

Final Minute for War-Impacted People's Dialogue Project Development
Chapel Hill Friends Meeting - Meeting for Worship With Attention to Business
May 19, 2019

Many people in the U.S. experience impacts of war: from refugees and military members and their families to concerned community members, peace activists, and anyone who suffers a loss of societal resources due to military spending. From April 2018 to April 2019, Claire Bates received support to focus time on development of an approach meant to connect those impacted by war in any way in dialogue groups to learn from each other's experience and work together for peace. Claire received \$4500 in financial support from the Clarence and Lilly Pickett Endowment for Quaker Leadership (CLPEQL), administration of these funds through Chapel Hill Friends Meeting (CHFM), and spiritual oversight and support through a committee of Friends composed primarily of CHFM members.

Claire learned a lot - both concrete lessons related to her project (the War-Impacted People's Dialogue Project), and spiritual lessons, too.

For the War-Impacted People's Dialogue Project, Claire met with mentors, attended conferences, read relevant books, organized and facilitated pilot groups, built community networks, and conducted over 30 interviews toward the development of this method. The result is a 75-page dialogue resource manual she will be sharing with interested communities who may carry on this work as they are led starting in early May 2019. Claire hopes iterative discussions with communities who put this method to work will allow the manual to evolve over time.

Especially due to moving to be near to project mentors, and due to health, financial, and family challenges, Claire experienced the project period as a time of challenge, even of wandering. She learned many spiritual lessons such as:

- the importance of relying on community
- the process of sensing her own leading
- the way a project plays out differently across different communities and geographic areas
- deeper trust that she will be led and her needs will be met
- the fresh wind of a new leading into activism through song.

Claire thanks CLPEQL, CHFM, and her support committee (Liz Bates, Alice Carlton, David Curtin, Jan Hutton, Tom Ludlow, and Curt Torell) whose compassion and insight she says have seen her through. Contact Claire at wipdpcoordinator@mailfence.com for information or materials for this project.