

Yearly Meeting Planning Committee Report to SAYMA Representatives Meeting 4/6/2024

Greetings Friends

The Yearly Meeting Planning Committee has been hard at work building and scheduling this year's Sessions and Retreat. I have been reflecting on the tasks of the last three years - designing our first virtual sessions (2021), then our first hybrid sessions (2022), then our first hybrid sessions at Berea College (2023)! This is the first year in four that we have not had any major new adjustments to make which has resulted in a sense of ease and less urgency on the committee.

Our brief survey of Friends regarding the preferred length of SAYMA Session & Retreat showed that there was not a strong preference for either a 4 or 5 day event. However a review of the data suggested that a 4-day retreat would be more accessible for Friends who work full time, especially young adult Friends. We scheduled the event for 4 days.

We settled on our theme of Becoming Breath of Spirit after several worshipful meetings. The inspiration for the theme comes from the hymn *Spirit of God**, written by Miriam Therese Winter, 1976.

Things to look forward to at this year's SAYMA Sessions and Retreat:

1. As always there will be worship and business every day with business in the mornings and worship opportunities throughout the day.
2. We look forward to our afternoons - We will have racial conflict transformation sessions that invite all of us to be part of the conversation; Thursday afternoon opportunities to visit with local Berea scholars Sharyn Mitchell, Archivist from Berea College and Dr. Shadee Malaklou, founder and director of the bell hooks center. And on Friday and Saturday a rich offering of workshops!
3. We are thrilled about the Evening events - a plenary with the Executive Director of AFSC, Joyce Ajlouny who will speak to being a Palestinian Quaker; an evening of fun brought to us by the SAYMA Faith and Practice ad hoc committee in cooperation with SAYF-Back to the Future, A Dickens-Inspired Quaker Carol; and an evening of dancing and music with talented Berea artists.
4. JYM and SAYF planners are busy at work preparing parallel programming for these groups.

The Cost of registration is going up this year to ensure we continue to cover what we expect is a larger group of children attending as well as Friends of Color and so we can offer appropriate stipends to our guest presenters. The cost for our technology team also went up this year which was expected. We hope Friends will seek financial support from their home meetings if needed and if unavailable will request a scholarship through SAYMA.

If you have questions, I welcome them at YMPC@SAYMA.org

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Dickie, Clerk SAYMA YMPC

*Spirit of God, *Miriam Therese Winter, 1976*

Spirit of God in the clear running water,
Blowing to greatness the trees on the hill,
Spirit of God in the finger of morning,
Fill the earth, bring it to birth, and
blow where you will.

Chorus: Blow, blow, blow till I be
But breath of the Spirit blowing in me. (2x)

Down in the meadow the willows are moaning,
Sheep in the pastureland cannot lie still,
Spirit of God, creation is groaning,
Fill the earth, bring it to birth, and
blow where you will.

Spirit of God, every one's heart is lonely,
Watching and waiting and hungry until,
Spirit of God, we long that you only fulfill,
The earth, bring it birth, and
blow where you will.