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Next issue

meditation news is published quarterly by WCCM in the UK. Contributions are warmly welcomed.

Please send articles for the next issue to:
uknewsletter@wccm.uk
and events to:
events@wccm.uk
to reach us by **1 September**.

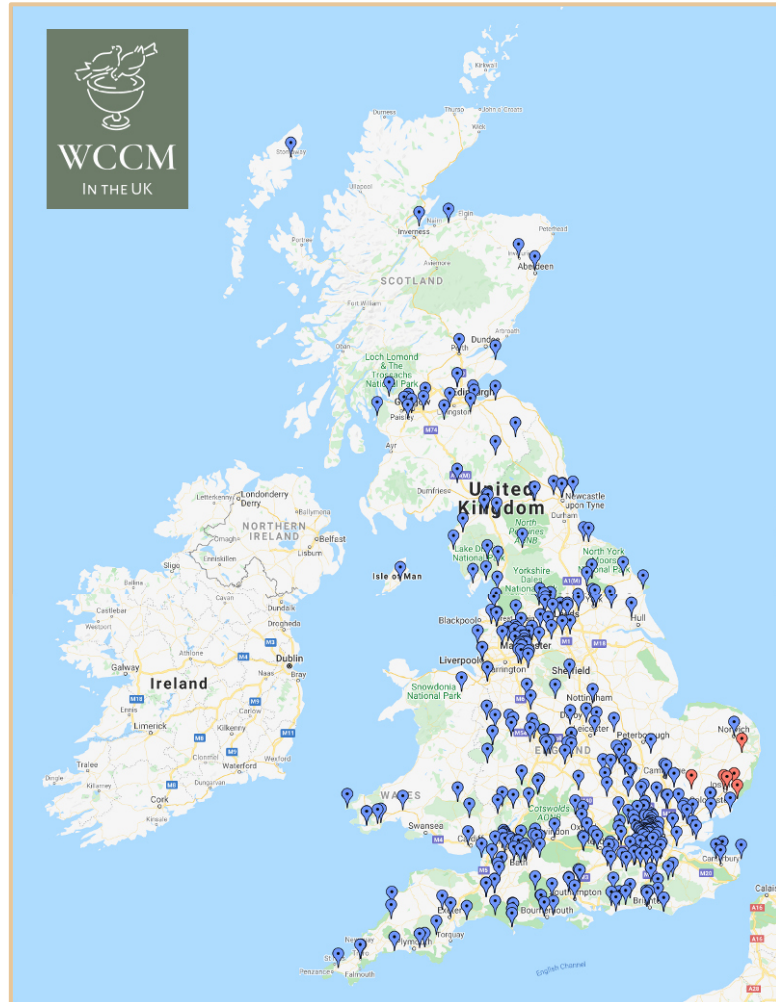
Space is limited and if the item exceeds 700 words please contact us in advance.

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Our WCCM in the UK Community



I've been meeting regularly with some of our Regional Coordinators through the last six months, and we first looked at the distinction between what's termed WCCM International, and our own UK national community.

Fr Laurence is director of WCCM, and of course a teacher and writer of global status, who has travelled the world to share the gift of meditation. There are world-wide initiatives which aid him in his work at the head of our community: particularly the centre at Abbaye de Bonnevaux; Meditatio, the international outreach arm; and the School of Meditation.

We in the UK are one of at least one hundred National Communities supporting meditators and sharing Christian Meditation on the ground, in our local churches and communities, knowing our

specific national conditions, culture, and denominations.

The key feature of the WCCM is its network of meditation groups right across the world, which is a remarkable legacy of John Main's teaching that 'meditation creates community'. In the UK, we have around 400 groups meeting regularly, distributed across our towns and cities. Many of us find it helpful to strengthen our practice by meditating with others in our locality and listening to WCCM readings and teaching. For people who are new to the contemplative path, the journey often continues by joining a meditation group and becoming confident in sitting and praying in silence.

In the UK, we organise our groups into thirty-five geographical regions with a

Paul Swinhoe

On the 14th March we heard the sad news of the death of Paul Swinhoe. Paul is known to many in the Christian Meditation Community as he hosted and managed the WCCM UK website some years ago, and of course attended local and regional WCCM events in recent times.

In late June 2020, Paul was diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour.

My initial introduction to Paul was amusing and auspicious. As a longstanding meditator, in 2000 I logged into the WCCM discussion forum, mediated by Greg Ryan in the US. It was inspiring to read discussions from people in the US, Canada, Far East, and around the world. Someone asked if there was a group in the West Midlands in the UK. I responded, saying I lived in North Staffordshire but knew of no group locally. Paul wrote saying he too lived in North Staffordshire, and asked for my location. I told him and when he told me his address, I asked where that was – I was new to the area. “Open your front door and look out” Paul said, “I live opposite”.

So began our history of meditating together weekly, and in 2004 we started a local weekly group, which continued until lockdown in March 2020. Paul was always present unless running retreats on Lindisfarne (Holy Island) which he did twice yearly, or attending day or weekend WCCM retreats in Cumbria with his wife Sue.

A longstanding member of the Community of Aidan and Hilda, Paul was steeped in stories of Celtic Christianity and delighted retreatants on the Island with nature walks, and talks of the local geology and of flora and fauna. In recent years he led art classes for retreatants on Lindisfarne. In his early teaching ca-

reer he taught geography and geology at the local 6th form college and took students on field trips to study landscape. He was an expert and sparked when explaining landscape formation. A keen walker, climber, bird-watcher and weather-watcher (he belonged to The Royal Meteorological Society), he loved the breathtaking landscapes of North Wales and the Lake District, but longed for the land and seascape of the North East, where he was born and grew up.



Another passion was in the creation of websites. Paul was self-taught in programming and managed the websites of the Community of Aidan and Hilda; the Lay Carmelites; and our local parish.

Paul’s ashes will be scattered on Holy Island and he will once more be reunited with his beloved landscape.

Paul leaves wife Sue, children Mary and Ed, and grandchildren George and Grace.

He will be sadly missed. May he rest in peace.

Carmel Dennison

Sharing the Gift of Meditation GRANTS

The World Community for Christian Meditation exists simply to share the gift of meditation, a gift it received through the teaching of John Main.

If you have an idea about how you would like to help share this gift and need a grant to help you, please follow the link from the ‘Grants’ banner on the homepage or contact the UK Office for more information about how to apply.



WCCM
IN THE UK

Meditation News

Meditation News is published quarterly by
WCCM in the UK,
Lido Centre, 63 Mattock Lane, London, W13 9LA

Telephone: 020 8280 2283
Email: uk@wccm.org
www.wccm.uk

WCCM in the UK is part of the World Community for Christian Meditation and is UK registered charity no. 1189977.

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Do you have any questions about your meditation practice, or your spiritual life in general?

Meditation Companions are experienced WCCM meditators who are there for you to talk to, in confidence.

Contact Bob Morley.
rgm1@live.co.uk
tel. 07704 419526.



A New Look for WCCM in the UK



Last year WCCM announced an initiative to bring a common design to their various websites and publications.

If you visit wccm.org or receive messages and documents you may notice the changes: different colours, different fonts, different layout and everything in a different place!

WCCM in the UK is making changes too. This is the first newsletter using the new design guidelines, emails and Mailchimp have changed, documents will be updated as they are reprinted and we will have a new website by the end of the summer.

Look out for these new WCCM in the UK logos designed to show who we are and that our local community is part of WCCM across the world.

We have some different fonts too:

- Cormorant Garamond for titles and headings
- ALEGREYA SANS SC for subtitles and emphasis
- Alegreya sans for normal, body text

These are free, open source fonts from Google Fonts.

An important part of the new design is the set of colours and how they are used. If you are seeing shades of grey, visit wccm.uk/newsletters to see this issue in colour!



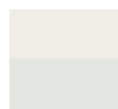
The primary colour, Moss Green, is used for backgrounds, large blocks of colour, illustrations and buttons.



The secondary colour Deep Grey is used for headlines, subheadings, body copy and support to the primary colour. White can be used for text on dark backgrounds.



Sand is an accent colour for lines, buttons and calls to action.



Finally there are Taupe and Dull Green used for backgrounds and contrast colours.

If you are creating documents, the logos and details of the colours and how to download the fonts are available from Roisin in the UK office, ukadmin@wccm.org.

Andy Goddard



OUR WCCM IN THE UK COMMUNITY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

coordinator or contact person. The regions will coordinate and guide their groups, and usually bring meditators together on a regular basis. As we become able to meet again in person, it's worth looking out for regional quiet days and days of gathering, where meditators across a region are able to meet and meditate together.

In a pressured and busy world, many people find it helpful to take time out and take part in a weekend retreat. The events section of our newsletter is the best source of news about the retreats that our regions organise: these will be at a local retreat house, easily accessible.

It's often the regions which can best share the gift of meditation; our regions and groups will usually know and be visible to their local faith communities, and be confident enough to make Christian Meditation known as a spiritual path.

The work of WCCM in the UK is coordinated by an Action Group consisting of six volunteers with long experience of the national community. Day-to-day operations are performed by our office administrator Roisin Williamson and her assistant Elena Plazas. Our office uk@wccm.org (020 8280 2283) is the first point of contact for information and advice: questions will usually be passed to the person best able to answer.

WCCM in the UK is a UK registered charity and is our financial and legal body. The trustees look at the overall direction and strategy of the national community. They ensure that the charity is on firm financial footing and look after our responsibilities around safeguarding and data protection.

Our UK national community cherishes and supports meditation groups across the country, and I'm sure that you will find that you deepen your practice by meditating reg-

ularly with a group. We can locate your nearest group, or a suitable on-line meeting. You could also start a new group if there isn't one near to you, and through our office we can offer materials and other practical help. Please be aware of your region and make contact with your regional coordinator for news and updates.



Richard Broughton
Regional Coordinator Liaison



WCCM
IN THE UK

Donations

If you would like to make a donation to support the work of WCCM in the UK, you can donate online at:

wccm.uk/donate

You can also send cheques to:

WCCM in the UK

Lido Centre, 63 Mattock Lane, London, W13 9LA

Please include your name, address and email and make cheques payable to: **WCCM in the UK**

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer you can Gift Aid your donation, which increases the amount we receive at no extra cost to you. Information about Gift Aid and a declaration form is available online or from the office.

giftaid it

Living with the Mystics - Eckhart Tolle

Our mystic for the 3 months leading to November 2020 was the German mystic Eckhart Tolle. He is a contemporary of our age. His early adulthood saw him in various states of anxiety and depression. When he was 29, at the point of suicide, he realised the implications of his thought “I cannot live with myself any longer” and that the “myself” was not himself but a false self which he came to identify as the ego. He felt a deep sense of inner peace which remained with him. He stopped studying for a doctorate and spent about 2 years ‘just sitting in a state of deep bliss’. He went on to become a spiritual director and wrote several books, centred mainly around Being in the Present Moment.

He sees himself as religiously non-aligned and cites much religious teaching as dualistic and divisive, essentially ego-driven and thus responsible for the problems in the world today, a position that does not find favour with fundamentalist religion of any flavour.

Quotations from Tolle:

“Any teaching that puts the spotlight on the workings of the ego will necessarily provoke egoic reaction, resistance and attack”

“A true spiritual teacher does not have anything to teach in the conventional sense of the word, does not have anything to give or add to you. The only function of such a teacher is to help you remove that which separates you from the truth of who you already are”

“The Truth is inseparable from who you are. Yes, you are the Truth. If you look for it elsewhere, you will be deceived every time. The very Being that you are is the Truth. Jesus tried to convey that when he said “I am the way, the truth and the life”. In this saying, he speaks of the innermost I Am, the essence identity of every man and woman, every life-form, in fact. The light of consciousness is all that is necessary to realise this. You are that light.”

A sample of experiences from our community:

“At the same time as Tolle I have been reading Laurens van der Post. An interesting juxtaposition. For me Tolle encapsulates the apophatic, the via negativa whereas van der Post signifies the cataphatic or affirmative way. Both deal with ‘living in the Now’ but come at it from different perspectives. Apophatic or cataphatic are both sides of the same coin. One is not better nor more effective than the other. There is no duality on the mystical path so no need for comparisons. More and more they become one – the fire and the rose.”

“For me, Eckhart Tolle speaks from a tradition of German spirituality going back to his namesake, Meister Eckhart, who taught the NO-THINGNESS of God and the mysterious birth of Christ in the soul (Essential being, or Oneness with the Father, manifesting itself in what Tolle would call “life formations”). This tradition comes down through Angelus Silesius (“Be your essential Self”). Other poets also express the paradox of the oneness of all life and at the same time the uniqueness of all individual things and beings.”

“We had a good and lengthy discussion of the Parable of



Eckhart Tolle (picture: Saffarelli, CC BY-SA 4.0)

the Prodigal Son, which Eckhart had interpreted in his characteristic way, focusing on the ‘illusion’ of suffering and the realization of oneness, but many felt that he missed the deeper meanings in the story told – about a process at work in which our foolish ways have consequences which not only cause real suffering to others but, as painful experiences, can also serve to ‘wake us up to ourselves,’ as happened to the Prodigal.”

“Tolle is brilliant partly because he ignores the shady areas of the practicalities of the spiritual life with its doubts and uncertainties, and goes for the strong contrast between reality and illusion, sight and blindness, ego and non-ego. Ironically, there is something dualistic in this presentation, which, after all, was a plea for non-duality. But we forgave him.”

Bob Morley
Christian Meditation in Cumbria

Further information about Eckhart Tolle, including a list of his publications and resources, is available on his website: <https://eckharttolle.com>

News from the School of Meditation

At the time of writing, retreat centres have reopened albeit with restrictions and it looks as though residential gatherings may soon be able to restart.

The School 7 day silent retreat at the Greenhouse Christian centre in Dorset is due to take place from 18/25th July. Please get in touch with me to enquire if you are interested in making a last minute booking as, unusually by this time, there are still a few places available.

During the past year the Essential Teaching Weekends have been offered using Zoom and you can read Jayne's article below. Another online course has been running through May and June and we have a waiting list for the next one, although no dates as yet. We are looking at how

we can make the Essential Teaching more flexible to enable more people to enjoy the fruits of this course.

Meanwhile, having been unable to re-book the Ammerdown Centre for the next Essential Teaching weekend, I can confirm that we have just booked Saint Columba's House in Woking, Surrey from 11/13th March 2022. I don't have any other details at present but if you would like to register your interest please contact Ailsa (ailsa.adamson@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing you in person or online sometime soon!

Julie Roberts
School of Meditation Coordinator

Essential Teaching Online

As a member of the team for the UK School of Meditation I had the recent pleasure of assisting Julie Roberts as she led our second Essential Teaching event online over the course of four consecutive Saturdays during January 2021. The previous (and first) online ET event was led by Liz Watson in June 2020. This is a new way of presenting this excellent course which as many know is usually presented in a weekend long residential format. Experimentation with how to present the course continues and this will evolve as we navigate the way forward once the pandemic restrictions have been lifted. As we move forward it is hoped that we will be able to offer both online and residential and non-residential Essential Teaching workshops so that people can choose which is more appropriate for them.

On this Essential Teaching event we had ten participants and all sessions were on Zoom which worked very well from an administrative and technological point of view. Even those 'technophobes' among us (and I include myself here!) were gently helped and reassured by Julie's hard won competence. Seeing all participants on the same screen, managing break-out rooms and yet still feeling 'part of the group' left us thinking that ten people (plus two facilitators) was just about right. We met up from 10am - 12 noon and then reconvened at 4 - 6pm on the four Saturdays of January. Those attending were from all over the UK - some relatively new to meditation and others who were already group leaders, but all wanted to experience the essential teaching in new and deeper ways.

Feedback from the participants was very positive affirming that the spacing/timing of the sessions was appropriate and manageable. All said that they felt included and connected and gained much from the teaching input, periods of meditation together and group reflections. Others felt it gave them a more global sense of the meditation community worldwide increasing their connection with others and becoming more aware of the many resources available for meditators within WCCM. We were left feeling encouraged in our own practice and more confident to share the gift with others.

Here are Penny's thoughts....

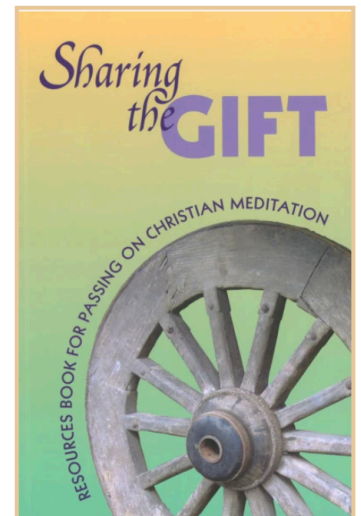
"The Essential Teaching Course was a real blessing for me, an opening of my eyes, that God is in the centre of my soul

and in the centre of Christian meditation. I gained understanding about meditation and was able to link it more to my Christian faith. It's a brilliant course. I enjoyed meeting other meditators and learning about their experiences".

I would highly recommend doing the Essential Teaching in an online format - even whilst acknowledging the very real lack of actual human contact which we all missed! Of course, there was no chatting in the queues for coffee and meals but nonetheless there was a developing group energy which we all sensed and over the course of a month we really felt we got to know one another. The course material is excellent and lends itself well to online presentation and delivery.

Whether or not you have thought about it before do think about signing up for one....now might just be the right time. Simply get in touch with Ailsa (ailsa.adamson@gmail.com) to register for the next one.

Jayne MacGregor
School of Meditation team



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In Relation

I have been reading Rowan Williams' book, *Being Human*. He writes about the difference between an individual and a person. We are all unique individuals but, he says, personhood is something more than all the facts about us. "A person... is the point at which relationships intersect, where a difference may be made and new relations created. It is in virtue of this that Christians can look at any and every human individual and say that the same kind of mystery is true of all of them, and therefore the same kind of reverence or attention is due to all of them." We ascribe personal dignity or worth to people because of the sense that, in relationship, each of us has a presence or a meaning in someone else's existence. We live in another's life.

Then I picked up Carlo Rovelli's *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics*. He quotes Werner Heisenberg who imagined that the electrons within atoms do not always exist. They only exist when someone or something watches them. They materialise in a place...when colliding with something else: *the only means they have of being real* [my italics]. So an electron is a set of jumps from one interaction to another. When nothing disturbs it, it is not in any precise place. It is not in a `place` at all.

What does this mean? Those of us like me untutored in physics might well ask! So does Rovelli. He ponders the mysteries of the physical world he has spent his life trying to understand. Does it mean that essential reality is indescribable? He writes "does it mean...that we only understand a piece of the puzzle? Or does it mean, as it seems to me, that we must accept the idea that *reality is only interaction?*" [my italics]

Both Williams and Rovelli remind me of the Zulu philosophical teaching Ubuntu: a person is a person because of other people.

Back to Rowan Williams and into theology. He writes that behind all this lies one very basic assumption going at least as far back as Saint Augustine. The assumption that "before anything or anyone is in relation with anything or anyone else, it's in relation to God". And said Augustine, "the deeper I go into the attempt to understand myself, who and what I am, the more I find that I am already grasped, addressed, engaged with. I can't dig deep enough in myself to find an abstract self that's completely divorced from relationship". So, for St Augustine and the Christian tradition, before anything else happens, I am in relation to a non-worldly, non-historical, everlasting attention and love, which is God.

So what does this mean for us as meditators? Firstly, Augustine's teaching reinforces the basic premise behind meditation as a way of prayer: God is with us and our task is to be present to ourselves and thus to God. As Augustine wrote "You were within me and I was outside, where I rushed about wildly searching for you like some monster loose in your beautiful world. You were with me, but I was not with you."

Then I think it helps us to understand John Main's teaching, and our experience as meditators, that meditation creates community. I would suggest that it does this by making present, more tangible, a community which is at root already there, though often unrealised.



This understanding also raises wide questions for society at large. American essayist Eula Biss writes "capitalism doesn't care about relationships between people ... my most major form of resistance [to it] is to privilege relationships with people over other things."

And this teaching underpins the whole idea of human rights. Rowan Williams writes "human dignity, the unconditional requirement that we attend with reverence to one another, rests firmly on this conviction that the other is already related to something that is not me". I think of the work some people in our community do in prisons, for the marginalised, in the migrant camps in Calais. These meditators are attending with reverence to the other. Hopefully in our small way we all do this each time we sit to meditate with others - be it online or in person.

Roger Layet



We need a Social Media Enthusiast!

WCCM in the UK wants to improve its presence on social media to reach a wider and more varied audience.

We are looking for someone who can manage our Facebook account, has experience of setting up and managing other social media accounts and is able to regularly post information about UK events and activities.

If you are enthusiastic about social media and would like to support the WCCM in the UK community we would like to hear from you.

Roz Stockley has more information and can be contacted on 07929 007808 or by email rozstockley@copsewood.org.uk



He sits under a willow tree
on the bank of a clear chalk stream.
In my coloured glass the river flows
through night and day and night.

At noon the sun casts pools of green,
of yellow, brown and blue -
they slide across the limestone flags
of Prior Silkstede's side chapel -
so mayflies dance, rushes nod,
warblers almost sing.

Darkness falls, the cathedral doors
are bolted fast. All is still.
But when Moon casts her platinum line
my river is drawn up into the night.

Beside the Itchen, the Kennet, the Dove,
Izaak watches for the flash of a flank,
the flick of a tail, a slicing fin. His bait
grasshoppers, lobworms, frogs.

Men stand and stare at me, at him,
in hushed tones swap tall fishing tales
of flies tried out, fish caught, fish lost,
and eels. Ah, eels, now there's a thing.

At dusk he'll take his net, his creel,
walk back to his rooms to write it down:
the sermon which broke from its chrysalis
on a shaking reed as he sat and fished
and read and prayed beside the waters
which flowed, which flow, then as now,
of Kennet, Itchen, Derbyshire Dove.

Through dusk to dawn to noon to dusk
Izaak Walton studies to be quiet.

Anne Boileau

A stained glass window in Winchester Cathedral is dedicated to the author of *The Compleat Angler*, informally known as the Patron Saint of angling.

WCCM *Wisdom, Living & the Joy of Connection* TALKS FOR YOUNGER ADULTS

The experience of loneliness and the fear of isolation are rampant in our world today. Wisdom speaks to us from many sources. She helps us reconnect to the self, others and to our divine origin. Solitude is the cure for loneliness, community is the safe space where we reconnect to others and learn about ourselves. And from this grows a new capacity for healthy intimacy and strong relationships. Meditation is simply the practice of wisdom reconnecting us to all that we are part of.

This series of online meetings for younger people is a journey through the roots of meditation in the Christian Tradition as experienced in the circumstances of modern life. These talks address the feeling that many young people have of being spiritually rootless and hope to offer them a way of reconnection.

WCCM offers an opportunity to connect personal experience with questioning to open and include tradition within a diverse and supportive community of fellow seekers. John Main, who planted the first seed of this

community, was a monk who himself bridged the Christian world with other faiths. Laurence Freeman developed this approach seeing meditation as opening the common ground and offering a way to unity and peace in our divided world.

The talks are monthly on a Saturday afternoon and there is no charge. Details are on wccm.org under the *Events* tab. Look for the picture above or search for the *Talks for younger adults* category.

Please note that this event is open to any meditator within the age group between 20 – 40 years old.



The Poetry of Lectio Divina

I first came across the practice of Lectio Divina (sacred reading) perhaps 10 years ago, when as a seeker, I travelled up to London to attend monthly oblate cell meetings, soon becoming familiar with the four stage sequence of Lectio, Meditatio, Oratio and Contemplatio. As part of the process it was suggested that we might 'chew' on the words or phrases that appealed or resonated, and later I read a book entitled 'Knowing by Heart' by Norvene Vest which explains the practice of lectio and something of its history. She also refers to 'chew' as a means of indicating something of what one should do, and suggests that scripture itself draws us to lectio; particularly the poetry and wisdom literature in the Psalms and Proverbs. She mentions the invitation we so often encounter in the scriptures:

'Listen, my child, with the ear of your heart',

and comments that word in prayer is our self-giving, silence in prayer is receptivity to the self-giving of God. The balance of the two creates possibilities beyond our imagining. Lectio is rooted in this formative balance of word and silence.

But language and our use of words can be a 'slippery' medium. The key perhaps is engaging both the mind and the heart.

A quotation I heard a little while ago, that is so very relevant to this subject of how language and words 'work', was offered by the prominent political philosopher and author, John Gray, when he was the guest on 'Desert Island Discs'. He said:

'The role of language is not to say something, but to point to things that cannot be said'.

It is a view that can so easily be questioned, but after considering and re-considering over time, I have often returned to it, and quoted it, since. It suggests, I think, a paradox. Language clearly is used with the intention of saying something, but if one ponders, then it becomes clear that so often our words, our use of language, is not precise, it does in fact seem to 'point to something that cannot be said'. And this is where poetry comes into its own.

Fr Laurence, in one of the Bonnevaux Sunday masses towards the end of 2020, commented that words from the Persian 13th century poet Rumi were part of the inspiration for the Advent Retreat. He described Rumi as a person from whom God shines for me, revealing the connections and insights between matter and spirit, between emotion and faith, and he illustrates through his poetry, this love of, and from, God. He talked also of 'Knowledge of the Mystery' as the foundation and core experience we need. The wonder and surprisingness of existence; and of those who really believe in God and trust Jesus on their way through life saying they cannot really explain why, but they cannot help but radiate it, or express it, perhaps in

the same way Rumi had to write poetry. Fr Laurence invited those attending to begin Mass with an intention, a resolution, to allow God to write great poetry with our lives, so that as God becomes human in us, we may become God.



In his recently published book 'The Splash of Words', Mark Oakley (Dean of Chapel St John's College Cambridge, writer and broadcaster) explores the power of poetry to stir our settled ways of viewing the world and faith. He says the phrase 'splash of words' is a good description of poetry. When you read a poem there is an initial splash like a pebble thrown into a lake. The words disturb your surface and have their impact. Then, as the poem begins to do its work, the ripples of meaning head out towards the shore, often slowly but relentlessly, and you realise that these words are shifting your perceptions and consequently transforming who you are and how you understand.

'When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be', noted the Chinese poet Lao Tzu.

A poem's ultimate meaning is found not in the words but in us, in our response to the words. Poetry is not about factual information but human formation.

Mark claims that poetry is the person of faith's native language. Ever since priests and people of the world's religions have been aware of the numinous, of the spirit, they have opened their arms to invoke the divine name and have done so with poetry pouring from their lips and dramatised into movement. It is also striking that the holy texts of the world's religions, believed by many to be revealed by God as holy wisdom from beyond the human mind, are so often found in poetic form. He suggests that it is acknowledged by the world's religions that God is very obviously a poet.

He quotes Les Murray, the famous Australian poet who said:

'God is the poetry caught in any religion, caught, not imprisoned.'

In the scriptures of most of the prominent world religions, truth is expressed through poetry for the faithful. It is not just a better way of saying the truth but rather truth is found in this form. Truth for the person of faith is inseparable from the way it is spoken, you might say that truth is far too important to be literalistic with. We know this when we fall in love and try to express how we feel. Literalism won't do.

The whole scriptural exercise is that of trying to read the love between the lines. We are not to 'hear the news' but to 'hear the good news' and, as Jesus knew, that requires both poetry in the speaker and 'ears to hear' in the rest of us. Oakley says, 'it looks then, as if poetry is the native language of faith', it is the language that most truly re-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Mind Melds Science and Spirit

In March I attended a five-hour webinar given by Don MacGregor and hosted by the Meditatio Centre. He is at the forefront of reconciling Science with Spirituality for us. This was the subject of his earlier book 'Blue Sky God'.

He is envisioning the fact that science can be seen to be confirming the truth that religious traditions and Christianity have been declaring for centuries, even millennia.

From the macro to the micro level creation is one vast interconnected field of energies.

In the realm of physics what is coming to light is Oneness and interconnectedness, both at the cosmic level of an expanding universe, and at the sub atomic level of quantum reality.

The natural world of the elements, plants, and animals around us, after centuries of alienation and exploitation, is now being rediscovered as a subtly interdependent web of life.

The last five centuries have been spent analysing and dissecting the distinct physical and psychic realities within us in an ever more specialised way. Now, neuroscience is demonstrating the fundamental unity and integrity of mind and body, each interacting with the other constantly.

In the field of epigenetics, the once isolated and deterministic gene is now shown to be interacting continuously with the surrounding environment of emotions and conditions, both within and outside the body.

Finally within the field of spirituality what was originally proclaimed by Jesus:

'The father and I are one' and 'I am the vine, you are the branches' can now be seen to be consistent with the evidence from these developing understandings of modern science. It has become a widely experienced reality.

In meditation, for example, we have a daily practice of coming to oneness with God, with others and with the whole field of creation. This is made available to Christians through the road map given by John Main and so many others. There is a fundamental, inescapable oneness and coherence with all the other religious traditions of the world.

THE POETRY OF LECTIO DIVINA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

flects the life of the soul. It is not for nothing that the Psalms remain one of the most treasured parts of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

So little wonder then that this enormously rich world of lectio divina and poetry has fed my curiosity so deeply, and become a much cherished part of my life.

I do hope there has been something in this piece to in-

The injunction, 'That they may all be one' sounds loudly and insistently.

Once you see it, you find it everywhere, staring you in the face!

Don MacGregor

Christianity Expanding

— Into Universal Spirituality



The Wisdom Series **Book 1**

If you have missed the webinar and its wonderfully helpful images and diagrams, you can find the recording at <https://vimeo.com/524289139>

Don has produced a new book on all these themes 'Christianity Expanding: Into Universal Spirituality'. It is the first of a Wisdom series; there are more titles to come. It can be used for individual reading or as a wonderful resource for a discussion group.

Don recognises that we have inherited a Christian religious tradition that goes back centuries, yet, in the main, does not speak to contemporary people. He recognises the need for a new language and new thinking to integrate the understanding of Christian faith with the rest of knowledge of the contemporary world. He charts a new way of under-

standing the mission of Jesus and his dramatic effect on humanity and the evolution of consciousness.

It is wonderful that we now have such a teacher. With his science background, Don is able to integrate the amazing new discoveries of science with the timeless truth of the Gospel.

I warmly recommend his book.

Shelagh Layet

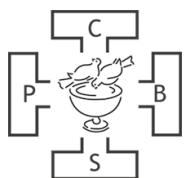
Books by Don MacGregor (www.donmacgregor.co.uk):

- Blue Sky God: The Evolution of Science and Christianity (Christian Alternative Books - 2012)
- Christianity Expanding: Into Universal Spirituality - The Wisdom Series Book 1 (Christian Alternative Books - 2020)
- Coming soon... Expanding Scriptures: Lost and Found - The Wisdom Series Book 2 (Christian Alternative Books - February 2022)

terest and inspire you.

Raymond Lamb

(Ray gave this material initially as a talk during Benedicts Well, a weekly online meditation and speaker session hosted over the past year by the WCCM Oblate community and he kindly reworked it for publication.)



Monastics in the World – WCCM Oblate Community

Meditation creates community. Meditators who experience personal transformation through a daily practice seek to express this in ways suitable to their own path. Oblation is one of these.

The World Community is ecumenical and the Oblate community specially reflects this. However, the WCCM as a whole acknowledges a special relationship to the Benedictine tradition which was the first in the western Church to form a stable form of inclusive religious life and, in succeeding generations, has always adapted to the needs and circumstances of the age. Oblates live out their oblation in a spirit of 'obedience, stability and conversion' and prom-

ise 'to share always in the life and work of our Community'.

The basic element of the Oblate Community, is the 'cell'. This word has a long monastic tradition referring originally to the monk's cave or room. With us it is used to describe presence not only physical space. The cell meets with regularity, to meditate, to share the Word, to consider their ways of sharing in the work of the wider community and where time allows share a meal together. All are welcome.

International Oblate Coordinator: Eileen Dutt
07721-574767 or eduttobl@christianmeditation.org.uk

OBLATE EVENTS

Annual UK Oblate Weekend: Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 October 2021. at The Monastery of Christ Our Saviour, Turvey, Bedfordshire. Please contact: Angela Gregson: rydal2814@yahoo.co.uk 01706 563 024 or text Oblates 07792 083 942.

The next **quarterly Community day** will be our first physical gathering for nearly 18 months - Saturday 14 August 10.30-16.00 at St. Marks, London. Do consider coming. Contact Angela Gregson (UKOC) rydal2814@yahoo.co.uk to book..

Benedict's Well - weekly online Oblate led prayer session and talk. Mondays at 9am. Contact: Julia Williamson julia.williamson78@gmail.com

WCCM Oblate cell meetings

North London: Meets at Christ the King Church, Cockfosters. Contact: Philomena Phillips philomenaphillips51@hotmail.co.uk or on 07970-971674

Cambridge: Contact: Jane Serrurier 07557 476227

Berkshire: Online Zoom meeting on the last Wednesday of each month from 14.15 - 15.45. Contact: Angela Greenwood angelagreenwood@hotmail.com 01344-774254

Northern Cell (Leeds): hopefully in person Saturdays 11 September, 13 November 12.00 - 15.00 (dates and place to be confirmed) & 11 December which will be online. Contact: Angela Gregson for details at rydal2814@yahoo.co.uk or on 01706-563024.

UK Led Online Oblate Cell Meetings: Sundays 8 August, 12 September, 14 November 11.00-12.30 & Wednesdays 22 September, 24 November 19.30-21.00. Contact Angela Gregson rydal2814@yahoo.co.uk for more information

Events

Events are subject to COVID-19 restrictions, some may be held as online Zoom events, others may be cancelled at short notice. Contact the organiser(s) for the latest information.

Events from August. Please visit the Christian Meditation UK website for more details and to check for changes and additional events: //wccm.uk/events

NATIONAL

Friday 17 June to Sunday 19 June 2022. Annual Conference – Touch the Earth
Lightly. Venue: Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. Details will be available in the autumn.

SCHOOL OF MEDITATION EVENTS

Contact: Ailsa Adamson ailsa.adamson@gmail.com or phone UK office: 020 8280 2283.

Essential Teaching Online. Leader: Julie Roberts. Venue: Online. Cost: £20. Please register your interest for the next one with Ailsa.

October (dates to be confirmed). Essential Teaching Weekend. Venue: The Briery, Ilkely. Contact: Aisla to receive details when they are available.

Friday 11 to Sunday 13 March 2022. Essential Teaching Weekend. Venue: Saint Columba's House, Woking, Surrey. Contact: Aisla to receive details when they are available.

NORTH EAST ENGLAND

Friday 24 September. Ampleforth Abbey Christian Meditation and Tai Chi Day.

Venue: Ampleforth Abbey, near York YO62 4EN. www.ampleforth.org.uk.

Contact: 01439 766486 pastoral@ampleforth.org.uk

Friday 1 to 3 October. Ampleforth Abbey Christian Meditation Silent Weekend Retreat. Venue & Contact: Ampleforth Abbey as above.

Friday 22 to 24 October. Embodied Contemplative Retreat Christian Meditation & Tai Chi. Leader: Terry Doyle. Venue: Minsteracres Retreat Centre, Minsteracres, Consett, Co Durham DH8 9RT Cost: £175. Contact: 01434 673248 www.minsteracres.org.uk

Friday 29 October. Ampleforth Abbey Christian Meditation & Mindfulness Day. Venue & Contact: Ampleforth Abbey as above.

NORTH WEST ENGLAND

Tuesday 3 August 10:00 for 10:30-15:00. Living with the Mystics: Abhishiktananda.

Speaker: Diana Raven. Venue: Ambleside Parish Centre. Cost: £5. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided. Contact: Bob Morley rgm1@live.co.uk

Saturday 14 August 10:30-16:00. Day of Gathering: A day to come together, to meet and chat and meditate. Leader: Cameron Butland. Venue: Dalemmain, near Penrith. Cost: £5. Contact: Cameron Butland cdsa03@gmail.com (please book by email by 7th August)

Events continued

Saturday 25 September 10:30-15:00. Remembrance in the Presence of Love.

Leader: Bob Morley. **Venue:** Ambleside Parish Centre. **Cost:** £5. **Contact:** rgm1@live.co.uk (please book ahead).

Friday 26 to Sunday 28 November. Boarbank Retreat (provisional). Contact:

Cameron Butland cdsa03@gmail.com to register your interest. In September he will be in contact to confirm if the retreat can go ahead and with all the details.

Friday 25 to Sunday 27 March 2022. Lent Retreat at Whalley Abbey (provisional) -

Alex Holmes on 'Oneness'. Please look out for more details in the autumn but keep the dates free.

WEST MIDLANDS

Saturday 9th October to Tuesday 2 November. Hereford Cathedral Art Exhibition:

Journey to your Centre - The Art of Meditation by Stephen Magrath.

Contact: www.stephenmagrath.co.uk

SOUTH WEST ENGLAND

Friday 24 to Sunday 26 September. Contemplation and Community Retreat.

Speaker: Liz Watson. **Venue:** Ammerdown Centre, Radstock near Bath, Somerset BA3 5SW. **Contact:** John Roberts john.wilcott@gmail.com

Saturday 16 October 09:30-16:00. Day of Introduction on: The Wisdom Tradition

within Christianity. Leader: Revd Don MacGregor. **Venue:** Brownsword Hall, Poundbury, Dorchester DT1 3GW **Contact:** Roz Stockley on 07929 007808; rozstockley@copsewood.org.uk

Repeating events:

Mondays 18:30-19:00. Meditation on Zoom with the Ilminster group. Contact: Lucy

Blows lucystepsplane@gmail.com for an invitation.

LONDON

Wednesdays 19:00-20:15. Addiction and Grace Meditation Group. Venue: Kairos

Centre, Mount Angelus Road, Roehampton, London SW15 4JA. **Contact:** May Nicol maymbnicol@aol.com 07768 310666

MEDITATIO CENTRE St Marks Church, Myddelton Sq London EC1R 1XX

Contact: 020 7278 2070 meditatio@wccm.org www.meditatiocentrelondon.org

Repeating events:

COVID restrictions allowing, we very much hope that from Wednesday 1 September The Meditatio Centre will be open for meditation at 13.00-13.30 every weekday.

We will also continue to offer **Online Meditation every Wednesday 13:00-13:30. Contact:** meditatio@wccm.org for the zoom link

Breathing Workshop Online every Thursday 9:00-10:00. Contact:

lucybarnesyoga@icloud.com for the zoom link

From Friday 10 September every Friday 10:00-12:00 Yoga. Venue: The Meditatio

Centre. **Leader:** Lucy Barnes. **Contact (for cost and information):** as above.

From Monday 13 September every Monday 19:00-21:00 Yoga. Venue: The Meditatio

Centre. **Leader:** Lucy Barnes. **Contact:** as above.

Single events:

Saturday 18 September 14:00-17:30. In My Skin: Movement & Meditation

workshop **Leader:** Lucy Barnes **Venue:** The Meditatio Centre **Cost:** £25/£15. Please wear loose clothing. Refreshments provided.

Saturday 25 September 10:30-16:00. Zenedictine! Speaker: Jim Green. **Venue:** The

Meditatio Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 2 October 10:30-16:00. Laybyrith: Letting Go on your Journey through the

12 Steps. **Leaders:** May Nicol and Martin Garsed. **Venue:** The Meditatio Centre **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 16 October 10:30-16:00. Leader: Laurence Freeman. **Venue:** The Meditatio

Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 23 October 10:30-16:00. Speaker: Daniel Horan OFM. **Venue:** The

Meditatio Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 6 November 10:30-16:00. Mysterious Wisdom. The Spiritual Quest of WB

Yates. **Speaker:** Gravel Lindop. **Venue:** The Meditatio Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 13 November 10:30-16:00. A day of poetry and Dance. Leaders Mark

Burrows and Hayley Matthews. **Venue:** The Meditatio Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 27 November 10:30-16:00. Start Advent. Speaker: Simon Parke. **Venue:**

The Meditatio Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

Saturday 11 December 10:30-16:00. Preparing for Christmas. Speaker: Laurence

Freeman **Venue:** The Meditatio Centre/Online. **Cost:** £30/£20. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea/coffee provided.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

Daily Meditation and First Wednesday Quiet Days are currently suspended.

SILENCE IN THE CITY See www.silenceinthecity.org.uk for the programme.

Unless stated otherwise all talks are at: Westminster Cathedral Hall, London SW1P 1QH. **Contact:** 020-7252-2453 info@silenceinthecity.org.uk Pre-booking is necessary.



WCCM

Upcoming Events



HEALTH SERIES WITH DR BARRY WHITE & LAURENCE FREEMAN

27 July: The Meaning of Suffering
7 September: Love - The Universal Healer
2 November: The Harmonies of a Healthy Life

SPEAKER SERIES

16 September: A Caring Economy
7 October: A Quest for Wisdom
9 November: A Healthy Intelligence for Our Digitised Societies



WCCM NATIONAL COMMUNITY RETREAT SERIES

Levels of Consciousness and the Fruits of the Spirit

18-21 November: The Heavenly Jerusalem
The WCCM in the UK Meditation Community

Live Webcasts on Zoom

RECORDINGS AVAILABLE ON WCCM YOUTUBE CHANNEL

CONTEMPLATIVE EUCHARIST: Each Sunday at 11am

MEDITATION SESSION: Each Thursday at 11.15 am

YOGA CLASS: Each Tuesday at 3.45 pm

DETAILS OF ALL THESE EVENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WCCM WEBSITE WCCM.ORG
LOOK FOR 'EVENTS' OR 'LIVE' ON THE MAIN MENU.

Keeping In Touch

If you would like to ...

- Receive Meditation News by email or post
- Find out about meditation groups in your local area
- Find out about the Lone Meditator Network

Visit: www.wccm.uk

Email: uk@wccm.org or Phone: 020 8280 2283

Or contact:

WCCM in the UK,

Lido Centre, 63 Mattock Lane, London, W13 9LA

UK OFFICE

WCCM in the UK – Registered Charity No. 1189977 & The Christian Meditation Trust (UK) – Registered Charity No. 1101900.

📍 Lido Centre, 63 Mattock Lane, London W13 9LA 📞 020 8280 2283 ✉ uk@wccm.org 🌐 www.wccm.uk

NATIONAL

National Coordinator: Contact Action Group team leader, Regional or Special Interest Coordinator. Otherwise, contact UK Office.

Chair of WCCM in the UK & CMT (UK): Roz Stockley–07929 007808-ukchair@wccm.org

Safeguarding Trustee: Richard Eddleston–07980 631311 riedd@btinternet.com

Goodnews Books: John Roberts–01458 832704 john.wilcott@gmail.com

Mental Health Advice: Shelagh Layet–shelagh.layet10@gmail.com

Birgit Duncan–020 8883 0666 / 0772 631 2350 birgituduncan@blueyonder.co.uk

Newsletter Editor: Margaret Comerford–uknewsletter@wccm.org

Events Listing: Pia Huber–events@christianmeditation.org.uk

Website: Andy Goddard–07881 988767 cmukwebsite@gmail.com

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Administration: Roisin Williamson–020 8280 2283 ukadmin@wccm.org

Clergy: Fr John Bannister (see below)

Communications: Roz Stockley–07929 007808-rozstockley@copsewood.org.uk

Meditation with Children in Schools: Laura Mapstone–07503 737350 ukmeditationwithchildren@wccm.org

Meditatio Country Coordinator: Diana Ohlson (see below)

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School of Meditation: Julie Roberts–01458 832704 julie.ann.roberts@icloud.com

Liaison with WCCM International: Roger Layet–01275 463727 roger.layet@btinternet.com

SPECIAL INTEREST COORDINATORS

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Bonnevaux Contact: Philip Kitchen pakitchen@gmail.com

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Marginalised: Terry Doyle–07971 105082 terry-doyle@live.co.uk

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Prisons: Contact UK Office or email ukprisons@wccm.org

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Online Meditation: Julia Williamson–01252 672145 julia.williamson3@ntlworld.com

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Suffolk (Contact): Margaret Comerford–01799 501581 margaret.comerford@btinternet.com

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London (South–none of Kent or Surrey): Contact UK Office uk@wccm.org 020 8280 2283