

SAYF Worship Journal
Nurturing/Steering Committee Retreat
February 10-12, 2017
Swannanoa Valley Friends Meetinghouse

On the weekend of February 10-12, 2017, the Nurturing and Steering Committees of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.

You know you're in deep when you love business meeting. I had an absolutely lovely time that refilled my heart with love. This retreat was so calm and caring, and exactly what I needed. You all make me a very proud Mama SAYF.

**With so much love,
Your friend,
Julia**

Why do I spend 9 weekends a year with a bunch of teenagers, sleeping on the floor, driving long hours, listening to music I may not entirely understand, dealing with about a hundred emails per weekend, organizing and helping cook for groups of up to 50, attending to infractions of the guidelines, etc., etc., etc.?

Because I see the tremendous love, talent, and humanity that grows in leaps and bounds in both the teens and adults who participate in SAYF. Watching the teens conduct great business meetings, join in spontaneous dance parties, sleep like angels (well most of them - I'm surprised by the number of you who talk in your sleep. Super funny stuff!), and teach each other about being a great person all while learning about Quakerism, that's why! I go home each weekend tired but so full of life, love, and the feeling that I'm helping shepherd the future of Friends. What a life. Thank you for welcoming me into this boundless joy.

Love,
Jennifer

Dear Friends,

This retreat has reminded me what the magical little bubble of friendship and community that SAYF is; The more it dawns upon me that this is such an excellent opportunity that I feel so lucky to be a part of. While sitting in business meeting, it occurred to me just how awesome it is that us - a more ragtag group of radical quaker teens - are able to conduct ourselves and guide a community to be as inclusive and ideal as possible. That, my Friends, shows true commitment to the awesomeness of youth-led groups and community. What I have drawn from this, just from attending my second nurturing retreat, is that I just care so much and it fills my heart with love because all my fellow SAYFers also care and respect one another to the fullest extent.

With so much love,
-Your new baby-clerk-
Tallulah