

JHYM Retreat Staff Notes

Swimming in Cold Water

September 27-29, 2019 @ Framingham Friends Meeting

We are Marion Athearn, Buddy Baker-Smith, Steve Ball, Mary DeSilva, Maggie Nelson, Kevin Lee, and Kristin Wilson cooking. Adam Kohrman and Isabelle Kane will be with us part of Saturday, especially for the service retreats.

Joining us are 18 JH'ers. Woohoo!!

Timelines

Arrival on Friday:

I will be arriving by 3:30pm. Let me know your e.t.a.

Registration begins at 600.

Supper on Friday:

Yes, we'll share one – at 7:00.

Wrap-up on Sunday:

Sunday Morning Worship is at 10:00.

I'm hoping we'll all be on the road by 1:30 at the very latest.

Please try to stay as much of cleanup as you can so that we all get out as early as possible.

DIRECTIONS to Framingham Friends Meeting are on our website.

The address is 841 Edmands Road, Framingham, MA 01701. The phone number is: 508-877-1261.

FRAMINGHAM MEETING'S CELL PHONE COVERAGE IS VERY UNRELIABLE. PLEASE MAKE NOTE OF THEIR LAND LINE # AND USE IT IF YOU NEED TO REACH ME (AND I DON'T PICK UP MY CELL). I will check my phone frequently out in the driveway, so you can also text less urgent info to me!

The Theme: Swimming in Cold Water: Our annual Service Retreat

(From our website) Margaret Atwood wrote this great piece about how, being Canadian, she had to learn how to swim in icy, cold lakes, and that this helped her learn to plunge in and *just do it* even though it might hurt, might not be totally easy, might cause her to look ungraceful.... Working to make our world – within ourselves and all around us -- more just, peaceful, and sustainable requires courage and a willingness to jump in and maybe flail around.

Let's talk about this. Let's then go do a little service work out in the community on Saturday afternoon. Let's start to build our community.

SMALL GROUPS

Small Groups will meet three times this weekend.

Friday night small group

- Do a first round of check-ins (explaining what this is) after first ensuring everyone is clear on confidentiality, safety, acceptance, etc. I expect this may be extensive. If your group needs to simply stay with this for the entire small group, that is just fine. I trust that you will follow the Spirit and your hearts here.
- Then..... Take turns being in the *Hot Seat*. (Of course, it is always an option to pass.) Each person sits on the JHYM plush fabric in the middle of the circle for 3 minutes. (I have nifty JHYM egg timers for you!) Everyone else in the group gets to ask them questions. The person in the Hot Seat can answer or pass on any question. It is important that no one else in the group comment on their answers – they get to listen and receive them! It is fine to ask the same questions to different people – they will likely have different answers. Having a staffer go first is helpful, as is having a timekeeper to keep things

moving. For this small group please have the questions revolve around each person's relationship to Friends. Here are sample questions, but please make up your own, too!

- Do you identify as being a Quaker?
- What is most important, meaningful, or interesting to you about being a Friend, or what do you like about being with people who identify as being a Friend?
- Are there aspects of Friends that you really don't identify with? What are they?
- If you don't call yourself a Quaker, what do you feel your connection is to Friends?
- What are your biggest "disconnects" with Friends?
- Do you go to a Monthly Meeting?
- Do you feel connected or disconnected to people there?

We did this activity at the first retreat last year, and it was so meaningful that I thought we'd try it again.

- ***Close with an affirmation of everyone's participation and sharing.***

Saturday morning small group

- Start with a round of check-ins.
- I will have take out box questions that are related to the theme. The answers will be helpful for the evening's small group.

Saturday Night Small Group

- Use focused check-ins to talk about experiences in the service projects. (20-25 min max)
- Then explain that we will be making beads for each other from Sculpey clay in an intentional, meditative way. To help with that, we need to share some more about ourselves. But first, let's spend a few minutes brainstorming ways that these beads can be used (possibilities include to name gratitudes, to hold people in Light, to breathe, to recite prayers, poems, songs, or chants, to recenter, to recall that we are loved and not alone..... So many more.)
 1. Give everyone a reflection card to complete. If there's time, those who want can share aloud.
 2. Collect the cards, "shuffle" and redistribute them. Each person gets the card of someone else. This is for whom they will be making beads. (It would be fun if it was a surprise..... but not necessary.)
 3. Come to the Sculpey room quietly and find seats at the 6 tables. Ideally, there will be 1 adult and 3 JH'ers at each, with no one making beads for anyone at their table. This may not always be possible.... But it's a goal.

I will settle us into the clay meditation and will bake the beads later Saturday Night. On Sunday morning, we'll give them to each other and have different kinds of string material available.

Other aspects of the Weekend

Mosquitoes

We will take the heightened risk of EEE seriously. Here's the plan.

- We will use mosquito repellent on all children when they are outside, **unless we hear otherwise from parents who do not want us to do this.** If parents send specific repellents for their children, we'll do our best to encourage/remind them.
- We will refrain from being outside at or after dusk.
- We'll encourage children and staff to be more aware of closing doors to the outside.
- We'll extend this caution to the service projects Saturday afternoon that will be outside.

Tick Checks

The little critters are also rampant this time of year, particularly in the tall grass areas. We'll have a team of staffers positioned at the front of the meal line to do quick checks of everyone. Please be aware that we have quietly found

ways to do these checks with individual children who are uncomfortable with physical contact. If you sense that we have not picked up on this with any child, please speak with me.

Saturday Afternoon Service Projects

On Saturday afternoon we will be going out into the Framingham area to lend our hands and hearts in a variety of ways. Every year is a little different. In a rare moment of dictatorship-ness, I am assigning you to your projects. The grid of seatbelts, project requirements, personalities, and skill sets is just too complicated to give you a lot of say in the matter. (You can complain about this on your staff evaluations.) The JH'ers, of course, will get to rate their choices – we seem to always manage to give them one of their top choices.

THE PROJECTS

Diane's bittersweet

Shirley's weeding & visit

Family Promise meal prep & room preparations

Anne & Dave, plant milkweed, walk with Anne, visit

TBA

Isabelle & Steve

Marion

Buddy, Mary, & Maggie

Kevin & Adam

Gretchen

Dear Friend: A Collaborative Advice & Support Project

This idea came while I was out on a walk at sunset..... It's possible that it was irrationally vetted by the breeze, the light, and the sky..... I trust you and the JH'ers will let me know! BUT, maybe it'll work! We'll try. I'll bring big wide paper to post on the wall, and we'll start a few sentences like, "I get really nervous before doing....." and we'll encourage people to complete the sentence and then encourage others to write suggestions or affirmations.....

A little help for widening our circles

I am hoping we can begin to build an understanding of the difference between a sleepover with our best friends and being on a spiritual retreat building community. The Caring for Each Other committees might have some ideas or reminders. One idea I have is to have a tangible way to let our closest friends know that we do love them but are going to try and be more present to the whole rather than just them. I'll be bringing a bowl of lovely glass beads, and if Friends want to use them as a way of "saying" this to each other (just giving them one, with or without speaking) they can. Let's keep thinking of other ways.

TLCs

Please look in your staff notebooks when you arrive for a blue TLC sheet, asking you to keep a special eye and ear out for one JH'er over the weekend.

The JHYM Leadership Experiment

This retreat, we will have these committees to help us with Care of the Earth, Care for Each Other, Tech Use while Building Community, Free Time Support, and Munch Mates. I am nominating JH'ers to the committees this time. I've assigned various staffers to be elders of these committees and will give you specifics.

Staff Assignments

Ovate of the Sacred Oven: Kristin

Registrar: Marion

Retreat Nurse: Buddy

Name Tag Fairy Squad: Marion & Friends

Photographers: Buddy & Kevin

Convener of Games: Maggie, Buddy

Sunday Morning Man of the Hour: Buddy

Sunday Morning King of Stuff: Kevin

Keepers of the Coffee Pot: Steve & Kevin

Dear Friends Column Elder: Maggie

Declumping Elder: Steve

Committees

Caring for the Earth: Marion

Munch Mates: Mary & Steve

Caring for Each Other: Maggie & Kevin

Tech Use Support: Gretchen

Free Time Elders: Buddy