

## **Welcome to the Friends General Conference Gathering 2020 Virtual High School Program!**

This letter contains important information and you should review it carefully.

### **The Virtual High School Program Kicks Off on June 28, 2020!**

**We are very excited about this summer's Virtual Gathering.  
It will be like none other!**

The current times are pushing us to adapt in ways we haven't had to before. Now is the time to Gather and be with friends.

Nearly 20 participants and 13 dedicated and caring staff will be sharing virtual space, worship, and their selves during the week. We are looking forward to a fun program that provides the connection and community we treasure at the Gathering.

#### **High School Guidelines**

The high school program draws on the commitment of every participant to **create an intentional community for the week**. The guidelines have been developed and approved by the High School Meeting for Business in the Spirit of Worship and represent our collective wisdom on how to create this rewarding, fun community, and support physical and emotional safety. The list of guidelines is re-evaluated each year to ensure that the expectations truly serve the living needs of the community. *We have adapted our High School Guidelines for the virtual environment.* By attending Gathering as part of the High School Program you implicitly agree to abide by these guidelines. The breach of trust that occurs when a participant is unable to function within the context of the expectations is damaging to the community and is taken very seriously. A participant who violates a guideline may be asked to spend time away from the program or be asked to leave Virtual Gathering entirely. In order to gain the most from Virtual Gathering, it is important to prepare for the experience. Please **take time to read through the guidelines and expectations** (in the link above and attached) and *discuss them with your parent/guardian and/or FGC sponsor*. We ask that you **review and sign the guidelines by 6/28**.

Here is a sneak peak of our **Week Calendar**.

Information on program schedule and activities will be available at the **Virtual Gathering Sched app** or on the **Virtual High School Program webpage**. (Info about Zoom and SCHED were sent to you yesterday in your Final Details letter).

You will need to have on hand:

- Headphones
- Water bottle
- A journal
- Markers, coloring pencils or other creative writing utensil
- Some favorite memes to share at Monday's Meme Showcase
- A performance act for Friday's talent show (if you want!)

In addition to the above items, we think your Gathering experience will be greatly enhanced if you **bring a rested self and an openness of Spirit**. The High School community cannot be forged without your participation. There will be worship, fun, and serious conversations. New friends will be made and old friends will be rediscovered. You will bring a unique contribution to

the experience and it is important to engage wholeheartedly: explore and enjoy your workshop, share yourself with your support group, and listen to the concerns of others (while discerning your own) in the Community Meeting in the Spirit of Worship.

Whether you are new or returning to the High School Program, you may be concerned about building community in a virtual setting. One opportunity is through your **support group**. This smaller group of peers and two counselors meets daily. Your support group leaders will be available whenever you need advice or a friendly ear. There are also connections to be made in workshops, affinity groups, during nightly hang-outs, and at worship. We've scheduled many exciting opportunities during the week, but we've also left plenty of flexibility for you to log off and take a break from the screen. We recommend using this time to read, go for a walk, listen to music, or catch up on sleep. Support groups will be assigned at the Orientation on 6/28.

**Communication is a critical element in a successful High School Program.**

Unexpressed concerns can lead to feelings of isolation, frustration, and hurt. Many opportunities for sharing our states of mind will occur during the program activities and the staff is available to participants and sponsors at all times to hear personal and confidential concerns. If you have any questions about program activities or expectations, we encourage you to speak with staff members for more information. In addition, to create a smooth week and open communication, you are responsible for checking in about Virtual Gathering with your parent or guardian, daily, throughout the week.

We are looking forward to meeting each of you and sharing the week with you. If you or your parent or guardian have any questions, please contact us without hesitation.

Yours with Love,  
High School Program Coordinators

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