

PYM 2007  
Young Friends Epistle

This years gathering took place at the University of Redlands, in Redlands California, and it was Hot... seriously it was really hot. The high temperatures encouraged use of the universities pool as much as possible. Something we struggled with this gathering were our small numbers. Many of those who we feel a deep connection with are not present. Less than 20 Young Friends filtered slowly in over the week. We hypothesize this may be because of jobs, lack of time, or forgetting what it is to be here together. We struggled with how to remind each other of the proclaimed joy we find while being among friends.

However, despite our small numbers we were mighty. We spent time with JYM playing Capture the flag and running Respectful Relationships, where there was a sharing of information in a safe environment, as well as participating in a meeting for healing and hanging out in the lounge. This time we spent together was meaningful and extraordinary. Our connection with JYM caused us to jump at the idea of a youth coordinator that would be a support in doing the logistical planning of gatherings throughout the year as well as PYM, and we are in full support.

A main issue that we discussed during the week were our relationship with the PYM guidelines and the actual integrity of the rules within our community.

At the annual community night there were a lot of talented young friends that participated in various skits. Our final and only meeting for worship proved to be profound as friends spoke about memories of people at past PYM's and their hopes for the future. We ended the evening with possible up and coming young friends, participating equally in an ice cream banquet that quickly exploded into a big sticky mess.

Though it's been a challenging year we managed to leave with our hearts full, our spirits lightened and the knowledge that both young friends and JYM are thriving entities.