

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Religious Society of Friends

Monthly Meetings in:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Held at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, U.S.A.

Sixth Month 17-20, 1993

Akron, OH

Ann Arbor, MI

Athens, OH

Birmingham, MI

Bluffton, OH

Cleveland, OH

Columbus, OH

Defiance, OH

Delaware, OH

Detroit, MI

East Lansing, MI

Findlay, OH

Grand Rapids, MI

Granville, OH

Kalamazoo, MI

Kent, OH

Marietta, OH

Morgantown, WV

Mt. Pleasant, MI

Oberlin, OH

Pittsburgh, PA

Toledo, OH

Wooster, OH

To Friends Everywhere,

Friends come together at Lake Erie Yearly Meeting for fellowship and spiritual enrichment. For the past 30 years, we have kept our structures simple. It has almost seemed that our meetings for business, brief as they are, were an intrusion on our busy schedule of plenary talks, workshops, poster sessions, meals, and small group sessions. This year, our plenary speaker, Arthur Larrabee, clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, spoke directly to our condition by suggesting that we should undertake only as much business as we can do worshipfully. The more we undertake, the more time we need to allow for worshipful consideration. We have called our business meetings "meetings for worship with attention to business." We see also that they need to be meetings for business with attention to worship.

We are reminded that the purpose of any meeting for business is to come into the presence of God; decisions that emerge from the unity experienced in that presence are by-products. Art explained that the sense of the meeting is not a decision, nor is it consensus. It is a description of where the meeting is at a given time. It can be an expression that we have labored in the Spirit and have come to no resolution. In the decisions of meetings, as in the decisions of individuals, it is not always necessary to resolve all the issues before moving forward. When the meeting for business is held in a spirit of worship and love, those who are uneasy or not clear can unite in moving forward with what most friends feel is God's leading, and still be included in a carefully and tenderly worded minute.

Art used the metaphor of a dam to represent our fears, angers and resentments which block the flow of the Holy Spirit and our willingness to risk communicating with each other. We recognize the need for a free flow within our Monthly Meetings and between the Yearly Meeting and our Monthly Meetings, as well as a deeper level of sharing and naming our spiritual experiences. We experienced some openings of the sluice gates as the Spirit flowed among us, touching us and moving us. We pray that you experience this same Presence in your sessions as well as in the rest of your lives.

We are reminded again that each generation of Friends must learn for itself our Quaker history and process. We are fortunate that we have available to us the same Teacher who taught early Friends and the first Disciples.

Because our Yearly Meeting has been so enriching this year, we long to invite those Friends in our Monthly Meetings who have not attended Yearly Meeting. Likewise we hear that the Holy Spirit is at work in our Monthly Meetings, and our Yearly Meeting needs to be strengthened by the presence and gifts of those Friends.

We have been blessed with a full and joyful program for our children. The papermaking, swimming, Quaker role play and other activities have released the parents to concentrate on their program. We include with this epistle the epistles from our children and young Friends.

On behalf of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting,

Patricia Campbell, Clerk

Children's Epistle

To young friends everywhere:

The Quaker kids of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting met June 18-20 at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio.

We enjoyed the weekend because it gave us something different from what we usually do, like getting away from our parents and sleepovers in the dorm.

At the Lion and Lamb Peace Arts Center, we acted out Silly Tilly and made peace feet and hands.

We went on a nature hike where we crossed a swinging bridge over a creek and drank cold water from a hand pump, spilling it all over ourselves.

We made bread and took it to a Swiss historical house where we baked it in a brick oven and heard a lot of stories.

Papermaking was interesting and a lot of fun, thanks to our instructor, NancyLynn. The paper we take home will remind us of our good times here.

Swimming was the funnest thing we did, even though we got sunburned and bitten by mosquitoes.

Overall we had a great weekend. LEYM should be LEMM so we can get together more often.

LEYM Young Friends
Ages 6-12

Youth Epistle

To young friends everywhere:

We, the Middle and High School group of the Lake Erie Junior Yearly Meeting, recognized the need to explore further the question, "What is Quakerism?" In an endeavor to explore this question, we queried members of the Yearly Meeting and explored Quaker process through a simulated Meeting for Worship for Business. We found that Quakers are a diverse group, searching together for spiritual guidance.

LEYM Middle and High School Friends
Ages 13-18