

# JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING 2023

Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

## What to Expect: for parents/guardians/sponsors of JYM'ers - Q&A

Please see the JYM webpage for more information and updates:

[www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/youth/jym/](http://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/youth/jym/)

**REQUIRED FORMS:** Please be sure to send in the Parental Release, Medical forms, and the Respectful Relationships consent form, in a timely manner so that we can effectively plan our program. These forms are available online via the JYM web pages or use these links below:

<https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/PY-M-PARENTAL-CONSENT-FORM-2021-general.pdf>

[https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/JY-M2015\\_Respectful\\_Relationships\\_Consent.pdf](https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/JY-M2015_Respectful_Relationships_Consent.pdf)

**Important: Minors may not participate in the program and registration is not considered complete until these forms are received.**

If you have any questions about JYM, please contact the JYM Adult Committee Co-Clerks:

Suzanne Doss (Las Vegas) zann.doss@gmail.com

Steve Leeds (San Francisco) sleeds@riseup.net

**\*There will be a *meeting for Parents/Guardians and Sponsors* with JYM Adult Committee Members and Friendly Responsible Adult Presence (FRAPS) on Friday July 21 @ 4:30 in Orchard House, the JYM room. You can ask for the location at the registration table and receive a map of Mt. Madonna Center. See you there! The JYM program doesn't start until after dinner and the welcome plenary on the first day, so you are solely responsible for your teen until then.**

**\*All attendees under age 18 - a parent/guardian or adult sponsor 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 minors to participate in the program. Note: Minors may attend without their parent/guardian if they have a Sponsor. A Sponsor is an adult (age 18+) who has been chosen and given permission by the parent or legal guardian to act as temporary guardian for the event. When minors are not in JYM or**

*Children's Program (such as at meal times), they must be under the supervision of their parent/guardian/sponsor.*

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **\*Why Come to JYM?**

Middle and high schoolers (typically ages 13/14 to 18 - see paragraph below about 13 year olds who may attend) are invited to participate in Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM). When we gather at PYM's Annual Session, JYM participants work together to develop community, learning to use Quaker process to live together for a week.

### **\*Can 13 year olds attend JYM?**

13 year olds have the choice of joining the [Children's Program](#) or JYM, which is decision made by the 13 year old and their parent. Young adults ages 18 and 19 are welcomed in JYM if they are still in high school or just exited high school. Any exceptions to this age guideline request must be received at least 2 weeks prior to JYM. The ultimate decision to accept a younger child into JYM will be made by a discernment process of a subcommittee of members of the Adult Committee and JYM co-clerks. For more information on PYM's transition guidelines, please visit:

[https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Policy\\_Transitions\\_CP\\_JYM\\_2016\\_03\\_ApprovedByJYMANDCP.pdf](https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Policy_Transitions_CP_JYM_2016_03_ApprovedByJYMANDCP.pdf)

### **\*Is my teen ready for JYM?**

The program is run by a JYM Leadership team with support from a PYM Adult Committee. The JYM Leadership team is chosen by teens at the conclusion of JYM for the following year. The teen leadership consists of co-clerks and a Ministry and Care committee.

Readiness for JYM depends on a combination of interests, maturity, and willingness to experience a new setting, make new friends, and build community. Some teens are ready earlier than others for the opportunity to participate in a spiritual community led by their peers using Quaker values and process. If you would like to discuss your youth's readiness for JYM, please contact the Adult Committee co-clerks.

Please note that there are activities at JYM that Middle Schoolers in the Children's Program attend.

### **\*How are the youth supervised?**

JYM is essentially a self-governing community, guided by Friends' Testimony of Community and agreements created using Friendly business practice during the week. Adults provide support, guidance, and safety as needed. In addition to adult committee members, we have day- and night-shift teams of Friendly Responsible Adult Presences (FRAPs) who support youth in their program and provide guidance when needed.

Each youth participant will be assigned to a small Support Group which will meet daily. Support Groups foster JYM'ers getting to know each other better and promote a feeling of belonging in the community for all. The youth and adult leadership team has a meeting each morning at breakfast to check in about how the program is going. This also facilitates transition from night-duty FRAPs to daytime-duty FRAPs

### **\*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 first evening (after the Opening Plenary) reflecting on Friends' Testimony on Community and the values that are the foundation of our time together. As the week progresses we may change those specific agreements based on the discernment of the community. Changes will be posted in where JYM meets.

The PYM-wide expectation that we all remain free from drugs and alcohol is self-enforced in JYM along with other PYM Community Expectations and host site rules. In addition, the JYM youth 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 Care, and a participant may be asked to leave JYM and/or PYM, in which case their parent/guardian/sponsor becomes entirely responsible for their care. Gatherings like JYM/PYM offer opportunities for personal growth and reflection, developing meaningful friendships, and experiencing the strength of community life. In order to make this possible, we must work together to create a safe and healthy space for all. Part of the JYM experience early on

(and throughout) will be for the participants to work together to create, agree upon, and uphold group guidelines.

We agree to/that:

- Participate in the JYM activities, including the service project, meals, and clean-up
- Turn off or put away electronics during activities that do not necessitate their use
- Communicate about and respect personal boundaries
  - Care for the physical welfare of the buildings and grounds and any sites we may visit and comply with all host site regulations and quiet times
  - Make sure that a FRAP or adult committee member knows of any situation which threatens safety or the integrity of our community's expectations
  - Fires will be made only with the consent and supervision of staff and comply with any host site rules
  - One adult and one minor may not be out of sight together except in case of emergency (unless the adult is the parent/guardian/sponsor of that minor). A Sponsor is an adult who has been chosen and given permission by the Parent or Legal Guardian to act as temporary guardian for the event. Staff and volunteers are oriented in abuse prevention and response.
- We agree to NO:
  - Sexual activity
  - Illegal or recreational drugs
  - Alcohol
  - Firearms
  - Fireworks
  - Violence or abusive behavior

### **\*What about sleeping accommodations?**

JYM participants may register to either sleep in tents outdoors with other JYM'ers and FRAP's. or teens will need to stay with their parent/guardian/sponsor. It is common and normal for some JYM'ers not to stay in the with the JYM "camp" for a variety of reasons; younger participants attending JYM for the first time sometimes prefers this. This is also a good alternative for youth of any age who prefer a quieter sleep environment or who would like to go to sleep earlier.

JYM will adhere to the site's quiet times and make agreements about bed and quiet times as part of community agreements, which we anticipate will be around midnight. The parent/guardian/sponsor is responsible for

supervising their minor JYM participant who is sleeping with them. Please note the “what to bring” list in the JYM Welcome Letter on the website. For more background on the mixed-gender sleeping arrangements, please see the JYM Report to Representative Committee, March 2017: [pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/JYM-report-to-RepCom-2017.pdf](http://pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/JYM-report-to-RepCom-2017.pdf) “JYM has come to unity to have gender-neutral sleeping arrangements at Annual Session in 2017:

*“We made this decision so that we would be more inclusive of trans-identified JYM’ers and to build the community up free from gender segregation. Teens will sleep in separate beds: no cuddle-puddle sleeping. There will be a private changing area. We understand that some teens or parents might not feel comfortable with this, so in that case teens are welcome to sleep in the same room or tent as their parents or sponsors, and we encourage them to do so with no stigma. (It is normal in JYM for some teens to sleep with parents/sponsors and some to sleep in the JYM tents, for any reasons they may have.) We ask the registrars to indicate on the registration form that JYM will be in a gender-neutral sleeping space so parents and teens can choose which sleeping option to register for.”*

**\*What is the JYM schedule like?**

The Parents/Guardians and Sponsors’ Orientation meeting will be held on the first afternoon at 4:30 in the Orchard House. **Please note** there will be no supervision by the JYM program until after dinner and the start of the opening plenary. JYM has daily youth-run business meetings regarding the day’s program and plans, along with 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 (parents/guardian/sponsors will be responsible for their teen(s) during meals), games, certain plenaries, and activities with middle-schoolers, and the Meeting for Memorials. The JYM schedule will be posted, however changes may occur as the JYM community makes decisions in business meetings. We will make every effort to announce and post changes as they occur and/or in the Daily Miracle.

**\*What is “Respectful Relationships”?**

JYM and the Respectful Relationships Subcommittee of PYM’s Ministry & Care Committee will host activities for JYM focused on respectful relationships, power and privilege, and sexuality education, exploring how

Quaker testimonies and Quaker ideals can be lived in romantic relationships. Topics 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 JYM participants on their evaluations, and we hope parents/guardians/sponsors will support their participation. We will continue to include 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. The planning committee believes that OWL's assumptions and values of "self worth, sexual health, responsibility, and justice and inclusivity" align well with PYM Friends' beliefs. Sexuality is defined in OWL as "a good part of the human experience" and "much more than sexual behavior."

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 and in the registration materials to opt in or out of this session, and you are welcome to contact the JYM adult clerks with any questions. Goals of OWL and JYM Respectful Relationships:

- To provide accurate information that young people need about sexuality. We believe that accurate information is essential, especially for young adults, and that holding back knowledge will hinder healthy sexual development.
- To provide a forum in which all questions are legitimate and appropriate.
- To provide learning about sexuality issues that goes beyond just factual information and that will be useful throughout participants' lives.
- To help participants to develop the skills necessary to make good decisions that will allow for a healthy, satisfying life.

Please note that JYM's Respectful Relationships is not a full OWL program, nor will it adhere only to OWL materials. If you are interested in the more in-depth OWL version, we encourage you to see if OWL is offered in your community, perhaps in a local UU or UCC church.

More information about OWL can be found at: ● [ucc.org/justice/sexuality-education/our-whole-lives.html](http://ucc.org/justice/sexuality-education/our-whole-lives.html) ● [uua.org/re/owl/](http://uua.org/re/owl/)

**\*How can parents/guardians/sponsors support the youth and the JYM Program?**

1. Expect your youth to check in with you daily during the Annual Session. Meals are often a good time for check-ins (and please remember, minors are to be under the care of 5 parents/guardians/sponsors during meals).
2. Set appropriate limits to meet your particular young Friend's needs. Younger JYM'ers often sleep in their parent/guardian/sponsor's care the first year in JYM.
3. Give your JYM'er space to learn and grow.
4. Be available to help if needed.
5. Speak to your JYMer's Support Group adult, a FRAP, or a JYM adult committee member if you have a concern.
6. Ask your JYM'er about their experience afterward.
7. Provide feedback to the JYM committee. Be sure to fill out the PYM evaluation form, too.
8. Help younger Friends get together 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 JYMer at PYM Annual Session!

In the Light,

**The JYM Adult Committee (2023)**

**Suzanne Doss - Co-Clerk**

**Steve Leeds - Co-Clerk**

**Natasha Herrera**

**Melissa Lovett-Adair**

**JYM Youth Leadership (2023)**

**Ash Glazier - JYM Co-Clerk**

**Linus Hartigan - JYM Co-Clerk**

**Dale Kerr**

**Nita Wright**

**Zoe Wardrip-Fruin**

**Levi Myers**

**Amaya Forrest**

**Kai Wilmer-Child**