

A brief report of our Area Elders & Overseers meeting on Saturday 17th March 2018 in Wells for those unable to join us.

Themes linking eldership & Oversight to Chaplaincy.

Lucy Faulkner Gawlinski and Sue Sharpe would like to share their hopes and aspirations for their time as Co Clerks.

We hope:

- That we support meetings in enabling worship - the shared opening to the Spirit that helps individuals and groups to find and follow their own spiritual path, enables both inward and outward listening, strengthens us and allows us to test our leadings.
- That we encourage a creative and gentle response to the words we all use so that people feel able to speak about what is deep for them and hear what is deep for others.
- That we are part of the process of forming loving and adventurous communities, recognising it as a process, continuously renewed, rather than taken for granted.
- That we are alert and ready to recognise that the processes of forming and sustaining meeting communities can be difficult so we keep ourselves informed and available to offer support where needed.

After a period of worship when Qf&p 10.1 was read, we started on the first activity which through a process of worship sharing was:-

To identify a moment or moments in the life of their meeting when they were involved in one of the actions of a chaplain.

A list from a leaflet called Quaker Chaplaincy produced by BYM, helped direct our thoughts

Some of the things Quaker chaplains may do:

- be open to new light from wherever it may come
- respect each person and respond to them with love
- seek a direct experience of God within themselves and in their relationships
- build spiritual connections and community not through professing identical beliefs but from sharing and working together
- encourage the communal gathered stillness of meeting for worship
- respond to spiritual need in the moment without recourse to creed or cant
- go to places overlooked by others and never give up on people
- listen to and support people to help them find their own strength
- promote social justice, support peacemakers and care for the environment

BYM

Some of our thoughts



Our second activity was to hear about each others development as an elder/overseer - our hopes and fears.

A minute looking at the following:

1. Identifying ways in which being an elder is like or unlike being a chaplain.

2. Each of us is seeking to be led by the Spirit. How do we enable that for each other?

was passed forward to the main meeting.