

Dear Friends everywhere,

Seventh Month 14-18, 2010

Greetings from North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)! We gathered for our 313th session on the beautiful campus of Guilford College in Greensboro, NC where recent summer storms had greened up the campus and lowered the usually high summer temperatures for us.

In our opening meeting for worship sponsored by the Yearly Meeting of Ministers, Elders and Overseers (MEO) we heard these questions, "Have you heard the gospel? Have you lived into it?" Also a statement, "The kingdom of heaven is coming, is here now, and is forever." This opening worship centered us into a depth and gravity that continued through our time together. The MEO had the joyful opportunity to begin a discussion with our newest monthly meeting regarding a Friend's worship group seeking relationship with our yearly meeting. Also a visitor from Baltimore was sent from his worship group to listen and learn more about North Carolina Conservative Friends.

Our morning Bible study led by Mark Wutka was titled *Being Valiant for the Truth upon the Earth* and in the course of our facilitated conversations a number of scriptural verses were opened to us on the challenging theme of spiritual warfare.

We enjoyed the presence of many visitors, new and returning. Among the returning visitors were two from England and several others who were joining us for a second or third time. There were some who have returned often enough that we no longer think of them as visitors. Among our first time visitors was a young Kenyan Friend, who has just finished his first year at the Earlham School of Religion.

Our yearly meeting theme *Spirituality and the Arts* was explored through panel discussions on Fifth and Sixth day evening examining the relationship of Friends to the arts from the beginning of Friends' history to the present. A rich dialogue ensued from these panel discussions on both nights that opened us to the many positive ways the arts are capable of enriching our lives. We gained awareness as well of the negative potential of the arts as we learned a little more of earlier Friend's attitudes who considered engagement with the arts as an inappropriate use of time that could be perilous for one's spiritual life. Through our discussions we heard our peers speak of how their spiritual condition and therefore their lives in general had been affected positively by art and the way art connected them spiritually to others. We held an open air art fair on Seventh Day evening where all were welcome to bring and display their artistic endeavors.

In line with the yearly meeting theme young Friends traveled to nearby Snow Camp to see the outdoor drama *Pathway to Freedom*, which is a narrative of Carolina Quakers' work with the Underground Railroad. They later spent time with a local American Friends Service Committee representative who facilitated conversation and role play based on the current plight of illegal immigrants in this country. Other activities included a trip to a bowling alley and to a water park. They planned and executed their own artistic endeavors which were presented during the Seventh Day evening's art fair; a puppet show with a social activist theme which was a big hit. Young Friends held their own meeting for worship with a concern for business and crafted a Young Friends Epistle which we include.

We're very excited about the ongoing growth and attendance of our Young Friends program. That others are seeking to fellowship with us is also a cause of joy. In these things, in our business and in our fellowship over meals and in free time, we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit drawing us closer to each other and closer to God. In our possibility for future growth we give God the praise and glory, while remembering to have the deepest possible appreciation for those hearts, heads, and hands that labor on behalf of the Peaceable Kingdom.

In Christ's tender Love,

Richard Miller, Clerk
NCYM - Conservative