

# Steps to Planning a Regional Gathering

Regional gatherings offer opportunities beyond the Yearly and Quarterly Meetings to strengthen the connectedness of Quakers, from small isolated meetings to larger meetings in busy urban areas. In these challenging times, with increasing natural disasters and political upheavals, nurturing a larger web of support can strengthen the bonds of our Quaker community and hold us all, gathered, to celebrate our joys, concerns, actions, lives in ways that renew and deepen our spirits.

1. Keep it simple to increase the probability of success.
2. Reach out to meetings and worship groups in your area and consider the following:
  - a. A weekend date that works for, and is not in conflict with, other events of the meetings involved or quarterly meeting.
  - b. Consider a weekend-long gathering at a central location. This could give time for rest and connecting, especially if the travel time is long.
  - c. If children and/or teens will have a separate program, who will plan that?
  - d. If a meetinghouse is not convenient for all parties, choose a place to meet--a park or somewhere centrally located to make travel easy for everyone.
  - e. Decide on the level of structure and program: pick a theme, find a speaker, or simply get together for worship, worship sharing and fellowship.
3. Choose planning roles or committees:
  - a. Logistics
    - i. Site arrangements
    - ii. Set-up
    - iii. Snacks and meal(s)
    - iv. Clean-up
    - v. Financial considerations?
  - b. Program
    - i. Adults
    - ii. Teens?
    - iii. Children?
    - iv. Print schedules
    - v. Create and print worship sharing queries
  - c. Outreach and Community Building
    - i. Send out the invites. Work with clerks, google groups, evites, etc. to get the word out. The more members and attenders of the meetings, the more fruitful the gathering will be.
    - ii. Gather store bought name tag making supplies or collage materials (calendars, magazines, etc) for handmade name tags, which creates an opportunity for chatting.
    - iii. Plan getting-to-know-you activities
    - iv. Follow Up! Share with your meeting how it went, invite new friends to come to your meeting events, make plans for the next one.

Sample Schedule for single day gathering:

- 9:30 AM - Greet and meet (name tags, beverages, snacks)
- 10:00 AM - Meeting for Worship
- 11:15 AM - Community Building Activities (games and/or singing)
- 12:00 PM - Potluck Lunch
- 1:30 PM - Program (themed activity/panel/speaker?)
- 2:00 PM - Worship sharing
- 3:30 PM - Clean up
- 4:00 PM - Farewells