

PULLMAN-MOSCOW MONTHLY MEETING
STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT 2020-2021

We are grateful to be able to keep the meeting together online, and have been carrying out the duties of the meeting, but there is something to be said for being there in person that is missing. Covid has had both positive and negative impacts on the state of our Meeting and on our individual lives.

Meeting online has enabled us to stay connected both with our local and with the broader Quaker community. Being able to meet with Friends, especially people at a distance, is such a blessing and a welcome and beautiful miracle. It has been wonderful to have Sandpoint, Lower Columbia, Tri-Cities and Montana Gathering of Friends join us in meetings for worship. A newcomer to our meeting was grateful to be welcomed in and have a place to worship. The possibility to visit blessed communities we've been individually part of in the past has also been a gift. We continue to meet in person for worship with one of our longtime members who is home bound in an assisted living facility.

Meeting online has significantly reduced our driving; half of our regular attenders make more than a 70 mile round trip to Meeting, and are grateful for savings of time, expense and the reduced carbon footprint.

Reflecting on the reduced driving led to our realization that preparing and traveling and arriving at a place together, and settling into a place where worship is the only thing being done, are aspects of our corporate worship experience. Being at home in front of a computer has a different dynamic. Being in a dedicated space for worship facilitates worship.

Another toll from worshipping remotely is on the Quaker sense of corporate worship. Some of us question if it is possible to fully experience or feel that "corporate worship" energy; a current that runs through a group that centers us; where everyone is in synch with each other – even to the sense that our hearts are beating as one; that mystical miracle that happens with a truly gathered meeting.

We very much miss the presence of several who have been an essential part of our corporate worship, but who do not feel comfortable with online worship. Additionally, Covid and the whole situation has been disorienting. It throws aspects of our lives into disarray, and as a result "going to meeting" on Firstday is sometimes beyond us, even when we need it most.

We have a concern for our spiritual health; we haven't intentionally made ways, as a Meeting, to deepen our individual spiritual lives, or as a blessed community. The strong leadings of a member led Meeting to agree to a program on Spiritual Healing for Quarterly. That decision was made near the end of 2019, and is just coming to fruition at a time when the need is great.

When we resume meeting in person, we sense a need to continue a remote worship capability to support and foster inter-meeting visitation and a weekly connection to a broader Quaker community. Shared experiences after the rise of meeting, especially recently with some of Sandpoint Meeting, have highlighted unexpected shared interests, such as puppets & marionettes and poetry. It contributes to community and a good sense of one another, and in fact that of God in one another.

We are glad to be able to sit "together" in expectant worship and go deeply, connecting to so much energy and light and love.... to be connected to something greater that is deep within us.

