

SAYF Worship Journal

September 2015 Retreat

Asheville Friends Meetinghouse

On the weekend of September 18-20, 2015, the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Asheville Friends Meetinghouse. This is our witness. This is our story.

Dear Friends,

It's been several months since I saw many of you and since then I've started high school. The hardest part for me is that I let nerves and worries get in the way of new relationships and new activities. This is why coming to SAYF is great, I am so happy to see new faces and spend this time with the people I love and admire. I hope that you Newcomers all have felt welcome. It feels so great to reconnect to old people and connect with the new. Thank you all especially for making my sister feel welcome as this was her first time. SAYF is so important to me and the fact that others get to have experiences for the first time brings me joy. I love you all and thank you dearly for a great retreat. Thanks to Asheville Meeting for letting us use this space. I hope to see you all in October! This will be a great year at SAYF.

- Tallulah

I am filled today, once again, with a profound sense of gratitude for SAYF. It is truly an honor to work with all of you. To witness the love, utter joy, and boundless energy within this community is really something special. Don't forget, you are wonderful, you are loved, and you are so worth the effort! I love each and every one of you.

Jennifer Chapman

FAN

Dear Asheville Friends,

Thank you so much for letting us (SAYF) use your meeting house! It enabled us to have queries and to go downtown and enjoy the culture. A common theme in our retreat that kept popping up was civil rights and the fact that everyone is created equal. We went to the YMI art exhibit and read all about truths and people who strongly believe in them. Thanks, we couldn't have done it without you!

**Mandy Abbate
Charlotte Friends Meeting
(first SAYF retreat)**

Dear SAYF,

This is my first SAYF retreat. I absolutely loved it. The first day was a little solitary, but I figured that was because people didn't really know me yet. Though by the end of the weekend, I made eight or nine good friends that I can't wait to see at future SAYFs. In the week leading up to SAYF, I originally was not going to go. I am so happy I listened to myself and changed my mind.

Sincerely,

Abner

SAYF,

I know I always either look really pissed off or sad, but I had a ton 'o fun this weekend! Even though I didn't want to leave the fabulous pinball museum, I really enjoyed the rest of the stops downtown, even though my feet are paying for it now.

Thank you Wren, for letting us see your beautiful shop, and thank you Asheville planning committee for a great weekend.

Until next time!

**Love,
Astrid**

Dear Friends:

This has been a powerful retreat for me as we adventured together to seek truth.

The YMI "Americans Telling Truth" exhibit was especially moving for me, all the more so in the worshipful way all of our Young Friends observed and experienced the portraits and quotations.

I hope we all remember the power of truth as we move in the wider world speaking our own.

In peace, with love,

Aaron

P.S. My truth from the weekend: Life is like a pinball game. The best you can really hope for is a chance to keep playing.

Thanks Adrienne for being your fantastic self and organizing yet another incredible retreat.

Dear SAYF,

You, as always, have my unending gratitude for this incredible retreat. I am beyond overjoyed to claim a home here and rest easily because I know that it won't be much longer until I see you again. As my time with you all in SAYF grows shorter, I look forward to a future full of impromptu visits all over the southeast, roadtrips to see old friends, and making new and different memories. Thank you to the Asheville Meeting, the FANS, and everyone who made this weekend possible. The visits and tours were unforgettable. A lyric from our tumbling harmonies this morning runs through my mind. "A light that is shining friend, in you and in me." With you all in my life, I feel that my flame is eternal. My spirit is, in part, a product of your love. I know almost nothing else that beautiful.

Endless love,

Laura Kelley

Dear SAYF community,

I feel blessed that I was able to come and be with you all this weekend. I'm going to try to express myself...

Nurturers - thank you for stepping forward to organize picnic and opening circle. And for your leadership and facilitating the group. I have witnessed so much love and care from you.

Newbies - it was so nice that you came to the SAYF retreat in Asheville. I wonder what you take home from this weekend. I hope we'll see you again soon.

Thank you all for your presence. Strange how the same weekend seems like a life-long here at SAYF.

I look up at the night sky and when I find twinkling stars, I think of you.

Love,

Mari

P.S. Truth seeker, singer, social justice activist Bernice Johnson Reagon said, "If you don't sometimes walk through trouble, you'll never get ot meet the rest of yourself."

Dear SAYF:

Insider/Outsider

Thank you to those who open doors
to let outsiders in and also open doors
to offer the opportunity for
insiders to step outside (of
their comfort zones.)

What a gift and a challenge to
be both a welcoming and an
intensely close knit community.

I am inspired by the spirit
of those who open the doors
and aspire to be a better
"door opener" in my own life.

Thank you.

Jennifer Dickie

This retreat rolled out because of every one of us. When it was first conceived, it was a set of loose concepts. We as a community, the SAYF community, fleshed it out, brought each of our own collective and individual timbres, listened and sensed where and when to play our particular parts, tuning in and falling into a rhythm with one another, harmonizing and adding syncopation. This retreat - we felt engaged and gathered, and although it was a super busy and active retreat, energized and refreshed. I'm personally soooo grateful that SAYFers, Nurturers, FANs, FADs, and local adult Friends were so in tune and in harmony and really each stepped in and up like a well rehearsed symphony or experienced jazz improvisationists! Wow!

We are AWESOME, SAYFers! I love you ALL. I love US all.

Adrienne

- "Laz-y" and "Lay-z" sound the same
- Russia is the only country separating Finland from North Korea.
- Cleopatra lived closer to today than she did to the pyramids being built.
- There's a group of orangutans currently domesticating dogs.
- If you drove a car straight into the air at 60 mph, you'd reach the international space station in less than an hour.
- Texas is half the width of the United States.
- This year was the first time in history that over 50% of all people lived in cities.
- Maine is the closest U.S. state to Africa.
- There is a West Korea.
- There are more cells in your brain than there are brains in your whole body!
- There are more possible chess positions than there are atoms in the observable universe.
- Most of the world's oxygen is generated by plankton and algae.
- Kim Jong Un was an IB student.

Yours,
Guthrie