

The Fediverse

For Friends



A Practical Guide for Faithful Digital Presence





“Proceed as the way opens.”

Introduction: A Faithful Digital Presence

Friends have long understood that structures matter. The way we organise ourselves shapes how we speak, how we listen, and how truth is discerned among us. Our meetings are not accidental in form. They reflect a conviction that authority is shared, that no single voice governs the whole, and that community requires accountability.

Digital spaces are also structured. Ownership models, moderation systems, and financial incentives shape what is amplified, what is silenced, and how we behave toward one another.

In recent years, many Friends have begun to ask whether the platforms we use reflect our testimonies or work against them.

This guide is offered in that spirit of discernment. It is not a campaign or an instruction. It is a practical invitation.

This guide aims to:

- Explain what the Fediverse is in plain language
- Offer thoughtful reasons why some Friends feel led to move there
- Provide clear, step-by-step guidance for getting started
- Help Friends find one another once they arrive

If, after reading, you feel led to explore further, you will not be alone.

The Fediverse is a network of independently run but interconnected platforms, offering a different structure from traditional social media, where each site operates largely in isolation. It does not rely on engagement-maximizing algorithms to determine what we see. The Fediverse is imperfect, sometimes quieter, and occasionally confusing at first. Yet it reflects, in certain important ways, principles that resonate with our practise.

This document focuses on social platforms that are part of what is called the Fediverse. Social platforms like Mastadon (think old Twitter), WriteFreely (think way better Blogger), and PeerTube (think ad-free YouTube) are only a few of the better known. We will go into detail below but first, let's explain what the Fediverse is and why we think it's right for Friends.

What is the Fediverse?

The Fediverse is not a single website or company. It is a network of independently run servers (often called instances) that communicate with one another. Each instance has its own moderation team and community guidelines, but users across different instances can follow, reply to, and share one another's posts.

A helpful comparison is email: you may use one provider and someone else another, yet messages pass freely between you.

In the Fediverse, no single corporation owns the whole network. Local administrators manage their communities, and users can move between instances if needed. Feeds are typically chronological rather than algorithmically ranked.

This does not make the space perfect, but it does make power more distributed.

A Structure That Resonates With Friends?

Friends have long practised decentralised governance. Local Meetings are autonomous yet interconnected. Authority is shared. Oversight is local. Accountability flows both upward and downward.

The Fediverse mirrors this pattern digitally: independent communities, connected but not controlled; shared standards without central domination; local stewardship.

The structure does not guarantee good behaviour, but it avoids concentrating power in a single corporate authority whose priorities may shift without communal discernment. It also allows plenty of tools for moderation and if you don't like what's happening on one instance it is easy to move to another.

For Friends concerned about integrity in digital participation, this structure may feel more consonant with our practice.

Why Many Friends are Reconsidering X/Meta/TikTok

Friends are not called to withdraw lightly from public spaces. We have long engaged in the world where we find it.

At the same time, we are called to examine the systems in which we participate. Over time, some platforms have become increasingly centralised in ownership and governance. Algorithmic systems amplify outrage and polarisation, because these drive engagement. Moderation decisions may lack communal accountability.

When a platform's financial model depends upon emotional intensity and constant interaction, it shapes the culture of the space.

Friends may reasonably ask:

- **Does participation in such systems support our testimony to truth?**
- **Does it nurture peaceable discourse?**
- **Does it protect vulnerable communities?**
- **Does it align with our understanding of shared authority and accountability?**

Different Friends will discern differently. Some may remain for reasons of witness. Others may feel led to reduce or end their participation.

This guide does not judge individual choices. It simply recognises that for many Friends, continued presence on certain centralised platforms has become difficult to reconcile with conscience.

The Fediverse presents one alternative.

Platforms in the Fediverse

You do not need to understand all of these. Most Friends will begin with one.

- Mastodon:** A microblogging platform. Most similar to X (Twitter) in format. Short posts, replies, reposts, hashtags, and direct messages. For most Friends, this is the best place to start.
- Pixelfed:** Focused on image sharing. Similar in feel to Instagram, but without advertising and algorithmic ranking.
- PeerTube:** Video hosting and sharing. Useful for Meetings that publish talks, lectures, or recorded events.
- Lemmy:** Discussion forums organised by topic. More structured, community-based conversations.
- Friendica:** A flexible social network that connects to multiple protocols. More complex, generally for experienced users.
- WriteFreely:** Long-form writing and blogging within the Fediverse.
- Loops:** TikTok-like short-form video sharing platform. Still emerging, but relevant for younger Friends and creative outreach.
- Bookwurm:** Goodreads-like platform for sharing what you're reading, tracking pages read and interacting with others on the Fediverse with what they are reading.

If you are unsure where to begin, start with Mastodon. You can always explore other platforms later.

Getting Started in 20 Minutes: Mastodon

You do not need technical expertise. You do not need to understand federation in detail. Simply follow these steps:

1. Choose an instance. Look for clear moderation policies and transparency. If uncertain, choose a well-established general-purpose instance, like <https://mastodon.world/> or <https://toot.community/>. A good place to start is <https://joinmastodon.org/servers>, which offers a filterable directory of Mastodon instances. An “instance” is simply the server where your account lives - similar to choosing Gmail or Outlook for email. Even if people use different servers, they can still follow and talk to each other.
2. Create your account using an email address and secure password.
3. Complete your profile with a short description and, if you wish, your Meeting.
4. Follow at least 20 accounts related to your interests.
5. Post a simple introduction and include the general Fediverse hashtags for new users #Introduction and #NewHere. You should also include the shared hashtag #FriendsOnTheFediverse (see also p. 8). You might write something like “Hello Friends. I am #NewHere and exploring this space. I am part of [Meeting name] and interested in [topics]. Grateful to connect. #Introduction #FriendsOnTheFediverse”
6. Adjust your notification and privacy settings.
7. Install a mobile app if desired. Mastodon’s official web interface is excellent and well-developed, but if you do prefer accessing Mastodon via an app, there’s an official app, simply called “Mastodon” on the Apple App Store, Google Play and F-Droid. However, you don’t need to use this - because Mastodon is deliberately built on open standards, it doesn’t restrict you to using it on one particular app or one particular interface. You can find a list of other Mastodon apps at <https://fedi.tips/which-apps-can-i-use-should-i-use-the-official-app-or-a-third-party-app/>

Begin gently. You do not need to understand everything at once.

Join the Gathering: #FriendsOnTheFediverse

To make it easier for Friends to find one another, we are proposing the shared hashtag:

#FriendsOnTheFediverse

1. Post an introduction using this hashtag and the general Fediverse hashtag for new users **#Introduction** and **#NewHere**.
2. Search for the **#FriendsOnTheFediverse** hashtag and follow others who have used it.
3. Engage gently in conversation.

This serves several purposes:

- It prevents isolation
- It makes Quaker presence visible
- It allows Meetings and individuals to connect
- It creates a distributed network without central ownership

No one controls this space. It grows as Friends participate.

For Older Friends who Feel Hesitant

It is natural to feel cautious.

You cannot “break” the network.

You cannot damage the whole system.

Mistakes can be edited or deleted.

You can make posts visible only to followers if preferred.

If possible, ask a younger Friend to sit with you for thirty minutes.

Learning together often builds confidence.

The aim is not speed.

It is presence.

For Younger, Digitally-Native Friends

Your participation matters. You can help shape the tone of this space by:

- Writing plainly
- Avoiding sarcasm that excludes
- Adding alt text to images
- Modelling thoughtful disagreement
- Welcoming those who arrive later

The Fediverse grows through culture, not algorithms.

Queries for Reflection

As we consider our digital presence, we might ask:

- How do the structures of the platforms we use shape our speech?
- Are we contributing to cultures of peace and truthfulness online?
- Where are younger generations gathering, and are we present there?
- What would faithful digital witness look like in this century?

We offer this guide in the hope that Friends may discern together.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is the Fediverse safe?

No online space is entirely free from conflict or difficulty. However, the Fediverse differs in that moderation happens locally. Each instance sets and enforces its own community standards - there is no single corporate owner, so communities can shape their norms more directly.

Many are transparent about their policies and active in protecting vulnerable users.

If an instance does not feel right, you may move your account to another.

What about Fediverse etiquette?

The Fediverse is shaped by communities rather than by algorithms and its culture depends largely on the care people bring to it. Many users follow simple practices that help conversations remain accessible and respectful.

For example, people often add alt text to images so that those using screen readers can share in what is posted. Content warnings are sometimes used when discussing topics that may be distressing. Writing in plain, considerate language and taking time to listen before responding also help sustain a healthier conversation.

These customs are not rigid rules. They are small acts of consideration that reflect a wider commitment to equality, accessibility, and community - values that many Friends will find familiar.

Who has compiled this guide?

This guide was prepared by two Friends concerned with faithful digital presence in March 2026. You can find us on the Fediverse [HERE](#) (<https://theforkiverse.com/@wess>) and [HERE](#) (<https://mastodon.nu/@martinkubler>).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Will I lose contact with people who remain on X/Meta/TikTok?

Yes, you may not see all the same voices, but you may also find:

- Deeper conversations
- Slower exchanges
- New communities
- Fewer algorithmically amplified conflicts

Many Friends choose not to delete their accounts on other social media platforms immediately, but reduce their activity while building presence elsewhere. Discernment takes time.

Is it complicated?

It may feel unfamiliar at first, but most Friends find that after creating an account, following several people, and posting an introduction, it becomes intuitive. You do not need to understand the technical infrastructure to participate meaningfully.

What about privacy?

You control:

- Who can follow you
- Who can reply to individual posts
- Who can quote and share your posts
- Whether posts are public or limited to followers

Your data is not sold for advertising in the way large corporate platforms typically operate.

Still, as with any online space, post thoughtfully.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What if I choose the “wrong” instance?

There is no permanent mistake. The Fediverse allows account migration. You can move your followers to a new instance if needed. Choose a stable, well-moderated server and begin. You can adjust later.

Is this only for younger Friends?

No. Older Friends often bring:

- Thoughtfulness
- Patience
- A habit of listening

We feel that all of these are deeply needed in digital spaces.

The aim is not speed or fluency. It is presence.

Where can I learn more?

The [Fedi-Tips website](https://fedi.tips) (fedi.tips) is full of great stuff and you can follow them on Mastodon (<https://social.growyourown.services/@FediTips>). Soon, you'll also find this guide and more resources at www.friendsonthefediverse.com.

