

Watching over one another in agricultural chaplaincy

Rev. Elizabeth Clark, National Rural Officer for Methodist and United Reformed Churches

Chaplains in all areas will walk with people in difficult circumstances at times and this can of course affect them. However, there is an added dimension for agricultural chaplains since they are often members or former members of the farming community themselves. They may well share experiences that those they support are struggling with and live in the communities they work with.



Those who manage agricultural chaplains need to be aware of this. Borderlands chaplaincy, an ecumenical chaplaincy based in the Shropshire, Herefordshire, and East Powys areas, have found various ways of supporting each other. Every two months they have a 'muddy boots' session when they meet to talk about how they are and what they are doing. They have a chaplain, a former agricultural chaplain, who sometimes comes to these meetings and is available to them anytime they need to talk.

Of course, they are also in contact with each other as often as they need to be. They also have the more formal line management structure and management group. All these things help them to 'watch over one another with love', as Wesley might have put it.

