

Columbia Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting Report 2021

1. In what ways is your meeting answering the call to become an anti-racist faith community?

Second hour programs (e.g. UBI) and selected books to become more aware of the issues and conscious decisions on how we spend our money/impact on black business, also to the scope of the issue and how it affects the community. Interested in educational/intellectual tools to become an effective communicator, especially when the conversation has different perspectives. Perhaps there is more we can do? Our meetings efforts have been impacted by the pandemic. Early efforts to have a series of discussions on this issue and members that were interested in facilitating these discussions have been unable to be present in the virtual meeting environment. AVP involves a lot of people in the community and has conducted a virtual workshop. The meeting continues to support the program. The meeting continues to strive toward inclusion. The meeting works towards efforts to counter act voter suppression by putting up signs to support everyone's voice during the election season. What are ways you and your meeting responded to the environmental impact of COVID?

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The pandemic had an effect which led to the meeting to have less of a carbon footprint by not driving our cars to the meeting. Worshipping on zoom has had other serendipitous effects to include visiting other worship groups virtually, and also the meeting looking at ways to maintain a virtual presence by having a hybrid meeting. Are we going to be able to sacrifice some things such as physical presence for the good of the environment? The meeting's use of the land to create an opportunity to grow food for all to share during the pandemic has been a positive. We had two presenters from QEW and others from our local Sierra Club with concerns and activities supporting a healthy environment.

3. How have we comforted one another during times of grief, loss, and isolation; and checked in on the emotional and financial health of Friends?

An issue for our meeting has been the inability of some friends/Friends being unable to attend the virtual meetings. Friends try to reach out individually and in other ways. Friends have been supportive of one another, by delivering food, if needed during these difficult times. Are there ways we can approach this better? The garden has been a real resource for our meeting, as this has assisted friends/Friends being able to comfort one another.

4. How has your meeting approached the sense of grief, loss, and the emotional health of the children, including the lack of regular physical interaction?

Children were able to participate in another church's world religions class. The meeting continues to experiment with virtual intergenerational programs. Children have also been present during workday and to assist in the garden.

5. What growth has happened in your meeting in response to the stresses of this year?

Our meeting has been resilient and responded in novel ways to the many changes over the past year. For example, the idea to put together a Quaker cookbook even though we are unable to eat together anymore. We have had visitors to our meeting and some members who were at a distance were able to attend.