**QPLC Virtual Vigil Guidelines - May 2021**

On 6 January 2021, the US Capitol building in Washington, DC was violently attacked by an organised mob of people. The shock of this event and the need to support one another and be together in community led many groups to hold vigils, primarily in the US. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, most of these vigils were held virtually.

We envision virtual vigils as an opportunity to come together for worship and sharing. Friends may wish to draw from the regular Virtual Witness Wednesday Silent Reflection hosted by Friends Committee on National Legislation <https://act.fcnl.org/event/witness-wednesday-virtual-events/2157/?source=fcnlweb>

QPLC has developed the following guidelines for virtual vigils which we organise.

1. Deciding to hold a vigil:
   1. A possible vigil can be suggested by any member of the committee either directly or at the suggestion of another Friend who is not on the committee.
   2. The decision whether or not to hold a vigil will be discerned by the whole committee, following discussion, whenever possible. In those situations which are time urgent, discernment will be made by those members who respond to an urgent email from the QPLC convener/clerk.
2. Possible reasons for a vigil to take place:
   1. An event should be have national or international impact, eg an attack on a place of worship in Australia
   2. Can be part of a national or international campaign, eg to stop violence towards women and their children,
   3. Can be commemorative, eg as an alternative to traditional ANZAC commemorations
3. Note that some vigils would need to be organised more quickly than others in order to be appropriate and relevant, eg in response to an attack on a place of religion compared to an alternative ANZAC commemoration.
4. Technology and talent: develop a list of Friends with the skills to host virtual vigils and who are willing to be involved and ensure that we have access to the necessary technology
5. Promoting the vigil: Cascade information through QPLC mailing list and correspondents, RM Clerks, relevant AYM committees, RM peace and social justice or similar committees and individual Friends.
6. Evaluating: virtual vigils can evolve based on our experiences and what we learn from other virtual vigils, in Australia and overseas.

**Suggested format**When setting up the vigil, it may be helpful to choose a prompt for reflection by those attending. This could be a quote that relates to the topic of the vigil and can be sent out with the notice.

It also could be helpful to tell those attending what to expect when they come and a suggested format is:

* Include in the notice how long the session will go for – 45 minutes to 1 hour is probably appropriate
* The facilitator of the session may open with the quote that has been circulated
* The facilitator could explain how the session will work.
* The group wills settle into silence. Anyone is welcome to share a message or reflection. We ask that you leave space between messages and only share once.
* A few minutes before the agreed finishing time, the facilitator will close the gathering, share announcements and if agreed, invite people to join a break out room to meet in small groups to introduce themselves and share reflections on the session.