

Ohio Yearly Meeting

Epistle to Friends Everywhere

2026

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. – Philippians 4:4

To Friends everywhere, and to this world God so dearly loves,

We have been gathered together in the overflowing love of Christ. Bringing all into His healing love, sharing both our delight and our wounds, we are made whole. We discover that we are loved beyond imagining. Joy in the Lord has been breaking out among us. This joy comes in worship, hugs, conversations with friends new and old, connections with Friends around the world, the precious sounds of the children in our midst, a feeling of being welcomed by the Lord. God is in all of it, bringing in the Kingdom.

Jesus has been teaching us what it means that each one of us is held in His love. The physical distances between us melt away as we allow this love to join us together. God is pouring out many gifts in our midst like milk and honey. In our time together, the Lord has been challenging us to open our hearts to these gifts from Him, gifts without money and without price.

The body of Christ is a self-healing body: we have felt the wine of the Holy Spirit stretching the wineskin and making it new, as the wineskin holds the fresh outpourings with tenderness. We give thanks for a sound vessel for the Spirit, formed with care over many generations, and for the Spirit pouring in. We have witnessed a dance of the old and the new, and the Lord has been at work in how these – how we – need each other.

With God's grace, when there are differences, we labor with each other. When there are forces that try to divide us, we look to our Shepherd, in a unity deeper and more lasting than our temporal concerns. In His care, conflict is not where we stay. God fills the spaces between us and forms us into a body in His image and likeness. To be the body of Christ is to be one another's ears and eyes, to learn each other's languages, to bind up each other's wounds, to learn to love and forgive each other as we each have been loved and forgiven. We falter, and we help each other home again. The living body of Christ is a dancing body.

We have felt a deep love for the beloved friends of the Lord in yearly meetings around the world. We have been grateful to Him for sending us visitors from many different places. Who but the Lord could bring us all together? In worship, wherever we are, we are together with Him, and with the faithful Friends who came before us. In their time, those Friends were at the growing edge, becoming new creatures in Christ. Now it is our turn to draw from that eternal spring. Now it is our turn to be bold in the Lord, sharing our joy from the rooftops.

It is our hope to shine Christ's Light in a struggling world, to share the treasure of that Light more and more widely, in all that we do and are. The Kingdom of God is within. The Lord is already with you. Can you feel His presence? Turn to Him, and let Him live through you. He will abide with you; He will change you; He will bring you His joy, this joy we have felt together. You will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.

On behalf of Ohio Yearly Meeting,



Charles Thomas, Jr, Clerk