

Epistle of Great Plains Yearly Meeting – 2012

To All Friends Everywhere:

We greet you from our 105th annual session held at Nebraska Christian School and the Friends Meetinghouse in Central City. Friends from meetings in Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and more distant places gathered together to worship and find unity of purpose. Our theme was “Walking in the Light.”

We enjoyed the grounds and buildings of Nebraska Christian School, the former site of Nebraska Central College, a Friends liberal arts college. Our evening programs were open to the public and held at the Central City Friends Meetinghouse, now home to the Merrick County Historical Society. Selma Mesner of Central City Monthly Meeting readied displays reflecting the rich history of the college and Friends in central Nebraska.

Diane Randall of the Friends Committee on National Legislation visited with us, was our keynote speaker and participated in a panel of people who shared their experiences of “Walking in the Light.” While in these times it is frustrating that much of what we perceive as Gospel Order is being obstructed by powers in our country, we encouraged one another to become active in working toward justice, equality and social responsibility for one another and in our world. We are optimistic that FCNL’s efforts will open opportunities for lawmakers to start a dialog across party lines and ideology.

There was a strong sense that those gathered want to strengthen our ties to one another, seek direction for our yearly and monthly meetings, and identify and develop leaders to ensure the continuation of GPYM. We voiced appreciation for the ministry of those who have made us mindful of the need to nurture new leaders. Friends are eager to act on this leading.

We were blessed in having good visits with Friends from afar, including those who represented Friends agencies. We are grateful for men and women who listen and attend to leadings in doing the work of Friends within the yearly meeting and the larger Society of Friends. We are also grateful for the renewal of spirit our gathering creates in us. Emotions overflowed as the Spirit grew stronger within and among us.

Our children were enriched again this year by the ministry of Shelli Kadel. They visited the Stuhr Museum in Grand Island and participated in the Grundlovfest and Pawnee Art Center in Dannebrog, learning about the Danish and Pawnee cultures. Adults and children were united in song as we sang a Zulu hymn, “Siyahamba,” “We Are Marching.”

Friends were saddened by the news that Ron Mattson left this world June 2nd, but take comfort in sharing our loss and recognizing how he enriched and guided our lives for over 40 years as an integral part of GPYM.

We believe that our searching and growth during this yearly meeting session was evidence of the Spirit’s presence. We are comforted by the knowledge that we are “Walking in the Light.”