

# Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

## Religious Society of Friends

### Monthly Meetings:

Akron  
Ann Arbor  
Athens  
Birmingham  
Broadmead  
Cleveland  
Delaware  
Detroit  
Grand Rapids  
Granville  
Kalamazoo  
Kent  
Mid-Ohio Valley  
Monongalia  
North Columbus  
Oberlin  
Pine River  
Pittsburgh  
Red Cedar  
Wooster

### Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Held at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio  
Sixth Month 15-18, 2000

To Friends everywhere,

Once again we gathered at Bluffton College, a Mennonite school in Bluffton, Ohio, which welcomed us to its campus. The beauty and quiet surroundings of towering old trees and blooming fragrant lindens blessed our spirits. The campus sparkled with handmade rainbow-colored T-shirts animated by enthusiastic young people and youth staff.

Plenary speaker, Connie McPeak, from Cleveland Meeting, shared her story with humility, intimacy, and humor. She described her spiritual journey in fresh vivid ways, giving personal examples of discovery, power and blessing that held us in rapt attention. She experienced a developing profound sense of being loved by God, and, by a kind of grace, was moved to love God back. It was apparent that she had been changed by this encounter. Now, in daily practice, she seeks to express God's love towards others in her personal life, and especially in her profession of hospice nursing to the dying and their families, helping them to be open to God and to the spiritual work of this period of their lives. She assured us that this journey is available to us as well, and encouraged us to make the intentional changes in our routines to make this possible. The period of worship following her talk was intense and filled with messages responding to her ministry.

Music wound its way throughout our gathering in the singing of old favorites and less familiar hymns accompanied by piano, recorders, flute, French horn, cello and tambourine. Unscheduled moments found quartets or trios enhancing our listening to the Spirit. A welcomed Friend from Aberdeen, Scotland, Nigel Dower, contributed with his recorder.

Addressing the LEYM theme of "Seeking the Center: Listening to the Spirit and Heeding the Call," a panel of four of our own Friends shared the experiences that led them each to the particular conviction and response that has shaped their lives. Through experiences with Christian Peacemaker Teams, Friend Jim Satterwhite found his call to stand with people in situations of oppression and conflict and to witness to their struggle. He has worked at personal risk in such places as Yugoslavia, Chechnya and Hebron. Another Friend, Greg Coleridge, saw the impact on his community of poorly regulated toxic dumping and the lack of governmental interest in their plight. As he observed other flagrant environmental damage, he became convinced that his call was to explore the

### Preparative Meetings:

Indiana

### Worship Groups:

Albion  
Chelsea  
Erie  
Fremont  
Holland  
Manitou  
Rock Road

public understanding that has led to this situation. Working with the AFSC, he is addressing the environment as an issue of Quaker concern. During a prison ministry, Friend Tom Taylor was moved by the faith and vitality of peace activists in prison, and so made a long-term commitment to FWCC's work in the world. He told of how effective Friends are in their witness around the world despite small numbers. Friend Connie McPeak found that her evolving relationship with God eventually prompted her to do a serious restructuring of her life. Her witness resulted in deepening the spiritual life of her local Meeting and that of Meetings in Alaska. Hearing about these panelists' moving and courageous personal ministries was inspiring. Each of them later led a workshop related to these experiences.

Worship-sharing in small groups brought attenders from different Meetings together where we experienced authentic encounters with each other and with Truth. Early-morning Bible study further explored the themes of the conference.

Our meetings for worship with attention to business were warmed by messages from Friends in Central and Southern Africa, New England, and North Pacific Yearly Meetings, which brought us to the realization of a world-wide community of faith and practice.

We feel blessed to be a part of this community of faith.

On behalf of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting,

Janet Smith, Clerk

### **Pre-School Epistle**

On Friday, we enjoyed blowing bubbles and playing with the rocks in the circle by the river. Joyce Balderston provided plants and flowers which we planted along the walk. We made pictures of flowers and boats, played with Legos and sang songs with Sylvia Muehling.

On Saturday, the Upper Elementary class came to visit and brought us tie-dyed socks to match our T-shirts. They also played games with us on a huge plastic parachute.

Gretchen helped us make snake hand-puppets.

We thank Abanya, Sylvia Muehling, Star Mary Castro, and others who came to help us.

We talked about our word — "respect" — for each other. We enjoyed playing together.

Written for the pre-school and kindergarten class by Margaret Kanost and Mary Hutchins, our teachers.

### **Early Elementary School Epistle**

We gathered for LEYM and played games, massaged each other, tie-dyed socks and napkins, had a book, *I Am Quaker*, read to us, and had the true story of Thomas

Lurting and the pirates read to us. We decorated visors with foam fish, decorated paper tote bags, and made glitter globes (for centering ourselves). We had snacks and juice, wafer cookies, and popcorn. We decorated our name tags. We decorated small paper plates with glitter and sand glue. We walked through town and saw pretty yards. We went swimming with Gretchen. We did crafts: shrink-it earrings, beady buddies, and bead pins.

We have an advice: stop, look and listen before you cross the street, or you will get run over and you will be dead meat!

Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Jody Pratt-Harrington, Sara Turner, Brittany Crotser Crowley, Meaghan Callahan Diffenderfer, Joyce Callahan and Linda Yoder

### **Upper Elementary School Epistle**

Hannah, Christa, Psyche, Jacob, Micah, Theo, David, and Scott attended LEYM this year.

We tie-dyed napkins and socks, then we sold napkins. The profits went to charity.

We gave the toddlers socks.

We told jokes, dirty ones, too!

We went swimming at the lake. We ate bad food.

We made up an advertising jingle.

We wrote an epistle. We had a great time this year and we can't wait to come back

### **Middle School Epistle**

by Kate, Franny, Laurel, Erin D., Abbey, and Erin H., with help by Ellen Barnes and Mary Ellen Newport

Is prayer greedy? How do you hold people in the Light? These are a few of the topics we talked about in class. We all gave our opinions or ideas. We also talked about how different people worship God. We came up with some interesting things like people spinning in circles, dancing, and human sacrifice.

On Friday morning, one of the things we did was tie-dyeing. Basically what happened was we splattered everything in sight, including socks, towels, napkins, Gretchen, and ourselves with dye. We also really annoyed Gretchen with our incompetence.

On the raft, at Twin Lakes, we mostly talked, dived off, and "fed" the fish. After we got restless, we dived off the raft and tried to catch a tennis ball. That got a little boring so we sang one, two, three, four and threw people off the raft. Well, that is Friday's swimming news.

On Friday evening, we all gathered in Ramseyer Hall for games and crafts such as coiling wire to make beads and safety pin jewelry. Some of the games that we played were Ultimate Frisbee and "How's Your's?"

It is a tradition to play "Kick the Can." Remember, kids, at dusk, be at the "Kick the Can" field.

On Saturday morning, we prepared our skit for the talent show. We decided to have

the skit take place in Meeting, with kids throwing crayons at each other because they couldn't go out of Meeting.

On Saturday, we took a walk to the nature center and identified different trees. This was a bit of a problem because some trees weren't in the book. Other trees were in the book but there was no way to find them. Our group overcame these small difficulties and had a great Saturday. Oh, and we sang "The Ants Go Marching One by One" on the way home.

### **High School Epistle**

Dear Friends,

This is the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting High School Group Epistle. On Friday morning, we tie-dyed socks and napkins with Gretchen Dixon. We then went into Meeting for Worship with our families. Then we met with Erie Engel, formed an agenda, and played some introductory games. During the afternoon, we discussed violence and came up with some short skits on that topic. Next, we swam at Twin Lakes for about two and a half hours. After dinner, we enjoyed Ultimate Frisbee, "Kick the Can," and various crafts. First thing Saturday morning, we worked on our skits some more and then we attended the plenary session and the associated meeting for worship. That afternoon, we worked on our skits about violence and decided that our ideas were unworkable for the upcoming talent show. We again enjoyed swimming at Twin Lakes for the rest of the afternoon. After dinner, some members were in — and most enjoyed — a talent show in which all age groups took part. Finally, that night, we enjoyed another session of Ultimate Frisbee, "Kick the Can," and various crafts. Kate Eaton helped us with the skits and activities throughout the weekend. On Sunday morning, we took some time to write this epistle, and then we finally cleaned up and said our goodbyes to all our friends.

Peace,

Arthur Clark, Matthew E. Hogan, Claire-Helene Mershon, Alex Dixon, Bekah Sommer, Keane Parkinson, Bevin Sweet, and Adrian Barnes