

Documents in Advance Part I

Information & Practicalities



This information & practicalities document provides information about the YFGM's gathering, which will be held:

on:	20th - 22nd February
at:	Friargate Meeting House, York

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Expenses

YFGM covers the costs of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in attending YFGM for role-holders and for newcomers. There is also an access fund for those who need to sleep off-site. You can find further information on this here:

<https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/claim-expenses/>

If you have any questions about the access fund, please contact pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk. If you have any other expenses questions, please contact finance@youngfriends.org.uk.

Before YFGM:

Join the YFGM Discord server to chat to other YFGMers and ask any questions:

<https://discord.com/invite/UNjHwQh8CQ>

If you have access needs or practical concerns please email pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk; for questions about the agenda or business, get in touch with clerks@youngfriends.org.uk.

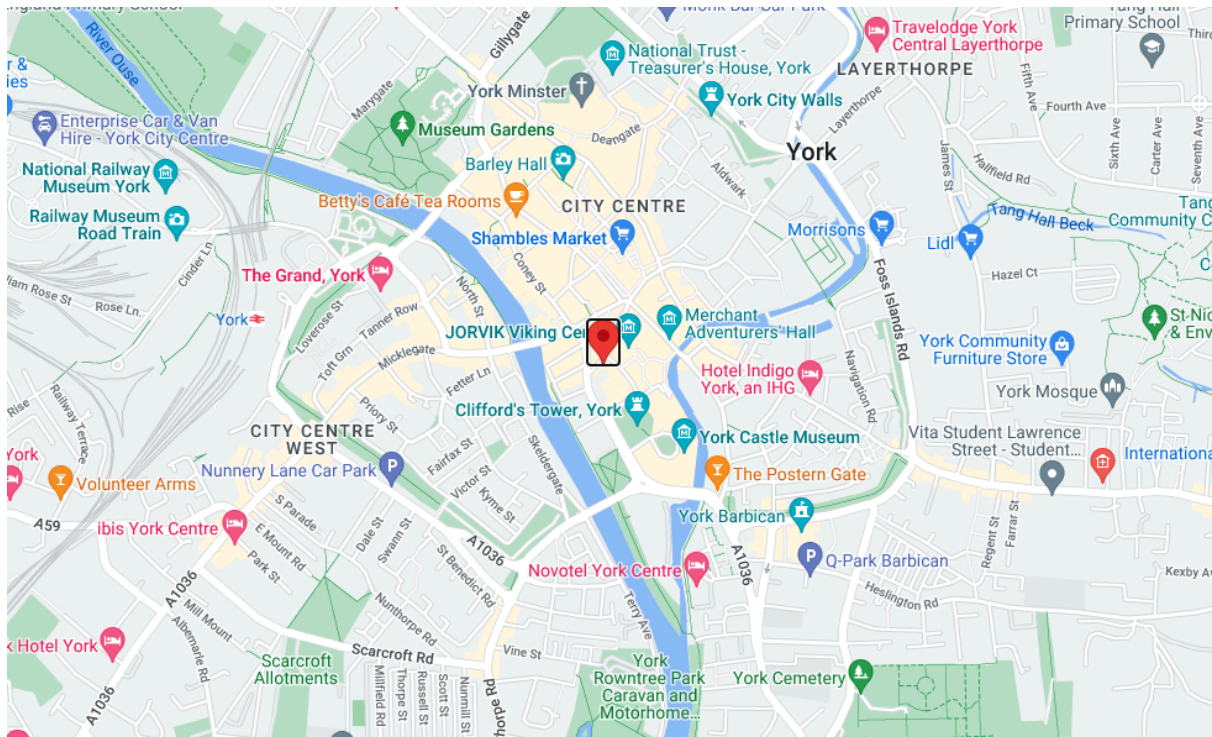
We will be having a short online meeting in the week prior to the event to worship together and hear various reports as prepared ministry from members of our community. More information on this will be circulated soon, and all reports will be available in written form at YFGM itself, where we will formally minute receipt of them.

The Meeting House

YFGM is being held at Friargate Quaker Meeting House. The address is: Friargate, York, YO1 9RL.

The nearest train station is York, 0.8 miles from the Meeting House (approximately a 19 minute walk). The nearest bus station, Low Ousegate, is 150m away (approximately a two minute walk).

If travelling by car the nearest car park is Castle car park, approximately 150m away



Arrivals

On Friday, arrivals start at 5:30 pm and we begin with Opening Worship at 6:00pm. If possible, please arrive in time for the opening session at 6:30pm, which will include an introduction to YFGM and essential notices.

Some YFGMers will be at the Meeting House earlier than 5:30pm, helping to set up, if you are able to arrive earlier (no earlier than 5pm) and can help with cooking on Friday please email logistics@youngfriends.org.uk we will be grateful for this assistance.

Newcomers

If it's your first time at YFGM (or you haven't been in a while, or you simply feel new), please do join our Discord server for YFGM <https://discord.gg/JqbuB7uEcW>. Within this, you can ask any questions in the 'info for newcomers' channel, as well as talk to members of our Pastoral committee. If you would like to speak to Pastoral privately, you can email pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk

During the weekend, there will be specific newcomers' sessions, led by Pastoral. These are optional sessions that you can come along to, to help get to know each other and ask questions.

Accessibility

Making our events as accessible as possible is a priority for us. If you have any access needs that you feel YFGM needs to be aware of, or any queries about accessibility, please mention it in your registration or email pastoral@youngfriends.org.uk.

At Friargate Meeting House there is lift access to all floors, with accessible toilets on the ground floor. A hearing loop is installed in the main meeting room.

What do I need to bring?

A weekend's worth of clothes, toiletries, medication, and any other personal items you need. If sleeping in the Meeting House a sleeping bag and pillow, plus we recommend a mat or air mattress for comfort.

You don't need to bring any food or drink with you, as we'll cook and eat together; however, if you do bring additional snacks, please be mindful of common allergies and avoid bringing nuts (or shellfish!).

During YFGM:

Sleeping Arrangements

There will be a number of separate sleeping areas designated during the weekend. Each room will have a set "lights out" time - at least one each of 11pm, midnight, and late (no specific time).

For those who require off-site accommodation (i.e. a bed), there are plenty of hotels in York including a nearby [Travelodge](#). We also have a [channel in the Discord server](#) for Friends to discuss off-site accommodation options.

Safeguarding Information

We are committed to keeping everyone safe at YFGM. We have a designated safeguarding lead and deputy lead to ensure that this happens. They will make themselves known to you during the welcome session, and we would encourage you to speak to them if you have any concerns during the weekend.

If you are unsure if your concern falls under safeguarding, but you are still worried about something, please speak to any member of the Pastoral committee, and they will be able to help.

Sometimes, we have young children coming to YFGM with their parents. We would ask that you refrain from taking photographs of any children, and that you check in the background of any photographs you are taking, if there is a child present. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please speak to the safeguarding lead, or email safeguarding@yfgm.org.uk.

Bag rooms

During the day, a room will be designated as a 'bag room'. Please make sure that you put your bags (and sleeping bags, shoes, air mattresses etc.) away in this room during the daytime, to keep other rooms tidy and accessible.

Cooking, cleaning & sharing a space

For the duration of a weekend, we form a short-lived intentional community; we share a living space. As part of keeping that space usable we ask that everyone contribute to the best of their ability with the cooking, washing up and cleaning.

This YFGM kitchen tasks will be done on a sign up basis similar to the door duty rota (see below). We've made this change so that you can take into account your preferences and availability in choosing your tasks.

We also take turns minding the door to the meeting house, to make sure that new arrivals are welcomed, curious passers-by are greeted and that the fire register is kept.

When you arrive you will be given stickers for the door rota and community tasks, please write your name on them and use them to sign up for one or two door sessions so that the work is fairly shared out. Be sure to look through the timetable before the event to see if there is anything you do not want to miss - or when you might feel that a bit of time on the door would be nice!

Cooking, washing up and cleaning are done on the same basis. We are not assigning tasks but asking that everyone take on two slots of kitchen tasks and one meeting house cleaning task.

Please look out for other opportunities to help out. If furniture needs rearranging, water jugs need refilling, something needs cleaning, or if the washing up is taking longer than expected, etc, then please lend a hand - it will make everybody's YFGM more pleasant.

All YFGMers are responsible for the community- this means doing our best to include others who may feel left out, and taking the opportunity to meet new people.

Eating together

The meals at YFGM will be vegetarian or vegan, with vegan options available. Please let us know about allergies or intolerances when you register, so that we can make sure suitable options are provided when putting together the menu. We'll aim to include the planned menu in Docs in Advance Part II, but these may be subject to change at short notice.

Nominations

As a Quaker organisation, YFGM uses the Quaker nominations process to find people to fill volunteer roles within the Meeting. Nominations are a key part of Quaker process, and while much of it takes place behind closed doors, it is central to the life of any Meeting.

We ask our whole community to make suggestions for people they think might fill particular roles. This is very valuable, since we are a large enough community that a small group can't possibly know everyone well.

YFGM nominations committee will approach people who have been suggested during or in the run up to the next YFGM event to find out if they are willing and able to be in the role or roles their name has been suggested for. They will discern, using the Quaker business method, who is right for a given role at a given time, and bring that forward to the Meeting for appointment. You are very welcome to suggest your own name.

Almost every role within YFGM is appointed following a nomination by the Nominations Committee - the big exception is the Nominations Committee itself. While the key work of discernment is done by the Nominations Committee, the whole Meeting is responsible for nominations and needs to support the committee by upholding them, by making suggestions, and by considering approaches with a frank and open mind.

This YFGM gathering we will be nominating roles including:

- **Planning Weekend Newcomer:** Someone who hasn't previously attended a YFGM planning weekend, who attends, feeds in, and provides a report to YFGM on their experience.
- **Pastoral Committee:** Be on hand to run newcomers' sessions and social spaces, support YFGMers to access YFGM and support the wellbeing of all YFGMers (as a committee of 5-6 people).
- **Elders Committee:** Our elders care for the spiritual health of YFGM; facilitate worship, meeting for worship for business, and spirituality sessions; and facilitate threshing sessions at planning weekend (as a committee of 5-6 people)
- **Nominations Committee:** Meets during YFGM weekends to discern on the names for appointments to all the other roles and committees. Between YFGMs, Nominations keeps track of who's on which committees, and makes sure role descriptions and the like are all up to date (as a committee of 7 people)

- **Finance Trustee:** Our finance trustee leads on managing our finances, including preparing a budget and similar work, alongside our Treasurer and other Trustees.
- **Fundraiser:** Apply for grants on YFGM's behalf, maintain relationships with our funders, create a strategy for YFGM fundraising (part of the finance committee).
- **Trustee:** Ensure there is good governance of YFGM, communicate with the charity commission, create policies for YFGM (as a committee of 5 people).

Please go to the YFGM website <https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/> for details on roles and the nominations process, and to submit your nominations. At YFGM, please find a Friend on the Nominations Committee or use the submissions box that will be advertised.

YFGM TIMETABLE:

Friday

17:30 - 18:30	Arrivals
18:00 - 18:30	Opening Worship
18:30 - 19:15	Introduction & welcome session
	Getting to know each other / 'Speed Friending'
19:15 - 20:30	Evening mealtime, including:
20:00 - 20:30	<i>Newcomers' welcome session</i>
20:30 - 21:15	Special Interest Groups
21:15 - 21:30	Break
21:30 - 22:00	Epilogue (evening worship)

Saturday

08:15 - 09:15	<i>Breakfast</i>
09:15 - 09:45	Opening Worship
09:45 - 10:00	Break
10:00 - 11:45	Meeting for Worship for Business, including:
	<i>Introduction to Quaker Business Method</i>
	<i>Changing our Name</i>
	Shuffle Break
	<i>May Strategy Weekend</i>
11:45 - 12:00	Break
12:00 - 13:00	Special Interest Groups

13:00 - 14:15	Lunch, including:
13:45 - 14:15	<i>Newcomers' Social</i>
14:15 - 15:30	Session: Taking forward our Concern
15:30 - 16:30	Community Time
16:30 - 17:15	Meeting for Worship for Business, including:
	<i>Receiving a minute from Trustees on provision of Admin Support</i>
17:15 - 17:30	Break
17:30 - 18:30	Spirituality Session: Is Too Much Business Bad?
18:30 - 18:45	<i>Big Notices!</i>
18:45 - 20:00	Evening Mealtime
20:00 - 21:30	Entertainments
21:30 - 21:45	<i>Break</i>
21:45 - 22:15	Epilogue
22:00 -	Unscheduled social time
00:00	Meeting House doors locked

Sunday

08:00 - 09:00	<i>Breakfast</i>
09:00 - 10:00	Cleaning the meeting house
10:00 - 10:30	Preparation for Meeting for Worship
10:30 - 11:30	Meeting for Worship (with local Friends)
11:30 - 12:00	Notices & chat with local friends / <i>Break</i>
12:00 - 13:15	Meeting for Worship for Business, including:
	<i>Nominations Returns</i>

	<i>Reports: Planning Weekend Newcomers, Meeting for Sufferings, Finance, Trustees, Switchboard</i>
13:15 - 14:15	Lunch
14:15 - 15:00	Meeting for Worship for Business, including:
	<i>Nominations to Nominations Committee</i>
15:00 - 15:30	Final Clean of the Meeting House
15:30 - 16:00	Closing Worship
16:00	Departures

Explanation of Sessions

This gives general information about types of sessions run during the weekend. Details for specific sessions / items this YFGM will be available in documents in advance part II.

Meeting for Worship

Meeting for Worship is when we come together as Friends to sit in stillness. In the quiet we look for a sense of connection; this might be a connection with those around us, with our deepest selves, or perhaps with God. Sometimes we may feel called to speak to our experiences in Meeting, and this is called 'ministry'. The Meeting usually lasts about an hour and ends when Friends shake hands or provide another signal. This YFGM we will be worshipping on Sunday with the local Meeting for Worship.

Epilogue

Epilogue is a period of Quaker worship at the end of each day. It is a form of Meeting for Worship, and usually quite reflective. There will sometimes be a reading by the Elders or some prompt or activity as a focus. We tend to encourage sitting on the floor / lying down / cushions and blankets to make epilogue a cosy experience.

Meeting for Worship for Business

YFGM, like other Quaker groups, makes decisions in Meetings for Worship for Business. As the name suggests, these are Meetings for Worship with the specific task of considering a question (or more likely several questions in turn) put before it. Rather than a debate or a discussion, we listen for leadings of the Spirit and contribute in ministry in order to discern an answer. We all hold a collective responsibility for the discernment that happens in these sessions and the decisions that result, whether or not we attend them (but we really encourage you to!). In our business meetings we might be looking at how our community functions - appointing people to roles within YFGM, changing what those roles are, agreeing to put money or energy towards new activities - or at wider things, such as our response to world events. Details of the specific items for this YFGM will be available in documents in advance part 2. You can read about the business process we use on the YFGM website at youngfriends.org.uk/about/explainers/quaker-business-method, which includes some YFGM-specific practicalities so we encourage you to look at this even if you've had experience with other Meetings. We also ask that you attend our first business session on **Saturday at 10.30**, in which Elders will introduce how the Quaker business method works at YFGM. We will aim to start each business session on time with 5 minutes of worship, followed by an opportunity to come in before the item starts. We won't let people enter the Meeting during a business item, however there will be a brief moment between items for people to come in.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups (known as SIGs) are smaller sessions based around specific interests or topics. These might be discussions on a particular topic, craft activities, walks, or anything else - previous YFGMs have included tasting a selection of tea varieties, discussions about membership, learning about Moravian side wound theology, and getting in the sea. Any member of YFGM is free to contribute a session, and we will usually have several running in parallel - hopefully quite a variety! Please speak to the Logistics Committee ahead of or during YFGM (before the SIG slots) if you would like to run one.

Entertainments (Ents)

Entertainments (known as Ents) is a block of time dedicated to socialising with the YFGM community through structured activities.

Big Notices!

A YFGM tradition is Big Notices around the last evening meal. Have you been doing something exciting that you want to tell people about, or have an opportunity for people to get involved with?

Maybe you've published a book, had a baby, produced a play, or maybe you want to find other people interested in running a campaign in your area; any of these and more could be a Big Notice.

If you have a Big Notice to share with everyone, get in touch with the Clerks before the Saturday evening meal or email clerks@youngfriends.org.uk to let them know. You can also put Big Notices in the relevant channel on Discord.