

Illinois Yearly Meeting June 2013

Greetings from the Adult Young Friends of Illinois Yearly Meeting (ILYM) to Friends everywhere,

Our epistle arises in the context of a considered minute in our Yearly Meeting's Annual Meeting for Business in "support of LGBTQ people and Marriage Equality for sexual minorities." While our Yearly Meeting has not as of this writing reached unity on this minute, we would like to offer our testimony:

Adult Young Friends (AYF) has heard with loving concern the discussion that has taken place surrounding the minute from Northside Friends Meeting. We know that we as Friends can stumble over words, and each other, in the process of discernment. Friends historically have been on the forefront of working to welcome many marginalized groups. However, we often forget the messiness of this process. AYF asks that Friends hold each other in loving kindness, keeping in mind that "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

At ILYM this group of AFYers has experienced the radical love that Quakers can give, and are aware that others in our Meetings do not feel fully welcome. We believe that at this time, love that is implicit needs to be made explicit. There may also be other times; Why do we have to be worried about a longer list of people who we love? While words can never fully express the spirit of Friends' testimonies, where they are given, we may use them. AYFers will continue to educate ourselves in order to create spaces for continuing discernment for our Meetings and the Yearly Meeting as a whole.

With love,

The Adult Young Friends of Illinois Yearly Meeting