USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS
To Be Presented to the Body
(Second Reading)
Fall Sessions 2016

The use of digital communication systems in the conduct of Friends' business has great benefits and has also created challenges for Quaker business process. The use of technologies such as video conferencing and electronic mail makes it possible to reduce the need for travel, and thereby expands participation by distant Friends. Our business can be responsive to the fast pace of developments in the world. Many Friends expect to use these technologies as they engage in the life of the Society. At the same time, we must be mindful that among us are Friends who cannot or choose not to use these technologies freely.

When use of these technologies replaces or augments face-to-face meetings, we must maintain discipline so that corporate worship, spiritual discernment, and the presence of the Spirit in our meetings and assemblies is retained. Each Yearly Meeting body that uses these technologies should establish agreements and protocols to ensure inclusivity and full participation, protect privacy and confidentiality, maintain collegiality, and support openness to Spirit.

Committees and other Yearly Meeting bodies seeking to conduct business by ways other than physical meetings should do so only upon formal approval at a face-to-face meeting. While they may choose to use e-mail or other asynchronous digital communication for scheduling meetings or distributing documents, they are advised not to use it to share ministry, respond to proposals, or engage in substantive discussions. These activities are best suited to synchronous communication such as physical meetings or telephone or video conferencing.

[To be inserted on p. 90 as the last paragraph in the section "General Business Procedures" that begins on p. 87.]