



SEEDS

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GOOD NEWS *Associates*

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At the World Conference of Friends, Kenya 2012

part two of two

*Write the vision;
Make it plain upon tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
for there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it hastens to the end, and does not lie.
if it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come, it will not delay.*

- Habakkuk 2:2-3, NRSV

I hear flamingos come by their millions at night
to where we stood at noontime
sweating at the sun-soaked hot springs
thirsting for living water

When the Quakers got together
I didn't see flamingos
or lions, or baboons

Well, not many, anyway.

But I saw the miracle.

Not in praying or in dancing
not in preaching, singing, silence

But in the place in all our journeys
where the Resurrection
meets the Damascus Road



All photos from the World Conference, courtesy of Noah Baker Merrill.

Where we are for just a moment blinded
ripped up
laid open
and then made whole

For just a moment
because that's how the healing happens
the work is always ours
but we're given just these moments' winged grace
to help us live our way back whole again

At such a time I heard the hunger unspoken
to know what we've been missing

*Blessed are those who know their need
for theirs is the grace of heaven*

It's easy to dismiss the miracle
when to name it would mean change

Since it comes on wings at night
wrong time, color, language, shape
scattered feathers in the morning are easily swept away

But at the edges of our vision
I saw the tidal change
where fear gives way to wonder
where exhaustion finds surrender
where laboring becomes loving
and strife encounters faith

In the eyes of a generation rising
I saw the grief of Not Yet Possible
and deeper down inside
the stirrings
as yesterday's Why
awakens tomorrow's How.



God's questions burn like candles, where answers never could.

So keep awake. Watch and pray.

When those long-legged birds
unfurl their wings
and the stars begin to sing
in those first skies humans saw
sing with us

*In the shelter of Your wings, we will take refuge
In the shadow of Your wings, we sing for joy*

If two costumed angels came
to announce the miracle I saw

If Love's messengers arrived on a mission from God
in the shape of old-time Quaker ministers

If the Rift Valley of Kenya
were the City of Chicago
and this was a classic film

Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough
would roll up in an old police car
plain-dressed
suits, hats, and sunglasses
and proclaim it:

"We're puttin' the band back together."

— Noah Baker Merrill, June 2012



Noah Baker Merrill is a member of Putney Friends Meeting in Southern Vermont, a monthly meeting of New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). He seeks to follow in the living Quaker tradition of service and travel in *gospel ministry* – the practical spiritual work of building relationships, encouraging faithfulness, and participating in Love's work of awakening hearts. Putney Meeting has named Noah a *Released Friend*, freeing him to be available for this service as he is led by the Holy Spirit. He is a founding member of [Quaker Voluntary Service](#) and a GOOD NEWS *Associate*.

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