I’ve found this weekend a source of inspiration during a year that has often felt difficult and dark. Judith Moran reminded us that strengthening a community is an active process and I have felt our community growing stronger this weekend, particularly during the discussions I’ve had and the worship we’ve held together. When sharing the ways in which this process happens, Judith talked about wellbeing and remembering the individual in the plural, which has been facilitated by our incredible elders and staff and the kindness we’ve shown each other. She also talked about the importance of fun, which was found in our social evening together which brought me so much joy.

Judith emphasized being attentive to the power in a community and I really hope what comes across in these reflections is the power of your words and ideas over the weekend. I attended the Quaker Roots workshop and my notes are full of wisdom from Friends in that group. I was reminded that change takes time and one piece of ministry that particularly struck me was from a Friend who suggested that when we feel we are not the person to take on a piece of work we phrase it differently: I’m not that person *yet*. Another Friend reminded us of the importance of support for those taking action and how every small step is another starfish back in the sea.

A sentiment I have heard in several different conversations is that faith, testimony and community are all interlinked. Faith in action means letting our lives speak- taking the risk to move from planning to putting something into place. Our faith community is at the centre of this process. Friends talked about the spiritual strength of protesting with other Quakers, the way that meetings have provided both practical and emotional support to those at risk of getting arrested, the way meeting houses have become spaces for a range of local groups and the pride they feel as part of a faith community with such a strong sense of witness. We all contribute by upholding each other in the light.

I want to end the way we began and ended the Quaker Roots group, with a gesture that conveys how we feel in this moment. Mine is the same now as it was at the end of that session: placing my hands over my heart and extending them out to all of you and your Quaker communities.