

Pacific Yearly Meeting

Representatives to Friends General Conference

Report to Representative Committee (RepCom) 2023

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 made up of representatives from these meetings. Pacific Yearly Meeting is represented in 2022/2023 by Carl Magruder and Michelle Bellows.

Meeting representatives serve on FGC's administrative and program committees. Carl has volunteered to serve on the Christian and Interfaith Relations Committee. Michelle represents PacYM at FGC's Executive Committee, and currently serves as clerk of the committee charged with care of the Gathering, the Long Range Conference Planning Committee.

We are excited that FGC's Annual Gathering will be held on the West Coast, in Monmouth Oregon, July 2-8, 2023. This wonderful event is hosted by us – Pacific Yearly Meeting – and is ably and lovingly clerked by Jessica Bucciarelli and Kate Jaramillo, former PacYM members. The Gathering committee, which includes several PacYM members, has worked diligently over the past year to prepare a rich experience with the theme, "*Listen, so that we may live.*" **We warmly invite all who can to attend this year's Gathering.**

This year, FGC has reached some decisions regarding future Gatherings, in the light of a project called "Gathering Anew." In the summer and fall of 2022, Gathering Anew hosted multiple focus groups and "deeper dive" discussion groups, hearing from more than 250 Friends about what is important in the Gathering and how a changed Gathering can address Friends' needs for spiritual nurture into the future. Decisions reached include alternating years with in-person, all-ages Gatherings in even years and primarily virtual Gatherings (along with an in-person youth-focused event) in odd years to begin in 2025.

Executive Committee approved two "experiments" that arose from the Gathering Anew project to take place in 2023/24. One will be an **online intensive spiritual retreat** of 3-4 days with workshops, speakers, and activities. Another will be a **virtual consultation** on a topic to be determined, giving constituent meetings a focused chance to share information as we work together on a variety of issues addressing common needs among meetings. Friends are needed to populate the working groups that will carry out these experiments. Who can we recommend?

In moving toward realizing our vision statement, FGC named its major priorities as the annual Gathering, the Ministry on Racism, Religious Education and Spiritual Deepening, Young Adult and Youth Ministries, and serving as a connector among the constituent meetings. All of FGC's work is undergirded by the query, "How does this decision support FGC in its goal to transform into an actively anti-racist faith community?"

Friends and newcomers can find lots of details and resources on the FGC website: www.fgcquaker.org.

Or – contact Michelle if you have questions! michelle.l.bellows@gmail.com

Michelle Bellows and Carl Magruder



FGC Gathering 2023

Western Oregon University,
Monmouth, Oregon
July 2-8, 2023

What is the Gathering of Friends? Around 1000 Quakers on a college campus! A week of deepening relationships. A week of renewed spirituality. A week of play. A week of focused exploration. Some call it Quaker Summer Camp for all ages. Some say it's like a family reunion.

We warmly invite all Friends to come. Seasoned Friends. Brand new Friends. Not quite yet Friends. Young Friends. Older Friends. Friends coming with family. Friends coming with children and youth. Friends coming alone.

Is the Gathering all things to all Friends? No. But we strive to provide a big place where everyone can find their own place. We plan carefully so that it can be safe. We budget and fundraise to help it be manageable.

The 2023 Gathering is clerked by former Pacific Yearly Meeting members Kate Jaramillo and Jessica Bucciarelli. Friends from the west coast and throughout North America including many from Pacific Yearly Meeting, have been working for months, seeking the light together, to make this treasure available to all Friends. At least 3 of the workshops originate from our community.

If you've been to the Gathering before, plan to come. Encourage Friends in your community to join you.

If you have never been to the Gathering before, know that you are **especially welcome**. Come give it a try!

After three years of virtual Gatherings, our 2023 Gathering will feel like something new, and be a reunion at the same time.

We hope you will be a part of the Gathering this year.

In March, an Advance Program will be postal mailed to Gathering Friends and Meetings throughout North America. If you don't receive one personally, contact us – we will send one to you!

Find more information at [FGCgathering.org](https://fgcgathering.org)
Or ask me – Michelle Bellows – michelle.l.bellows@gmail.com