

SAYF Worship Journal
Nurturing/Steering Committee Retreat
August 2016
West Knoxville Friends Meetinghouse

On the weekend of August 19-21, 2016, the Nurturing and Steering Committees of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.

We did really well for our first nurturing business meeting without the 14 graduates, and I'm very proud of us. We rock. Thank you to all the people who modeled for me. I will find a way to get those pictures to you. You all matter a lot in this community and "Romeo and Juliet is totally a salad."

*Your friend,
Mama SAYF
aka Julia*

James Nayler was a famous (infamous) Quaker back when Quakerism started. On his deathbed he said:

"There is a spirit which I feel that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things."

I think we feel that same spirit here today, and the SAYF community does a great job of nurturing our encounter with that spirit. Quakerism is not an individual religion but a community, we help lift one another up. I'm grateful for the love and care shown by the nurturers – both teen and adult.

One more old Quaker – Isaac Pennington:

"Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another, but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand."

With love, Mark

May we each pay forward the benefits of this loving community shared with us. May we take the patience, joy, and loving acceptance into our daily lives. Thank you for the gifts you bring to SAYF. Thank you for helping me develop and share my own gifts. This weekend, we got a glimpse of our challenges, our imperfections. As hammer is to metal, working on our flaws can move us in a beautiful direction, loving and strong. Thank you for being vulnerable and courageous. May we provide honest and caring support to each other. Let's continue to laugh and cry together. We're all the better because of the other.

Jennifer

Dear SAYF,

I feel like it's been so long since I have come to a SAYF, this nurturing retreat has been amazing. It has reminded me that there is more to life than just working and paying bills. It seems that I am at a point in my life where friends are temporary but I can always trust that I have a home at SAYF when needed. I will try and make more SAYFs this next year but it's really hard for me to take off work for a whole weekend. Love to all my SAYF fam.

- Michael Dunn

I am so confident that SAYF is in good hands with you! Many times when I've stepped away from a community, there has been mystery about the future. In this case, I see the leaders, the nurturers, the "mama SAYFs" in front of me. Thank you for continuing to care for this community and ensuring it is strong even in 10 years when my daughter is ready to join. (I would include an emoji here, but I still don't understand what they mean.)

love,
Jonah

Dear SAYF,

What a wonderful weekend of business. I feel so blessed that I get to spend a day twice a year devoted to building and serving our community through the Quaker process. Each retreat I learn a lot about myself and others, and this retreat I learned that often times when there is disagreement within our community we are actually on the same page. In these situations, it is our job to find common ground. So thank you SAYF for the ability to listen and compromise, even if it takes a really long time. I'm very much looking forward to future nurturing retreats.

Love,
Julian

P.S. Don't eat the Play-Doh

I'm really excited to see how this new group of nurturers fits together. Y'all already feel like a cohesive and strong body of Friends. You seem sensitive to the needs of the larger community and of the individuals in it. You work well together and care for one another with love. And I am totally impressed by how many of you asked "What else needs to be done?" during clean up today!

*I love all y'all!
FAN Mary Linda*

