

Information for Monthly Meetings and Friends to consider regarding Pacific Yearly Meeting formally affiliating with Friends General Conference

**PYM - Friends General Conference Affiliation FAQs**

**What is Friends General Conference?**

Friends General Conference (FGC) is a Quaker umbrella organization originating in the unprogrammed tradition of the Religious Society of Friends serving Friends in the USA and Canada. FGC exists to increase communication among unprogrammed Friends, to bring Friends together across yearly meeting lines, to enrich the spiritual life of the Religious Society of Friends, and to provide resources and services to Friends and Friends meetings. It is not a governing body. It does not establish policy for its member meetings, or seek to speak for the Religious Society of Friends. FGC services are available to all Friends and attenders, regardless of affiliation.

**What is Pacific Yearly Meeting?**

Pacific Yearly Meeting (PYM) is one of 33 Yearly Meetings in North America, which together with the 50 other Yearly Meetings throughout the world make up the Religious Society of Friends. PYM is composed of Monthly Meetings and their affiliated worship groups from California, Nevada, Hawai'i, Mexico, and Guatemala.

**What would affiliation with Friends General Conference mean?**

Affiliation would mean that Pacific Yearly Meeting, through its up to four representatives on the FGC Central Committee, would have a voice in the development and implementation of the programs and policies of FGC. It would mean that we are a participant in the FGC process and not just a consumer of FGC services.

**What does it cost to be affiliated with Friends General Conference? What would be the financial impact?**

All affiliate groups are expected to make an annual financial contribution to FGC. There is no set amount for this, however the average contribution made by the affiliated Yearly Meetings is \$3.24 per capita.

Pacific Yearly Meeting (PYM) currently makes an annual contribution to Friends General Conference in the amount of \$500 (budget line 5264) or \$0.39 per capita.

The Yearly Meeting would be expected to cover the travel of its representatives to the meetings of the FGC Central Committee. PYM currently budgets \$1,000 (budget line 5278) for one observer to travel to the FGC Central Committee meetings.

**Why should the Yearly Meeting affiliate and not just let any Monthly Meetings affiliate if they want to?**

Three of our Monthly Meetings are members of FGC and we understand that other Meetings may be considering FGC membership. All of the Meetings in The Yearly Meeting would be better, and more efficiently represented, if the Yearly Meeting were a member. Full participation in FGC means nominating representatives to the FGC Central Committee, and service on other committees, and making a financial contribution to FGC.

**Does affiliating with Friends General Conference mean Pacific Yearly Meeting would also affiliate with, or be required to affiliate with Friends United Meeting?**

No. Friends General Conference and Friends United Meeting are completely separate organizations serving different groups within the Religious Society of Friends. Pacific Yearly Meeting is not considering affiliation with Friends United Meeting at this time. It is an umbrella body of Biblically-based Friends Meetings and Churches which usually have pastors and programmed meetings and who, unlike FGC, are in no way seeking our affiliation.

**What's the difference between Friends General Conference and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)?**

Friends General Conference is an umbrella body for so-called ‘liberal, unprogrammed’ Yearly Meetings, like Pacific Yearly Meeting, in the United States and Canada. The Friends World Committee for Consultation brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world. The purpose of the FWCC is to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends. FWCC also recognizes and offers support to individuals and groups who are outside the region of any yearly meeting

### **Why is Pacific Yearly Meeting considering formal affiliation with Friends General Conference?**

FGC is an umbrella organization that brings together unprogrammed Yearly Meetings across the USA and Canada. FGC is able to provide many resources that Yearly Meetings alone could not, including representation of Quakers at the national level. Many Friends and Monthly Meetings within Pacific Yearly Meeting use the services and resources that FGC offers [see list below]. Formal affiliation with FGC would acknowledge and affirm our ongoing corporate and individual support of the work of FGC. An increasing number of PYM Monthly Meetings are seeking to affiliate with FGC individually, which reflects the deep connection to FGC that has become widespread within PYM.

Current FGC programs and services include:

- QuakerBooks of FGC (the FGC Bookstore);
- Quaker Press of FGC, publishing materials to nourish the spiritual life of Friends and Friends Meetings;
- The Annual Gathering of Friends, held during the first week in July;
- Religious Education and spiritual enrichment materials for children and adults;
- Small conferences and workshops;
- The Friends Meetinghouse Fund;
- **www.QuakerFinder.org**, a new website offering a searchable directory of Friends meetings and worship groups in the U.S. and Canada;
- The Committee for Ministry on Racism, helping Friends overcome old prejudices and open doors to diversity;
- Committee for Nurturing Ministries works with meetings and FGC committees to support younger Friends and build authentic intergenerational ties within Quaker communities;
- Spiritual Deepening Program.

Links for more information:

Friends General Conference

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/>

[2016 Annual Report](#)

Information about FGC and affiliating with FGC

<http://www.fgcquaker.org/about/affiliating-fgc>

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/serve/about-fgc>

[Benefits of Affiliation](#)