Heya Oaks,

We're excited to connect with you this year. It's going to be an adventure for us, and the most important step to take is showing up for it. So thank you for signing up to gather with us this year, and in advance for making the trip to Radford!

**What to expect from us:**

We'll be in smaller groups this year, and our overarching goals are to create an environment where we can be present in person to make some non-zoom memories.

You can look forward to a mixture of outdoors adventures (plant identification, tree climbing, lizard-y lounging in Virginia sunshine), snacks (cool drinks and protein filled goodies), games and goofiness (there will be improv offerings, short guided meditations, and anything we feel like playing), altar building (bring cool rocks, pictures of people who are important to you, or any other small items that inspire you?), crafting projects (think: markers, yarn, glue, pipe cleaners…) and read alouds (bring a favorite shirt story?).

We, your group leaders this year, are enthusiastic, flexible, and excited to come together for some daily adventures. We'll leave space for input and ideas from participants to see where the days take us, and where the group's energies are being led! We'll do our best to meet your needs and desires as they arise.

**What we expect from you:**

Again, the most important thing you can do is to show up. We're scheming up ways to connect once we're together, but we'll be depending on each of you to bestow us with the present of your presence! Please bring yourself, in whatever mood or state you're in, with an openness to embrace the days we have with each other, to dive into play and learning.

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From Leo, your Oaks coordinator:

We’ll be sharing space at YAY Gathering from July 6-10; we’ll have time to explore ways of being and doing together. Personally, I reflect a lot on how divided we are in the US, even within our own communities. It can feel overwhelming to navigate the world, and being in community, while welcoming our differences. In light of recent events in our country, I’d like to promise to you that we will be working to make room for everyone’s thoughts and feelings in a way that feels balanced and respectful. There will be room for processing what is on our minds and in our hearts—whether that’s diving into reflective conversation and contemplation, or letting out our goofiest of jokes!

I’d like to invite you to consider bringing something from home to share with the group. Something that shares about your culture, and/or who you are and what/who is important to you right now. This could be something that reminds you of home, a recipe, a skill you have, a favorite book or piece of art. I’m thinking this could be a settling-in activity for us on the first day together.

Also, if it’s in the cards, bring along a labeled bowl, cup, and cutlery. I believe this is a small and accessible way to practice Quaker values of simplicity and stewardship/responsibility in the world.

Thanks, see you in July!
Your Oaks coordinators
Leo, Avery & Star