

Northside Friends Meeting is a Quaker Meeting located in the Uptown Neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and Illinois quarantine we have continued to worship and share fellowship over video from our homes and have drawn comfort and strength from this continuing connection to our community.

At a recent check-in video call, we shared how we felt affected by the pandemic – we spoke of feeling sorrow, frustration, fear, guilt, and despair. Although these feelings were painful, we felt lifted at being able to be together in our sorrow.

We know this crisis is far from over. We will experience more frustration and fear and guilt and despair and terrible, terrible loss. But we know too that sorrow shared is sorrow halved and it serves none of us to carry our burdens alone.

There has been no call from the US government for a Day of Mourning to acknowledge the grief and loss caused by the pandemic thus far. As people of faith, it falls to us.

Our testimony of integrity compels us to speak truth – we will not deny our grief nor refuse to acknowledge our loss. Our testimony of equality compels us to see the privilege enjoyed by those whom the pandemic has touched lightly and witness the pain of those whom the pandemic has wounded deeply. Our testimony of community compels us to come together – as Quakers, Chicagoans, Americans, humans, and children of the Earth.

We invite all people to hold Memorial Day, Monday May 25, 2020, as a Day of Mourning. We invite you to take time and to share your burdens with your loved ones and the communities from which you draw comfort and strength. We too will be worshipping together on that day and gather with you in spirit.

We also invite you to join with us in a visible action. At sundown wherever you live, light a candle and step outside and hold a moment of silence for what we have lost together.