

## Ministry and Oversight Summary of Monthly Meeting Reflections on FGC Affiliation

Nineteen of our 36 monthly meetings provided a summary of their threshing on the question of PYM's affiliating with FGC. In addition, Young Adult Friends provided input.

Three monthly meetings (Davis, Grass Valley, and Sacramento) are already affiliated with FGC and two of these meetings send a representative to FGC Central Committee paid for (at least in part) from monthly meeting funds, in addition to the Pacific Yearly Meeting observer covered by yearly meeting funds. Berkeley Meeting has minuted its intention to affiliate with FGC if Pacific Yearly Meeting does not. At least one other monthly meeting has explored the possibility of independent affiliation in recent years. At least fifteen of the nineteen meetings report already using FGC resources. Affiliating with FGC was seen as acting in integrity to support our *de facto* use of these resources.

At two meetings, earlier decisions by FGC were questioned. These involved laying down particular programs or dropping financial support for FWCC Section of the Americas. At one meeting some Friends expressed concern about the "secularization" of FGC, while others spoke appreciatively of the support and services offered. At several meetings Friends noted that by affiliating with FGC, PYM could actively support FGC programs now seen as valuable and have a voice in future decisions about laying down or adding new programs. There was agreement that delegates to FGC should be well-prepared to engage fully in FGC decision-making and committee work.

Friends at one monthly meeting asked for additional information about the demographics of FGC affiliate meetings. While there was a question about affiliating with a group whose members are largely white, there was also acknowledgment that FGC approaches social issues such as racism and the full inclusion of LGBTQI people in religious life from a spiritual perspective that is consistent with PYM Faith and Practice. PYM has also benefited from FGC's Ministry on Racism.

Many Friends saw an advantage to being affiliated with a broad range of monthly meetings. Affiliation was seen as potentially helpful in making the Religious Society of Friends and PYM monthly meetings more visible. One monthly meeting suggested that it is time for PYM to let go of its historically-rooted Beanite attitude of independence and join the broader family of Friends represented by FGC. Friends expressed hope that with PYM affiliation, along with IMYM, FGC Gathering could be held on the West Coast more frequently.

Thirteen of the nineteen meetings and Young Adult Friends generally favored affiliation, although only five of those had formally minuted support for affiliation at some time. Among the remaining six meetings, most reports included comments both favorable to and opposed to affiliation. One of these six reported that they had no objection to affiliation but could not say whether PYM should affiliate and were happy to have the Yearly Meeting make that discernment.

Questions about the cost of affiliation were raised by a most meetings. What will the cost be and are the advantages of affiliation worth the cost? Three meetings expressed willingness to raise their PYM dues "by a modest amount" to support affiliation. M&O is working with Finance Committee to bring clear statement of the financial implications of FGC affiliation to annual session to assist Friends in the discernment process

### **List of Monthly Meetings Responding:**

Berkeley, Central Coast, Claremont, Davis, Grass Valley, Humboldt, Honolulu, Inland Valley, La Jolla, Live Oak, Napa, Palo Alto, Redwood Forest, Reno, Sacramento, Santa Cruz, Santa Monica, Strawberry Creek, Visalia.

Submitted by Shan Cretin, for the Ministry and Oversight Committee  
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