

# Indiana YM

## Indiana Yearly Meeting Epistle 2012

Indiana Yearly Meeting held its 192nd sessions at Quaker Haven Camp, 7th Mo. 26-29, 2012. Typical Indiana summer weather made the theme of this year's meeting, "Thirsty, Come Drink of the Living Water," taken from John 7, even more meaningful. Overall, the weekend weather was beautiful, and we enjoyed periods of worship, business, eating, and discussion together.

We were blessed to have two speakers for our worship, Colin Saxton, the new General Secretary of Friends United Meeting, and Carlos Moran, the pastor of one of the Hispanic worship groups that is affiliated with Indiana Yearly Meeting. Both speakers used our theme as the basis for their messages, urging Friends to forsake "broken cisterns" that we have dug ourselves in favor of the Living Water, which is Jesus Christ.

In approving our annual statistical report, we noted that our total membership increased slightly, the first increase in annual membership that Indiana Yearly Meeting has recorded in over fifty years. Worship attendance also increased slightly and remains higher than total membership. We hope that these statistics are signs of improving health in our local meetings, as well as in the yearly meeting as a whole. We note vitality and growing edges in many of our congregations.

We were pleased to have visitors from several other groups of Friends. Their fellowship with us was enriching and encouraging, and their prayers for our Yearly Meeting were both appreciated and deeply felt.

At our Feast of Faith, an annual dinner held near the end of yearly meeting each year, we honored those in our membership who have served as foreign missionaries during their lives. We also gave certificates of recognition to Friends from many places for their work in their local meetings. This year's memorial service was especially poignant as many Friends vocally remembered the faithful lives that recently departed Friends had lived.

A significant portion of our time was devoted to learning more about the work of a task force, appointed by our Representative Council after yearly meeting sessions last year, to lead Friends of Indiana Yearly Meeting through a process of reconfiguration. This process seeks to create two yearly meetings from one, freeing Friends to choose a yearly meeting that is structured on the basis of mutual submission and centralized authority on matters of doctrine or a yearly meeting that is organized around congregational-authority and mutual fellowship. Our discussions of this topic were earnest but patient and loving, as Friends sought to make their views known in our search for God's will. It is clear that the process is one of anxiety and deep concern for us. Many are saddened by the potential of parting, while others are excited at the possibilities that might await new organizations. Final decisions in this process await local decisions and a called meeting to be held later this fall.

We do not know what God has in store for Indiana Friends, but we ask for the prayers of Friends everywhere that we would be faithful to His will as we seek our ways forward for the future.