

Online JYM 2020-21 Epistle

To Friends everywhere,

We send our warm greetings from JYM 2020: The Remix! Thirteen young friends and three organisers from Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK gathered online from the 1st to the 3rd of January 2021 to attend. Postponed from Easter 2020, the gathering was held on Zoom, making it the first ever online Ireland JYM! The theme of this year's JYM was Community, which we felt was especially important for us to contemplate this year.

With two sessions, led by Ciara and Oliver, we explored the theme through a variety of wonderful activities and games. In Ciara's session we made use of the Zoom whiteboard to hold a 'walking debate'. Some contentious issues emerged, such as whether pineapple belongs on pizza or not. There were also some deeper topics, such as whether a community can be as effective online as in-person. In Oliver's session we split into groups of different sizes to find the things we had in common, and we pondered a selection of quotations on community by people such as Parker J. Palmer and Mahatma Gandhi. Then we made paper people chains in which we wrote a word, a place and a person or group we associated with community, and one thing we could do to strengthen community going forwards. Both sessions were really fun and thought-provoking, and opened our minds and hearts to a deeper understanding of community.

Throughout the three days we played games as a group, which included two exciting rounds of Geo-Guesser, the mysterious games of Mafia, and the hilarious Story Game. In base groups we did a variety of activities such as the weather report (an analogy for how everyone is feeling at a given time), discussing the sessions, Scribble games (where one person draws a scribble on Zoom whiteboard and another person makes it into something by drawing in details) and Two Truths and a Lie. Both games and base group sessions were full of laughter and discussion and brought us joy and merriment.

On Sunday morning we held a half-an-hour-long Meeting for Worship. In the evenings we held epilogue; a wonderful way to wind down after each day. The first epilogue started with a guided meditation by Susie, and the second epilogue started with a slideshow of Ciara's photographs, and piano music by Laoise. These were beautiful and calming.

So, feeling replenished and connected, we face into the New Year, feeling grateful for this unusual opportunity we've had to meet and spend time together. Through our exploration of the theme of community, we have learned of the fulfilling benefits of spending time and sharing with each other. Our hearts and thoughts are full of our online-JYM experiences.

Signed on behalf of Junior Yearly Meeting,

Susie Harty (Clerk)

Laoise Corrigan (Assistant Clerk)