

Concord Friends Meeting
Joint meeting of Property and Ministry and Counsel committees
Hybrid/blended Meetings for Worship

Ministry and Counsel held a special meeting with the Property Committee to discuss how to handle hybrid/blended Meetings for Worship.

— “Hybrid/blended Meetings” means people will be present both in the Meetinghouse and remotely via Zoom

— While it seems possible that we might have a blended meeting for some time, the need for this might change over time. We decided to prepare in a way that could be used long term. All of the equipment can be used for other meeting functions such as presentations during workshops or other events.

— After discussion about the best approach, we settled on the following:

- Large screen/monitor (not projection)
 - This will be mounted on the Southeast wall or on a cart or stand that can be moved as needed.
- A wall mount could involve a cabinet or curtain to cover the screen when not in use. We will need to make sure we can deal with any light issues that make it hard to see the screen. (Curtains, etc.)
- Microphone on a fixed full sized stand. People with a testimony to share will walk up to the microphone. We might need a microphone-bearer to take the microphone to people who are unable to walk to the stand. The bearer would wear gloves and hold the microphone for the speaker.
- Following the Pendle Hill model, we might use more than one computer: one to handle the video and audio feeds, one to handle the traffic and administrative tasks. We may want more than one image to be viewed over Zoom.
- Ministry and Counsel will need to consider social distancing needs, including seating arrangements that can accommodate camera angles and screen viewing in the Meeting Room.
- Speakers that will let people in the Meetinghouse hear what our remote Friends are saying. We will need to take steps to eliminate feedback if the speakers also amplify voices in the Meetinghouse. Depending on the efficacy of the speakers, we might need additional support for those with hearing aids. We discussed how this can be complicated by different hearing aid systems. There is a preference for wireless speakers.

We formed an ad-hoc committee to explore this further:

Michael Evans, convener
Mark Barker
James Farquhar

Richard Kleinschmidt

This group will bring to the Meeting a set of recommendations for further discussion, including the possibility of a phased-in approach that lets us start with the simplest approach and expand as needed. We will consider solutions that can work for the foreseeable future, because we don't know how long the pandemic will last. And these solutions might benefit others who can't physically attend Meeting, even after the pandemic has subsided.