

Technology Tools: Google Voice

One of the dilemmas of a new worship group or meeting is staying in touch. Since most new groups don't have an office or administrator, it's up to the various organizers to try to keep up with communications – both in the group and for visitors. One helpful tool is Google Voice – a free application from Google.

Google Voice enables your worship group or meeting to have a telephone number that is can be answered whenever someone calls or during set business hours or at times you choose. Google Voice gives you one number that you can have forwarded seamlessly to a number of other phones. For example, when someone calls your group's Google Voice phone number, you can have it ring at the same time to your cell phone, someone else's cell phone or home line, and so forth. You can customize when the various phones ring or if all calls are automatically forwarded to voice mail. If someone leaves a voicemail for your group, the voice mail then is emailed to you -- along with an email transcript of the call.

When you register for Google Voice, you'll be asked to choose a local phone number from those available. Then you'll select which phone numbers you'd like the Google Voice number to be forwarded to. One person could be scheduled to answer calls in the morning while another answers in the afternoon and another answers at night.

Besides availability (and being instantly informed when a potential visitor is calling for information about your group), having a Google Voice number means that you do not have to give out your home or cell phone numbers. Your outreach activities (news releases, website, etc) only need to feature one telephone number – the number of the group.

Other useful features include:

- You can record phone calls you make or which come in, allowing you to listen to the call later.
- You can get a free widget for your group's website so people can call you without having to dial your number.
- You can send text messages and forward voicemails by email from your Google Voice account.
- Google Voice has apps for most smart phone platforms, including iPhone, Android, etc.

Learn more at <https://www.google.com/voice>

Connect

Connect with FGC:

- FGC has resources to support new and existing groups
- FGC can help a group connect with other local Quaker groups
- FGC can help you get listed on QuakerFinder.org to help others find you

FGC staff and volunteers are happy to talk with you about this, or any other issue, your meeting or worship group is facing. Please contact us by emailing us or phoning 215-561-1700.

This document was downloaded from the website of Friends General Conference. Explore the many resources and opportunities we offer for Quakers, Quaker meetings, and all interested individuals. Go to www.fgcquaker.org.

