

# Friends General Conference (FGC) Representative Report to Annual Session 2022 Pacific Yearly Meeting

Friends General Conference (FGC) is an association of 16 affiliated yearly meetings and 12 directly affiliated monthly meetings. FGC's governing board, "*Central Committee*" is comprised of representatives from all those constituents, as well as members invited for their particular gifts or expertise. Don Kewman and Michelle Bellows have represented Pacific Yearly Meeting to FGC in 2021/2022.

As part of their service, representatives populate the administrative and program committees, which carry on FGC's work. FGC's major priorities are the annual Gathering, Ministry on Racism, Religious Education and Spiritual Deepening, Young Adult and Youth Ministries, and serving as a connector among the constituent meetings. Our work is grounded in a deep commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist faith community. It is exciting to work with other Friends from all around North America. Your Pacific YM representatives bring our own experiences and learn from the experiences of others, ultimately sharing our learnings in our monthly meetings and the yearly meeting.

The 2022 Annual Gathering ("*. . . and Follow Me.*") is primarily virtual, with an innovative in-person smaller Gathering for Young Adults and Youth. FGC labored over the arrangement decisions for this year, considering both potential health risks and financial implications. We believe that a prudent decision was made. By the time of Pacific YM's annual session, many of you will have attended the 2022 Gathering. We welcome your feedback about this key FGC program.

We are so excited that July 2-8, 2023 the Annual Gathering will be held in-person in Monmouth Oregon, ably and lovingly clerked by Jessica Bucciarelli and Kate Jaramillo. We are grateful that Pacific YM is among those welcoming this Gathering to the West Coast. The 2023 Gathering committee promises to bring us a rich experience with the theme, "*Listen, so that we may live.*"

In the coming year, FGC has decided to engage a consulting firm in a review and planning process that we hope will help us to: 1) reimagine FGC's governance, 2) attract and retain volunteers, 3) reimagine the Gathering, 4) empower staff, 5) set up effective program evaluation methods, and 6) set financial management priorities.

Together, representatives, volunteers, constituent meetings, staff, and Friends from throughout North America continue to reach toward realizing FGC's vision statement:

*We envision a vital and growing Religious Society of Friends – a faith that deepens spiritually, welcomes newcomers, builds supportive and inclusive community, and provides lasting service and witness in the world.*

*Through Friends General Conference, we see Quakers led by the Spirit joining together in ministry to offer services that help Friends, meetings, and seekers explore, deepen, connect, serve, and witness within the context of our living faith.*

You can find lots of details and resources on the FGC website: [www.fgcquaker.org](http://www.fgcquaker.org). For a quick overview of all that's going on, check out the recently published 2021 Impact Report. Find it at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/2022/04/30/fgc-impact-report-2021/>.

Or – contact one of us if you have questions!

Michelle Bellows and Don Kewman