



Touching Place

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Issue No. 11, July 2007

Keeping Christian Communities in touch.

Welcome to the latest edition of *Touching Place*. The new editors are Members of the Pilsdon at Malling Community in Kent. We aim to include articles with background information, aims and goals, hopes and fears of the communities that are out there, as well as continuing to advertise events. In this issue we have an article from The Pilgrimage Community of St Wite in Whitchurch Canonorum written by Sue Langdon, the founder. We hope to have more of the same from others in the next edition and will be contacting some of you to ask for contributions. Our email and postal addresses are below so please send us articles and information about events in your Community for future editions.

In the future we hope to be able to email this newsletter and it will also be available on our website for you to download. In order for us to do this we would appreciate an email or a note informing us of your email address.

We are also discussing new ways to finance *Touching Place*. Donations are welcome, please make cheques payable to 'Pilsdon at Malling'.

Thanks go to Sidney Garner for designing our new logo.

Roberta, Pam and Peter, editors.

Community Focus

The Pilgrimage Community of St Wite
Whitchurch Canonorum
Dorset

We (Sue Langdon and Janet Lake) had explored the possibility of community, individually and together for several years where, contained within a framework of prayer and meditation, there is space for bringing together issues to do with our spirituality and our humanity. Both of us have had connections with various religious and lay communi-

ties. We wanted to express the essence of the contemplative end of the Christian tradition, in ways that support people's inner pilgrimage, whether they belong to a particular religious path or are seekers outside recognised structures.

As you can imagine it didn't all fall into place immediately though from our first conversation with Bishop David we knew that he was 'on board' and open to the idea. We looked seriously at the possibility of joining other established communities as it was important to us that we didn't get caught in the ego trip of beginning a new community just for the sake of it! Many friends helped us with our discernment not least our spiritual directors and we held onto the encouragement we had received from other communities while we continued to explore within the Salisbury Diocese.

In January 2006 the Team in Salisbury gave us an 'in principle' Yes. Later Paul Taylor, the Archdeacon of Sherborne, invited us to look at the former rectory in Whitchurch Canonorum. We moved at the end of November 2006.

Whitchurch Canonorum has been a place of pilgrimage for centuries second only to Canterbury and Santiago de Compostela at one time. St Wite (pron. Witta) is thought to have been an anglo-saxon anchoress. Her shrine and remains are still in the Church) and evidence shows that she was short woman about 40 when she was killed probably by the Danes. Her healing well is nearby within sight of the beautiful landscape of the golden cap and jurassic coast of south Dorset.

It is very exciting that the Salisbury diocese has made such a beautiful house available for this embryonic community at Whitchurch Canonorum. Many people still pray at the shrine leaving their beautiful and moving petitions for healing on a card within the shrine. They come out of compassion and love for one another to ask for help and to give thanks for the help given.

The community was commissioned by Bishop David Stancliffe on the feast of the Epiphany 2007 and there were 83 people who came to celebrate with us. One person, perhaps feeling the crush, was heard to say, 'This must have been like the early Christians worshipping in their own homes, sitting on stairs, here there and everywhere. It's us being Church'.

Local people have said they want to see the sense of pilgrimage here revitalised in a twenty first century way. Hopefully their vision and the community's will work together creatively. Bishop David said at the community's commissioning, "It's wonderful to have a community about inner pilgrimage located in such an ancient place of outer pilgrimage."

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We have had several day events here at St Wite's House including quiet days and workshops. We are willing to explore with anyone or any group how we can support time they wish to set aside for God. Lots of people have come to stay for a variety of reasons, some for rest, some for reflection, some for peace and quiet, others for support in a one to one way, for example people struggling with issues surrounding forgiveness. Our kitchen table has heard many people's stories already and even a couple of 'dream breakfasts' where dreams are shared and explored often in significant ways. Our house is welcoming, the atmosphere is one of 'en famille', the garden is a delight and we are in the midst of beautiful countryside with walks in abundance and only three miles from the sea.

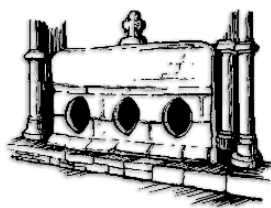
All are welcome to the community's prayer and meditations though it is not required that visitors attend. Each Wednesday evening at 6 p.m. there is a Eucharist, the last of each month on the theme of healing. St Wite House is generally closed on Tuesdays and occasionally at other times. If you wish to be on our mailing list please email or write to us with your details.

Contact details:-

The Pilgrimage Community of St Wite
St Wite House
Whitchurch Canonicorum
Dorset
DT6 6RQ
Telephone 01297 489401
Email:- stwitehouse@btinternet.com

Sue Langdon P.G. Dip. Psychosynthesis Counselling.
An Anglican priest whose life experience has drawn her into realising the vital need to understand the distinct wisdom of our hearts.

Janet Lake MBACP (Sen. Accred.) UKRC
Her main interest is exploring how the insights of the spiritual and psychological traditions can be used together creatively in our search for wholeness.



Picture taken from www.thedorsetpage.com and used with permission.

Events

Events at the Guy Chester Centre, London
Saturday 22nd July
Quiet Day – 'Rediscovering the Rainbow'
10am – 4pm Fees: £20

Why not come and take advantage of the grounds and gardens here on the North Bank Estate whilst they are looking their best in the summer sunshine. And what better way to complement the beautiful surroundings, than by using

'colour' as your inspiration for the day. Amongst other things you will be helped to reflect on the colours hidden in white light and the layers and nuances waiting to be found. The day will include plenty of individual space as well as leader's input.

Leader: Muriel Huntley, an experienced quiet day leader, is involved as a Lay Worker in the local Methodist circuit of churches.

Saturday 23rd September
Quiet Day – 'Sacred Space – Shoes Off Standing on Holy Ground'
10am – 4pm Fees £20

Life is a sacred journey. It is about change, growth, discovery, movement, transformation, continuously expanding the vision of what is possible, stretching the soul, learning to see clearly and deeply, and listening to that still small voice. The Labyrinth is a metaphor for life with its twists and turns. The day gives an opportunity to experience this tool to discover more of your journey with God.

Leader: Glynis Mewton is a trained Spiritual Director, Labyrinth Facilitator, MBTI Consultant and Life Coach. She supports and helps individuals and groups as they seek to grow and move forward in their spiritual journey.

Saturday 30th September
Counselling Skills for Pastoral Care
10am – 4pm Fees: £25

This day workshop is designed to offer some of the concepts and skills of Counselling for those involved in pastoral care. Much of what we do in pastoral care is to accompany people. It is not to direct them or lead them, but to walk alongside them; to offer support and companionship in their journey. The day will focus on the areas of active listening (to others, self and God) and care of self. In addition to the leaders input on the day, there will be opportunities for skills practice and role play.

Leaders: Liz Gamble is a self-employed counsellor, tutor and trainer, working in private practice and for a number of charitable organisations. She is particularly interested in the interface between counselling and pastoral care, which informs her work at GCC. Liz also runs courses for local churches in pastoral care and can offer guidance on how to set up and train pastoral teams.

Mark Wakelin is a Methodist Minister, who has been involved in both circuit ministry and as National Secretary of the Methodist Church's youth service, MAYC. Mark is Director of the Guy Chester Centre.

For more information on any of these events, or the work of the Guy Chester Centre please contact the Programme Office on 020 8883 8204, email admin@chestercentre.org.uk or look at the website: www.chestercentre.org.uk

Guy Chester Centre
Programme Office
Chester House
Pages Lane
Muswell Hill
London
N10 1PR

Events cont'd.

Friday to Sunday 20-29 July 8 Day Individually Guided Retreat

The Sisters of St. Andrew, Eden Hall, Edenbridge
Each day you will be meeting with your own retreat guide, a member of the team at St. Andrews, to share what concerns you most deeply at the point of your journey with God.

For more details contact:

Sisters of St. Andrew
'Eden Hall'
Stick Hill
Edenbridge
Kent TN8 5NN
01342 850388
thecentre@sisters-of-st-andrew.com

The Scottish Churches House are holding an international conference which will examine the dialogue between art, religion and prevailing cultures: how the language of the arts translates the experience of poverty, power, joy, suffering, love and death into practical encouragement and sustenance for living in the world.



Monday to Friday, 20-24 August

"YOU ARE THE MUSIC WHILE THE MUSIC LASTS"

Faith, Culture and the Aesthetics of Resistance

Fees: £189 full board 4 nights, or £85 non-resident including meals. Up to ten places are offered at a special rate of two for the price of one, sharing a room. First come first served.

Speakers include Fr Benedict Hardy from Pluscarden Abbey, an authority on Gregorian chant, Erik Hillestad from Norway's largest independent record label, Richard Holloway, chairman of the Scottish Arts Council and Screen, Michael Kocab, from Czech underground rock band and now Czech MP, Ronald Rae, sculptor, and Donald Smith from the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

Booking form with more details available on request, or contact:

Alastair Hulbert, Warden
warden@scottishchurcheshouse.org
Scottish Churches House
1 Kirk Street
Dunblane, FK15 0AJ
Tel. 0044 (0)1786 823 588
www.scottishchurcheshouse.org

Friday to Sunday 3 - 5 August Invitation to 'Spiritual Searchers' Emmaus House, Clifton

Registration will take place between 5 - 6 p.m. on Friday 3 August. The weekend begins with supper at 6.30 p.m. and ends with lunch on Sunday.
Fees: £70

The weekend, open to single women & men between the ages of 20 - 40, invites participants to join a team from four different international religious congregations from around the country to review steps already taken and to consider steps forward on their way to God.

The team, composed of Liz Shaw, Sister of La Retraite based at Emmaus House, Anne McLoughlin, Sister of St. Paul, Michele Totman, Sister of La Sainte Union, and Dave Nixon, Missionary of the Sacred Heart, will offer a varied program of group input, sharing, celebration and socialising, as well as individual time for personal space and reflection. "It's really important that people bring to the weekend their own questions and concerns. We will provide the necessary space and means to take these further" says Sr. Liz, adding that Emmaus House, with its varied prayer places, beautiful gardens and reputation for good food is an excellent venue for this type of weekend.

"The weekend is an excellent opportunity to take time out from one's daily routine and to consider 'where next?', or 'what am I doing with my life?', or asking 'how can I see God's call to me more clearly?'. Sometimes it can be really helpful to explore questions like these with others rather than just carrying them on one's own", says Sr. Michele.

For all further information contact:

Sr. Liz Shaw, Emmaus House on 0117 907 9950 or email
administration@emmaushouse.org.uk
www.emmaushouse.org.uk



The Othona Community,
Burton Bradstock,

Sunday to Sunday 8-15 July Open Space – with New Horizons

Classic Othona 'time out': restful days in an inclusive community context. And each day one optional New Horizons workshop with warden Tony Jaques. Do you suspect much of religion is bankrupt and dangerous, more trouble to the world than it's worth? Are you mystified by "my God's better than your God" quarrels? Do you long for more solidarity and integrity, less dogma and defensiveness? Tony introduces us to new trends that may bring about what a wise priest called "Christianity with balls... but without the bollocks".

Events cont'd.

More Othona ...

Thurs 12 July at 7.45pm Summer Concert

A fundraiser with singers and instrumentalists of the Broadoak Choir conducted by former core member Chris Reynolds. (12 July is also an Othona Locals Day) Please phone to reserve seats.

Sunday to Sunday 22-29 July Sea, Beach and Cliff

An unspoilt beach, a dizzying cliff top, quarries and rock pools, fishing and fossil hunting, swimming and boat trips. All the contrasts of the World Heritage Site that is the Jurassic Coast. A family week in community with five all day outings, led by Othona core members and friends.

Monday to Sunday 30 July-5 Aug

Monkeys, mud, marshmallows and magic!
(How to discover spirituality in family life and have fun at the same time.)

Jane Bartlett and John Watters lead a wonderfully varied week: visiting Monkeyworld, storytelling, bonfire party, walks for all ages in a sacred labyrinth, and time for adults to reflect on our journeys as parents. Jane is author of "Parenting with Spirit: 30 ways to bring the sacred into your family's life" and developed an experimental church ministry for families in Brighton. John runs a leadership development consultancy. They have three children aged 7, 8 and 10. This week is especially suitable for primary school aged children.

For all further information contact:

Tony Jacques, Warden, mail@othona-bb.org.uk
The Othona Community
Coast Road
Burton Bradstock
BRIDPORT
Dorset DT6 4RN
01308 897130
http://www.othona-bb.org.

Saturday 28 July A Day for Creativity and Reflection Norwich Friends Meeting House 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This is a day of meditation, creative listening and a range of creative artistic activity, including sketching, poetry, painting. Facilitators will include: Diana Stephenson, Sue Debbage and Peter Varney.

No charge, but please bring picnic lunch and also a sketch book. Open to anyone over 16.

**If you would like to come please contact
Peter Varney p.varney@lycos.co.uk**

L'Arche - Bognor Regis

L'Arche Bognor Regis have launched an appeal to raise £80,000 for a Community Room. With three family sized houses for assistants and people with learning disabilities, they do not have anywhere that is big enough for everyone to meet together. The room will be used for a wide variety of activities including worship, as a quiet space, training, a retirement group and meetings. The Community have already raised three quarters of the money but are still looking for the balance.

The Community is also looking for new people wanting to join the community as assistants. Chris Bemrose, the Community Leader says 'we hope and expect that the new Community Room will give us a new lease of life - and we are looking for people who want to share in this.' Potential members should be willing to commit at least a year, and live in one of the houses with 4-6 people with learning disabilities.

Contact Sahlee Brillantes, Assistants Coordinator, L'Arche, 51 Aldwick Rd, Bognor Regis PO21 2NJ; tel 01243 863426; or assistants.bognor@larche.org.uk for further details.



Places

Hotel San Luchesio Amsterdam

Franciscan hospitality in a quiet neighbourhood of Amsterdam

WELCOME

The 'San Luchesio' hotel in Amsterdam is a small and cosy hotel near the City Centre. We are situated in a very quiet and safe area. The hotel was founded in 1961 by a Franciscan Third Order Foundation.

WHO IS WELCOME IN OUR HOTEL?

- Franciscan people from all over the world who like to visit Amsterdam;
- Religious people from all churches;
- Organizations working in accordance with the spirit of Saint Francis (Many missionary and charity organizations as well as non profit organisations);
- All people looking for a quiet and clean hotel in a safe and quiet area.

The website gives you practical hotel information and an on-line reservation form.

http://www.sanluchesio.nl/uk_index.htm
info@sanluchesio.nl
0031-(0)20-6717631