



Young Friends General Meeting

YOUNG ADULT QUAKERS IN BRITAIN



Documents in Advance II

Hearts & Minds Prepared

Young Friends General Meeting 3 - 6 May 2019

Liverpool Quaker Meeting House, L1 3BT

Welcome

Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) is a national community of 18-30ish year olds. YFGM meet three times a year in different Quaker Meeting Houses across the UK. Each gathering provides the opportunity for people to meet likeminded people, explore spirituality, and cook and eat together. As a Quaker Meeting we use the Quaker Business Method to make decisions as a community.

YFGM can be busy weekends. It helps to come to the weekend prepared. Therefore, this document outlines the agenda for the weekend. It includes a breakdown of some of items of Quaker business, special interest groups, and evening entertainments. For more information on how to get to YFGM in Liverpool Quaker Meeting House, please refer to Documents in Advance 1.

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About the venue

The May 2019 Young Friends General Meeting Gathering, will be held at Liverpool Quaker Meeting House. Liverpool's Quaker meetinghouse is based in the center of Liverpool city center with easy access to the bus stations and train stations (see documents in advance 1 for more travel information).

The venue can hold up to 130 in the large meeting room and has a lift to all floors. If you are hard of hearing, there are portable hearing loops available, and the large and small meeting rooms are equipped with hearing loops. If you have any more questions about the venue, please contact the yfgm office on yfgm@quaker.org.uk.

Nominations required

Many members of YFGM take on voluntary roles that help facilitate our events and support our community. We use the Quaker nominations process (Faith & Practice 3.22-3.25) to appoint people to these roles.

At this YFGM, nomination committee will be looking for suggestions of names for the roles listed below:

Nominations Required:

- Overseers x3
- Outreach x2
- Planning weekend newcomers x2

Nominations Opportunities:

- Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) rep

For more information on the required roles, opportunities and the nominations processes at YFGM, please see: <http://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/docs/volunteer-roles/>

Remember that you can suggest names in advance of YFGM, by emailing your suggestions to noms.yfgm@googlemail.com - nominations committee find it super helpful when people do this!

What is happening at YFGM in Liverpool?

Agenda for the weekend

Friday	
7:00	Newcomers / Drop in
7:30 – 9:30	Introduction to YFGM, entertainments, and dinner
9:40	Epilogue
Saturday	
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	Committee check in
8:45 – 9:15	Optional Prologue
9:30 – 12:30 (this session includes a 30 min break)	Settling into our community Intro to business Intro to nominations Trans & Non –binary Inclusion next steps Roles restructure update & next steps
11:45 – 12:30	Newcomers session
12:30 – 1:45	Lunch
1:45 – 2:40	Special Interest Groups
2:45 – 3:45	Spirituality Session
4:00 – 6:30 (incl 15 min break)	Mental Health in our meeting
6:30 – 8:00	Dinner
8:00 – 9:25	Entertainments
9:30 – 10:00	Epilogue
Sunday	
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	Committee check in
9:00 – 9:45	Cleaning
10:00 – 10:15	Prep for meeting for worship
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting for Worship
11:30 – 12:15	Tea with local friends
11:45 – 12:15	Newcomers session
12:15 – 1:15	Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
1:15 – 2:30	Lunch
2.30 - 6.30	Community time
5:00 – 5:30	Newcomers session
5:30 – 6:30	Special interest groups (SIGs)
6:30 – 8:00	Dinner
8:00 – 9:00	Spirituality
9:00 – 9:30	Epilogue
9:30 -	Evening Entertainments

Monday	
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	Committee check in
9:15 – 12:15	Noms to noms Nominations returns Reports / Minutes of record Finance update and approving accounts
12:30 – 1:00	Meeting for worship (MfW)
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00	Final cleaning and departures

Business Sessions

The Quaker method of conducting Meetings for Business and arriving at decisions is quite different from that of most businesses (see Quaker Faith & Practice 3.01, 3.02 and 3.05 for more info). Below are the business items we have this weekend, but the position on the agenda is just a guide. (In trying to learn from last YFGM weekend when business sessions had a tendency to over-run, this weekend we will aim to finish each session on time, and carry over items to the next business session if required).

Trans & Non-binary Inclusion next steps

At our last YFGM weekend in February, we made a statement on our commitment to make YFGM as inclusive as possible for people whose gender identity is Trans and/or Non-Binary (<http://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/docs/trans-and-non-binary-statement/>).

We have since shared this statement on social media and in the Quaker publication the Friend, and have got some really positive responses. In our minute, we also committed to taking some other actions to make YFGM more inclusive and to help Friends in the wider Quaker community understand how they could make their meetings more inclusive. In this session we will identify how to take these actions forward as a community.

Roles restructure update & next steps

At our last YFGM we considered changes to our voluntary roles structure. We discerned that this process is urgent but it is also important we don't miss the opportunity to go as far as possible towards a restructure which will take pressure off our role holders.

In this session we will hear what progress has been made and how the whole community can be involved in taking this work forwards.

Finance update and approving Accounts

We will receive the accounts from 2017 which we need to approve as a whole community. We will also hear some other updates from our finance committee.

Reports

YFGM has many representatives to other organisations and one way to share their work is through verbal reports at our gatherings. This can also be an opportunity for YFGM participants to ask questions of our reps and learn about the work they do on our behalf. If

you are a rep and would like to give a report this weekend and have not yet been asked, please contact our YFGM Co-Clerks (Rici and Sam) at yfgmclerk@gmail.com

Special interest groups (SIGs)

As always, we will be treated to an interesting, stimulating and fun selection of Special Interest Groups led by volunteers from amongst our very own YFGM members and external speakers. This weekend, these are as follows:

Learn the Lindyhop - Chris Webster

Chris is very excited to share the joy of lindy hop dancing with young Friends. All welcome to the class, no experience required! Lindy-hop developed from African-American dances in New York City in the late 1920's. It is a form of swing dance that evolved in conjunction with jazz music, but also incorporates many other forms of dance such as tap, breakaway, charleston and jazz. Although it is a partnered dance we switch partners regularly during the class, so no need to arrive in pairs!

Veganism as Quaker Witness - Sasha Lawson-Frost and Chloe Scaling

There is an increasing trend in Quakerism, (and in YFGM in particular), to move towards considering veganism, vegetarianism, or a more plant-based lifestyle. The reasons for this are numerous. For example, more plant-based diets are more sustainable and better for the planet than diets which include animal products. There is also growing concern about the treatment of farmed animals. Vegan and vegetarian food options are also becoming increasingly mainstream, making it easier than ever before for people to eat healthy and exciting vegan/vegetarian foods. However, modifying your diet can still be really difficult. As well as practical barriers, our emotional and psychological relationships with food can be complex. What is 'healthy' diet for one person may not be healthy for another person. In this SIG we will be discussing our personal journeys to veganism, offering practical tips about reducing your consumption of animal products, and answering questions people have about whether this might be the right path for them. The SIG is open to everyone, regardless of what your diet is. There will also be cake.

Activism & Chronic Illness - Jennie Atherton and Alexandra Boliver-Brown

This SIG will focus equally on activism for those with underrepresented or misunderstood chronic illnesses, as well as a timely discussion on being an activist and a chronically ill person.

We will talk about campaigns for improved support and medical funding for chronically ill people, with #millionsmissing highlighting the issues and stigma that chronically ill people (specifically people with M.E) face every day. Also we will discuss how to navigate activism in the 21st century when you have complex symptoms that can mean traditional campaigning (for example, marching) is out of your capabilities.

Forgettable Quaker Radicals: 'Sam Hobson and the birth of Modern Quakerism - Laurence Hall

The fundamentals of British Quakerism as we know it were born out of the dramatic changes that spread through the country at the beginning of the twentieth century. Virtually all the elements of 19th century Quakerism - political liberalism, elitist diplomacy, evangelicalism and paternalism - were challenged by a new generation of Friends. The radical ideas of these Quakers laid the foundations of modern Quakerism and it could be argued that no one symbolised this radicalism more than the Quaker socialist Samuel George Hobson who throughout his life campaigned for the new social order that we as Quakers still strive for today.

Discerning our Social Action - Chris Rivers from Quaker Social Action

Quaker Social Action has been taking action against poverty for over 150. It is an independent charity, founded by Quakers. More info here:

<https://quakersocialaction.org.uk/#>

Chris Rivers, clerk of Quaker Social Action will be talking to us about some of the projects and how we can take action.

Opportunities for Quaker Service and Learning from Naomi Major

We are gathering ideas for how to offer those aged 18-35 a chance to be involved in Quaker service and learning (see Quaker Voluntary Service in the US as a starting point, and we are also hoping to have a model that works alongside full time work/other commitments).

- What do you feel led to do in terms of Quaker service?
- What are the barriers to this? (health, finance, time etc)

Help us create programmes that really speak to you! We'll also have chance to talk about Quaker service for Britain Yearly Meeting; what change would you like to see and how it can make a difference to the future of Quakers (including YFGM).

Roots of Resistance- (external speaker)

Roots of Resistance is a community of Friends building a creative, vibrant and radical Quaker response to the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair. They are aiming to make this year's protest the biggest yet with over 1000 Quakers joining in. To do this they are laying roots - building a network of 100 Quakers in Area Meetings around the country. These "organisers" will in turn attempt to find 10 more Quakers in their local area, interested in joining with Roots of Resistance as we take action against DSEI.

Transgender and Non Binary inclusion activities.

Further to the business item looking at how to take forward actions to promote Trans and Non-binary inclusion, this SIG will be a chance to discuss these actions in more detail.

Spirituality sessions

The spirituality sessions are an opportunity for us to explore our spirituality and different aspects of our Quaker beliefs and journey. At May YFGM we will be considering what

Quakers mean when they talk about “holding in the light” through discussion, reflection and worship. We hope to explore its meaning and resonance for us as individuals and as a community.

Mental Health in Our Meeting Workshop

Following the rise of concerns for Mental Health in Meetings, we will have a workshop that has been tailored to YFGMs needs. This workshop will be ran for two of our every own YFGMers who have been trained by Britain Yearly Meeting’s Mental Health in Meetings project.

The workshop will explore how YFGM can support those experiencing poor mental health and will look at ways that, as a community, we can improve support for individuals.

Community Time

Last May YFGM there was an idea of having an ‘agenda free’ YFGM at one of our weekend events. On Sunday afternoon we will be trying out what that might be like. Community time is not intended to be ‘free time’ but is more intended to be a time where we can be together as a whole community, or in smaller groups, doing whatever activities seem right at the time. These might be a continuation of one of the sessions earlier in the weekend, or throwing a frisbee in a park. Bring ideas along for what you would like to do in a bit of space at YFGM. But most of all, be mindful that this is an experiment and we’re not exactly sure what will happen!

Newcomers’ sessions

Newcomers’ sessions will be a chance for those who are new to YFGM to get to know each other and learn about what Young Friends General Meeting gatherings are all about. There will be four newcomers’ sessions over the weekend. These will involve playing games, being creative, learning about the Quaker process, and eating some snacks! These sessions are ran by the Outreach YFGM committee.

Evening entertainments

This will be a chance to sit back and relax with the rest of the community. The evening entertainments is sometimes referred to as ‘ents’ (short for entertiments). These sessions are deigned just for fun.

These timetabled slots will be programmed, with the activities organised by the Overseers. A variety of ents have happened in the past, including ceilidhs, open mics and party games. These are often a great place to get to know new people and unwind!

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to call the YFGM coordinator on 020 7663 1050 or email on yfgm@quaker.org.uk