

2022 Annual Report
Worship and Ministry
Tim Mammel, Clerk

Worship and Ministry continues our dedication to supporting the meeting community in deepening worship and deepening discernment in decision-making. This year, we considered how better to integrate technology for hybrid meetings for worship. We continued, at the request of Clerk of the Meeting, Mark Ratliff, to create material and programming to deepen discernment in decision-making for business meetings. Worship and Ministry hosted the yearly Christmas Eve service. The service was primarily on Zoom with a few friends broadcasting from the meetinghouse, worshipping in candlelight. We are looking forward to being able to have the Christmas Eve service in person again.

In February, Worship and Ministry issued a document entitled: 'Faithfully Participating in Meeting Decision-Making' that was read at the February business meeting. The document asks us to contemplate what the Spirit requires of us in the search for answers in our decision-making. We are reminded that once we release a message in business meeting it belongs to the care of the meeting. Once that happens, we don't have to defend our point of view," just to hold the meeting in the light, and trust the Spirit." This document is attached to this report.

In mid-February, we presented a program called "Coming to Love," a presentation that was given at Adult First Day Class. In this session of reflection and worship sharing, we raised the question of how we can share differences of opinion without having to be heavy or contentious and be in a space where we are led by the Spirit. We suggested love is the key element to this, along with humor. We considered queries that ask how we can "give up our points of view" and turn our wills over to the Spirit. We considered how we can respond to God in everyone, including Friends who have different points of view.

On Easter, Worship and Ministry presented an Easter Service program titled "From Horror through Grief to Hope: What the Easter message can offer in today's challenging world." The service was a blend of readings, pictures, and music. Jeff Durshin had a key role in the service by leading a choir that sang hymns and inspirational songs for the service. It was a gift to have music in the Meetinghouse once again.

We had two memorial services this year. The first was for Elizabeth Hurst on March 5th, held at George School Meetinghouse. On June 1st, there was a memorial service for Almira Sharp, former clerk of Newtown Meeting, that was held in the Newtown Meeting House.

In June, we resumed the summer outdoor worship, held at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings under the green canopy provided by the old trees in front of the meetinghouse. In September, when First Day School resumed, we moved the time of outdoor worship to 8:45 to 9:30 to allow time for transition into the First Day School classes. We encourage the meeting to hold this time period of worship from 8:45 outdoors, to the close of worship in the meetinghouse at 12:00 noon, to be a period of continuous worship, rather than separate meetings for worship.

During the Summer, Worship and Ministry initiated a conversation with the Tech Team to explore how to make the technology more conducive to worship in the meetinghouse. Worship and Ministry has suggested that the Meeting clarify our commitment to using hybrid technology so that the sense of the meeting can guide our decisions on how to move ahead with the broadcast technology. We continue to work with the whole meeting community to have a clear vision for our worship space and to be as welcoming as possible to people with a wide range of needs and abilities. We continue to seek ways our committee can serve Newtown Meeting in finding how we can bring more richness to worship. We are fortunate that Newtown Meeting is a thriving community. We see many more opportunities to deepen and enrich our worship and spiritual practices.

Memorial Minutes are being prepared for Hurst and Sharp.