

## **Group contributions from Quaker hybrid/zoom conversation**

**Many new folks coming to attend.**

**Friends afar can visit**

**Ways to get to know folks we never could have if we were only in the meeting house**

**Met outside around pots of fire, until Dec when too cold**

**Zoom has allowed others to attend**

**Doesn't take the place of social isolation for some**

## **Burlington Vt Meeting**

- **Started zoom solely**
- **Then went in person, and back to hybrid**
- **At Meeting for business decided to continue hybrid**
- **Marquis for memorial**
- **Outdoor snacks**
- **Have problems with sound for people on zoom**
- **Business meeting have clerk and asst clerk, one on zoom and one in room- each monitor a different group**
- **Very successful Christmas Pageant put on by adults brought a huge number of people together**

## **Ann Arbor**

- **Zoom easiest**
  - **Some didn't come**
  - **Some didn't find it nourishing**
  - **Now have hybrid meetings**
  - **Use blue yeti microphone, favors male voices (geared towards lower frequency- has bass rolloff)**
  - **Exploring going back to microphone which has speakers**
  - **Monitor microphone so loud enough and goes into zoom**

## **Charlotte, NC**

- **Pre-pandemic, in-room loudspeaker system for folks who were hard-of-hearing**
- **COntinue to use this**
- **Decided not to have things projected on wall, project onto a TV**
- **Chose not to do owl**
- **People tend to look and talk to the screen**
- **Challenge with only having one person doing tech**
- **Joy is having people who have moved away still able to join**

## **Birmingham Pa**

- **Blended rather than hybrid**
- **Only one month of zoom**

- Then folks met outside, with sound shared
- Group guiding with guidelines from CDC
- Contacted company which provides AV systems
  - Testing a huddle pod- \$8000-\$10000
    - provides both microphone and speaker
    - Improve pickup sound for those on zoom and in the room
    - Screen on wall
    - Screen is the computer, and a camera
      - Can choose to sit with back to it, or looking at it
      - Camera finds the speaker
      - Huddlepod went to speak when first 20 minutes were silent!  
This was fixed by tech assistant
  - In dec had bonfire outside meeting house
    - Little snack/refreshment bags
    - Bicycle rides and hikes
    - Feel this is the future
  - Zoom works well with committees and has benefitted committees
  - Early service- either in-person or online, and second one hybrid

## **ROOM FIVE**

**Lisa—western NC, Zoom group, in person meeting house and in-person outdoors, testing an Owl to connect indoor and Zoom. Tech outside hasn't worked well and was only used when we couldn't go inside.**

**Betsy—Cambridge, started before Pandemic because family worship first day of month has people not in Cambridge so a technical parent set up people joining from afar, in the Friends room they decided to get a projector screen, so some were used to the hybrid format before pandemic. Started with the hybrid in July 2021 when back to Meetinghouse. Alistair brought college equipment at the beginning because it was summer. In the fall, they hired someone to run the technology so that it wasn't Alistair all the time. Tech person works 15 hours a week**

**Naomi—Ann Arbor Friends, pre-pandemic, 9am smaller and 11 larger. During pandemic both hybrid. Sitting outside not an option. Outcry to make 9am only in person. Now 9am is separate Zoom and in person and 11 will be hybrid. Can't please everyone.**

**Pam—Indiana, FUM/programmed meeting. When pandemic started they had the goal to keep people together and connected. First all Zoom. After 6 months hybrid. Parlor can accommodate 25-30 with spacing. Large TV to the side. One Sunday half and half. Most of the time 20 in Meetinghouse, 40-50 on Zoom. People still want Zoom. Small webcam that they take to anyone speaking out of the silence. Zoom speakers are blown up on the**

**TV. Gone from very programmed to a very silent meeting. Pam and her husband send a reflection and queries on Saturday night. So now semi-programmed.**

**Emily—No internet at the Meetinghouse in Plainfield, VT. Extremely limited cell service/hot spots. So we tried hybrid for weeks and weeks but now we have to have separate meetings 8:30 on Zoom and 10:30 in-person. Some attend both but we are very small (15 is a good attendance) so often 10 + 5 (both ways).**

**Joy and Challenges—**

**Lisa—Just recently returned to in-person. There was an outdoor group with blankets and lawn chairs. Joyful to meet outdoors. They live in beautiful woods. Hard time worshipping/centering when there's tech in the room. Tech issues getting the Owl to work. Betsy—She discovered that being in the physical space itself was a comfort after being away. Redoing the ceiling and acoustics was concerning. Meetinghouse windows are open. Didn't think it would be a problem. Usher when people arrived and they were escorted in. That was distracting. Now no one can come in more than five minutes late until transition with the children leaving. Naomi—Husband was sick so couldn't get to Meeting. Wonderful to have Zoom and continue with hybrid. Challenge, people in Meetinghouse could not be heard on Zoom. Challenge that friends are divided. Kind of together during but not afterwards (during fellowship). Pam—Joy programmed meeting before but Meeting has now embraced silence in a way that was not possible before. People are much more willing to speak than ever before—they talk on Zoom when they were reluctant before. People from far away now join and after pandemic they plan to keep what they're doing. Challenges, web cam works well but it's intimidating when it is delivered to people. Thinking about buying a PTZ camera so that when someone in Meetinghouse speaks the camera goes to them. A local church broadcasts their service into peoples' cars. Seems possible in a rural meeting. Emily— Joy that I was able to go back to in-person and not fidget. Joy to have the virtual option. Betsy—people come from all over to see how Cambridge does it. Used to having a lot of visitors on every Sunday. Lots of students. Asked whether people had problems with unwanted Zoom visitors. (At least three of us nodded "no".) Naomi—meeting for worship in a breakout room.**

**END OF ROOM FIVE**

**Hard of hearing folks can hear better through zoom**

**Folks who are ill can stay home and not spread illness**

**Tech challenges picking up sound with amplified technology**

**Lack of children to be able to attend**

**Virginia Beach attached to Friends school, so easier to get into the tech for blended meeting**

Anchor for sound doing a good job  
Using projection  
A few folks who will not do zoom

#### Burlington -

Champlain Is Worship group only on Zoom  
Midweek worship is in person only  
Sunday hybrid using the OWL. Cannot see folks on Zoom-- no screen or projector.  
Joy - continuing to meet in person for those who feel risk is manageable and also includes some on Zoom.  
Challenge - finding enough folks to manage the tech.  
Outdoor tent for refreshments during summer added fellowship.

#### Germantown Mtg -

Attends on Zoom (lives in VT)  
Has added other activities on Zoom that have added other reasons to stay with that community.  
Midweek Zoom only.  
Started in person meeting with small numbers of people to try the tech out and make sure that audio, etc would be OK.  
Run 3 computers with Zoom - one in social room, one in Meeting Room, and if someone unvaxxed comes they are given the Zoom link.  
9 am worship in Social room for in-person only, which was good for people who find the tech intrusive.  
Joy - lots of expression of feeling connected even while shut down.

#### Mountainview FM (Colorado)

Just started blended meeting in Nov/ Dec with projection  
9 am Zoom only and simultaneous 9 am in person.  
Hoping to resume in person soon  
Challenges - limit of size of meeting, those who have aversion to tech less involved.  
Blended meeting is helpful to connect folks from far away (FL, NY, etc.) which is a joy.  
New people are coming.

#### San Antonio -

Started blended in July - hard when we had to close down for delta variant.  
Large discernment - important to include those who live far away, who are too frail to come in person. Hard to come to unity to accommodate those only on Zoom and also those who cannot face worship with tech/ camera/ screen.  
8:30 am only in person (usually very small-- 3-8); at 10 am have blended worship (10-15+).  
Have decided to buy assisted listening devices that will also work with Zoom  
Blended MfB works pretty well; tech person signals clerk that a Zoom person wishes to speak by standing.

**Joy - children came back & children's program restarted.**

**Challenge - Jim is both clerk and the only person who understands the tech. Can't do both at once! Burned out from doing it all!!**

**Hanover -**

**Will have blended worship when we return after omicron. We have a completely new HVAC system that has very good ventilation and air exchange.**

**Camera is stationary and does not focus on speaker. No screen in room yet. Mics hanging from ceiling that are part of hearing assistance work very well with Zoom but we are not fully "live" with blended worship yet so I am not sure that all the wrinkles have been worked out.**

**Had in-person worship at a nearby hall while our HVAC system was being renovated, however, that space closed with delta/ omicron surges.**

**Having separate in-person and Zoom worships at the same time was good for those who really wished to be in person (and felt the risk was manageable) and also allowed those from afar or who couldn't come from home to attend worship.**

**However, separate worships also felt isolating (at least for me when I was on Zoom, which was most of the time.) It felt weird to know there were others from my meeting in worship and not being with them.**

**Joy- we have fellowship breakout rooms on Zoom that are randomly assigned, which is really fun. People love them! We enjoy getting to talk to folks we might not usually talk to if in person.**

**Challenges - coming to unity and moving slowly enough to accommodate everyone and make sure everyone feels heard.**

**Joy to attend worship all over the world, Pendle hill, woodbrooke**

**Can be hard to see zoom people in the meeting house**

**On zoom people can see who is speaking and what their names are**

**Being able to attend memorial meetings**

**Having new tech will open up the meeting house for others to use**

**West Falmouth MA - One worship in person, one on zoom; meetinghouse has no internet, starting to have discussions.**

**JOYFUL: People can attend who are not in commuting distance. One person joined us from hospice for some time until the end of her life. I can attend worship every morning.**

**CHALLENGE: we have a sense of fragmentation because of people we haven't seen over Zoom**

**Mountain View Friends Meeting** (Denver)- have both in-person and on-line, have just tested blended worship at one of our worship times with permission to purchase equipment to make that permanent; a mid-week worship began during the pandemic and intends to continue fully online.

**JOYFUL:** The ability for people to attend regardless of distance, mobility, etc. Personally, having the chance to learn about how having on-line presence is an issue of accessibility in multiple ways.

**CHALLENGE:** We feel fragmented because we have not been able to be together in person.

**Middlebury Friends Meeting** - Have been running blended worship regularly since June; trouble with feedback & syncing volume levels between Zoom speakers & in-person speakers.

**JOYFUL:** I could start going to meeting again because I have environmental sensitivities so I had to stop going to in-person meeting. It has been an absolute gift to be able to attend meeting again. We have been able to continue a 12-Step Meeting that used to meet only at sessions. Cambridge Friends shares information about events they are hosting so that we attend more activities that would be too far away in person. NEYM Youth Staff kicked into gear immediately to figure out how to support kids; they have offered a lot online, things that are really valuable to the kids. I coordinate First Day School; in person, it was always at the same time as worship, but when we shifted to on-line, we changed the time, so I can attend worship and so can the children. Participation in the yearly meeting's interrim meetings has increased greatly because people don't have to travel.

**CHALLENGES:** Extraneous noise in the meetinghouse, such as chatter around announcements times, makes it hard to hear for online attenders.

**Portland MM (Maine)** - meeting only on zoom; 3 separate small groups with multiple worships during the week.

**JOYFUL:** We have more and deeper interaction and I can go to multiple worships; I've been delighted. We had two people attend from their hospice beds.

**Friends Meeting of Cambridge** - AV host sits by the audio controls and occasionally adjust the speaker volume depending on who is speaking ("Zoomers or Roomers").

**JOYFUL:** We were able to reschedule some things away from Sunday mornings which allowed more time and deeper connection because people weren't in a hurry. Time NOT spent commuting to committee meetings is spent in relationship with people. Seeing people who moved away. People who have a hard time hearing things in the meetinghouse hear much better on zoom. More social groups have formed because there is no distance barrier.

**CHALLENGES:** Integrating new people - we had a pot-luck every Sunday, which was a chance to talk to new people.

**Room 4: Group with Robyn, Linda S, Katy, Carol S-F and Peggy - from Michigan, Virginia, Kentucky, Connecticut, Mass.**

### **JOYS**

- **A wider variety of attenders from nearby to far away, creating a wonderful gathering**
- **Attending former meetings and being with older friends**
- **Zoom is good for seeing faces and names**
- **Can attend in pjs**
- **Meeting together outside**
- **A zoom potluck at Christmas**
- **Home bound Friends are able to be with us on Zoom**
- **Easier to attend committee meetings on Zoom – don't have to drive to the meetinghouse or other meeting location, made harder during the winter months – and some people don't like driving at night**

### **CHALLENGES**

- **Hand held mics in the meeting room – people think since they have a mic, they don't need to speak up making it hard for people in the mtg to hear them, as well as on zoom not hearing them as well.**
- **There are some people who will not do zoom**
- **Absence of children and children's programs**
- **Zoom screen in the meetinghouse shows one screen even if there are more attending than can be pictured on that screen and the pictures of people are small so you can't see them as well in gallery mode**
- **Some finding it difficult to learn how to zoom**
- **Rural meetings may have no wifi or even a phone, thus no ability to Zoom unless someone personally sets this up, but then others would have difficulty joining MFW**
- **The restriction of in-person gatherings**
- **Purchasing a good sound/video system is expensive**