

Plenary for Listening
[notes, not approved minutes]

Presiding Clerk Diego Navarro introduced our plenary for listening as an opportunity to share and to hear how the Spirit is coming alive for us. What is the Spirit helping us to live into? What is trying to be brought forth in this annual session?

Two queries were presented to us:

- How have you experienced the Spirit come alive this Annual Session?
- What is the Spirit trying to help us live into?

We began with a period of worship, opened with a song. In pairs and then groups of increasing size, we responded to these queries, then gathering again as a single group to share in the large.

- The Spirit is trying to help us live “into”: not only to go deep but in the depth to work with the hard stuff. The unconscious prejudices in us older adults include a prejudice about young people, a sense that they are lesser. Look at yourself in your occasions with young people, inside and out, for evidence of this.
- Doesn’t being tender with one another include a tenderness for the long and patient work of our committees? Do we see them working with the Spirit? Can we feel this as we hear their recommendations? Why do we not show more tenderness? Can we try to do that?
- How might we mean the message “I see you?” YAF’s learning they were to host worship were reluctant at first to sit on the facing bench. Then they all said to each other “I see you, I value you, we value you, we want you to hold our worship.” We may not be perfect at what we do, but we share our good. We are good at seeing each other regardless of age. I see Spirit alive and working through you.
- We are made in the image of God. The bedrock is freedom. Yet we lose track, we forget that we are called to know what is in each other’s heart. I am interested in the unshakeable foundation; I hope we are moving in that direction.
- Are there gifts unseen? How many among us carry these and are not supported? Do we struggle with personality differences that obscure access to these? If you give first to what is inside you, it will save you. If you do not give first to what is inside you, it will destroy you.
- The courage and passion and intellect of those who have shaped this yearly meeting have moved me. We face difficult issues and differences, but there are those with the will and love to engage these. Like a parent, these guiding Friends support us in our growth.
- Silence has taught me. Being with other Friends has taught me. We help and push each other to become better, and the world needs this. Our county burned up

last year; how will we face such things together in the future? We show impatience with one another, but we have great gifts. We need these to survive, this ability to live in community.

- I have seen how to bear my own pain and the pain of others. The cup is both half empty and half full.
- Spirit is leading us into life, to vitality. The intergenerational activities and time/space to breathe created energy. Tragedy also helps bring a community together—into a deep sense of rawness in living. This, Spirit is helping us lean into.
- Different answers may also be the same answer: Spirit gives each of us the nourishment we need, in the different ways we need it.
- Spirit comes back upon us, creating the conditions for Spirit to minister. We help create the openings for Spirit to enter.

We closed with shaking of hands, and announcements.

Presiding Clerk: Diego Navarro

Recording Clerks: Jim Anderson, Leslie Zondervan-Droz