



Yearly Meetinghouse, McNabb, Illinois

ILLINOIS YEARLY MEETING

of the Religious Society of Friends
(Quakers)

Consisting of 20 Quaker Meetings and Worship Groups
in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin

Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends (ILYM) met for annual sessions June 15-19. The theme for this year's session was "As Way Opens: Discerning our Path Forward in the Light." This theme provided a focus for our daily worship sharing, workshops, and evening programs.

On Wednesday, Mary Garman, visiting from Earlham College and Clear Creek Monthly Meeting of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, told the stories of four "quietly rambunctious" Quakers, past and present. She expressed the idea that "if it brings you into trouble, it will bring you out again".

Friends shared their creative gifts Thursday evening with poetry, music, and dramatic performance. Jinny Laughlin led us in two hymns that she had written for her meeting, one to accompany a poem by Winnefred Mayne. Pam Timme shared a poem about arriving at ILYM. Phyllis Reynolds read poems by herself, Phyllis Berentsen, and Mariellen Gilpin. Sondra Sula shared several poems, including one about touching Jesus' toes. Brad Laird shared three poems written by Tom Forsythe. Margaret Nelson led us in singing songs of her own composition. Finally, we were visited by Elias Hicks, as performed by Paul Buckley.

On Friday evening, we enjoyed the traditional dancing on the front lawn. We were blessed with dry weather throughout the evening, although storms seemed imminent. From the youngest to the oldest Friend, we enjoyed the chance to have fun as a community.

Our Saturday speaker was Vanessa Julye, a visiting Friend from Friends General Conference and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, who discarded her prepared remarks and spoke from a leading instead. She described her personal journey that has led to her Ministry on Racism, and challenged us to make our own meetings more welcoming to newcomers. Her parable of Mr. Elephant visiting Mr. Giraffe's house sparked much reflection and discussion.

The annual Plummer lecture was given by Dick Ashdown. The meeting was grateful to hear his spiritual journey.

The younger Friends also had a Spirit-filled weekend. During the morning, they explored discernment through singing, construction of a labyrinth, visits from a storyteller and a drummer, and other activities. They also enjoyed swimming, crafts, a hayride, and a campfire. The high school Friends' activities included a high ropes course, a workshop on clerking, and a query writing activity.

For the first year, Friends were able to sleep in the newly refurbished and refurnished Clear Creek House. We held a celebration there Friday afternoon, enjoying the space and also cake. The Environmental Concerns Committee contributed a vision for integrating the new property, although the Meeting continues to discern the ultimate use of the property.

During the business session, the Ministry and Advancement Committee presented a vision for next year and years to come. They have developed programs to improve pastoral care in the Meetings by nurturing the nurturers and increasing support between the Monthly Meetings. We are enthusiastic to see what develops from these programs as we continue to discern our way forward.

-Respectfully submitted by Eva Hare and Ted Kuhn