

# Blended/Hybrid Worship: Zoom and In-person Together Resources

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An interest group, in two parts, for New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM), facilitated by Carol Clarke, Melissa Travis Dunham, Fred Dettmer

Changes to this document since it was first shared:

- Added a section [Technology Needed for Blended Worship](#) to identify equipment or technology needed in general, and specific equipment being used by some meetings.
- More links and articles listed in the [Articles and Links](#) section.

## Queries on Blended Worship

We (the facilitators) reflected on these queries as we prepared for this interest group. We invite you to consider them as well.

- Quakers from the beginning were paradigm changers: we are in the midst of a current paradigm change. We are walking an old path in new shoes. How has Friends' worship adapted to fit the requirements or expectations of behavior in the last 15 months?
- We have already adapted to new realities; our purpose is being in community together during our Meeting for Worship, to create the space to be faithful for our community. How do different Friends respond to Meeting for Worship online? How does online worship provide opportunities for some Friends? And how does online worship create barriers or limitations for other Friends?
- Friends have had different experiences and traumas during pandemic; how can we build bridges and support each other in our current reality?
- How do we be open to the Spirit and open to continuing revelation and find our way to be faithful while we are using technology? How can we create a more meaningful, gathered meeting using technology? Let us listen carefully and worshipfully to each other as we discern how to move forward in learning the best way to worship together. We should not rush to a decision, but must take time and care to reach discernment.
- We are seekers but also holders of a precious heritage of discoveries. We, like every generation, must find the light and life again for ourselves. Only what we have valued and truly made our own, not by assertion, but by lives of faithful commitment, can we hand off to the future. Even then, we must humbly acknowledge that our vision of the truth will again and again be amended.

## Technology Needed for Blended Worship

We'll be discussing this more in the second session. If your meeting has already been investigating or doing hybrid or blended worship, you've already identified this equipment. If you're just beginning to explore options for hybrid/blended meeting for worship, this information can be a starting point.

### Basic Equipment Required

In general to have a meeting for worship comprising some people in-person and some people on Zoom (or other conference software), you will need:

- A computer or laptop with reliable, high-speed internet
- A microphone, so the people online can hear messages shared by people in the room
- Speakers, so the people in the room can hear messages shared by people online
- A camera, so the people online can see who they are worshipping with
- A projector or monitor, so the people in the room can see who they are worshipping with online

There are also technology solutions that combine some or all of these functions into one piece of equipment. A sound bar or audio bar is equipment that combines microphones, camera, and speakers into one compact device. A conferencing camera, such as the Meeting Owl, is another type of all-in-one device. There is also equipment that includes the computer connection piece in the combination.

### Considerations When Choosing Technology

As you explore technology options, some things to keep in mind include:

- Where is the meeting for worship taking place? Inside or outside?
- How big is the meetingroom? How far away will people be sitting from the microphone?
- How does sound travel or echo in your meetingroom? How tall are the ceilings? Do you have carpeting or other soft surfaces that will absorb sound?
- Does your meeting already own equipment that can be used? If you have a sound system, can the output from that system be plugged into a computer to share via Zoom?
- Do you have reliable, high speed internet?
- Who will set up the equipment and use the equipment? Do you have people in your meeting who are comfortable setting up and using the technology you're considering? How easy or difficult will it be to learn to use?
- Do you want to set the equipment up and leave it in place (plug and play technology)? Or do you prefer, or need, to move the equipment out of sight when it's not in use?
- What is your budget for buying equipment?

## Specific Technology or Equipment

**Purchase Meeting** has a D7 device from DTEN (<https://dten.com/d7>). \$3,500 This all-in-one Zoom Room system features built-in:

- 55-inch touch-screen monitor
- 16 microphones
- 120-degree, universal focus camera
- speakers

Purchase also got a heavy-duty TV stand to hold the D7 machine (which weighs about 50 lbs). \$150

**Ithaca Monthly Meeting** held hybrid worship from August through November 2020, and then again from April 2021 until July 11, 2021. The equipment used includes:

- Chromebook - we do NOT recommend this for Zoom
- Blue Yeti microphone, \$130 ([www.bluedesigns.com/products/yeti/](http://www.bluedesigns.com/products/yeti/))
- Wide-angle camera and tri-pod
- Optoma Technology EH200ST Short-Throw Multimedia DLP Projector, \$800, ceiling mounted
- Basic computer speakers

**Cambridge Meeting**, of New England Yearly Meeting, has a document detailing their technology set-up. It's available on Kathleen Wooten's website:

<http://quakerkathleen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Hybrid-Meeting-Tech-Setup.pdf>

**Britain Yearly Meeting** compiled a document in 2020 detailing the technology setup for several Meetings in the UK.

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/sharing-our-stories-and-equipment-for-blended-worship>

The **Meeting Owl** is an all-in-one conferencing camera from [Owl Labs](https://owllabs.com/) (<https://owllabs.com/>). It includes a 360-degree camera and audio and automatically zooms to focus on who is speaking. There are two models of Meeting Owl:

- Meeting Owl: \$799, 12 foot radius for audio pickup
- Meeting Owl Pro: \$999, 18 foot radius for audio pickup, better camera and speaker

## Articles and Links

We have found these articles, links, and online resources helpful in considering and implementing blended Meeting for Worship:

**Fruit Basket Upset and the Eighth Continent** by Emily Provance. Emily, a member of Fifteenth Street Meeting and NYYM, writes about Quakers and the internet.

(<https://quakeremily.wordpress.com/2021/03/16/fruit-basket-upset-and-the-eighth-continent/>)

Published March 16, 2021

**Hybrid Worship and Quaker Values from Reno Friends** Wendy Swallow, of Reno Friends Meeting, reflects on a workshop, “Future of Worship”, that used the Quaker testimonies of “Equality, Simplicity, Community and Unity with Nature” as guides to consider hybrid worship. (<https://www.renofriends.org/hybrid-worship-and-quaker-values/>) Published May 29, 2021

**Hybrid Worship and Gatherings by New England Quakers.** This page offers tips, suggestions and things to consider before a beginning hybrid experiment in your meeting. (<https://neym.org/hybrid-worship-and-gatherings>) Retrieved July 7, 2021

**Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) Guidance on Re-Opening**  
([https://www.pym.org/pym-guidance-on-re-opening/?fbclid=IwAR35cxOO\\_ipVHwZDP88fZDgmdBUou9NNknoF\\_rv5ewFUK7bsAh\\_H0KXyacs](https://www.pym.org/pym-guidance-on-re-opening/?fbclid=IwAR35cxOO_ipVHwZDP88fZDgmdBUou9NNknoF_rv5ewFUK7bsAh_H0KXyacs)) Retrieved July 2, 2021

From the above link, PYM also has articles on specifics of hybrid worship, including:

**About Hybrid Meetings: How They Work**  
(<https://www.pym.org/about-hybrid-meetings-how-they-work/>) Retrieved July 15, 2021

**Meeting Owl Pro Device: Technology to Support Digital Worship.** An overview of the Meeting Owl, including pros and cons to using it.  
(<https://www.pym.org/meeting-owl-pro-device-technology-to-support-digital-worship/>), Retrieved July 15, 2021

**QuakerKathleen: Being the Church Online** Kathleen Wooten is part of New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) and has traveled throughout New England to meet with Quakers both online and in-person. Her website includes a variety of links about online worship, including articles or advice from other Meetings or Yearly Meetings.  
(<http://quakerkathleen.org/being-the-church-online/>)

**Britain Yearly Meeting** provides advice and thoughts on blended worship, and has compiled a document on how individual meetings are doing blended worship, including specific equipment:  
<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/thoughts-on-blended-worship>  
<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/sharing-our-stories-and-equipment-for-blended-worship>  
Both retrieved July 2, 2021

**Learnings from 2021 Quaker Spring Hybrid Gathering**, by David Coletta, Three Rivers Meeting, NEYM  
([https://docs.google.com/document/d/13uGchG97tWnWC\\_DonxmhaENCTIDhaGAN7csEugD4Xrw/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/13uGchG97tWnWC_DonxmhaENCTIDhaGAN7csEugD4Xrw/edit#)), Retrieved July 15, 2021

**MIDWEEK June 2, 2021: David Coletta and Jen Higgins-Newman | Exploring Hybridity,**  
video from Beacon Hill Friends House  
(<https://youtu.be/p-euLAvNZrQ>)

**More Easily Add and Manage Your Pronouns in Zoom**, from the Zoom Blog. Many people choose to add their preferred pronouns to their name when they are in a Zoom meeting, by renaming themselves. Zoom has now made the sharing of pronouns a more integrated option. This feature must be turned on under account settings first, then individual participants can edit their user profile to indicate their preferred pronouns.

(<https://blog.zoom.us/zoom-pronoun-sharing/?fbclid=IwAR2n5MTanN5-HkmfGceTOu-PgWL4IDiLQcHMBN7pSMGCOVRdb3KOKmTVkiw>), Retrieved July 15, 2021

**Facebook groups** related to Quaker or hybrid worship:

Quaker Gatherings: best practices and creative explorations  
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/quakergatherings>)

A private Facebook group for Quakers sharing new ways of gathering faithfully and safely.

Quaker Communications and Outreach  
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/QuakerComms>)

A private Facebook group for people serving their meetings or yearly meetings in communications, outreach, and related capacities.

Zoom Faith: encouragement, expertise and community  
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/zoomfaith>)

A public Facebook group focused on using Zoom for congressional life. Most of the members are from faith communities with a centralized speaker (rabbi, pastor), worship segments, and many times music.