



Friends Association for Higher Education

2018 Epistle Friends Association for Higher Education Conference

The Friends Association for Higher Education (FAHE) met at Wilmington College (Wilmington, Ohio) from June 14-17, 2018 on the theme ***“Keeping Faithful in a Time of Rapid Change.”***

Nelson Bingham, recently retired provost of Earlham College, used the goals of community and diversity to caution us against using “class” in its various manifestations to isolate persons. He implored us to value the identity and dignity of each individual to generate respect.

Hannah Lutz (Bridges of Hope), **Allen Willoughby** (Sugar Tree Ministries), and **Thomas Vaughn** (Tender Mercies) described being faithful to the homeless in communities in southwestern Ohio. They encouraged participation by colleges and their students in this service.

A panel of Quaker-college presidents challenged us to seek vitality through distinctiveness, transformative experiences, and authentic language. They encouraged us to help in socializing new faculty to Quaker practice. They also reminded us how privileged we are to participate in higher education in spite of current challenges.

Laura Rediehs offered ways to keep the candle of education lit by showing how the nurturing of the beloved community can overcome the idolatry of economic concern, technology dependence, and procedural confinement. To accomplish this, we must be both custodians and critics of culture. We should address whether our teaching and professional practice is governed by the idol of “meeting standards;” whether mocking disciplines is a defense of these idols; and whether the pursuit of academic debate becomes simply a form of conflict. We should accentuate the power of the positive for liberation from idolatry in order to live an illuminated life in a supportive community. In this way the candle of education cannot really be extinguished.

Members’ contributions explored the theme “Faithfulness in a Time of Rapid Change,” calling us to honor Friends traditions, love and care for creation, clarify our mission while under fire, and promote life-sustaining use of technologies.

We look forward to meeting in search of truth again at **Swarthmore College** and **Pendle Hill** in June, 2019.