

**SAYF Worship Journal**  
**SAYF Retreat**  
**September 2016**  
**Charlotte, NC Friends Meetinghouse**

*On the weekend of September 9-11, 2016, the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Charlotte Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.*

This was my first SAYF ever, and the weekend I had was the highlight of my month. I truly don't think it is humanly possible to describe the feelings and love I have for all of these beautiful amazing people. Without each and every one of you SAYF would not be the same. Right now I am struggling so much to find a word stronger than love, and I think I did. SAYF. So thank you for being my friends and my family. I love you SAYF.

So it's the first retreat of the year, and if I'm being completely honest here, it was tough for me. Growing up is a weird and sometimes difficult thing, but it obviously needs to happen at some point. I was right before when I said I would cry at the first retreat because I missed the graduates. However I soon became unbelievably happy while during lunch clean up in the kitchen, every single person was singing along to Bohemian rhapsody. It was such a pure & magical moment. And while we all were in the pool, I completely fell in love with all of you. I really really hope to see you all at more retreats.

All of my love  
from your friend  
Mama SAYF

secret agent name: Julia Hudson

Dear Friends,

This retreat was really refreshing for me because I am going through a lot back home and since I've started coming to this magical community, it's one of my most favorite places ever. It's full of my favorite people, and for that reason I get so crazy excited every SAYF weekend.

My top 5 things this retreat were having a dance party in the kitchen to Bohemian Rhapsody. Sleeping outside, making the cakes despite the fact they were kind of nasty looking, pretending we were being chased by clowns, and just feeling all around loved.

I love everyone here so, so hecking mcuh! Stay cool famalam!  
(this retreat was li+af as the cool kids say!)

Love, Matilda

P.s. I wrote a poem

Roses are red,  
Christians say grace,  
Sayf is and always has  
Been my favorite place.

Dear SAYF,

This was only my 2nd SAYF retreat and I still had lots of fun. My favorite part of the retreat by far was the wink. I think Charlotte was a great place to have this retreat and look forward to future trips.

Hello Friends,

It's been an amazing weekend with you beautiful people! It was so nice to see some new people join our family. I loved playing wink, it was my **favorite** part of the weekend. I can't wait to see all of you guys again next retreat!

Love your short little  
Mexican

P.S. that vegan cake was so good

This retreat was super chill, even though I got roasted for my love of fine waters. I'm glad there was meat, that was pretty epic. I'm also glad I got to help with the fire activities, the FANS who let me do that are awesome. You guys are super cool, and I can't wait for October.

- Patrick

#firstepistle

Hey Guys,

I don't have much poetic talent, so I'll just have to keep this short & simple. This is by far the best SAYF I've been to. I cannot comprehend how much I love you guys. I don't want to go back home. I can't wait a whole month to see you all again. This has been one of the best experiences of my life. Also, it's the most fun I've had in a long time. You are all my favorite people in the universe.

I love you, Kenya Clo

With the loss of old growth, the saplings thrive. We miss the graduates of last year. But in their absence, a new group of amazing leaders has emerged. You all should go home with the knowledge that you did a great job this weekend. I look forward to working together. For our newcomers and younger attenders, we are very happy you are here. We love having you as members of the SAYF family.

Jennifer Chapman

p.s. The impromptu Bohemian Rhapsody group singalong in the kitchen was memorable. Possibly made SAYF history on the awesome scale.

Dearest SAYF,

Please remember the sense of community you felt developing this weekend. What I saw happening is a sweet tenderness for one another and a unity where love can grow. Y'all work well as a team, really encouraging one another and pulling together to accomplish things. You also seem sensitive to one another's needs and concerns. All of this is a joy to witness. All my love to you,  
Mary Linda (FAN)

Each retreat, I'm consistently amazed at how much love my heart has for you all. It comes as no surprise that I would feel this way because you are all as great as it gets. But, it's almost a physical feeling of growth in my heart while I'm at SAYF. I don't really want to compare myself to the Grinch, but for the sake of this metaphor, I will. In the gaps between retreats, I feel like I am missing that sort of love that is present during SAYF. I love my life, and it's actually pretty good, but there's that one ingredient missing; that's you all. This is where that Grinch part comes into play. In the movie and book, once the Grinch realizes the true meaning of Christmas, or whatever, his heart begins to grow at an alarming rate. I feel like that when I'm with you all. My heart is as happy as it gets.

I'm not sure if I just totally butchered that metaphor, or if I just was thinking too much about the Grinch, but you guys really do make my heart happy.

- Cora