

May 23, 2020

Dear Friends,

Earlier this week, the governor started the process of a phased re-opening of the state. Although Houses of Worship are now permitted to meet in person, it does not mean that we should resume meeting in person. Our meeting is a place of healing, connection, and love. When we open our doors we need to do so responsibly, without fear, and in a way which prioritizes the safety of everyone.

We share the frustration, grief, and profound sense of loss created by this new reality. The usual ways we show our love and caring—through a touch, a hug, or a casserole—have been replaced by social distance. In this time of uncertainty, we crave the familiar. Adjusting to online worship has been a challenge for some Friends and we miss those who are not able to join us.

As the co-clerks of the meeting and co-clerks of Ministry and Worship met this week, we felt a clear leading to continue our virtual worship for the foreseeable future. We long to find ways to deepen our connection to each other and strengthen our community. We recognize the opportunity which this time of crisis has given us to see things anew. We have heard much joy and appreciation from many of you about the new shape of our community. We have been joined by Friends both near and far who are not able to attend in-person meeting. We have been joined by new Friends who have discovered us as a virtual meeting. We have made ourselves accessible to Friends with mobility challenges or hearing loss.

We have faith that we are being led into a better place. Might we be moving towards a new reality which is more inclusive and allows us to be more faithful? We welcome your comments, suggestions, and feedback. Please contact any one of us with your questions or concerns. This is a journey we are all on together.

Faithfully,

Betsy Kantt, co-clerk FPMM

Will Taber, co-clerk FPMM

Melody Brazo, co-clerk Ministry and Worship

Becky Phipps, co-clerk Ministry and Worship