

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

Quakers in Florida, southeast Georgia & South Carolina

Yearly Gathering
27 - 31 Third Month 2024

Youth Epistle

Dear Friends,

We want to share our experiences at the SEYM yearly gathering in 2024. This year's youth and young adult program theme was "The Friends We Are Becoming."

Thursday evening, we attended the talent show and watched several acts. One of our favorites was the kazoo band! Afterward, we made smores at the campfire.

The following day, we began the morning by journaling with Kathy Hersh. She brought a tree branch she found on her walk and asked us to write or draw whatever came to mind. This activity helped us be grounded together. Following this, we began our service project in which we created bags of assorted snacks to give to homeless shelters. We decorated and filled over 90 bags! In the afternoon, we did the high ropes course. During the course, we learned to trust and support each other and work as a team.

Most importantly, we learned our personal limits and to trust in our minds and bodies. We finished the day by participating in the intergenerational dance. This was a fun experience in which we learned to work together and to have patience with one another. We also frequently got yelled at by Gary.

We began Saturday morning by doing more journaling. We followed this with some worship sharing with queries centered around our theme. A visitor from FGC named Nova George joined us during our worship sharing. They were a delight to share space with. Following worship sharing, we had a meeting with attention to business. During which we discussed activities for next year, nominations for clerk positions, and the position of youth coordinator. We are excited to give our input and ideas to the new coordinator. We hope to find someone as inclusive, welcoming, and spiritually nurturing as Kody Hersh.

Later that afternoon, we went canoeing, where many of our youth learned the difficulties of communication and teamwork. This was also a time for them to ground themselves in nature. Afterward, some of our youth took part in intergenerational singing time. We ended Saturday evening with board games.

We ended the gathering by walking through the labyrinth on Easter Sunday and having an egg hunt.

Lastly, we call on the community to support and advocate for the youth program. Your support is crucial in amplifying our voices and ensuring our continued growth and development within the community.