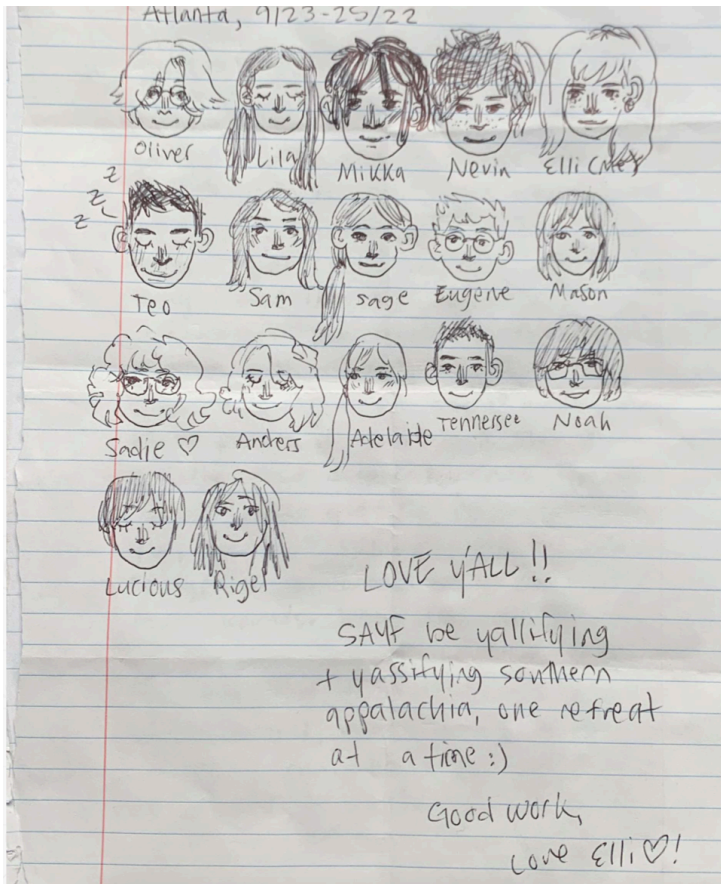


SAYF Worship Journal
 September 2022 Retreat
 Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse

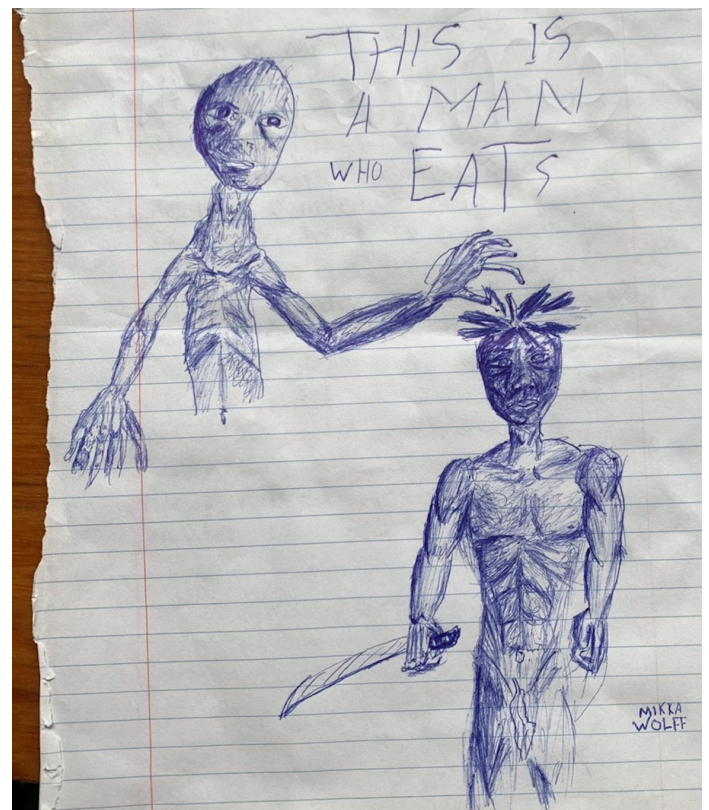
On the weekend of September 21-23, 2022 the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Atlanta Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.



All connections with others are valuable. And there are all kinds of connections; connections where you greet a neighbor every so often, say hi, take care of each other's pets. The waiter who knows your order because you go to the restaurant and order the same thing every time. Then the deeper ones, friends you see movies with or hang out with at gatherings. You "friend" each other on social media, show photos of your dogs. Then there are the soul deep connections that you feel in your gut, the people who know you, see your vulnerabilities and offer the type of comfort that seeps in and heals wounds. Where you are focused on the core self of the other. These are the ones that feed us, that add color to our world, where we are home. These are the connections you all find at SAYF and it is beautiful to watch.

Beth Myers
 FAN

Dear SAYF,
 I've been surprise-attacked with a bit of anxiety this retreat, and have spent more time than usual thinking (or often overthinking). As I've continued to come here, the excitement, joy, and creativity that I see reflected in the newer SAYFers has been combined in my own experience with a peculiar melancholy. Despite this unfortunate "emotional lens" I am seeing through, SAYF remains incredibly vibrant and



colorful. Particular moments stick at, such as

1. The interpretive dance session, a deeply moving performance
2. Playing piano with Sam and showing Elli and others some of my original songs on guitar
3. Cleaning out cabinets with an outstanding soundtrack
4. The mister crunchy or whatever it was called was a top 5 donuts of all time moment
5. An incredible philosophical discussion w/Mikka
6. The cake turned out super good this time! I still think it could've used some guac...
7. I'm glad to see Asa FAN/YAF-ing
8. Legitimately love having linguistic conversations with Nevin, even if he makes me say "butter" a bunch in a weird way.

Ok, that's about it I think. Big props to planners of this meeting, it was a good mix of activity and downtime. I love you all a ton!

Oliver Gonzuma Ping Pong Pool Wingate

I was so happy to see everyone again. To spend this time with you. I really enjoyed helping to clean and set up the house for Casa Alterna. I lost my dad almost 3 years ago. He had planned to come to the Jan 2020 retreat to translate for asylum seekers being held at the detention center outside of Atlanta. He died just before then. I miss him but felt closer to him helping with a project I know he would have supported and loved.

Thank you for coming. Thank you for your hard work and fun loving nature.

Danielle (FAN)

Hello SAYF,

I'm really glad I was able to make it, even though work interfered with the majority of Saturday. I loved the paella and hiking Arabia Mt. was fun (I might have run up most of it). I loved the music and drawing on my arm party we had that evening. I hope to see you all again soon.

Stay wonderfully SAYF,

Sage (They/She) P.S. I'm sorry if I'm not there in October :(

Jennifer and I realized on the drive back from Arabia Mountain that the last time SAYF made that trek was 5 years ago. I cannot BELIEVE I've known some of you for that long. I feel very lucky to have this community as a constant through such a transformative period of my life. I still feel so at ease with you all, and I don't take that for granted, especially given all the time we spend apart. Thank you for that.

Watching new SAYFers come in makes me happy. It feels like this space is fully revived, with all of its opening-circle skits and crazy birthday traditions and exhausted teenagers. Lots of you have several years to go here, and I'm so excited for you to watch the sunset one day with the same people you're sitting next to now. And probably some new and wonderful friends I won't get the chance to meet.

Grow up don't get tough? All will be well in the end? Pretend that airplanes in the night sky are like shooting stars? Not sure how to conclude this. I guess I don't really feel the need to give you any advice or affirmations. But I think you're all wonderful, whether I've known you since I was 13 or since Friday. Everybody deserves a community to grow with, and I hope that those of you who are here for the first time feel safe to grow with this one.

love, Sadie

Dear SAYF,

What a great weekend! Spices in a Trench Coat was a fun theme - I love the idea of the Quaker Values showing up in our retreats even when unexpected/planned! You/we really did exemplify so many of the testimonies this weekend.

Community - The way we welcomed each other and all the new (to me) young friends

Stewardship - Not stepping on the "solution pits" on Arabia Mountain.

Simplicity - Clearing the clutter to make the work of supporting and welcoming asylum seekers easier.

Peace - Watching the "sunset" or at least the post sunset with each other in a beautiful place.

Equality - Helping out with all the chores and work so that the burden didn't fall on any one person too much.

Integrity - Respecting our own needs and those of others with our sleeping arrangements and with food distribution - eating our fair share and making sure everyone got some

Love you all,
Jennifer