

# Intermountain Yearly Meeting News

## September 2017

Dear Friends,

I am writing to share information about the events and decisions of our annual gathering in June 2017 and to provide information about our next annual gathering in June 2018. I hope you will share this newsletter with your meetings so that Friends can be aware of the changes and opportunities coming to IMYM as well as the dates and locations of upcoming meetings. In October, I will send out more detailed information about our Annual Gathering theme and speaker as well as Fall Queries for your consideration.

One of the biggest changes will be in how we pay for our participation in the Annual Gathering. We will be experimenting with the Pay-as-Led model for 2018 where Friends pay as much as they are led to for the services of Ghost Ranch and the annual gathering. Friends will have information about the actual cost of their attendance. More information will be forthcoming.

Thank you for all you do to support Friends and the larger community of Quakers in the intermountain west.

Peace,  
Molly Wingate  
Presiding Clerk of Intermountain Yearly Meeting

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Epistles to all Friends**

### **Intermountain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**

### **June 11-18, 2017 (including early days)**

### **Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico, USA**

To Friends Everywhere,

As is always the case, we were enchanted by our surroundings at Ghost Ranch this year: canyon walls changing color throughout the day, cottonwood leaves rustling in the breeze, vultures spiraling up into clear summer skies. Yes, there were also a few gnats and no-see-ums, but they were manageable distractions. While it is true that Friends can gather and practice in any setting, it is also true that many attenders of Intermountain Yearly Meeting have developed a special fondness for this place which, among other things, evokes many memories.

Each year at IMYM we have the opportunity to integrate creative practices with our lives as Quakers. We believe that the arts at IMYM offer a relaxed and contemplative way to go inward, as well as opportunity for deepening fellowship among Quakers. This year, during early days, many Friends contributed to a huge mural. Our own "contra-band" got everyone moving at the Friday night contra dance. And on Saturday night, we were entertained by a variety of creative pursuits, including story, song, and some homespun comedy.

While the arts nurture the contemplative dimensions of our yearly meeting, business meetings reflect the outward movement of our faith. This year, we passed a minute endorsing the 2017 Border Convergence sponsored by the School of the Americas Watch as a nonviolent means of opposing the militarization of the border and the mistreatment of those who cross it. This event will take place Nov. 10-12, 2017 in Nogales, Mexico. It was also noted that two of our meetings, Mountain View Monthly Meeting in Denver and Albuquerque Monthly Meeting, are currently offering sanctuary to immigrants without documentation who are threatened with separation from their families.

Our theme this year was “About Money: A Call to Integrity, Community, and Stewardship.” In our worship sharing groups and discussions we were reminded, on a personal level, how feelings of fear, guilt, defensiveness, secrecy, resentment, denial, worry, and pain can be disabling and also that sharing these feelings can be liberating. We were also reminded that ethical considerations about money, whether regarding personal budgets or meeting finances, have powerfully spiritual roots. Many worship sharing groups considered Jesus’s words in Matthew 6:21: “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Pamela Haines, our guest speaker this year, who has been active in peace, justice and environmental work in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends and in the Friends Economic Integrity Project, brought queries that challenged us to consider our values and spiritual orientation toward money. How do our traditional testimonies—Integrity, Simplicity, Equality, Community, Peace—guide us in making money decisions, both in our personal lives and in our meetings? How can we live in a growth economy that profits from war, exploitation, and environmental destruction? Pamela shared her belief that materialism damages the soul and the fabric of society and that an economic system based on greed and unlimited growth generates even more evil than war. She asked us to consider the role of conscientious objectors? Do we object to the economy we live in? If so, on what basis? And how do we respond? She invited us to write our own statements of conscience, a challenging exercise that led to much thoughtful discussion.

Ethical considerations of money were especially prescient this year as we are preparing to adopt a pay-as-led system for our 2018 gathering. We believe that a payment system based not only on one’s resources, but also on spiritual discernment, will make our annual gathering more accessible to all Friends (as has been demonstrated by New England Yearly Meeting). Adopting the pay-as-led system for our yearly meeting will also be a way of bearing witness to the belief that “our resources are gifts from God to be held in trust and shared” (IMYM Faith & Practice).

Once again, Senior Young Friends offered us their gifts in another listening session this year. Adults listened in worshipful silence while young Friends offered their responses to a variety of queries on the theme of identity. With careful reflection and great poise, they spoke to the role of ethnicity, religious affiliation, socio-economic status, and gender in shaping identity. “Identity is about more than just gender,” said one Young Friend. “It’s about who and how you love. Love is at the root of it all.”

Later on in meeting for business, we considered the possibility of a move in the event that we outgrow Ghost Ranch. Several Friends spoke to difficulties—distance, accessibility, and heat among them—that this location poses to those who have physical challenges. Whatever the facility, one Friend said, what’s crucial is how we care for another. We were reminded again that wherever we gather, love is at the root of it all.

With Gratitude,  
Intermountain Yearly Meeting of Friends  
Molly Wingate, Clerk

\*\*\*\*\*

## Save the Dates!

- **Intermountain Yearly Meeting’s Annual Gathering, June 9-16, 2018, Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, NM. Theme: Faith into Practice -- Living a Full Quaker Life.**

- **Arrangements Committee (creates and runs the annual gathering) will meet in Boulder Meeting, Boulder, CO on January 12- 14, 2018.**
- **Representatives Committee (seasons business to be brought to the annual gathering including the budget) will meet in February 2-4, 2018 at Tempe Meeting, Tempe, AZ.**

Please note:

Our website, [IMYM.org](http://IMYM.org) is in the process of moving to a new format. As a result, the website is not fully functional. Please be patient as the Web Clerk and team work to give us a flexible and accessible site. In the meantime, if there is something you can't find, please write to Polly Washburn at [pollygwashburn@gmail.com](mailto:pollygwashburn@gmail.com).