

Minute. 12 (March 2019) Part One of “Scottish Quakers: How do we liberate ourselves to focus on spiritual growth, community building and witness in the world?”

Paul Parker began his presentation with reading from Advices and Queries no.27 – Live Adventurously. He asked us to consider whether we could see this advice not just for us as individuals but for us as a collective. Can we see it as a challenge?

Can we go carefully but boldly?

Paul reminded us of the discussions and discernments we had had in Perth on 13th September last year. (See documents in advance of today's GM) We had worked out what was important to us and what makes us who we are. In Scotland we have such a strong community with so much to draw on. So much passion.

Paul led us to acknowledge how things are changing both in the wider world and in our own lives. He reminded us of what we had said were the true essentials that we felt we needed to look after. In September we had begun to consider what needs to be done differently and what needs to stay the same. Are the structures that we have working for us doing so in ways that are joyous and adventurous?

Paul spoke of the idea of coppicing. We were led to consider “What is the heartwood of Quakerism? “When we trim back, what new shoots are ready to grow?

“If I go to walk into the forest, I'd rather it was one where the Light would get in” Paul During some reflection time we heard from Friends about the joy of service and the importance of learning about each other in the things that are eternal. We heard that meeting together in places that are counter intuitive at the time of the move ends up being just the coppicing that was needed to enable new shoots to flourish.

We are encouraged to open our eyes to different and new opportunities. Young Adult Friends are thriving, and we can learn from them. We hope we can include Woodbrooke in this adventure of learning.

There is more freedom than some of us think to do some things differently. We shouldn't constrain ourselves by looking too hard for permission.

Can we boldly (yet cautiously) take a Holy opportunity and be purposely expectant?

Are we ready to jump off a cliff and wait for the wind to be beneath our wings?

Minute. 15 (March 2019) Part Two of “Scottish Quakers: How do we liberate ourselves to focus on spiritual growth, community building and witness in the world?”

We are thankful that we have embarked on this exercise over the last few years. We are thankful for today and all that we have experienced. We are clear that we have energy, community, passion and a willingness to Live Adventurously.

We have met in small groups to consider the Menu for Change paper. This document is attached to these minutes.

On feeding back, we realise that a minute at this point cannot gather the detail, so we ask our clerks to work on a summary paper of the findings. This will be circulated as soon as it is ready. We ask that this be shared with local meetings.

We are particularly keen to enable better communication between AMs. We do have a newly constructed Communications Group who are tasked with looking at communication across Scotland. We look forward to hearing from them when they are ready.

We have returned often to the idea of inviting Woodbrooke to work in Scotland with us on spiritual and role holder courses. Indeed, all types of learning and development would be most welcome.

We were moved by the feeling in one group that, although we have been tasked by previous GM minutes to tackle our feelings of overburdened-ness, we need to be careful that we are always approaching these considerations being led by the Spirit.

We feel strongly that we don't want to lose sight of this process and discernment. We ask our GM Committee to ensure it comes back to a future GM agenda.