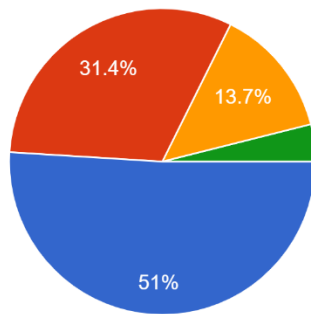


Results of the MFM Hearing Survey

1. Presently, when I attend meeting in person and without use of the headset hearing devices, when friends speak (choose best answer)

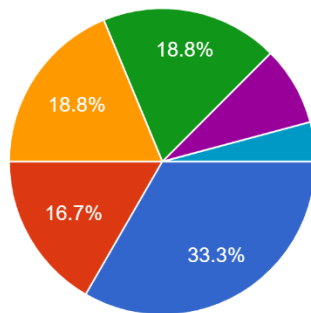
51 responses



- I hear almost everyone
- I hear most, except for the soft-spoken and far away
- I have difficulty hearing many people
- I do not attend in person or I always use a headset

2. When I attended in person, thinking back to the use of a handheld mic and speaker in the room, please check best answer

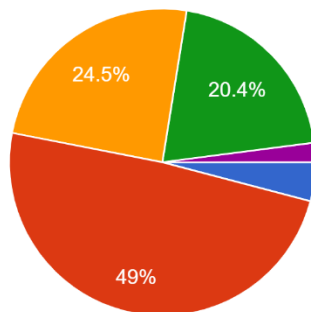
48 responses



- I was usually able to hear most people without the mic but did not find the mic...
- I was usually able to hear most people without the mic and did find the mic int...
- The mic improved my ability to hear and I liked its use.
- The mic improved my ability to hear but I found it intrusive: I like it better without...
- The mic with speaker in the room was...
- Even with the mic I had some trouble...

3. When we were using a handheld mic and speaker in the room, how did you feel about the introduction of a "mic runner" carrying the mic to people who wished to speak?

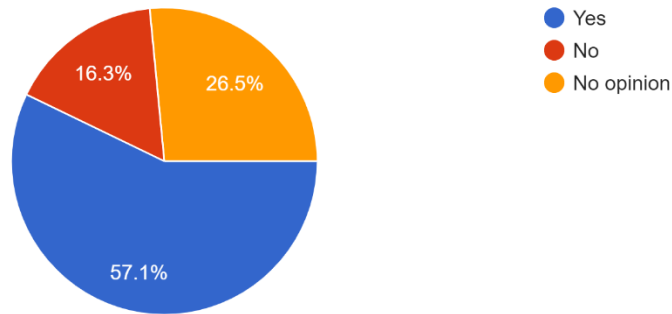
49 responses



- I liked it
- Didn't bother me
- Bothered me a little
- I found it interfered with my worship experience
- No opinion

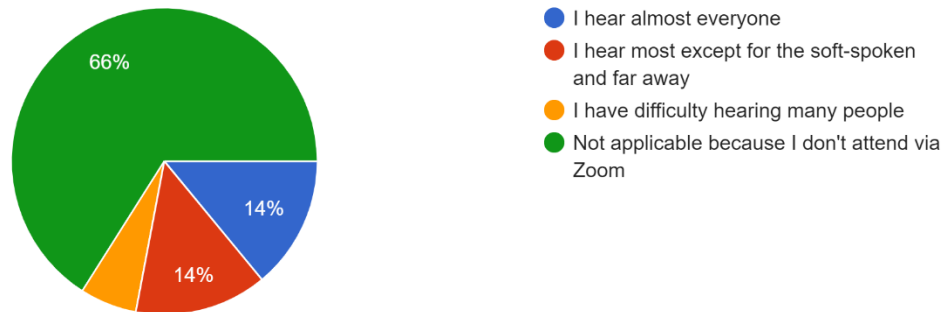
4. Other larger meetings (including Madison and Minneapolis) use multiple mics to minimize the distance and time for the mic to be brought to the...instead of one to reduce movement during meeting.

49 responses



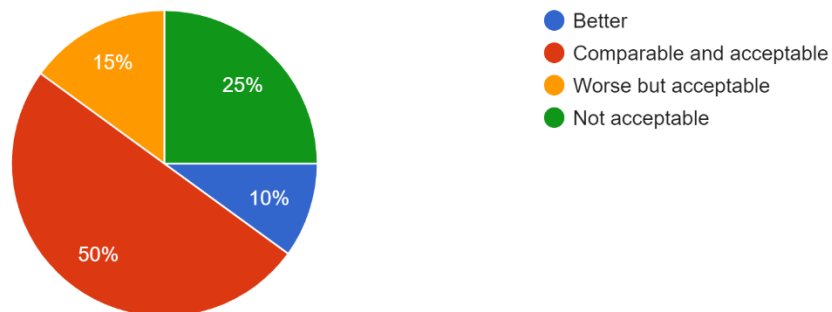
5. Presently, when I attend via Zoom and ceiling mics are used (choose best answer)

50 responses



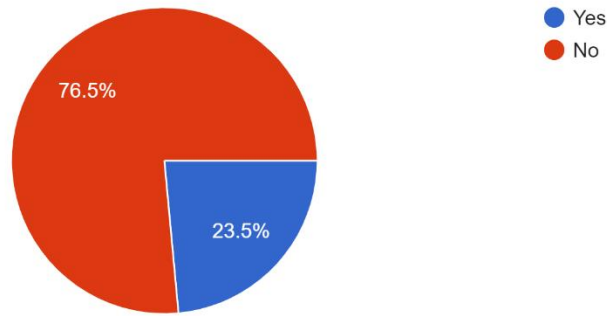
6. For those who attend meeting using Zoom: when comparing what I heard when the hand-held mics were used with what I hear now with the ceiling mics, the sound now (with ceiling mics) is:

20 responses



7. Do you use hearing aids?

51 responses



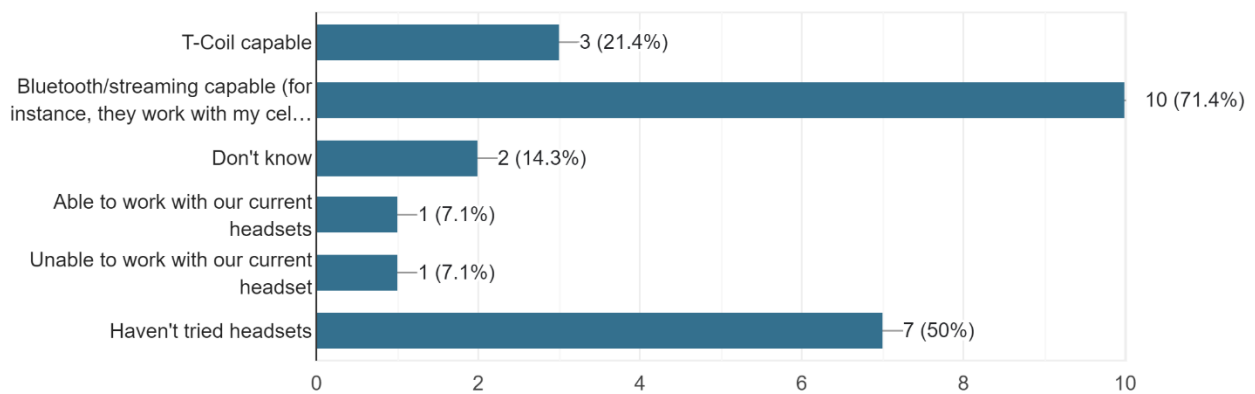
8. Do you use a headset assistive device when attending meeting in person (choose best answer)

49 responses



9. If you wear hearing aids, please check all that apply—are they

14 responses



This might be out of line with Quaker practice, but I offer it up anyway: would it be possible to use a set of standing mics that people with messages go to?

Slightly amplifying speech via ceiling, or other unobtrusive microphones or amplified speakers seem like the best option.

When I've forgotten my hearing aids the headsets have worked well for me.

Hand-held mikes only useful if people hold them correctly. Persons identifying themselves when speaking actually enhances my ability to understand them.

Do microphones have to be brought to a speaker? Could they be placed at strategic locations and people walk to them? Or would that be a disturbance or a problem regarding accessibility? Also, when we've had memorial services, the people speaking couldn't be heard by the audience. That needs to be addressed. Thank you!!

Having at least 2 mics (and mic runners) is a reasonable solution to most hearing problems. Thanks for asking!

1) I find that there are quite a few soft-spoken friends in meeting and the ceiling mics just do not pick up their voices. Could we invent a hand signal that means "please speak up" in order to avoid people loudly uttering "please speak up"! I find that really jarring!

2) Are the multiple mics mentioned in regard to Madison and Mpls meeting on stationary stands requiring people to rise and walk over to them in order to speak? If so, that would seriously inhibit my vocal ministry! Thank you for this opportunity!

Not all answers above are exactly right for me. I do have trouble hearing soft-spoken, far away speakers, and appreciated our being able to offer the use of a mic so all could hear each speaker.

I use a headset during the Zoom meetings which makes hearing easy

Severely dislike microphones! The scurrying about it causes etc. I find to be disruptive. Would prefer we acquire a few more effective hearing devices for those who need them because I often find the hearing assisted devices are all being used by the time I look to see if there is one left for me.. I don't wear hearing aids because Meeting is the only place I go where I have a hard time hearing what people are saying. It is frustrating! I'm glad we're addressing this issue.

I appreciate all the work that went into creating this survey and Meeting's willingness to test alternative approaches to this difficult problem.

Well designed survey! I have not attended in person for several years. No basis to answer question # 2.

I found use of the mic made it harder to hear because of distortion, people not holding it correctly and speaking too softly or holding it too close which distorts as well as being too loud. The regular headsets work fine with my hearing aids but most need to be replaced because just one

side works or other problems. The ones for the old style hearing aids do not work with my hearing aids.

I disliked the mic! I have been told by multiple people that when I use the mic, they struggle to hear me. Those same people said that when I speak in meeting without a mic, they can hear me just fine. When I am speaking in the mic, I feel like my voice is blasting throughout the meetinghouse. I often feel blasted by the mic when other people speak. That is just the physical issue of the mic.

As far as spiritual issues of the mic, there are many. People are told so many conflicting things about the mic ie: "Hold it this way," "No, hold it that way," "You're too loud," "We can't hear you." There are also so many extraneous blasting squeals, squeaks, etc. there is no focus on the message itself. I can't stand it!

I feel sad that this is such a struggle in our Meeting. We claim to be an inclusive community but those that don't want technology in the room don't seem to mind excluding those that need it. It seems selfish as they have the option of meeting without technology in the library but those with hearing issues don't have an option when no technology is available. I hope that more and better headsets will help enough to avoid the need for mic's but, if not, I hope multiple mics can be a solution, at least for two Meetings a month.

Appreciate all your efforts!!! None of us speak as well as we should, including me. How can we encourage/teach people to (1) e-nun-ci-ate, (2) read peoples' body language and facial expressions that say "I CANT HEAR YOU!", and (3) use their outdoor voices? Thank you.

It is such a relief not to have microphones any more in meeting for worship. Hope we can make things work for everyone (in meeting for business, too!)

Question 2: Even with the mic I had some trouble hearing. *and* I found it intrusive. I like it better without the mic.

Question 8: I've tried the headsets provided at the meetinghouse but find that they amplify the noise of the exhaust fan as well as voices. Making everything louder doesn't improve clarity.

Other remarks: Adding more and more technology isn't the only solution to a problem and often not the best solution. Our infatuation with tech can blind us to other approaches. Raising awareness of the need to speak clearly in worship would go a long way toward allowing Friends to hear vocal ministry. I find that the people I hear most clearly aren't necessarily those who speak loudest. Lifting one's head and not speaking to your shoes but projecting into the room, not speaking too rapidly or running words together, not dropping one's voice at the end of a sentence, and, yes, being aware of how loud you need to speak to reach everyone in the room would be more successful than any number of microphones, amplifiers, headsets, or other gizmos. Educating Friends would provide more improvement than any tech, and be far less expensive.

Combining remote participants over video conferencing software with those participating in person in our meetingroom will always be unsatisfactory for both groups. The experiences are so different from each other that they will by their nature resist all attempts to blend them into a unified experience.

The times I attended on Zoom I didn't know what sort of mics they were using.

Several of the headsets have loud background hum.

Headsets essential for greeter. I don't know if it's aging electronics but much more background buzz than there used to be. I thought passing a mic around worked well--minimal disruption far outweighed by the increase in audibility.

I do need hearing aids but I am uncertain about how to choose among options and providers and how some sounds will seem too loud, (I tried them once) especially in light of all this. When we were using microphones, I was able to forget that I need to tackle this. Very recently on Zoom I missed multiple in person speakers between worship and announcements and really have no idea what I missed, so Zoom worship no longer provides a positive experience. Dropping microphones seems like an ease for some who are against technology but it causes a burden for me, and I feel sad we are catering to that group when it is clearly a very small number.

a. I miss perhaps 25-50% of words spoken without hand-held mic. Do a lot of guessing. b. Regarding question #8, it isn't a matter of not liking them. I tried multiple devices. Each produced static when turned up high enough to be functional. I would turn them down until someone spoke - then have to turn them up. Could hear the speech over the static. The process does not lend itself to being spiritually "in the moment." c. Naturally soft-spoken folks are not the only issue . Many of us start off speaking with strong volume. But along the way peter out. Additionally, sharing heart-felt messages does not lend itself to strong speech. The use of masks produces additional challenges. d. On whole, I hear Zoom speakers consistently better than in-the-room speakers. Thank you for this survey.

Thank you!!

I am in favor of an option that maximizes accessibility and inclusion. However, I find that the way people shout at the person using the microphone ("further away!" "like an ice cream cone!" "not like that!") to be obnoxious and not in the spirit of worship.

I attend predominantly in person but sometimes on zoom. The biggest problem I have encountered was on zoom for the most recent Adult RE (Bill Brown). Everyone was soft spoken and I could not hear well enough to continue listening. Generally, even though I liked it better without a hand held mike, I gradually became accustomed to it and it bothered me much less. M.

Now, at the age of 93, I am profoundly deaf. I do not hear well even with new hearing aids bought in September, so there was no point in my trying to fill out the survey I read about in Quaker Talk. It said I could give feedback to the clerk or to . My problem is not so much with volume, which hearing aids are limited to help with, but my inability to recognize consonants. I need to face a person close up, then I usually can understand what they are saying if they speak slowly and loud enough. I think I do some lip reading then.

My vision is also deteriorating so I had to quit driving last fall and get rid of my car. I have become rather reclusive, especially now with covid making another fresh round of contagion. I do

not socialize with others in my building at group activities which resumed after the time of the pandemic.

I had stopped going to Meeting some years ago not only because I was limiting my driving to "close to home" but also because of my frustration wanting to hear messages delivered in Meeting and to be able to socialize afterwards. The equipment for hearing assistance then did not help me. Even later with zoom, I was frustrated trying to hear. I wonder if it's better now, if people use a microphone. If so, perhaps I should try again