

Nurturing the Light in each other

As Quakers, we strive to recognize and uplift “that of God” in ourselves and in one another. In addition, continuing revelation is central to our community. We are all in the process of learning how to support one another’s Inner Guide, as we all change and grow.

The Quarterly Meeting planning committee from University Friends Meeting wish to offer several guidelines and reminders for this weekend:

1. Ask before touching someone.

Create a culture of consent by asking for permission to hug someone, touch their shoulder, etc., and by allowing the person space to say “no” without guilt. People may decline touch for any number of reasons, and nobody owes anyone an explanation for saying “no.”

2. Respect people’s pronouns and bathroom choices.

Over a year ago our Yearly Meeting approved a Minute of Inclusion that reads, in part:

“We recognize that when we embrace the Light within the full spectrum of gender identities in our meeting, our worship deepens and our community is enriched. As part of our evolving struggle to live our testimony of equality, North Pacific Yearly Meeting minutes our commitment to becoming an affirming, safe, and nurturing place for everyone to live fully that which the Spirit is leading them to be. We extend our loving care to people of all genders... We will continue to educate ourselves and our communities and take appropriate action to bring about a more equal world.”

There are many ways to support trans and gender non-conforming people: one way that we can do this is by honoring people’s preferred pronouns (e.g. “she/her/hers,” or “he/him/his,” or “they/them/theirs,” or “zie/hir/hirs”). Please consider including your pronouns on your name tag, and correcting yourself and others when you notice someone being referred to with the wrong pronouns. It is not the end of the world to make mistakes, and we all do it occasionally; it’s usually best to offer a quick apology and move on with the conversation.

Men's and women's bathrooms can be physically and socially dangerous (and therefore anxiety-provoking) for trans and gender non-conforming folks. If you are using a bathroom with someone who doesn't seem to be in the "right" place, please keep your thoughts to yourself. Everyone deserves to pee or shower in peace.

3. Take care of yourself.

The concepts of white supremacy, justice, and punishment have deep historical roots and intense personal and spiritual implications. We will likely have disagreements and difficult conversations. Pay attention to the difference between discomfort and danger. You are strongly encouraged to maintain boundaries that keep you safe, while also leaving yourself room to grow and learn. Please do your best to respect others' boundaries as well.