

Summer Gathering 2023 - 2024 General Information

Friends in Dunedin Monthly Meeting welcome you to Summer Gathering 2023 - 2024.

This paper is intended to give you general information about Summer Gathering, and to assist you to complete the registration form. The Guide to Registration form is more directly focused on explanation of the form. **Please read both papers before registering, and consult the Guide as you work through the form.**

Dates: Friday 29 December from 2.00 p.m. to Saturday 6 January midday

Place: Tirohanga Presbyterian Camp, 214 Tirohanga Road, RD2, Wyllies Crossing 9092
<http://www.tirohangacamp.co.nz/>

Local planning group **contact:** sglocalplanning@ym.quakers.nz

What happens at Summer Gathering

What happens depends very largely on all of us who attend.

Accommodation is simple; the camp is well maintained and clean.

Meals are catered for by our expert cooks, Grant and Tess Marryatt, whose skills are well known to those who have attended events at the Quaker Settlement. Help will be needed with food preparation, cleanup and dishwashing, and perhaps other kitchen tasks. These are part of a range of shared work duties. Extra kitchen help is always welcome. 'Home groups' include a range of ages, and enable you to come to know some people more closely. The group members work, play and reflect together. Morning programmes include time for home groups, Meeting for Worship, and choice between three all-age streams of involvement - reflective (talks, ideas, discussion), craft, and activity. The afternoons and evenings are more flexible, including interest groups, time offsite, relaxing and special activities. On New Year's Eve evening we hold a ceilidh, culminating in a midnight greeting of the New Year. The next day we leave camp for a picnic. The final evening is given to a concert.

Theme

We have a triple theme: 'Love your neighbour - tātou tātou - ubuntu'. Why ubuntu? It's a southern African word, chosen as the theme for the World Plenary Gathering of Friends in South Africa in August 2024, and as a focus for Friends worldwide for the year 2024, the 400th anniversary of the birth of George Fox, one of the great original leaders of Quakers. "*Ubuntu* refers to the deeply held belief, morality and custom that every person is worthy of being recognised, respected and heard, and that we as human beings are all interdependent. It implies a collective responsibility to ensure that all members of the community have the means of subsistence and learning and participation. It further extends to care for the environment, since people are part of the same divinely given creation that is an interdependent whole." (From *Friends World Committee for Consultation, FWCC*)

Venue

The site is a simple school-type camp, run by a Presbyterian trust, 5km from Mosgiel, 22km south of Dunedin, with easy access from the city and from Dunedin Airport. Tirohanga is interpreted as "a place of far vision". See more at <http://www.tirohangacamp.co.nz/>.

Tirohanga combines grassland with bush areas (mainly kanuka), featuring a little creek which can be explored for small koura. There are short walks onsite, including a track to an uphill reflection or prayer space. An adventure course and horizontal climbing wall are suitable for primary age children upwards. Orienteering materials are available.

How to get there

Please arrange to arrive after 2.00 p.m. on Friday 29 December, when registration opens.

Public transport Intercity buses from north and south connect in the Dunedin bus hub with local buses, usually half hourly, to and from Mosgiel. We can arrange arrival day transport from Mosgiel.

By car or bike The camp is at 214 Tirohanga Road, RD2, Wyllies Crossing 9092.

By air Book to Dunedin Airport. There is shuttle transport from the airport to Tirohanga, if you book in advance at <https://www.airportshuttlesdunedin.co.nz/>. Your destination is Tirohanga Camp, 214 Tirohanga Road. Estimated cost is \$25.00 per person. Summer Gathering ends at midday on Saturday 6 January, and we will arrange transport to connect with flights departing during that day.

Accommodation

The accommodation is in bunkrooms holding 4 - 8 people. Because the camp is mostly used by schools, there is a limited number of full-length bunks suitable for taller people. Please indicate on the form if you need one of these. The beds are supplied with mattresses, but **not pillows or other bedding. You will need to bring these.**

Some bunkrooms have toilets attached. There are general toilet and shower blocks, and an accessible toilet and shower with ramp approach.

There are two power points suitable for camper vans, and plenty of camping space, where toilets will be available.

If you prefer to live out (e.g. at a local motel or bed & breakfast), the venue charges a day fee at half the overnight rate, and this is reflected in our Summer Gathering charge.

What to bring

All bedding including pillow

Towel

Clothing including warm items for cold days

Togs if you want to visit local pool

Toiletries

Medications if needed

Masks and RAT tests

Sunhat, sunscreen

Rainwear

Suitable footwear if you hope to go on a walk

Covered shoes for work in kitchen or dishwashing

Personal cup or mug

Torch

Any items you want to display (let us know)

Food Meals will be vegetarian and vegan. Please list any allergies or special food needs on the form.

If you need meat for health reasons, say so on the form. We will help you make your own arrangements to obtain it locally and to cook it.

Costs

Cost are affected by increased food costs, payment for our cooks, and hireage for some items. The venue charges the same for each person aged 5+ living in, whether you are in a bunkroom or camping. If you live out, we supply all meals, and the venue fee is reduced.

We recognise that you will have travel costs on top of these amounts.

Under 18s: no charge to you; costs are paid by Yearly Meeting.

18-25s: you can opt for a 50% subsidy from Yearly Meeting (see form).

Early bird (register by 29 October)

Living in Full-time \$590 , Per day \$74

Living out Full-time \$555 , Per day \$69

Regular (register by 15 November)

Living in Full-time \$615 , Per day \$77

Living out Full-time \$ 580, Per day \$72

Late (register by 1 December)

Living in Full-time \$640, Per day \$80

Living out Full-time \$605 , Per day \$73

If you are 'dropping in' for one day, the day fee, without meals, is \$10, payable on site; this is to cover venue requirements.

Financial support

We would like all Friends and their families wanting to attend Summer Gathering to feel able to do so. As well as the full **attendance support** for under-18s, and part-support for 18-25s, Yearly Meeting has a Summer Gathering **Travel Support** Fund. Some Monthly Meetings are also able to assist with the cost of attendance and/or travel. Please feel free to contact the Friends responsible for pastoral and spiritual care in your Monthly Meeting about any form of support. (The groups have differing names; if you're not sure whom to contact, ask someone who seems knowledgeable.)

How to register We're not able to offer paper forms in addition to online registration. Please don't let this deter you from coming; if you don't know someone who can work with you to manage the online form, ask for help within your Worship Group or Meeting.

Please register early, as this is a great help for catering and other arrangements. After the closing date for early bird registration, the fee increases to meet additional costs.

Complete the form to include each person attending, whatever their age. When you've sent in the form, you'll receive an email confirming the amount to pay. Please pay as soon as possible. If this isn't possible for you, please contact us at sglocalplanning@ym.quaker.nz to discuss arrangements.

If your Monthly Meeting or someone else is paying some or all your costs, please contact us.

Fees are payable to Religious Society of Friends Dunedin, account 38-9018-0626096-04. Please include your name and SG in the details.

Important dates

The **closing dates** for registration are:

Early bird 29 October Regular 15 November Late 1 December

Arrival Friday 29 December from 2.00 p.m. (Lunch is not provided that day.)

Departure Saturday 6 January, 12.00 noon. (Lunch is not provided that day.)

Children and young people

Summer Gathering is for all ages, and most events on the programme are planned to be open to everyone. There may be some activities for specific age groups; apart from these times, parents or regular caregivers are responsible for those aged under 16. If someone under 16 is attending Summer Gathering without a parent or regular caregiver, you need to arrange in advance for a '**proxy parent**', i.e. an adult over 18 who will take responsibility for that child / young person as appropriate for their age. There is space on the form to indicate this.

We hope that children and young people will take a full part in the life of Summer Gathering. They are included in home groups, and take part in duties according to their ability. We hope to offer a space which families can use if they would like 'time out'.

Respect & safety

Friends at Summer Gathering share the responsibility for one another. Home groups are one of the many ways in which we can keep in touch, enjoy the presence of others, and respond to their gifts and needs. There will be a pastoral care group who can be contacted with problems, including a couple of Friends who can respond to experiences of harassment or unwanted approach.

Health & safety, including Covid policy

The site is partly sloping, with the camping areas downhill from the main buildings. Young children need care around the bush and creek (which is very small). Care is needed on the decks of some buildings. The adventure facilities onsite are suitable for primary school aged children upwards.

There is space on the form if you wish to let us know of any particular health or safety needs.

We invite Friends who have health, medical or first aid qualifications to let us know on the form. Details of local medical and emergency facilities will be available.

We will follow public guidelines at the time of Summer Gathering in response to the level of Covid or other serious infectious disease. Please be prepared to bring your own RAT tests and masks as needed - we'll keep you informed nearer the time. There will be arrangements for anyone who develops infection to isolate and to be supported. A small 'Covid response team' will take care of these needs, and of ongoing policy during Summer Gathering. You can volunteer for this team on the form - you don't need medical qualifications.

Roles & offers

During Summer Gathering a 'steering group' takes care of arrangements and makes ongoing decisions. Much of what happens flows from initiatives by Summer Gatherers. On the form you're invited to offer contributions. Including this on the form doesn't commit you at this stage, and activities often emerge at the time.

Worship & reflection

During each morning there is a time of worship as usually practised in Aotearoa New Zealand. This lasts for about half an hour, an hour on Sunday. At the end of each day someone offers an 'epilogue', a reflective time (about 15 minutes) which can feature a reading, brief talk, music or something else growing from and leading into quiet worship. At other times there is scope for you to invite Friends who wish to join 'programmed' (prepared) worship, meditation, study or other spiritual approaches.

Any queries? Contact us at sglocalplanning@ym.quakers.nz