

2013 INTERMOUNTAIN YEARLY MEETING EPISTLE

"Simplicity and Ecojustice"

June 12 - 16, 2013, with Early Days June 9-12

Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico, USA

Dear Friends Everywhere,

283 Friends gathered for Intermountain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (IMYM) at Ghost Ranch near Abiquiu, New Mexico during the week of 6th month, 9th to 16th, 2013. We are looking forward to having the Friends General Conference Gathering in our region for the first time, starting in two weeks, and feel blessed that so many Friends attended Yearly Meeting anyway. The theme of our 39th annual sessions was "Simplicity and Ecojustice" inspired by the *Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice* that came out of the 6th World Conference of Friends held in Kenya in 2012. The Call is attached. As we gathered amongst beautiful mesas, smoke rose in the distance from behind the flat-topped Pedernal Mountain. Drought, fire and windstorms made their presence known here.

Optional, business-free Early Days continued to be popular, with more than half of our body gathering for seminars, hiking, and relaxation in this cell-phone-service-free valley. Steve Chase and Katy Locke of Putney Friends Meeting (Vermont), our invited resource persons, led seminars during the Early Days on the Transition Movement and showed environmental films. The 3rd annual early days open studios and seminars organized by the Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts committee enlightened our hearts and spirits. The arts as a form of waiting worship gave respite from structured work, from parenting, and from our hurried lives. Many of us were deeply moved by workshops led by the Indigenous Peoples Concerns Committee of Boulder Meeting, offered as an educational effort in advance of a minute to be brought next annual sessions supporting repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Steve Chase, an author, teacher, activist and traveling minister, gave our keynote address titled "From Empire to Beloved Community: The Prophetic Call towards Radical Faithfulness." He shared shocking quotes from the Doctrine of Discovery, Charles II's Charter for Pennsylvania granted to William Penn, and George Kennan's U.S. State Department memo from 1948 as examples of the language of imperialism. Steve spoke passionately to the importance of courageous faithful action, encouraging us to be honest about the ways we miss the mark on "loving God and loving what God loves"—which certainly includes all of creation. He used the example of historical Quakers who were unable to unify behind abolishing slavery for one hundred years—until they followed a "sensitive few" who understood the issue from the beginning. Steve challenged us to ask what moral issues, especially in the care of one another and our earth, might need our attention. He called us to become the "sensitive many" of our time. He asked us to recognize our privilege and give up the luxury of choosing not to know.

Steve shared a quote from Joanna Macy asking whether we will be the hospice workers to sooth our dying civilization or the midwives who birth a new one. In either case, compassionate action is in order. He also quoted Martin Luther King Jr. who told the American Psychological Association in 1967 that there are some things—like militarism and racism—to which we should always be maladjusted. Steve sees the Kabarak Call as a prophetic one, challenging us all to examine our obligation to heal the world. Instead of identifying as simply "spiritual Quakers" or "activist Quakers," he asked us all to be "faithful Quakers." (Audio of Steve's talk will be posted on <http://imym.org/2013annualgathering>.)

We cherish our IMYM youth. Several babies joined us this year, one the fourth generation of their family to have attended IMYM, and our young adults are taking on more leadership in our yearly meeting. The Senior Young Friends (SYF) hosted the second annual Listening Session, this year on ecojustice. We were invited to listen deeply and respond to queries posed by the SYF. It became clear that the young and the old must work together. We must share ideas and wisdom, do what we are each called to do, and keep each other out of despair. We have realized we need to listen to our young people.

All meetings and worship groups in our region will consider their own callings to environmental ecojustice over the next year. Steve Chase suggested we each read the Kabarak Call to ourselves out loud and as often as possible at business sessions. We share this suggestion with you in the hopes it will lead to your own quest for radical faithfulness. What are you called to in light of the Kabarak Call?

In the Light,

Intermountain Yearly Meeting of Friends

Sara Keeney, Clerk

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(The *Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice* can be found after the youth epistles on page 6 of this document.)

IMYM Senior Young Friends Epistle 2013

Dear Friends Everywhere,

The muddled haze of smoke from wildfires mingled with scouring dust storms as Friends from across the four corner states drove for the familiar solace of Ghost Ranch, New Mexico. The thrill of reunion with our distant family was mingled with an apprehensive awareness of the environmental degradation plaguing our world, made ever more acute by the smoke hovering on the horizon.

The Senior Young Friends (SYF's) find more than a connection to the wider Quaker community in Intermountain Yearly Meeting (IMYM); we find a family. The abounding support and love in the SYF community continually grows stronger, as does the concern and care for each individuals' unique needs. The long-standing tradition of participating in team building on the low ropes course remained firmly intact as did our connection to the Ghost Ranch college staff, some of whom have been with us for many years. The experiences we have in low ropes continue to solidify the SYF's trusting support of one another.

The "growing pains" of last year's gathering blossomed into a deeper mutual understanding and appreciation. While the grief of losing one of our members still lingers, we have all grown so much over the past year. Last year's long and troubled business meetings allowed for a profound unity and openness to the spirit that has expedited our business meetings and smoothed our path to the future. Every family has its conflicts and ours is no exception, but the love that lies at the very core of our community extinguishes our squabbles and soothes our lingering pain. The strength, support and solidarity of the SYF grows ever richer and ever stronger.

This year's theme of Ecojustice and Simplicity struck a chord with the SYF's as we are the newest engaged generation in this on-going issue. Our keynote speaker, Steve Chase, gave an inspiring presentation on the correlation between ecojustice and social justice and the ability of each individual to improve themselves, their community and with help, the world. He emphasized the importance of cultivating a holistic attitude about instituting change while encouraging us to build a community of love and to eradicate imperialistic tendencies. The SYF's took Steve's message not only to heart and mind, but also explored its practical applications in our lives.

Our passion for ecojustice and the adult meeting's interest in younger opinions combined to create the second annual SYF led listening session. Despite the perceived pressure on the younger generation to step forward and take charge of the environmental issue, the general message that emerged from our listening session was that all generations must cooperate in the pursuit of Environmental Justice. The movement of intergenerational unity was further established by the SYF coordinated intergenerational worship sharing. The community between each generation grew further as we came together in song and folk-dancing. A widespread conviction to grow as a community of love contributed to a growing sense of hope about the possibility of ecojustice.

Through this year's theme of ecojustice, the whole community was bound together, as last year's "growing pains" bound the SYF's together as a family.

In the Light,
The IMYM Senior Young Friends

IMYM Junior Young Friends Epistle 2013

Dear Friends Everywhere,

This year the Junior Young Friends of IMYM learned about ecojustice, teamwork, consensus building, and much more.

Ecojustice is caring for the world and its inhabitants. To demonstrate ecojustice, we made solar powered cars and ovens. With this technology we can help reduce pollution. We also learned that technology alone is not the answer.

Teamwork is the next piece of the puzzle. The low ropes were a great example of cooperation. This challenge course gave us an opportunity to experience teamwork to the next level. Through the multitude of team-building exercises presented to our group, we learned many things both about leadership and each other.

Sincerely,
The Junior Young Friends from Intermountain Yearly Meeting

IMYM Children's Yearly Meeting Epistle (Presented in Writing and Images)

What we did at the 2013 Children's Yearly Meeting to have a sense of Ecojustice and well-being with the earth.

1. Just being here, eating breakfast with crackers, butter and sausage.
2. We also enjoyed swimming.
3. We made solar ovens and baked apple crisp.
4. We went on nature hikes and played on the cliffs.

"I was thinking when we were looking out the window that I think God painted the mesas and he did a good job."

5. We fed the chickens and picked radishes.

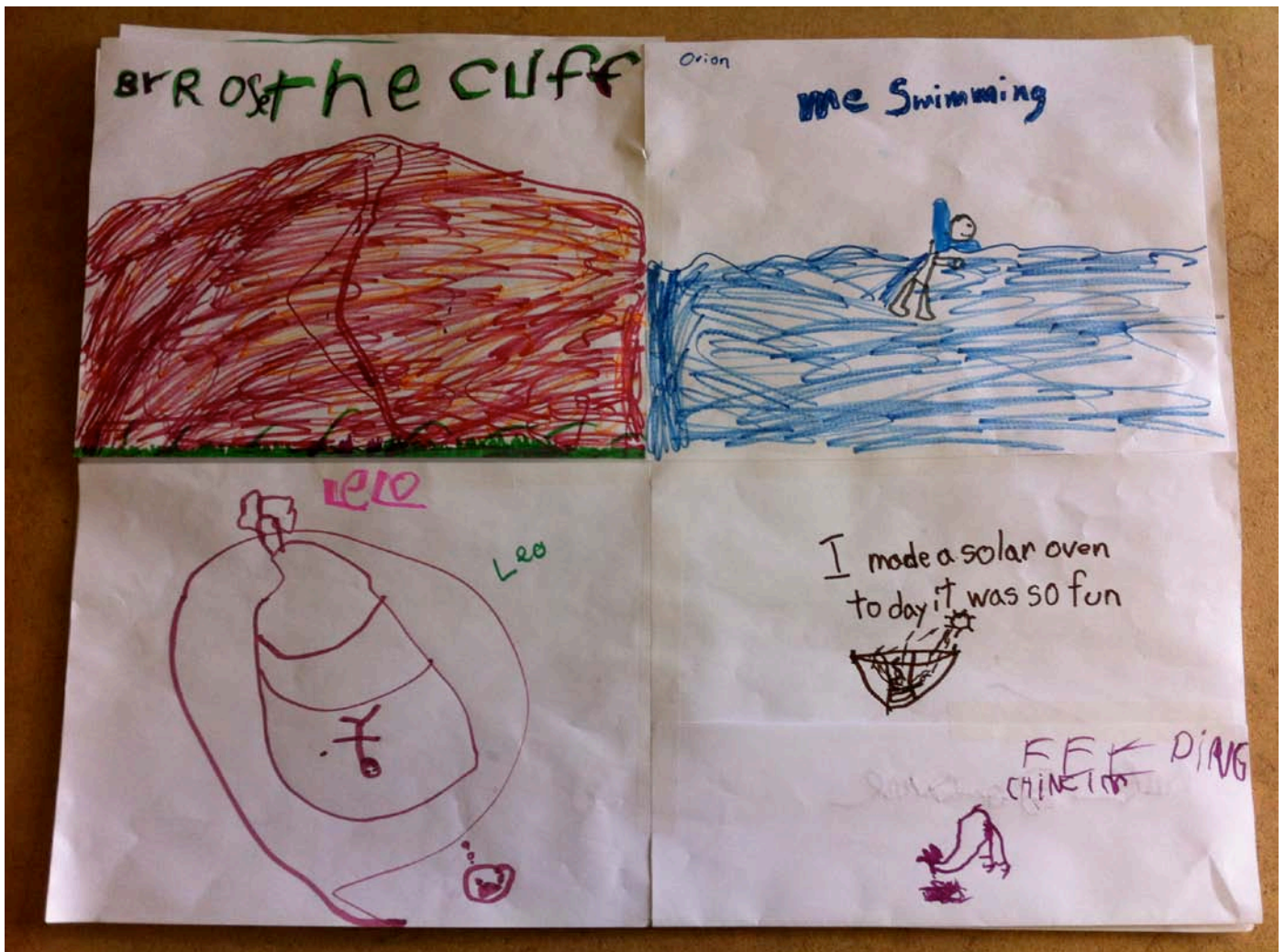
"I learned today that respecting the environment and the animals that inhabit it is very important."

6. We made bowls and balls with clay.

7. We painted with watercolors.

"I think the thing I liked the most today was painting in peace."

8. Some of us are excited to move on to Junior Young Friends next year.



I liked
 Painting 
 today



By: Jasmine Cheng

Clay ^{Gingel}




Watercolor



Breakfast




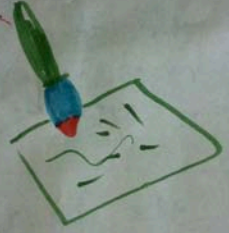
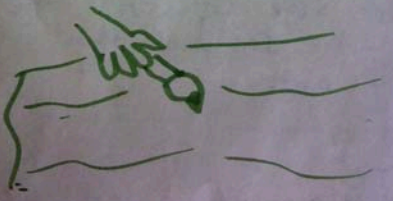
SOIPE OVEN



Darie



Maggie

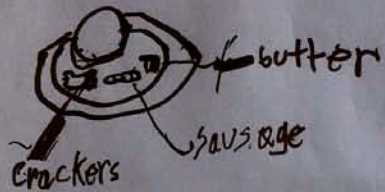




I painted today. I painted a mermaid that is water-bathing. I also made my everything owl for our flag. today is my last day as a CYM because next year I will be going into 6th grade so I will be a JYF. I will miss CYM but I will have fun a JYF. I hope God will be with me were ever I go and right now he is with me.



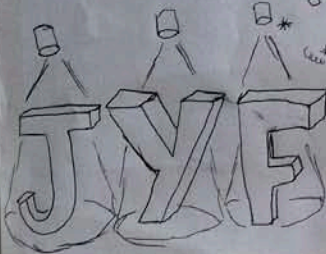


Eat breakfast

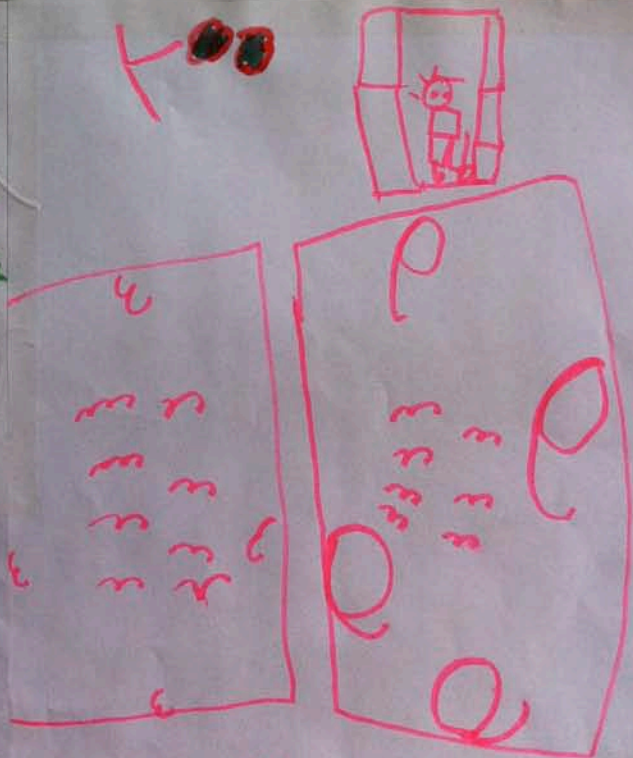


Thomas

I finished today. I painted a normal that is
water-bathing. I do made my everything cool
for our flag. today is my last day as
a CYM because next year I will be
going into 6th grade so I will be a JYE.
I will miss CYM but I will have
fun a JYE. I hope God will be with
me were ever I go and right now
he is with me.



I Kallie,
Have learned today that
respecting the environment
and the animals inhabit
it, is very important



HAPPY ♥ SWIMMING
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The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice

The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It is the culmination of the FWCC World Consultation on Global Change which was held in 2010 and 2011. It is being circulated with the Conference Epistle.

In past times God's Creation restored itself. Now humanity dominates, our growing population consuming more resources than nature can replace. We must change, we must become careful stewards of all life. Earthcare unites traditional Quaker testimonies: peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice. Jesus said, "As you have done unto the least... you have done unto me". We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples. However few our numbers, we are called to be the salt that flavours and preserves, to be a light in the darkness of greed and destruction.

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations – this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumors of war, job loss, inequality and violence. We fear our neighbors. We waste our children's heritage

All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar.

Is this how Jesus showed us to live?

- ❖ We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbor as ourselves, to aid the widow and orphan, to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, to appeal to consciences and bind the wounds.
- ❖ We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?" (Job 38:4)
- ❖ We are called to do justice to all and walk humbly with our God, to cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.
- ❖ We are called to be patterns and examples in a 21st century campaign for peace and ecojustice, as difficult and decisive as the 18th and 19th century drive to abolish slavery.

We dedicate ourselves to let the living waters flow through us – where we live, regionally, and in wider world fellowship. We dedicate ourselves to building the peace that passeth all understanding, to the repair of the world, opening our lives to the Light to guide us in each small step.

Bwana asifiwe. A pu Dios Awqui. Gracias Jesús. Jubilé. Salaam aleikum. Migwetch. Tikkun olam. Alleluia!