

Minute 48: Receipt of minutes from the Children and Young People's Programmes

We have received minutes from the groups of the Children's and Young People's Programmes of this Yearly Meeting as follows:

New Shoots (0-2 year olds)

With the theme of gifts and giving we first took time to get to know each other and to independently explore the activities we could see. Tower building was fun but taking them out of the box and putting them straight back in was satisfying.

We enjoyed the company of the other groups particularly Fox Cubs. They took us for a walk to the park, dancing with coloured ribbons, encouraged us to paint and join in their playtime on the balcony and shared their snack with us.

Our snooze time was important to recharge our batteries so that we could run around on the grass and explore the popup tent and tunnel.

At the end of our sessions we sat in silence and looked at the colour changing bunny and cube, but the desire to pick them up was challenging, however we did manage a whole 30 seconds.

Fox Cubs (3-5 year olds)

Using our gifts for good

We have been thinking about gifts all weekend. We all felt welcomed and we used pictures to help us make the right choices so that everyone could feel safe and happy.

We have been given gifts several times this weekend.

We have had the gift of new friends and smiles and kindness in our group. Mel and Gill gave us a box with seeds to grow and bubbles to blow. Penn Friends came and gave us a brilliant gift of stories and songs. Spiritual Adventurers shared worship and biscuits with us. Seeing our brothers, sisters and friends in other groups was great.

We have a kindness tree which is full of leaves that help us to remember how we were kind to each other. We saw a tree in the park that reminded us of the kindness tree.

We loved making fruit dipped in chocolate and then creeping along the corridor to make it a surprise gift for Penn Friends. That made us feel happy.

We have worshipped together and taken turns being elders. We have thought about pebbles on the beach, seeds growing, stars in the sky, the taste and texture of chocolate and fruit, coloured flowers opening and thanking God for all these wonderful things.

We have thought about laughing and being happy and enjoyed laughing together every day. We danced with ribbons to the “Happy” song and enjoyed sharing this with the babies and some adults. We were two thumbs happy.

Penn Friends (6 – 8 year olds)

This is the minute of the Penn Friends.

Some of us settled in as we walked through the doors because we knew we would have fun and we saw people playing.

Many of us enjoyed making things and being creative, in response to the story about a person who planted the smallest seed that turned into a massive tree, which birds came to.

We enjoyed singing songs with Spiritual Adventurers. We went to Fox Cubs to perform a gift for them because they gave us fruit covered in chocolate.

We made tree-people – paper dolls – that we put on a paper tree and moved it up if we were feeling brave and confident, making friends and enjoying ourselves. We moved the paper doll lower if we were uncomfortable, nervous or scared.

We went to Coram’s Fields, aka park, and we saw a shelf where babies were left in the old days when their family could not look after them.

We made lots of friends, especially in our small table groups.

We had journals which we could do anything in. We like drawing and writing in them about what we were doing.

We liked the story with the stars and liked having peace and quiet.

We also enjoyed listening to the box story about Miss Nancy who had lost her memory. We liked looking at the things in the basket. In the basket there was a ball as precious as gold, a puppet that made people laugh and shells from the beach. There was a medal that reminded Miss Nancy of when her brother went to war and never came back. There was an egg from under a chicken that was warm and reminded Miss Nancy of warmth. Then she got her memory back.

We were visited by Mel and Alistair because we were learning about gifts that you give to people. We all chose a ‘gift’ from a blanket and we said to the person next to us who the gift was for and why. Rupert visited us to help.

“In my journal I put, ‘This afternoon is going to be great fun’.”

Most of us enjoyed Quaker meeting.

Spiritual Adventurers (8 – 11 year olds)

This weekend in Spiritual Adventurers we have been thinking about using our gifts for good. We have done this in a variety of ways, for example playing games, being creative, writing promises to our future selves and sharing our stories through worship.

Meeting new people of different ages was exciting, we learned each other's names through NameZombie, quickly becoming friends.

We shared games with the younger children in Penn Friends and they shared songs with us.

We thought hard about questions 'Who is the best person to help those in need?' Is it important to know their backstories, and is it always good to help those in pain?

We learnt about Quaker business method through having a business meeting to nominate minute readers and writers and elders.

Sitting in quiet worship and meditation calmed us down and we were helped by the support of the group to share our stories and ministry.

We invited the Fox Cubs and New Shoots to share worship where we heard a story about promises and then shared the gift of biscuits that we had decorated.

Our group boundaries had stated that we would treat everybody the way we expect to be treated. We feel, as a group, we have worked this way which has led to a special atmosphere of calm and inclusivity.

Young People's Programme (11-15 year olds)

From the 27th to the 30th May 2016, 40 young people and 5 adult volunteers met at Felden Lodge, Hemel Hempstead, to consider the theme of *"Why are Quakers active in the world?- considering what we as young Quakers can do."*

We explored the theme through a variety of speaker sessions, discussions and activities. On Saturday Lee Taylor told us the amazing stories of Mama Rosa, John Woolman and herself as they followed through on the promptings they experienced.

Later on we split into four groups to discuss climate change, poverty, refugees and lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender plus (LGBT+) issues. We discussed our experiences, thoughts and what we could do to make a difference.

We had a session in which the adult volunteers shared their experiences of promptings and how they acted upon them. We then went into our base groups - small groups we gathered in regularly throughout the event, which were like our family - to create parodies of popular songs based on the four themes we had discussed earlier.

On Sunday afternoon we joined the Yearly Meeting session- "Living out our faith in the world; recognising, testing and supporting concerns." which allowed us to explore our own concerns whilst listening to the views of the Quaker community as a whole, and helped us feel a valid part of YM. Two young people felt prompted to minister

during the session and were heard. We stayed at Friends House to witness the burial of Junior Yearly Meeting's time capsule, and to visit the groups fair.

On Monday we had a question and answer session with Cait Gould, Laurence Hall and Holly Wallis addressing the question: "What can young Quakers do?" We heard their stories and considered the question for ourselves.

We explored the Quaker business method through holding our own Meeting for Worship for Business and nominating next year's Arrangements Committee.

Over the whole event we explored our purpose as young Quakers, and our thoughts on various topics. We would like to thank the adult volunteers and speakers for making the event interesting and enjoyable. We look forward to the future of Quakerism.