

SAYF Worship Journal
Nurturing/Steering Committee Retreat
August, 2017

On the weekend of August 25-27, 2017, the Nurturing and Steering Committees of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the West Knoxville Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.

Thank you to everyone for all the good work this weekend, in the business meetings and meal setup and cleanup, and getting the meetinghouse back in shape. It felt like SAYF at its best.

With love and gratitude, Mark

Dear SAYF,

This is my last first retreat ever. And it wasn't even a year ago that I was on my way to my first retreat ever. While I regret not stumbling across SAYF sooner, I will never regret a minute of any of these retreats. As I head into my senior year, I am determined to cherish all the time I have left in this community - whatever that may bring with it. I love ALL of you for the individual happiness you bring me, the love you show me, and the lessons you teach me. Let's keep changing for the better. XO

SAYF (and the Steering/FAN community) is like crowd surfing. It takes a lot of dedicated, trusting and enthusiastic individuals to make it possible. One or two people stepping away only makes a little difference. The support of the entire group is necessary, even if you aren't carrying the load at that particular moment. But, if too many people put their hands down or step back, the person falls. When it works, everyone is part of an amazing experience. It can be a touchstone in one's life. Who wants to go first? I'll put my hands up for you.

All my love and eternal support, Jennifer

Dear Friends,

I have thoroughly enjoyed this retreat. It always amazes me what we can get done when we put our amazing Quaker heads together. Quite honestly, I like (even Love) business meeting. There is something very calming and healing about sharing ideas and creatively problem solving with people you love. Granted, it can be a long and sometimes draining process, but when we're in the groove, we are a well oiled machine and we are READY to revise some guidelines. Also, it has dawned on me that this is one of the last warm retreats because it may already be chillier by the time September rolls around. It feels really nice outside right now and I need to remember to soak it up before it gets cold. BUUUT, I love you all so much and I'll see you all soon again.

Cora

~P.S.~ Thank you FANs, we LOVE. LOVE. LOVE you all, and appreciate you and all the work you do/have done for SAYF.

This is the start of my last year. These last retreats I know will fly by but I'm gonna try to soak up the sun while it's still shining. And embrace you all while I can still reach you. So until next time we meet, drink water, stay in school and have fun. I can't wait to see ya'll in two weeks when we can nurturer the hell out of these SAYFers.

Sincerely, Julia Hudson

Dear Friends,

Y'all are such champs and I would just like to thank you all for such a great nurturing retreat to start off the year. It takes so much strength, commitment and diligence to sit through many hours of business meeting and communicate effectively with one another to discuss the needs and problems in the community. After this retreat, I feel like I've learned so much about Quaker process, friendship and leadership, which I hope to take home with me. Especially since my sister and I will be starting school this next Monday.

It's rather thrilling to welcome so many smart, compassionate, and kind nurturers back, as well as the new ones that have joined the Nurturing Committee. So much of nurturing is about finding your role, and so I'm very much so looking forward to how we all grow into that this next year at retreats.

So much love,

Tallulah

I'm happy to have gotten to know and be a part of the community this SAYF Nurturing Retreat. The meetings for business felt difficult in the beginning, and intense at other times. As we labored, a fruitful and kind energy emerged among us. Bright threads of caring and ideas slowly came to connect us. Sharing our full names at the end of the day and laughing after much hard work accomplished felt so good. For me, it was affirming to experience and be reminded that even when a community or person is tired and facing daunting obstacles, fresh springs of wisdom can bubble up. This retreat also helped ground me in parts of myself that are very important to me. Being surrounded by books on Quaker and nonviolent social action when I lay down on my mat to sleep was comforting and friendly. I was reconnected to people, even unknown, who are working quietly (or loudly) and passionately in so many places for vigorous healing and good. Love, Autumn