

The 318th New York Yearly Meeting
Summer Sessions
July 21 - 27, 2013 Silver Bay, New York

To Friends Everywhere:

Our plenary speaker, Whatwehni:neh (Freida J. Jacques), Clanmother of the Turtle Clan of the Onondaga Nation of the Haudenosaunee, opened with a prayer of thanksgiving. With her we say:

Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to mother earth;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to the waters;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to the berries;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to the medicine plants;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to all the animals;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to the sun;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to the moon;
Together with one mind, we give thanks, love and respect to the stars and all of creation;

We have been challenged by Truth: To renew and invigorate the Two Row Wampum Treaty – the original agreement the Haudenosaunee people made with the European settlers to live along side each other, in peace with one another and with the earth;

To respond to a vision of the Doctrine of Discovery as an ungodly and violent deception in need of repudiation by the Roman Catholic Church, its source, and by the courts, and witnessed a dramatic apology in the name of Jesus Christ to indigenous peoples everywhere;

To see spiritual renewal as born, not of top-down restructuring, but of opening ourselves to personal transformation, supporting one another in ever deepening faithfulness; following the Light each of us has been given;

To break from lives dependant on the burning of hydrocarbons and from all related investment;

To change the language we use to talk about Quakerism. To stop speaking as if we are dying and to start speaking of the living passion that transforms the world.

We acknowledged that for too long alcohol and drugs have been used at our summer sessions. We have begun serious conversations throughout the community, speaking truth and listening with love; this shall continue.

We heard from young adults that as children they were deprived of the opportunity to experience what is most vital and precious in our faith.

We experienced deep worship and came together as a multigenerational body. The challenges we face are daunting, but our faith is strong, and we are covered by divine grace. We ask for your prayers as we take up the urgent work before us.

New York Yearly Meeting

Jeffrey L. Hitchcock, Clerk