

General Meeting of Young Friends in Britain

Spiritual Review Gathering



Documents in Advance Part 1: Information & Practicalities

22nd-25th May
Redland Friends Meeting House, Bristol

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Introduction (pls read!)

At this time, we are called to hold a spiritual review in place of a typical YFB gathering in May. To pause, breathe, look up from the frantic mess of running an event and ask: Where are we going? What does the spirit call us to be? What dreams do we have for what YFB could be? How does this community look more like heaven five years from now?

The agenda has been simplified, and we won't be having our usual sessions, but it will be held lightly. We will continually ask "how or where are we led now?", and attend to the guidance and movement of the spirit. The structure will centre on four core themes, which are each explored across multiple worship-based and creative sessions throughout the weekend:

1. Who are we? What is our nature?
2. Who are we between gatherings?
3. How can our structures enable bold and vulnerable service?
4. How do we financially support this?

The only scheduled Meetings for Worship for Business will be to receive the accounts and any necessary nominations. There will be no scheduled Entertainments sessions or Special Interest Groups, though we suggest you bring boardgames/crafts/other activities for community time!

There is no limit on numbers this time around. If a lot of people register to attend, this may be challenging. If we get more registrants than we can safely house and feed, we will request that those who can afford it eat and/or sleep off-site. If this looks likely (i.e. we get over 90 registrants!), we will announce it via email and Discord.

We are aiming to reduce the responsibility and workload of our roleholders this weekend, so that they can engage with the discernment as fully as possible. Please uphold them in this and be aware that you may need to participate in the day-to-day running of the event more than you are used to and pay extra attention to looking after one another's wellbeing.

As this is an inward-looking gathering, those who have never attended YFB before are discouraged (but not prohibited) from attending. Those who feel new are very welcome, and those who have not attended in a long time are especially welcome.

This Documents in Advance includes a deposit of YFB's living questions and proposals, to help frame the discussion. You can contribute here: (<https://forms.gle/MpA6jSwZGNPFVRvS6>). At the weekend, there will be a station set up with post-its and pens for reflections and ideas that come up.

Spiritual Review Specific Information

Timetable

Friday

18:00 - 18:30	Arrivals
18:30 - 19:00	Opening Worship
19:00 - 20:00	Evening mealtime
20:00 - 20:30	Clear up/Break
20:30 - 21:15	<i>What is the Spiritual Review?</i>
21:15 - 21:30	Break
21:30 - 22:00	Epilogue (evening worship)

Saturday

08:30 - 09:30	Breakfast
09:30 - 10:00	Opening Worship
10:00 - 10:15	Break
10:15 - 11:00	<i>Who are we? (A)</i>
11:00 - 11:15	Break
11:15 - 12:15	<i>Who are we (B)</i>
12:15 - 13:15	Lunch
13:15 - 13:45	Clear up/break
13:45 - 14:30	<i>Who are we (C)</i>
14:30 - 14:45	Break
14:45 - 15:30	Meeting for Worship for Business, including:
	<i>Accounts for 2025</i>
	<i>Introduction to financial proposals</i>
15:30 - 16:00	Break

16:00 - 17:00	<i>Between Gatherings (A)</i>
17:00 - 18:00	Break
18:00 - 18:45	<i>Between Gatherings (B)</i>
18:45 - 19:00	Break
19:00 - 20:00	Evening Mealtime
20:00 - 20:30	Clear up/Break
20:30 - 21:30	Community Time
21:30 - 22:00	Epilogue
22:00 -	Unscheduled social time
00:00	Meeting House doors locked

Sunday

08:30 - 09:30	Breakfast
09:30 - 10:30	Cleaning the meeting house
10:30 - 11:00	Go for a walk!
11:00 - 12:00	Meeting for Worship (with local Friends)
12:00 - 12:30	Notices & chat with local friends
12:30 - 13:30	Lunchtime
13:30 - 14:00	Clear Up/Break
14:00 - 15:30	<i>Structures</i>
15:30 - 16:00	Break
16:00 - 17:00	<i>Money (A)</i>
17:00 - 17:15	Break
17:15 - 18:00	<i>Money (B)</i>
18:00 - 19:00	Community Time
19:00 - 20:00	Evening meal, including:
	<i>Big Notices!</i>

20:00 - 20:30	Clear up/Break
20:30 - 21:15	<i>Meeting for Worship for Business, including:</i>
	<i>Noms Returns</i>
21:15 - 21:30	Break
21:30 - 22:00	Epilogue
22:00 -	Unscheduled social time
00:00	Meeting House doors locked

Monday

08:30 - 09:30	Breakfast
09:30 - 10:15	Opening Worship
10:15 - 10:30	<i>Break</i>
10:30 - 11:45	<i>Decisions</i>
11:45 - 12:00	Break
12:00 - 12:30	Final Clean
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 14:30	Final Clean
14:30 - 15:30	Closing Worship: <i>Who are we now?</i>

Four Sections Descriptions

This gives general information about the types of sessions run during the weekend, and the four key sections of our spiritual review. Details for specific sessions/ items this YFB will be available in Documents in Advance part II.

Who we are

Why do we gather? What is our nature? What are we for?

This is about the big questions, we will attempt to grasp the complex identity and purposes of YFB. What is alive and life-giving? What happens through us?

Clarity found in these sessions will contextualise and inform the rest of the weekend.

Between Gatherings

Who are we between gatherings? What sort of community?

Here we will explore what exists when we are not gathering. Considering the different ways we organise and connect. This includes our mailing list, Discord, website, committees (including Switchboard!), etc.

Structures

Are our processes and structures serving us? How can our structures enable bold and vulnerable service?

With our purpose and direction clarified, we will reimagine our structures and the aspects of YFB we take for granted. How often do we gather? What type of gatherings do we have? We will consider the nature of different roles Friends serve in and how our structures uphold service.

Money

How do we financially support this?

We will consider proposals to increase our income and decrease our expenditure.

Session Descriptions

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. This YFB, we will be worshipping on Sunday with Friends at Redland Meeting.

Epilogue

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

Meeting for Worship for Business

YFB, like other Quaker groups, makes decisions in Meetings for Worship for Business. These are Meetings for Worship with the specific task of considering a question (or 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 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 YFB, changing what those roles are, agreeing to put money or energy towards new activities - or at wider questions, such as our response to world events. Details of the specific items for this YFB will be available in Documents in Advance part 2.

You can read about the business process we use on the YFB website at youngfriends.org.uk/about/explainers/quaker-business-method, which includes some YFB-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 10.15, in which Elders will introduce how the Quaker business method works at YFB. 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, though there will be a brief moment between items for people to come in.

Community Time

During these times, there is no activity scheduled in advance, though we invite members of the community to arrange social activities to share, for instance, a singing session or a walk to a local park.

Big Notices!

A YFB tradition is Big Notices during 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.

What's different this time around

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 cleaning.

As we have no numbers cap at this event, we would ask that Friends be mindful of sharing the space, particularly at meal times, and consider noise levels, as well as cleaning as you go, where possible.

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. Please write your name on them and use them to sign up for two task 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!

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 YFB more pleasant.

Newcomers

We strongly encourage any Friends who have **never** attended a YFB before to wait until our October gathering in Edinburgh (23rd-25th). People who *feel* new, but have previously attended at least one YFB gathering, are very welcome!

With all the demands of a spiritual review gathering, we will not be able to provide the usual care, context, and consideration for our new people. There will also be no bursary for newcomers, and the event won't give a good reflection of what YFB is normally like. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email Elders: elders@youngfriends.org.uk

Minutes from Planning Weekend

Our April 2026 Planning Weekend was held slightly differently. Our Elders shared a proposed agenda ahead of the weekend and Quaker Business Method was used to discern on this and other questions, rather than threshing, which we have used in the past. The following are minutes of Planning Weekend, not the General Meeting:

Minute 1: Proposed agenda

We've heard how interlinked the sessions are, and of the need to test how we are led on the day. We acknowledge the need to share more, earlier to ensure that all Friends have a shared understanding of the challenges YFiB is facing. Clerks and Elders will discern on this. This includes bringing the accounts earlier in the weekend, with further context provided. Clerks and Elders will reconsider the Structures session for Friends to identify pain points, supporting in our re-imagining. We ask Friends to consider whether you may be led to lead any of these sessions.

Whilst there are serious matters before us, we do them because we are led to go forward in the love and joy of coming together and imagining a better way.

We accept the revised, proposed agenda.

We particularly thank Dan and Calum for their hard work in preparing this proposed agenda.

Minute 2: Practicalities

We want as many people as possible to have the opportunity to attend our spiritual review weekend. There are practical difficulties, but we are led to not limit the number of potential attendees. If Friends are able, they may be encouraged to eat and sleep off-site if this is necessary for catering purposes, fire regulations and the potential for overwhelm due to numbers. We ask our Logistics Committee to liaise with the warden to ensure we are compliant with fire regulations. We ask our Elders to ensure those present can participate in the event whilst complying with fire regulations in terms of room capacity. We ask that Elders liaise with Switchboard and those at this Planning Weekend to monitor registrations and consider how to manage this.

We ask that the sign up form and communications for this event make it clear that Friends registering should intend to actively engage with the sessions.

We are led to ask local Friends in Bristol to help us cater for our spiritual review. We ask our Logistics Committee to liaise with Redland Local Meeting to facilitate

this. If local Friends are not able to support us with catering, we will cater for ourselves as usual.

These decisions are for this gathering only. It may be discerned at the spiritual review that this is the sort of decision that will or will not be made in the future.

We ask Friends to gather in joy and service and to consider how we can serve each other with confidence and without guilt. We trust that, in making this decision, our community can live adventurously and with love.

Practicalities

Before YFB

Join the YFB Discord server to chat with other YFBers 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, get in touch with elders@youngfriends.org.uk

The Meeting House

YFB is being held at Redland Quaker Meeting House. The address is: 126 Hampton Road, Redland, Bristol, BS6 6JE

Arriving by bus

Buses 1, 2, 3, and 4 go from the Centre up to Whiteladies Road (1 and 2 also pass the station approach road at Temple Meads).

Jump off at the Apsley Road bus stop on Whiteladies Road, and walk down Redland Park to the Meeting House.

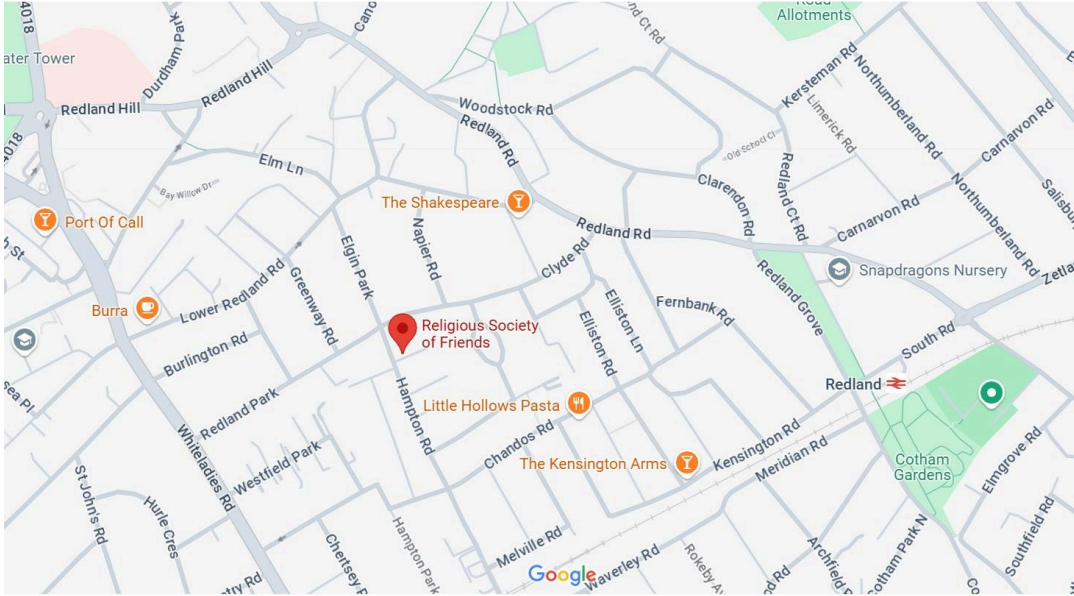
Arriving via train

The Severn Beach train from Temple Meads (hourly service on Sundays) stops at Clifton Down, a little further down Whiteladies Road, so you can also walk from there to Redland Park and turn right.

Arriving by car

There is limited parking in the surrounding streets, and a residential parking zone is in operation, but not in the evenings and at weekends.

If you need to park at the meeting house for accessibility reasons, please contact logistics on logistics@youngfriends.org.uk who will help organise access.



Arrivals

On Friday, arrivals start at 6pm, and we begin with Opening Worship at 6:30pm. If possible, please arrive in time for the opening session at 8:30pm, which will include an introduction to the Spiritual Review and essential notices.

Some YFBers will be at the Meeting House earlier than 6pm, 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.

Accessibility

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

At Redland Meeting House, all rooms are accessible apart from the library, which has 5 steps at the entrance. There are accessible toilets available. There will be a quiet room.

What do I need to bring?

A weekend's (+ bank holiday Monday) 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.

Reports Session

Our Separated Reports Meeting will be held online on Tuesday, 19th May at 7pm

This will be open to anyone between the ages of 18-35 who wishes to attend. The meeting will receive the following reports:

- EMEYF report
- Trustee report
- Finance report
- Meeting for Sufferings report
- Report from our Planning Weekend Newcomers

This will not be a General Meeting of the charity, although we will minute receipt of the reports in brief over the weekend gathering in Bristol. The reports will be circulated after the meeting for reading.

This Separated Reports Meeting will be an opportunity to hear more from members of our community about the life of our Meeting between gatherings, and to meet in anticipation of our weekend together. Further information, including how to join, will be circulated nearer the time.

Deposit of living questions and ideas

We are creating a deposit of the living questions and proposals in our Meeting, and we will put these in the Documents in Advance for the gathering. We don't necessarily need to do anything further with these. However, we would like to collect them all in one place for reference and reflection over the spiritual review weekend and beyond. <https://forms.gle/rXAHaFpJFAJsx11F>

During YFB

Sleeping Arrangements

Most sleep in the Meeting House! There will be several 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 and B&Bs in Bristol.

As mentioned elsewhere, if our registration numbers start to push the capacity of the Meeting House, we will ask Friends who can afford it to find their own accommodation.

Safeguarding Information

We are committed to keeping everyone safe at YFB. 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 YFB with their parents. We would ask that you refrain from taking photographs of any children and that you check the background of any photographs you are taking, in case there is a child present. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please speak to the safeguarding lead or email safeguarding@youngfriends.org.uk.

Bag rooms

During the day, there will be a designated ‘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.

Eating together

The meals at YFB will be vegan or vegetarian, 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 Documents in Advance Part II, but these may be subject to change at short notice.

Nominations

At this YFB gathering, we will be nominating roles, including:

- **Planning Weekend Newcomer:** Someone who hasn't previously attended a YFB planning weekend, who attends, feeds in, and provides a report to YFB on their experience.
- **Treasurer:** Our treasurer maintains our bank accounts, handles bursaries and expenses, and tracks our spending. Together with our Finance Trustee and Assistant Treasurer, they also prepare our accounts and budget and ensure our finance policy is maintained.
- **Trustee:** Ensure there is good governance of YFB, communicate with the charity commission, and create policies for YFB (as a committee of 5 people).

Please go to the YFB website

<https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/documents-forms/nominations/> for details on roles and the nominations process, and to submit your nominations. There will NOT be a submissions box at this YFGM, so please make nominations online in advance of the event.

As a Quaker organisation, YFB uses the Quaker nominations process to find people to fill volunteer roles within the Meeting. Nominations are a key part of Quaker processes, 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 know everyone well.

The YFB nominations committee will approach people who have been suggested during or in the run-up to the next YFB event to find out if they are willing and able to be in the role or roles for which their name has been suggested. 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 YFB 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.

Expenses

YFB covers the costs of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in attending YFB for role-holders. For our Spiritual Review, travel expenses will not be covered for newcomers attending their first event, though they are welcome to claim expenses at the next YFB gathering they attend. 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 questions regarding expenses, please contact finance@youngfriends.org.uk.