



Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)

7/25/2021

To Friends Everywhere,

Our theme for this Yearly Session was “Tapestry of Transformation: Sharing our Light.” In the evening plenary session we were invited to share our encounters with poverty and injustice and then reflect on whether this current world order is under God’s plan. Our Bible study continued this theme of right relationship focusing on how deep knowledge and reverent attention to the natural world sustains us and is necessary to our survival. God invites us to love all our neighbors. As we reflected on how we might more rightly share the world’s resources, address systemic violence including racism, and repair our relationships with the natural world, we were reminded that we do not need to be afraid. We do not walk alone. May we learn to trust in God’s love and the leadings of the Spirit as we discern our individual and collective responses to these issues.

Our beloved Scattergood School and farm continue to be a central part of sharing our Light in the world. We feel awed and blessed by the ministry of the school, the care and dedication of its staff, the loving care of the farm and the many committees which support its work. Classes for middle and high school continued both in person and remotely while keeping staff and students safe during this year of the pandemic. In a major decision, the Yearly Meeting agreed to add air conditioning to both the dormitories in addition to its continuing financial support.

The State of Meeting reports from our 13 constituent meetings testify to our efforts to safely continue worship and remain spiritually connected during the Covid pandemic this past year. While some Friends have not felt clear to join worship on Zoom, it has allowed others living at a distance to participate more frequently. Opportunities for participation in midweek worship, Experiment with Light Groups, Bible study groups, the Yearly Meeting Spiritual Sharing groups, worship with other meetings including Pendle Hill and collaboration on the work of racial, social and climate justice have all contributed to our spiritual growth and connection. There is a sense that we have remained connected to the three legged stool of the Divine, our blessed community and our work in the world. We have missed the participation of our children and youth at our annual session this year. The pandemic has made it especially hard for these young Friends to remain connected. We look forward to the day when all meetings feel safe to resume worship in our

meetinghouses, but feel blessed by the many ways we have maintained our life together in the Spirit of Love.

We enjoyed an evening of song and conversation with John McCutcheon. As we bring our annual session to an end, we invite all Friends everywhere to unite with the words of George Fox: "Sing and rejoice ye children of the day and the Light, for the Lord is at work in this thick night of darkness that may be felt; and the Truth doth flourish as the rose, and lilies do grow among the thorns and the plants atop the hills, and upon them the lambs doth skip and play."

In love,

Carol Gilbert, Clerk

On behalf of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative

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