about this booklet

This booklet grows from an intentional exploration of nonviolent community embarked upon by members of the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance. It has since expanded to embrace many members of our peace community.

Our intention is to use the booklet to build spiritual community. It is available for no charge to those who request it. Those who are using the book are asked to participate by contributing readings to it.

The common thread in these reflections is the struggle of human beings to improve the world. In OREPA, our struggle to end nuclear bomb production is part of that struggle. In these reflections, we join ourselves with the larger community that works to heal the world.

From the outset, the reflection booklet has been provided free of charge. If you are able to make a donation to cover the cost of your booklet, it would be greatly appreciated. A gift of $20 would cover the cost of paper, printing and mailing for one year. If you are unable to make a donation, please continue to accept the reflection booklet and use it.

Each Thursday, in addition to the reflection, you will find the name of a person who is using this booklet like you are. This is an opportunity to think a little about that person and all those who work for peace on her/his day.

‡ contributions, suggestions, requests can be sent to OREPA, P O Box 5743, Oak Ridge, TN 37831 or by e-mail to orep@earthlink.net

front cover:

Watch your fingers, boys! At the Great Smoky Mountains Peace Pagoda, the massive stone carvings, created in Orissa, India, are carefully positioned.

sources

Readings contributed by Mary Dennis Lentsch and Jim Ullrich and extracted from Another America by Barbara Kingsolver, Seal Press, 1992
Saturday, December 1
1955 : ROSA PARKS REFUSES TO GIVE UP SEAT ON MONTGOMERY BUS
1969 : US HOLDS FIRST MILITARY DRAFT SINCE WWII

When you feel how depressingly slowly you climb, it’s well to remember that things take time.

~ Piet Hein

Sunday, December 2
1942 : FIRST SUSTAINED ATOMIC CHAIN REACTION, CHICAGO
1980 : THREE MARYKNOLL NUNS AND ONE LAY WORKER MURDERED IN EL SALVADOR

One of the first things we must get rid of is the idea that democracy is tantamount to capitalism.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Monday, December 3

As we become more in touch with our own ancient, black, non-European view of living as a situation to be experienced and interacted with, we learn more and more to cherish our feelings and to respect those hidden sources of our power from where true knowledge and, therefore, lasting action comes.

~ Audre Lorde

Tuesday, December 4
1969 : CHICAGO POLICE MURDER BLACK PANTHERS FRED HAMPTON AND MARK CLARKE

We are healed to the extent that we love ourselves as we are right now—blemishes, vulnerabilities, and all – not as we wish we will be at some time in the distant future.

~ Marsha Sinetar

Wednesday, December 5

Each of us, as we journey through life, has the opportunity to find and to give his or her unique gift. Whether that gift is great or small in the eyes of the world does not matter at all—not at all; it is through the finding and the giving that we may come to know the joy that lies at the center of both the dark times and the light.

~ Helen Luke
Life is glorious, but life is also wretched. It is both. Appreciating the gloriousness inspires us, encourages us, cheers us up, gives us a bigger perspective, energizes us. We feel connected. But if that’s all that’s happening, we get arrogant and start to look down on others, and there is a sense of making ourselves a big deal and being really serious about it, wanting it to be like that forever. The gloriousness becomes tinged by craving and addiction. On the other hand, wretchedness—life’s painful aspect—softens us up considerably. Knowing pain is a very important ingredient of being there for another person. When you are feeling a lot of grief, you can look right into somebody’s eyes because you feel you haven’t got anything to lose—you’re just there. The wretchedness humbles us and softens us, but if we were only wretched, we would all just go down the tubes. We’d be so depressed, discouraged, and hopeless that we wouldn’t have enough energy to eat an apple. Gloriousness and wretchedness need each other. One inspires us, the other softens us. They go together.

~ Pema Chödrön
Friday, December 7

Revelation is an in-coming, a breaking-in upon the world that takes the world by surprise. That is not “super-natural” but an amplitude of the way the world works. To live in history is to be structurally subject to surprise, to unforeseeability, to the future.

~ John Caputo

Saturday, December 8

Enlightenment of Buddha celebrated
1886: Diego Rivera born

The only reason we don’t open our hearts and minds to other people is that they trigger confusion in us that we don’t feel brave enough or sane enough to deal with. To the degree that we look clearly and compassionately at ourselves, we feel confident and fearless about looking into someone else’s eyes.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, December 9

Since the moment Constantine made the cross his personal talisman, the sign under which his troops would always win, the cross has been the symbol of both martyrdom and murder. Soldiers’ declaration that they are willing to die for the cause also always buys them a license to kill for it.

~ Stephen J. Patterson

Monday, December 10

1869: Wyoming passes first women’s suffrage law
1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
2017: ICAN receives Nobel Peace Prize for its work on the nuclear ban treaty

There are only two possible endings to the story of nuclear weapons. Either we get rid of them, or they will get rid of us.

~ Beatrice Fihn
Tuesday, December 11

The hardest thing in life may be to learn to truly trust that there is something noble and generative in ourselves. This is a greater sense of the notion of believing in our self; to truly believe in oneself means to uncover the inner core of imagination and authenticity that can also be called the genius within us. When we connect to the inner resident of the soul, we also learn how we are woven to the Soul of the World.

~ Michael Meade

Wednesday, December 12

1870: Joseph Rainey first African American in House of Representatives
1958: Maurice McCrackin sentenced to six months in prison for war tax resistance

What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.

~ Report of the Kerner Commission

The state of Tennessee executed Edmund Zagorski in November; Knoxvilleians gathered on Market Square for an evening vigil. PHOTO BY JIM TOREN
I am the woman whose flesh
does not move when she walks,
the nipple-less,
the bloodless, sweatless woman
who cries copious tears from the pressure
of all other prohibited secretions.
I am painted in the colors of no flower
that ever really bloomed.
I do not smell like any living thing.
I am the woman at war with body hair: who
curls her oriental hair,
straightens her African hair,
garnishes her eyelids with hair
and removes it from her eyebrows,
pursues it and relentlessly destroys it,
engaged in war with her mammalian origins.
Literally, you have seen me a million times:
the radically altered female who doesn’t stand out
in the crowd
of radically altered females,
I remain because
the potential of my body is a universe.
If I should abandon this battle
and turn my pious fury on something
less persistent, more conquerable that my sex,
if I should go away to war
and leave my fields behind, unmowed,
unmanicured, and let the weeds spring up,
if I were to become
the animal that I am, then
what?

~ Barbara Kingsolver
Friday, December 14

The prison system does everything within its power to sever any physical or emotional links you have to anyone in the outside world. They want your children to grow up without ever knowing you. They want your spouse to forget your face and start a new life. They want you to sit alone, grieving, in a concrete box, unable to even to say your last farewell at a parent’s funeral.

~Damien Echols

Saturday, December 15

1890: Sitting Bull, Sioux Chief, killed by US soldiers

The most fundamental aggression to ourselves, the most fundamental harm we can do to ourselves, is to remain ignorant by not having the courage and the respect to look at ourselves honestly and gently.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, December 16

1770: Beethoven born
1773: Boston Tea Party

Questions can be dangerous. They can take us right to the edge of what is known and comfortable. They can require tremendous courage to ask, because we know that new questions can lead to new ways of perceiving, and new perceptions can lead to new explorations of our world. Pick any question you have been avoiding asking yourself and you’ll see what I mean.

~ Dawna Markova

Monday, December 17

Mystery requires that we relinquish an endless search for answers and become willing to not understand. That we be open to witness. Those who witness life may eventually know far more than anyone can understand.

~ Rachel Naomi Remen
Tuesday, December 18
1946: STEVEN BIKO BORN

We teach children how to measure, how to weigh. We fail to teach them how to revere, how to sense wonder and awe. The sense of the sublime, the sign of the inward greatness of the human soul and something which is potentially given to all, is now a rare gift.

~ Abraham Heschel

Wednesday, December 19

A theology of embodiment mistrusts all abstract spirituality which is dissociated from the body, life, Earth, and social relationships. It trusts all embodiment which speaks from a concrete, involved spirit, moved by eros and related to the cosmos.

~ Elizabeth Moltmann-Wendel

At the Pleasant Hill Alternative Christmas Fair, two boy scouts stopped on their way to the hot cider to watch OREPA coordinator Ralph Hutchison fold a peace crane. “Do you ever teach people how to do that?” asked one. Three minutes later, he brought his friend over to learn. (PHOTO BY JEAN CLARK)
In other years I watched the sky for birds
flying south in formation.
This year they pass in unbroken lines through my sleep,
driven down on machine wings.

I know the voice you use
for telling children not to fear
every droning sound
that scatters their play like shrapnel or shattered
ice across asphalt; every approach sends them
into piles of limbs under trucks,
sends the youngest under your breasts
that ache like the unmilked she-goat bleating somewhere,
ache with the waiting.

Every child has waited for death angels: I
listened at night for the Russians, who would
know our little town
by its twin water towers.
Someone, believe this, painted the towers black
hoping to save us.
And even now, fear is a night-time animal,
winged engines pulsing and the drone
of my mother praying
in the bed where she never died.

No one slipped through a lake of night sky
in search of our secret towers.
No one. I know this now, but some believed
and believing still, prepare the massacre.

~ Barbara Kingsolver
Friday, December 21

The real work of planet-saving will be small, humble, and humbling, and, insofar as it involves love, pleasing and rewarding. Its jobs will be too many to count, too many to report, too many to be publicly noticed or rewarded, too small to make anyone rich or famous.

~ Wendell Berry

Saturday, December 22

1993: White South African Parliament votes self out of existence
1998: US okays production of bomb tritium in Watts Bar reactor

Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It’s a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, December 23

We can’t prolong the battle of greed or domination with the weapons of destruction that we have now without serious damage to ourselves and the ecology and all the other life on earth.

~ Thomas Keating

Monday, December 24

When we begin to accumulate, we begin to forget our common responsibility for the planet and all its people. What we need and what we want are two different things, and that can be hard to determine. But one thing is clear: when we have what we need, it is time to get serious about seeing that others have the same. Then we have do more than charity; we must demand just legislation and sufficiency for everyone.

~ Joan Chittister
Tuesday, December 25
BIRTH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH CELEBRATED
1875: JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN, WAR RESISTERS’ LEAGUE FOUNDER, BORN

Don Juan Chavarría: Not until that moment was there peace on earth—when the child was born. And that’s probably why there was joy in heaven. That’s what the angels are singing, it seems to me.

Edgard: The glory of God can’t exist in heaven until there is peace among people, which means justice, brotherhood, equality. Peace is all this. The rich often believe they give glory to God, but they don’t give peace and justice, and so they don’t give glory to God because the two things go together.

~ The Gospel in Solentiname

Wednesday, December 26

One of the main tasks of theology is to find words that do not divide but unite, that do not create conflict but unity, that do not hurt but heal.

~ Henri Nouwen

Once the conversation moved to the tables, talk was animated at the Women in Black community conversation on Identities and Social Justice Movements at the Beck Cultural Exchange Center in Knoxville in October.
Friday, January 4

The mystic is a religious anarchist and utopian, who speaks for an ancient tradition of protest against religious alienation. The mystic tries to undermine the law, and to create religious happiness by melting God down.

~ Don Cupitt

Saturday, January 5

Fear is a natural reaction to moving closer to the truth.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, January 6
1878 : CARL SANDBURY BORN
1885 : A J MUSTE BORN

There is nothing noble about acquiescence in a cramped life or mere submission to a superior force.

~ A J Muste

Monday, January 7
1891 : ZORA NEALE HURSTON BORN

If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it.

~ Zora Neale Hurston

Tuesday, January 8

I know with all my heart that the only way the world will change is if many more of us step forward, let go of our judgements, become curious about each other, and take the risk to begin a conversation.

~ Margaret Wheately

Wednesday, January 9

The world around us teeters on the edge of both peril and promise. Breakdown and breakthrough tussle with each other. The path forward is hidden in fog.

~ Pat Farrel
Friday, December 28

This war offers us, indeed, the grandest opportunity in all history of inspiring our men with religion.

~ James Cardinal Gibbons, 1917

Saturday, December 29
1890 : WOUNDED KNEE: US SOLDIERS MURDER 300 SIOUX WOMEN, MEN AND CHILDREN

To be fully alive, fully human, and completely awake is to be continually thrown out of the nest.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, December 30

You can go elsewhere for a job, but you cannot go elsewhere for a soul.

~ Jeff Flake

Monday, December 31
1915 : FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION FOUNDED

It is not possible to love or form a relationship with someone by force.

~ Jerzy Popieluszko

Tuesday, January 1
1863 : ABRAHAM LINCOLN SIGNS EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Nothing has ever been said about God that hasn’t already been said better by the wind in the pine trees.

~ Thomas Merton

Wednesday, January 2

When the mind can engage reality as a question rather than imposing prefabricated answers on it, then one can participate creatively in evolution.

~ Ilia Delio
The clink of tin cups in the kitchen rouses my ears. I close my book, hold my place with a fingertip while I listen: to the measuring cups, little quarrels of half against quarter, then the sifted hush of the flour. There will be kneading, there will be punching down, and rising and rising again, the press of increase constrained by the small square box in the oven, the immutable passage of time, and finally a home and a hunger filled with fragrant gold. I return to my reading, but first I thank the kitchen gods for what marriage is: throughout this immutable passage, these square impossible constraints, these petty clinkings of half against quarter, and oh this needing, oh this falling and this rising, I am blessed with a husband who makes bread.

~ Barbara Kingsolver
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~ Pat Farrel
The feral incantations of our dreams
bring the wolf
through the door.
The southern sun is flint
on his charcoal eye.
The image of a person, tiny and perfect, shines
in the mirror of his cornea.
His orange pain becomes a desert sunset.
His hunger perceives the scent of blood
on the wind,
the sleep of sheltered animals,
everything
but borders.
The television says McAllen, Texas,
is closer to Managua than to Washington, DC,
and housewives in McAllen
check their own
possibly Bolshevik eyes in the mirror
and lock the windows.
Their peaceful constitution sings of liberty
and justice
and their outlaw dreams
say the wolf deserves a meal.

~ Barbara Kingsolver
Friday, January 11
1912 : TEXTILE WORKERS IN LAWRENCE, MA LAUNCH BREAD AND ROSES STRIKE
1952 : FIRST BRITISH PROTEST AGAINST NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Community cannot be seen as the thing we get to when everything has been won; instead it must be the daily praxis we honor as we struggle for the transformations our world needs. In this discipline we ensure that we are indeed creating new ways of being that reflect our deepest hopes for radical change.

~ Erin Cox

Saturday, January 12

Feelings like disappointment, embarrassment, irritation, resentment, anger, jealousy, and fear, instead of being bad news, are actually very clear moments that teach us where it is that we’re holding back. They teach us to perk up and lean in when we feel we’d rather collapse and back away. They’re like messengers that show us, with terrifying clarity, exactly where we’re stuck. This very moment is the perfect teacher, and, lucky for us, it’s with us wherever we are.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, January 13

The transformation of the world, in a sense, begins in the transformation of our understanding of what is possible, needed, and revolutionary. This is as much a leap of the heart as it is of the mind.

~ Liz Deligio

Monday, January 14
1918 : EMMA GOLDMAN SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS IN PRISON FOR OBSTRUCTING DRAFT

The idea that each corporation can be a feudal monarchy and yet behave in its corporate action like a democratic citizen concerned for the world we live in is one of the great absurdities of our time.

~ Kim Stanley Robinson
Tuesday, January 15
1929 : MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BORN

This growing self-respect has inspired the Negro with a new determination to struggle and sacrifice until first-class citizenship becomes a reality. This is the true meaning of the Montgomery story. One can never understand the bus protest in Montgomery without understanding that there is a new Negro in the South, with a new sense of dignity and destiny.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Wednesday, January 16
1991 : GEORGE H W BUSH BEGINS FIRST GULF WAR

Many public officials are using the power of their offices to defy the law of the land, Through their irresponsible actions, their inflammatory statements, and their dissemination of distortions and half-truths, they have succeeded in arousing abnormal fears and morbid antipathies within the minds of underprivileged and uneducated whites, leaving them in such a state of excitement and confusion that they are led to acts of meanness and violence that no normal person would commit.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Knoxville’s Women in Black sponsored a community conversation event at the Beck Cultural Exchange Center; the subject was the intersection of identities and movements for social justice. The house was full as we talked about the challenge of creating justice in the Middle East and the plight of Palestinians.
The day my sister moved away forever, she came by where I work, her car packed, to tell me goodbye. With arms linked, a lock about to be forced, we walked the parking lot, afraid and sure since childhood that every separation would be final. A carload of young men watched from the street. At the moment I let her go they yelled, \textit{Hey, dykes.}

The three of them sat smoking on a wall in front of the high school: he in the middle, she on his right, on his left, not one of them older than fifteen. He said, as I walked past, \textit{I could use a piece of that.} A bad day for me, I spun on my heel, showed him an Italian fist. She, on his right, said \textit{Bitch.}

My sister and I again, in a border town, fed up with being tall, fair, followed, tired and maybe afraid of the one who, hissing, persistent, trailed us for half an hour: we turned all at once, examined the hands in his pockets, the arms, the hair on his neck, looked at each other and laughed. Whispering the pretense of a secret, superior knowledge, we followed him down to the end of the plaza. From there, he ran.

\textit{\textcopyright 1961 : Dwight Eisenhower’s Farewell Address Warns Against Militarism}

\textit{\textcopyright 1982 : Barbara Kingsolver}
Friday, January 18
2005: 500,000 March in Washington DC Against Iraq, Afghanistan Wars

Every crisis has both its dangers and opportunities. It can spell either salvation or doom. America can achieve either racial justice or the ultimate social psychosis that can only lead to domestic suicide.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Saturday, January 19

People get into a heavy-duty sin and guilt trip, feeling that if things are going wrong, that means that they did something bad and they are being punished. That’s not the idea at all. The idea of karma is that you continually get the teachings that you need to open your heart. To the degree that you didn’t understand in the past how to stop protecting your soft spot, how to stop armoring your heart, you’re given this gift of teachings in the form of your life, to give you everything you need to open further.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, January 20

During periods of discontinuous, abrupt change, the essence of adaptation involves a keen sensitivity to what should be abandoned—not what should be changed or introduced. A willingness to depart from the familiar has distinct survival value.

~ Peter Drucker

Monday, January 21
2017: More than 1,000,000 March in US to Demand Protection of Women’s Rights.

The human body is not a closed or static object, but an open, unfinished entity utterly entwined with the soils, waters, and winds that move through it—a wild creature whose life is contingent upon the multiple other lives that surround it, and the shifting flows that surge through it.

~ David Abram
Tuesday, January 22

1973: Vietnam Peace Agreement signed

Desire calls forth what is needed to transform and requires the engagement of imagination. Imagination is the bridge between the loss and the transformation. It is the alchemical catalyst that allows anger to be a fuel instead of a stopping point. It shelters the heart as it strengthens and readies to believe in the future. Imagination is a discipline, a sacred praxis, and a gift back to the world.

~ Liz Deligio

Wednesday, January 23

Justice requires that we be willing to risk the very ground beneath our feet. It demands that we not shy away from examining our most beloved teaching, assumptions, or traditions for failing, bias, and exclusion. It invites us toward emergence, allowing what is no longer needed to fall away, as newer and needed visions replace old ones.

~ Diann Neu

Pleasant Hill, Tennessee, has an Alternative Christmas Fair each fall—local nonprofit organizations are invited to set up tables and local residents review the presentations and select groups to donate to in honor of their friends and relatives, in lieu of consumerist presents for the holidays. OREPA was pleased to be included in this year's fair and delighted to get to visit with so many long-time friends. Here, Don and Grace Inglis, with 186 years of peacemaking experience between them, stop by the OREPA table to chat.
The night before war begins, and you are still here.  
You can stand in a breathless cold  
ocean of candles, a thousand issues of your same face  
rubbed white from below by clear waxed light.  
A vigil. You are wondering what it is  
you can hold a candle to.

You have a daughter. Her cheeks curve  
like aspects of the Mohammed’s perfect pear.  
She is three. Too young for candles but  
you are here, this is war.  
Flames covet the gold-sparked ends of her hair,  
her nylon parka laughing in color,  
flammable. It has taken your whole self  
to bring her undamaged to this moment,  
and waiting in the desert at this moment  
is a bomb that flings gasoline in a liquid sheet,  
a laundress’s snap overhead, wide as the Tigris,  
and ignites as it descends.

The polls have sung their opera of assent: the land  
wants war. But here is another America,  
candle throated, sure as tide.  
Whoever you are, you are also this granite anger.  
In history you will be the vigilant dead  
who stood in front of every war with old hearts  
in your pockets, stood on the carcass of hope  
listening for the thunder of its feathers.

The desert is diamond ice and only stars above us here  
and elsewhere, a thousand issues of a clear waxed start,  
a holocaust of heaven  
and somewhere, a way out.

~ Barbara Kingsolver
Friday, January 25
1851: Sojourner Truth addresses black women’s rights convention, Akron, OH
1914: Gandhi campaign for Indian nationals’ rights in South Africa succeeds

The key to a successful social justice process is to do it with others and with a common purpose. Given all the social, economic, political problems of any age, true change comes when ordinary people come together with others to share their experiences, their hunches, and even outrage, to unpack the truth.

~ Kathleen Desautels

Saturday, January 26

We think that the point is to pass the test or overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don’t really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and fall apart again. It’s just like that. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy.

~ Pema Chödrön

Sunday, January 27
1951: First US nuclear test at Nevada Test Site
1973: Vietnam war ends, US military draft ends
1999: Pope John Paul II urges opposition to death penalty

Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted, the indifference of those who should have known better, the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most that has made it possible for evil to triumph..

~ Haile Selassie

Monday, January 28

Election days come and go. But the struggle of the people to create a government that represents all of us, not just the one percent, a government based on economic, social, racial and environmental justice—that struggle continues.

~ Bernie Sanders
After a Sunday vigil in October, we took a field trip to the new location of the Friendship Bell in Oak Ridge where Caroline Best set the massive ringer in motion and sounded the bell. Looking on, Jim Ullrich, Mary Dennis Lentsch, Ed Best, Marese Nephew, and Betty Coleman.

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Tuesday, January 29
1996 : FRANCE HALTS NUCLEAR TESTING

Until justice is blind to color, until education is unaware of race, until opportunity is unconcerned with the color of men’s [sic] skins, emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact

~ Lyndon Johnson

Wednesday, January 30
1948 : GANDHI ASSASSINATED

There is a higher court than the court of justice and that is the court of conscience. It supercedes all other courts.

~ Gandhi
Maura, I have dreamed of your life:
there are lilies as red as blood, as a sunrise
that only grow from scarred earth after a fire.

Maura, your mother was sixteen, without thoughts of you,
when they caught her painting walls,
painting the oldest kind of tomorrow
in colors she found only inside her eyes.
When your mother was sixteen, this was a crime.

Maura, she will never tell you everything
they did to her in prison: the men,
the pants tucked into boots, the pain.
The way she watched him tuck his shirttail in
while she wondered what she would ever
find to love again.
Soon after this, she began to think of you.

Maura, there were people who said you should not
be born, that a life conceived in hatred
is more hate than life. Your mother said
the seed is the least of a tree
that has lived through several seasons.
Even before the first bud opens, the seed
is not what it was. And so you were born
and in the season that brought you into the light
they rang every bell in the country,
down to the sea
and promised kindness, the oldest
kind of tomorrow.
Even the men in boots were treated with kindness.

Maura, you have your mother’s eyes.

~ Barbara Kingsolver
October is always work party month at the Great Smoky Mountains Peace Pagoda—this year the three week party crept into November. The primary project was moving more than a hundred stone carvings up three levels and securing them in place with concrete. We also winterized the gardens and fed the ever-changing gang of volunteers who came to join the party. Here, Nancy, Oliver, Sawada, Melody, Ken, Jim and Kell are hard at work cleaning, preparing, mixing concrete, cutting stone, and securing the stones in place around the pagoda.
Scenes from the Fall 2018 Work Party at the Great Smoky Mountains Peace Pagoda:
At the end of a full work day, dinner with fabulous food and great people from across the United States and around the world. Lunch on the deck outside the Visitor's Center is a chance to eat, rest and visit.

Tom Matsuda, stone carver, consults with Utsumi Shonin about making repairs to the stone—below, four levels of stone are in place, circling the pagoda.