

JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING 2015

What to expect for parents/guardians and sponsors of teens - Q&A

Please see the JYM webpage for information and updates:

<http://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/youth/jym/>

Please be sure to fill out the Parental Release and Medical forms and the Respectful Relationships consent form. They are available at the registration web site as well as the JYM web page. **Teens will not be allowed to participate in the program until these forms are received.**

If you have any questions about the program please contact the JYM Adult committee co-clerks: Sue Torrey 805-205-4931, sjtorrey@charter.net and Steve Leeds 415-665-8424, sleeds@riseup.net

There will be a *meeting for Parents/Guardians and Sponsors* with JYM on Monday afternoon (exact time and location TBD – see the PYM schedule). You can ask for the location at the registration table and receive a map of Walker Creek Ranch. See you there!

For all attendees under age 18 - *an adult sponsor or a parent/guardian must be on site at all times for each person under age 18, including day attendees. A signed medical history form and parental release form, with sponsor signature if parent/guardian will not be attending, must be submitted with registration for the teen to participate in the program.*

Why Come to JYM?

Teenagers are invited to participate in Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM). When we gather at Yearly Meeting's Annual Session, teens work together to develop community, learning to use Quaker process to live together for a week. The JYM community is based on the Quaker values of love, respect, integrity, honesty and mutual responsibility. In keeping with Friends' practices, JYM members select officers and committees as needed, hold business meetings, meetings for worship, worship sharing, and come together through fun activities and games. Many Monthly Meetings do not have enough teens to create a sense of community, so teens might not attend their local meeting regularly or at all. At JYM a much larger group of teens gathers to develop friendships, try out leadership roles, and witness the power of the Spirit. This is an opportunity for teens to practice Quaker process and claim it for themselves. By learning with their peers and struggling to reach unity, they grow as Quakers and as individuals.

Is my tween/teen ready for JYM?

The program is directed toward and run by teens 13-18. Some Friends are ready earlier than others for the opportunity to participate in a spiritual community led by their peers using Quaker process and values. For others, the rigor of sitting in business meetings is too much, and they would prefer the structure and activities of the Middle School Program. If you would like to discuss your youth's readiness for JYM, please feel free to call JYM adult committee

co-clerk Sue Torrey 805-205-4931 or Steve Leeds 415-665-8424.

How are teens supervised?

JYM is essentially a self-governing community, guided by Friends' Testimony of Community and agreements created using Friends business practice during the week. Adults provide support, guidance, and safety as needed. In addition to adult committee members, we have day and night Friendly Responsible Adult Presences (FRAPs) who will be supporting our youth in their program. Each teen will be assigned to a small Support Group led by an adult, which will meet daily. Support Groups foster adults and teens getting to know each other better and promote a feeling of belonging in the community for all. Your teen's Support Group adult will be your main contact person should you have questions or concerns about how your teen is doing.

What are the Community Agreements?

"Friends' testimonies on integrity, unity, equality, simplicity and peace come together in our testimony on community which calls us to sustain caring relationships for all... We come to know one another as we seek our collective, Spirit-led Truth – our shared sense of the common good within which we discover who we are and where we each fit in the larger scheme of things." PYM Faith and Practice 2001, pp.44-45.

We will begin the week reflecting on Friends' Testimony on Community and the values that are the foundation of our time together as we use last year's agreements regarding specifics such as quiet time. As the week progresses we may change those specific agreements based on the discernment of the community. Changes will be posted for parents/guardians and sponsors. The PYM-wide expectation that we all remain free from drugs and alcohol is enforced in JYM. In addition, the teens agree to abstain from sexual relations. Violations of these expectations will lead to a discernment process with wider PYM Ministry and Oversight Committee and/or JYM Ministry and Oversight, and a teen may be asked to leave JYM and/or PYM.

What about sleeping accommodations?

JYM will provide two supervised sleeping areas, one for boys and one for girls. Please note the "what to bring" list. Teens can also share a room or camp with a parent/guardian or sponsor, and younger teens attending JYM for the first time sometimes prefer this. This is also a good alternative for teens of any age who prefer a quieter sleep environment or who would like to go to sleep earlier. The teens will agree to lights out time as part of community agreements, and we anticipate quiet time in the sleeping spaces by at least midnight and lights out by 1am. The parent/guardian or sponsor is responsible for supervising any teen camping or sleeping in any area other than the JYM area during the night.

What is the schedule like?

The Parents/Guardians and Sponsors' Orientation meeting will be held on Monday afternoon. During the opening plenary (after dinner), an announcement will be made for JYM to leave together to begin the program. JYM officially begins after the beginning of the opening plenary

session; there will be no supervision by the JYM program until after dinner at the point when JYM is invited to leave the opening plenary to go to the JYM room. Every day there will be a teen-run business meeting regarding the day's program and plans, and any other business of JYM. Other activities will include interest groups, worship sharing, games, and a service project. We will join the wider PYM community for various intergenerational activities, including meals, games, certain plenaries and activities, and the Meeting for Memorials. The JYM schedule will be posted, however changes may occur as the JYM community makes decisions in business meeting. We will make every effort to announce and post changes as they occur.

What is “Respectful Relationships”?

Young Friends and the PYM Youth Programs Coordinator will host activities with the teens focused on respectful relationships. The majority of the time will be spent discussing how Quaker testimonies and Quaker ideals can be lived in romantic relationships. Topics that may be explored include boundary setting, self-respect, dealing with expectations from a partner, how to feel safe in a relationship, acceptance of one's own sexual orientation and gender identity, and how to communicate with parents/guardians. It will also include a presentation on Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and birth control methods. While optional, Respectful Relationships has gotten some of the highest ratings from teens on their evaluations, and we hope parents/guardians will support their teen's participation. We will continue, with the help of the PYM Youth Programs Coordinator, to present materials from the *Our Whole Lives, Sexuality and Our Faith (OWL)* curriculum that was created by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. JYM's planning committee and the Youth Programs Coordinator believe that OWL's assumptions and values of “self worth, sexual health, responsibility, and justice and inclusivity” align well with PYM Friends' beliefs.

JYM, like Our Whole Lives (OWL), affirms that parents/guardians are the primary sexuality educators of their children. Therefore, your signature is requested on a consent form in the registration materials to opt in or out of this session, and you are welcome to contact the JYM adult clerks or the YPC (Alyssa Nelson) at pym.youthcoordinator@gmail.com with any questions.

How can parents/guardians and sponsors support the teens and JYM?

1. Expect your teen to check in with you daily during PYM. Meals are a good time for check-ins.
2. Set appropriate limits to meet the needs of your teen. Younger teens often sleep in their parent/guardian/sponsor's care the first year in JYM.
3. Give your teen space to learn and grow.
4. Be available to help if needed.
5. Speak to your teen's Support Group adult or JYM adult committee members if you have a concern.
6. Talk to your teen about their experience after PYM.
7. Provide feedback to the JYM committee.
8. Help your teen get together with other teens in your area during the rest of the year.

We are excited by the great program developed by JYM for this year and look forward to seeing you and your teen at PYM Annual Session!

In the Light,

The JYM Adult Committee

Steve Leeds, Co-Clerk (San Francisco)
Sue Torrey, Co-Clerk (Central Coast)
Suzanne Doss (Orange Grove)
Erika Tarabini (Chico)
Dan Strickland (Orange Grove)
Kate Connell (Santa Barbara)
Sally Kingsland (Strawberry Creek)
Keenan Lorenzato (Davis)

JYM Leadership

Natasha Hillman-Herrera, Co-Clerk (Mexico City)
Maya Price, Co-Clerk (Berkeley Friends Church)
Jarod Rischpater, Co-Clerk (Palo Alto)
David Shaw, Clerk of M&O (Santa Monica)
Miles Pangelina, M&O (Berkeley)
Rose Nadis, M&O (Santa Barbara)
Nina Shaw, M&O (Santa Monica)