

***Facebook: a tool to help your Meeting or Church
welcome seekers, support ministries,
and share the Quaker message widely.***

What a Facebook page can provide:

A place to share news of events and gatherings more widely.

Low cost, or free advertising and sharing of events is very easy on facebook. Many Meetings have made a commitment to various ministries and faithful work - this provides an additional way to connect and share with wider communities of social justice and ecumenical church and peace networks. If a meeting minutes specific directions or work - the meeting can share it more widely to get others involved. This sharing goes well beyond people that might see a meeting website, or meeting members in a limited private email group.

A way to help promote and share other events and news we as a meeting support.

Do you want to help others learn about Quaker Dinner Church? Or Quakers Concerned with Immigration Justice, or the Boston Quaker Voluntary Service House? Or the faithful work being done by the MA Council of Churches, or our own Quarterly and Yearly Meetings? Sharing this news is simple on Facebook, and shows our values and involvement as a meeting.

A way to connect with seekers.

Social Media is not just media - it's "Social". That means people who are seeking a way of peace, a supportive place for their children, or a community of spiritual practice that shares their values might have questions. They might want to ask them in a neutral and safe space first. Websites are often visited 3-6 times before a new person actually sets foot in a new meeting or church. Facebook is a way to make those interactions more personal. Whether or not those seekers decide to visit, or join a meeting - we have already shared our story, and helped them with their spiritual journey no matter where it leads them.

A way to connect using different mediums.

Sharing video, visual graphics, links to written articles, and other posts speaks to varied people. Social media allows us to more easily use different ways of sharing to speak to different people in our community.

Commonly asked Questions:

Who will manage the page?

We recommend a number of page administrators - meeting members with basic FB experience (or willing to learn), that will agree to monitor the page and follow our discerned social media policy.

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(Facebook: a tool to help your Meeting or Church)

How does a FB page work?

A Facebook *page* is a publicly displayed social media feed. It is managed by administrators (like our website) who have permissions to post, to edit, and to delete things on/off the page.

Why do we need this particular platform?

Facebook is the most current, up to date, widely used outreach platform across many varied demographics in community. Some Meetings are finding that a Facebook page is even more effective than a website - people have the ability to “find” in the page (and therefore, information about our meeting) in various searches and links. 69% of all adults use facebook. 79% of all adults online use facebook (facebook is limited to age 13 and older).

We already have a website, isn't that enough online presence?

No, not for outreach. The website is a permanent “home” for information, how to find us, what to do at worship if you are a newcomer, what's happening weekly. People still have to search for us to find the website. They have to know a fair amount about what they are looking for “Quakers in Cambridge area”, etc. Social Media is social - it uses links and sharing to network others in unexpected ways. Therefore, Our FB page might also be stumbled upon by people who like “peace events” or “are looking for a new church” or “people with families who live in Arlington”. A page also allows any meeting member with a private facebook account to “share” news and links easily with others more widely. A Website and a Facebook page (despite both using the internet) have very different functions and uses - both can be important to a meeting.

What if some members are not online, or do not have a facebook account, will they be excluded from some meeting information?

No. We are suggesting this as an additional tool for meeting outreach, not our only method of communication. Much like we make announcements at meeting, and have them on our web calendar, and publish a newsletter, and share news in a google group - this is a tool that will be used specifically for the kind of sharing and news that works best for Facebook. It is very important we have multiple ways for members, newcomers, and community seekers to learn about our meeting and participate in its work at all levels.

How will will deal with inappropriate posts, or shared content?

This will be the work of the administrators - following a meeting social media policy. A Facebook page has many tools already in place - allowing only admins/selected people to post directly to the page, the ability to delete posts and comments, and even the ability to block certain words, or people who are not able to engage in respectful discussion. These policies would be under care and review of Fresh Pond Meeting as a whole (outreach working group? Admin and stewardship?) It is always a risk that we might encounter problematic people or conversations. It is also often not a persistent issue, and our outreach working group believes the limited chance of concern is balanced by the overall benefit to the meeting for outreach and positive engagement and conversation.

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