

7th and 8th Grades Epistle

To Friends Everywhere,

On July 20th, 2009, twenty-four 7th and 8th graders gathered at Silver Bay. All were excited to see old friends we had missed so much. We were equally excited to make new friends, and form new bonds. Many of us knew almost everyone; others we welcomed into our group for the first time.

Visitors shared their gifts throughout the week. Rubén, a Quaker from Bolivia, sang with us and taught us about Bolivian instruments, as well as about his country and its customs. Kim and Nikko came with Original Play. Wrestling on a mat with no competition was a lot of fun. Beginning with groups of four, the numbers increased until everyone was able to play on the mat at the same time. Lee and Franklin each led us in different types of interpretive theater games, giving us new ways of thinking.

“The Holy Spirit, in which we all share, makes us equal...” and other well-known words introduced this years NYYM theme of equality. From world hunger statistics to inequalities at school, we reflected upon our theme. One participant said, “Boys play baseball and girls play softball.” When asked for a definition, another said, “Equality is when everyone has choices.”

The Spirit was at work among us; wisdom came from within. We recognize that to live into our testimony of equality we are called to: “listen to the whole story,” “be leaders and not followers,” “make everyone feel welcome,” “share,” “give away cheese,” “greet both those you like and those you don’t with a smile,” “play the same games,” “pass the Frisbee to girls,” “see people as friends not members of a group,” “avoid cliques by mixing with others,” and “respect the abilities of peers to help each other.”

The Nominating Committee put forward Carolyn Beer and Jenifer Morgan Davie as assistant clerks for the coming year. We look forward to Café night, and the JYM bonfire. We leave for home more aware of ways we can promote equality for all people.