

Annapolis Friends Meeting for Worship, 1.12.2020

This is the latest update as of 1.12.2020. We will continue to update decisions as needed.

Dear Friends,

As the number of cases of coronavirus in Maryland continue to grow, we are called to reassess our situation at AFM and consider how to best serve the health and safety needs of each other and our community. With the guidance of Ministry & Worship, AFM is beginning a voluntary effort to comply with public health guidance to avoid crowds by **asking Friends to worship from home during our regular Meeting for Worship hours rather than gathering at the Meeting House.**

Current guidelines call for those “at risk” based on age or health status to avoid crowds as much as possible to reduce personal risk [health.maryland.gov/coronavirus]. The call for “social distancing” is not just about *personal* protection. Public health officials are noting the importance of immediate and collective efforts to slow the speed with which the virus is transmitted in order to keep from overwhelming the health system. **This is not a time to panic, but it is a time to be aware and proactive.**

With these perspectives in mind, **M&W recommends to Friends that we participate in Meeting for Worship this Sunday from our homes.**

Experiment in Remote Worship:

Everyone, but especially those in an “at risk” group, are encouraged to join in Meeting for Worship from 11 to 12 noon this Sunday from home. We will be experimenting with the option to join together via a conference call. We invite as many as willing to help us pilot this and determine if it is a feasible to use this going forward. For those who wish to call in, information will be sent separately soon.

In-Person Worship:

Since this is a recommended, but voluntary, initiative at this point, in-person worship will be held this week. Please be aware that we will be piloting the remote phone connection. Despite efforts to minimize disruptions, there may be hiccups. Limiting physical contact is encouraged along with good health practices:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Use sanitizing wipes often
- Limit touching your face
- Use a tissue to cover your coughs and sneezes and discard immediately
- Stay home and away from others if you are ill

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Children’s Religious Education (CRE):

Children's Religious Education will NOT be held this week. Jen DeLorge McKeown at jdelorgemckeown@gmail.com, 443-995-6640 is interested in speaking with parents about the option of setting up on-line/Zoom interactions for CRE if in-person meet-ups are limited into the future.

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Future Status:

Needless to say, this is a fluid situation with new information and learning each day. We will continue to do our best to update and keep information coming your way.

While disruption is hard when it occurs, it can be the birthplace of innovation. We will find our way through this together. We will care for one another along the way. We will be a stronger community for tackling the challenges together.

Please be in touch with any questions or concerns.

In Light,
Martha Baer
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