

Process and Procedures for a Monthly Meeting to Affiliate Directly with Friends General Conference

Benefits and Responsibilities

The benefits and responsibilities of affiliation with FGC by a monthly meeting are similar to those of a yearly meeting or association of meetings: fellowship with Friends from all over North America; consideration of business, budgets and new leadings with other experienced Friends; working together to nurture and educate Friends and seekers. Members of Central Committee provide guidance for FGC to provide resources and opportunities to meetings and individuals for worship and spiritual nurture.

A directly affiliated monthly meeting names one member to serve on Central Committee, although directly affiliated monthly meetings in geographic proximity may, if they choose, join together to name one appointee to represent and report to each of their monthly meetings. The representative attends the fall Central Committee meetings and works with one of the program or administrative committees of FGC. Travel to achieve full participation may strain the resources of a monthly meeting, and many committees are open to corresponding members and other accommodations that may be necessary. Affiliated groups are also expected to contribute financially to the support of FGC to the extent possible. There is no set amount expected and per-member contributions vary widely. While the organization needs every group to make some financial contribution, the expectation is that all will contribute as able, and for some meetings this may be a modest amount.

Affiliation Procedure

The monthly meeting seeking affiliation with FGC starts the process by writing to the FGC Committee for Nurturing Ministries (CNM) of its intentions. Committee for Nurturing Ministries considers the situation, the appropriateness of possible existing links to FGC, and the appropriateness of direct affiliation of the requesting group. Committee for Nurturing Ministries may meet with the group or appoint visitors to meet with members of the group to consider the request and possible affiliations more fully. Such meetings may take place in person where possible or via electronic communication.

If direct affiliation seems appropriate and the requesting group has been recognized as a monthly meeting, a formal letter of application may be suggested. (FGC cannot confer monthly meeting status, but might assist a group in being recognized by a nearby monthly or yearly meeting.) Among criteria for such direct affiliation are the ability of the applicant meeting to send appointees and financial support to FGC and the relationship of the meeting with its neighbors. If the applicant meeting belongs to a nonmember yearly meeting or another branch

of the Religious Society of Friends, it should be in communication with that body early in the affiliation process. When the Committee for Nurturing Ministries and the meeting seeking affiliation are satisfied with the application, the recommendation for action will be brought to Central Committee or Executive Committee for its consideration. The determination of which body will receive the recommendation will depend on the schedule, in order to allow consideration of the application in a timely manner. Upon approval of the affiliation request, the Presiding Clerk of FGC sends a letter of welcome. Members of the Committee for Nurturing Ministries will remain in contact with the new directly affiliated monthly meeting. CNM welcomes periodic written reports on the state of their meeting from each directly affiliated monthly meeting and provides communication through the affiliate's representative in order to maintain the collaboration.