

SAYF Worship Journal
Nurturing/Steering Committee Retreat
February, 2018

On the weekend of February 16-18, 2018, 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.

Dear SAYF,

What a lovely retreat! It was exhausting, productive, and brought me back in touch with my Quaker values. It feels great to leave knowing how much we accomplished. I especially loved thinking up our own queries on Friday night and then using those to write the ones for SAYMA! I'm happy to be back.

Much love,
Evangéline

All y'all,

Current (and former) SAYFers and the adults who ensure your presence remain in my heart. With love, Mary Linda

P.S. Especial thanks to Jennifer, Mari, Aaron, Mark and Autumn for making our grueling work almost not unpleasant.

Guys, This was a really fun retreat for me, which was mildly surprising. I thought it wouldn't be given that there was lots of business to discuss, but it was enjoyable all the same.

- Stay chill bros
love: David

Dear SAYF,

Is it possible I feel like my best self with you? We work hard, laugh, learn and dance together. I had some pretty dysfunctional, lonely years as a teen and it brings me great joy and satisfaction that I play a small part in supporting a community that creates a beautiful and loving family for teens. It's okay in this family to be 100% your whacky, delicious selves, growing at your own pace into your amazing potential. Stay freaky, my lovelies!

Always yours,
Jennifer

...Oh, and a huge thank you to the Steering Committee who saw what I didn't see all those years ago when I came to my first retreat: something to contribute. I love you all and I will miss you and our time together.

Really, really, really.

Love, Jennifer

This is my last Nurturing/Steering retreat. My first was in Feb 2005. I have seen a lot of change in SAYF over that time, especially in the Nurturing Committee and it seems to continually improve. I really appreciate your leadership in learning new ways to love and accept one another. Thank you for the opportunity to learn with you and from you.

With love,
Mark Wutka

P.S. The sign above me here says "Let's see what LOVE can do." It is quoting William Penn who said "Let us then try what Love will do: For if [People] did once see we Love them, we should soon find they would not harm us. Force may subdue, but Love gains. And [whoever] forgives first wins the laurel."

Dear SAYF Community,

I really liked the queries that the teens made. I appreciate the respectful and thoughtful words during the meetings. Thank you for reaching for the deep spirit within you and sharing with others.

I am looking for the balance what it means to be the guardrail in the bowling alley as I serve as a FAN. This does not always come to me naturally so I need to work it out.

I'm holding Wren, Mary Linda, Mark and Jennifer in the Light as they take a break or retire from FANNing after many years. Thank you for all you have done. You've shown me - Work is love that's made visible.

*In the Light,
Mari*

The universe is cyclic. Waves roll in; Waves roll out; an endless circular flow.

Once I stopped trying to push the water, stopped flailing at the surf, relaxed, laid back and floated with the tide I found peace...and looked upward at last to see the wonder of the infinite stars.

Trust that the tide will carry us to new and wondrous places.

Aaron

Man I freakin' love Quaker teens. We have so many strangely intellectual conversations. But also so many strangely funny conversations. A quote from the car ride, "Life is your treadmill, no matter how fast you go you won't get anywhere." (don't take seriously. I'm sure you'll go far) Does our generation have a set name yet? Have you ever made a past tense form for a word that shouldn't be past tense? Is soup a salad? Do you know the definition of a meme? Capitalism? Quaker teens are the coolest. We killed that business meeting. It was a fantastic way to close out my time as clerk. Coming to the realization that this was my last nurturing retreat is weird but we are leaving with this community in very good hands. I'm not worried at all. You all will be amazing.

Till next time,
signing off
Mama SAYF