

The World Community for Christian Meditation in the UK



SPRING
2013

32 Hamilton Road, London W5 2EH

The community is registered in the UK as 'The Christian Meditation Trust (UK)' reg charity no. 1101900

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FROM YOUR EDITOR

Dear Readers and fellow meditators

Firstly, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of you who returned our survey form. Secondly an equally heartfelt thank you to the volunteers at Meditatio House who lovingly entered your replies on to the computer and summarised them. I have written a more detailed breakdown and analysis of your responses on page 6.

And finally a special thank you to Dee O'Connell who has very kindly cast her professional eye over my feeble efforts and has I think effected a considerable improvement.

I do hope you enjoy this issue.

With best wishes

David Simpson

Contributions to the newsletter are warmly welcomed. Please send items to **David Simpson** at:

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Deadline for next issue - June 15th 2013

SPRING WELCOME

Janet Robbins

When I have been in touch with members of our UK community during these past few months, I have been made aware of the weather that people have endured. There seems to have been very little respite between the rain, snow and winds, especially for those in the north of England and Scotland. It is at these times that we find the rhythm of our day is determined by the elements.

I have just returned from India (I know I escaped much of the bad weather)! We were in a very rural part of South India, where people are very strongly connected to the land and where their worship is grounded at a local level, often a short period taken out of the working day to pray at a shrine placed in a small corner of the field. I found myself

quickly adapting to the natural rhythm of the day, waking at dawn and sleeping at dusk. The benefits were deep sleep and my body relaxed, with time for simple meditations that reflected the pace of life.

So, with the weather continuing to demand acute awareness of its power, may we walk to its rhythm and pace.

Christian Meditation Conference

14-16 June 2013

High Leigh Conference Centre, Lord Street,
Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire EN11 8SG

One and the Many

Unity of Faith – Diversity of Belief

Fr Laurence Freeman OSB

About the conference:

"What kind of community does meditation create? And how can meditators in community witness to the human need for stability and harmony in a troubled and fast changing world?" Fr Laurence, spiritual leader of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM), will be exploring this theme in his talks to us during our time together.

Our time together offers meditation and a range of workshops, sensitively chosen to reflect the weekend theme. This will include: music/singing; poetry; tai chi; yoga; meditation and the creative arts and time for discussion and reflection. The workshops will be led by members of our community, including:

Margaret Rizza, Liz Watson, Terry Doyle, and Chris Hurley

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The weekend will conclude with a Eucharist in the beautiful chapel at High Leigh. Full details and a timetable will be available nearer the time. We do hope you feel able to join us at our Christian Meditation Conference.

Great Silence:

In keeping with our Benedictine tradition, we will be keeping the "great silence" which will begin on Friday after supper until Saturday morning before breakfast. This will enable us to enjoy the stillness and contemplative nature of the weekend. At all other times during the weekend, we will be able to share in conversation and companionship.

High Leigh Conference Centre: (www.cct.org.uk)

High Leigh opened as a Conference Centre in 1921. With 40 acres of lawns, parkland and woodland the tranquil surroundings aid both concentration and relaxation for delegates.

Accommodation: All en-suite rooms have a bathroom suite, towels and soap, plus tea and coffee making facilities. All have high standards of decor and furnishings.

Non en-suite rooms (standard rooms) provide hand wash basins and comfortable furnishings and decor. Each group of bedrooms has the use of a suite of toilets/bathrooms. As with en-suite rooms, towels and soap are provided. Refreshment points are situated close to these rooms for delegates to make drinks at any time. Six bedrooms that are specifically designed for delegates with disabilities, are available including adapted doors and space for wheelchair users, the provision of alarm pull-cords and specially designed showers and bathroom suites.

DAY OF REFLECTION

Led by **Adrian Scott**

Saturday 20th April 2013
10.00—4.30

At St John's Seminary,
Cranleigh Road, Wonersh, GU5 0QX
(Nr Guildford)



Suggested donation £10.00

Book in with Brian & Sheila Longman
sheilaannlongman@aol.com
Telephone: 01483 505814

Booking:

Please send a deposit of £90. Cheques should be made out to **Christian Meditation Trust (UK)** (not WCCM).

Deposits are non refundable. If you wish to pay by bank transfer please contact us.

Bursaries:

Please get in touch also if you need financial help to attend the conference. If anyone is able to contribute towards the bursary fund, donations would be gratefully received.

Contact: Jacqueline Russell

e: jacq.russell@ntlworld.com;

ph: 01296 488450 (office hours)



Outreach of **meditatio**
The World Community for Christian Meditation

A Meditatio Seminar

JUSTICE

9 & 10 July 2013

At The Meditatio Centre

St Marks, Myddelton Square, London EC1R 1XX

www.wccmmeditatio.org

Speakers: Laurence Freeman OSB; Richard Cogswell, Judge; Sean Hagan, General Counsel IMF; Lord Andrew Phillips, lawyer and politician; James Bishop author of *The Way of Wilderness* and others.

In a society that is increasingly dependent on legislation to define its values and run its institutions, what is happening to justice? Often the innate sense of justice is smothered in argument and polemics and the execution of justice becomes confused with the influence of the media. In this Meditatio Seminar we will be opening a dialogue between legislators, politicians, lawyers - and the rest of us - which will bring the spiritual dimension of justice to the foreground of the modern debate. The first day of the Seminar will focus on how justice - balance, equity, decency and integrity - is respected in the making of laws and the management of public life and values. On the second day the Seminar will concentrate on meditation in prisons. People who have been prisoners and those now working with them will ask how the teaching of meditation can both restore justice at the inner and outer levels and help individuals regain their inner balance and wholeness in preparation for a return to ordinary society. **To register your interest or if you would like to help with the organisation of the Seminar please email meditatio@wccm.org or call Brijji 07980 581351**

MEDITATIO EVENTS

25 April: Roots of Christian Mysticism, The Meditatio Centre, London. Fr Laurence will launch this 12 session course.

26-28 April: Weekend Retreat in London

Conscious Contact – Christian Meditation as an

UK News Spring 2013

11th Step Practice With May Nicol, Linda Kaye and Terry Doyle at Kairos Centre, London

9-10 July: London: Meditatio Seminar on Justice

To find out more about any of these events please email meditatio@wccm.org or call The Meditatio Centre on 020 7278 2070.

Meditatio Publications

Based on our outreach, we have recently published some booklets. A really good introduction if you want to find out how meditation can be applied in these different areas.

Meditation & Mental Health - £2.00

Meditation & Addiction - £2.00

The Business of Spirit - £3.50

All available from Good News Books. Order Tel: 01582 571011 or Email: orders@goodnewsbooks.net

OPENING OF THE NEW MEDITATIO CENTRE AT MYDDELTON SQUARE

Charles Posnett

It's quite difficult to recognise the "upper room" at St Mark's, Myddelton Square in London. Gone are the bookcases and the desks and gone is the rather subdued office atmosphere. In its place, we find a bright and welcoming environment, which will be the home to an impressive range of events during the coming year.



Over a hundred people attended the opening of The Meditatio Centre on Tuesday, 19 March and heard Fr. Laurence refer to it as "a new beginning" for our community. Indeed, it promises to be just that - in so many different ways. Certainly it provides a new ambience for our seminars, workshops and groups. It addresses a whole new range of subjects and concerns. It also gives rise to new possibilities for art and music events. It will use all the latest technology and make it possible to host "webinars", "web casts" and "teleconferences". However it also promises to provide the right balance between technology and human interaction in that it will provide a meeting place in which to meditate, to renew old friendships

and create new ones.

At the heart of everything at the Meditatio Centre is the practice of Christian meditation itself. The programme offers daily meditation, renowned speakers and a variety of groups, courses and seminars. The Roots of Christian Mysticism course is starting on 25 April with Fr Laurence speaking on Jesus: The Teacher of Contemplation.



Then there's a regular programme of Teaching on Christian Meditation and Bodywork Workshops and specific Meditatio outreach programs for example – Interfaith evenings, Addiction and Recovery, Meditation with Children and Mental Health. New topics will be explored in our Creative Silence sessions, Science and Spirituality and Theological Reflections with James Allison . . . and lots more . . .



I would encourage you to look at the new Meditatio website – www.wccmmeditatio.org where you'll find full details of the programme for 2013 at The Meditatio Centre. Book online – but you can also book by calling 020 7278 2070 or by Email: meditatio@wccm.org. Better still come and have a look for yourself!

THIRD INTERNATIONAL MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS CONFERENCE 2013

Christine Hill

WCCM local group leader in Surrey

I have a keen interest in the welfare of children, and had a rare opportunity to attend the above conference on 27th March. The most inspirational speaker was Jon Kabat-Zinn who is the originator of secular mindfulness programmes and their vision within education.

He reminded us that 30 years ago this type of thinking would not have been acceptable but as the diagnosis of psychiatric disease and self-harming in children increases, we have a duty to care for their young minds. The world today is on the edge of a tipping point and we are required to quickly re-think its destiny. I believe mindfulness, heartfulness and awareness need to be part of this journey. We need to teach our constant “thinking brains” to separate from our “emotional” brains and take a break “in the moment”.

“Yesterday is history,

Tomorrow is a mystery,

Today is a gift (that is why it is called the present).”

In the present we can learn to be free, rational, calm, non-judgemental and totally loving of ourselves and each other.

Jon spoke about breathing techniques and body scanning. To suit children in this high-tech age, a programme called .b (pronounced dot B) has been invented — whereby children can remind each other to “stop, breathe and BE” with a text message. Several children presented their own experiences of mindfulness and its use during times of exams, squabbling with siblings and arguments with parents. The groundwork of this programme is taught by trained, experienced school teachers and becomes a normal routine for the children and their parents — not as a therapy but integral to daily life for all. Many teachers who I spoke to felt that a mindfulness course should be included in their teacher training.

Richard Burnett spoke well and demonstrated to all of us the very simple techniques of breathing and scanning the body.

Chris Ruane MP told of the chilling statistic that by 2030 the number of people with a psychiatric disorder is predicted to overtake the number diagnosed with cancer. He was very keen as an educationalist to promote the teaching of mindfulness programs in schools.

At the close of the conference several of the

speakers presented themselves at No 10 to speak with David Cameron’s advisors.

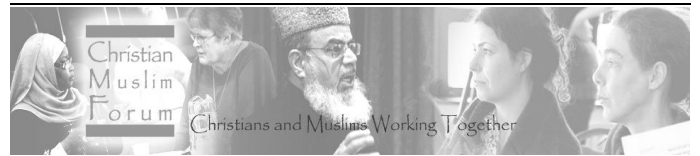
I was sitting next to a teacher of philosophy and religion who commented that he was keen to see these changes, providing we and the children are able to retain the idea of “nature wearing the visible garments of the divine”.

I believe I’m quoting Fr. Lawrence when I say “mindfulness has benefits, meditation has fruits”. Could this heartfulness teaching open a gate?

We are working closely with mindfulness practitioners within the NHS. The fruits of our Christian meditation have led to the development of our own outreach programme Meditation with Children. It is good to share the benefits of this work with children.

Janet Robbins

National Co-Ordinator



A MEETING OF THE CHRISTIAN MUSLIM FORUM

AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS LITERACY

Charles & Patricia Posnett

On Thursday, 14 March we were invited to join about 40 other delegates in the Jerusalem chamber at Westminster Abbey.



The conference was set firmly within the context of current educational practice, and explored what is meant by spirituality; considered some practical faith-based and community-based approaches to developing greater understanding in pupils and students of what spirituality might be; and identified particular challenges and opportunities presented by such work.



Kate Christopher (Head of RE, Southend High School for Boys and member of the NATRE Executive) gave a keynote address on Spirituality in the context of Religious Literacy. This was followed by workshops led by: Debbie Danon (Three Faiths Forum) – The power of words - delving deeper into Jewish texts



Members of the 'dare2engage' team – The power of story - a journey through the Book of Job.
 Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra (The Sacred Spaces project) Creativity and Spirituality
 Charles & Patricia Posnett (WCCM) Christian Meditation with Children
 Westminster Abbey Education Department – Symbols of Worship for Easter

The conference outcomes will feed into the RE Subject Review, sponsored by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, and other educational policy-making destinations. It has also resulted in an Inter-Faith Dialogue between Fr. Laurence and the Christian Muslim Forum on 3rd June 2013.

GOING DEEPER...THE ROOTS OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM

FEB 22-24 2013

THE BRIARY RETREAT CENTRE, ILKLEY, YORKSHIRE

Led by Alex Holmes and Liz Watson.

Photographs by Peter Jarvis

Meditating . . .



. . . on Ilkley Moor ba't'hat



. . . with Liz Watson

THE READER SURVEY

David Simpson

Several hundred of you responded to our survey, for which we thank you. I have excluded the many flattering comments but just picked through the answers that seemed to have something to tell us.

From the boxes you ticked the following emerges – you would like more articles on personal experiences of meditation and about meditation in general; more information on Meditatio activities; more poems; less fiction (which is difficult as so far, as far as I'm aware, we've had none, but I get the message); fewer jokes – also difficult as we've only had three in the last six years; more art; more book reviews (this requires more book reviewers *hint hint*); more news about other non-WCCM meditation related events. A very large number of you want to keep the contacts and events listings in the newsletter (i.e. not just have them on the website).

You have two particular gripes – the poor quality of some photographs (too dark, too small) and the timeliness of information about upcoming events. I would like to use colour which would help with photographs and art, which many of you asked for more of, and will investigate, but of course cost is an issue. As for events, we are very reliant on you to let us know in good time of events in your area. Please email or write to me and I will make sure they are included in the newsletter and on the website. I have to apologise for those occasions when due to the pressure of my work the newsletter has come out later than planned and as a result mentions events that have already been and gone

Nobody mentioned letters – I'd like you to write to me, please!

HERE ARE SOME OF YOUR COMMENTS:

Please remember those of us not on the NET and easy with technology – keep giving phone numbers – that's simplicity too! I like the poetry very much in the magazine

Edit larger pieces or articles

Life has been chaos - my husband died suddenly and unexpectedly and now I am moving to a small apartment. Hence the change of address. The practice of meditation and mindfulness has helped me keep some equilibrium through this stormy time.

It would be VERY helpful to know about future events EARLIER. It would then be easier to plan to attend.

I find it encouraging to know that other meditators still experience various difficulties. I am grateful for their honesty. As a lone meditator I am always pleased to receive the newsletter. Fr Laurence nearly always has something, even just a couple of sentences, to

reassure or that is worthy of personal exploration, especially when he writes of opinions which coincides with my own! My thanks to each person who contributes to my receiving the newsletter Basic help for beginners meditating alone. Could more events - talks, weekend of practice, themed retreats come to North Wales

Not seen so much re: mental illness and addiction

Include application and practical outcomes

The really long articles are good to have but

sometimes I end up putting them on one side to read later as I know they'll need a bit of time and, yup, I end up not reading them at all. So I'd get more out of them if they were shorter but they are a privilege to read when I do!

Articles are too long, verbose, wordy, full of head stuff.

if the newsletter is to contain initial information, it needs to be posted on time.

remember the older generation without IT knowledge.

Many things drop through the door that never I get to look at. This I do, and use it even if I have not thought about form and content.

More extensive information, I would like to see more in depth articles about the journey of meditation, More stories of Bede Griffiths, More reflections of Cassian Conferences; broader articles on diversity of meditation.

Would it be possible to investigate walking groups to focus on the harmony with nature see (meditatio vol 36 No3) People with knowledge of wildlife, ecology etc leading these groups might benefit us all. Local groups beginning and ending with meditation but including a walk could bring tranquillity to many people. These could easily be organised at local level. I can see this as a healing experience but also as an extension of meditation.

The look of the newsletter is very busy.

I would like at least one silent retreat a year on the lines of the one father Laurence did in Norfolk last October.

I have not always read your magazine, but will make more of an effort in future - I would not like it to stop.

you seem to take for granted that your reader will have access to the internet? I do not. I may be the exception?

I love to read poems,

More articles by practitioners of other major faiths who use meditation and how it affects their lives.

Would be good to have a quick guide to how to meditate

It is very text heavy. More pictures would be good.

For lone meditators . . . just once a year a paragraph encouraging us to keep going with meditation. Pam

Winters writes to us all, via email, and does a good job

but a word in the newsletter would be nice.

An excellent article from Janet Robbins on P1/2 on what the organisation is all about

Thank you - seeing the newsletter drop through my letterbox is always a light in my life

As a group leader, but who cannot attend events outside my area, it would be helpful if there could be a regular slot to encourage and provide any new teaching or thoughts on group leadership. I know this is covered in various articles and thoughts by Fr Laurence in the newsletter but something a bit more specific might be helpful. Otherwise well done for a splendid read.

BOOK REVIEWS

David Simpson

"UNAPOLOGETIC" BY FRANCIS SPUFFORD

FABER & FABER £8.99

I first came across Francis Spufford and this book in the Church Times a few months ago, and then almost the same article, repositioned somewhat for the paper's presumably more agnostic readers, in The Guardian. Spufford wanted to write a book about what it feels like to be a Christian and to have a religious faith. He wanted to answer Richard Dawkins et al, not by building a complex argument in defence of belief and Christianity (apologetics), that is, not accepting the grounds of Dawkin's critique of religion (i.e. having to believe six impossible things before breakfast) but rather by giving an account of why he, Francis, believes in God and Jesus.

I then went to a talk given by Spufford at the cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, on CS Lewis' apologetics ("Mere Christianity", "Miracles" etc.) and his Narnia stories for children and Rowan Williams' response to these ("The Lion's World"). Spufford argues, rightly in my view, that CS Lewis is far more persuasive about faith and Christianity in his fiction than he ever is in his apologetics.

Spufford is honest, direct, blunt. He writes well. Two things in his book stand out for me – his chapter on prayer (he doesn't call it that) which for him is breathing in and breathing out in a quiet church – "the escape from the unending song of myself" – and his retelling of the story of Yeshua (Jesus) in his own words. The latter almost prompted me to try and do the same thing myself but the trouble with that, as Spufford says himself, is that the mere act of writing it down (or anything about faith, come to that) starts to kill it. For me, my view or understanding of Jesus / Yeshua changes all the time, deepening and growing I hope, but it can never be final or definitive; true for me now, as I write it, but probably, almost immediately, something to leave behind.

I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in the religious experience, whether they believe, or they don't. It might not persuade an agnostic or an atheist, but it might help them understand why so many people do believe. And for those of us struggling with what we do believe, and what we do about it, this book can certainly help. I don't agree with everything Spufford has to say, but I still enjoyed and profited immensely from reading him.

"WHAT HAS NATURE EVER DONE FOR US?" BY TONY JUNIPER. PROFILE BOOKS £4.50

A few years ago my wife and I went on the WCCM retreat at Monte Oliveto. My wife is a keen environmentalist and is particularly concerned about the state of the sea and marine life so she decided to talk to Fr Laurence about this. She told him about a marine reserve that has been set up in New Zealand, and how no fishing or exploitation of any kind is allowed in the reserve. In fact no human interference of any kind is allowed either positive or negative. Within a remarkably short time the environment within the marine reserve began to improve and recover dramatically. Seaweed forests grew up, young fish were able to shelter from predators, larger fish were able to survive without the depredations of scuba divers, sport fishermen and commercial fisheries. It is a wonderful demonstration of nature's powers of recuperation, if we only just leave her alone. Quick as a flash Fr Laurence responded by pointing up the parallels with our practice of meditation – we simply sit, recite our mantra, and gently and slowly, we are fixed. Our minds and spirits become stiller and clearer, and simpler.

So why review this book, in this newsletter?

- because out of our meditation comes right action and this book is about the right actions we need to take to preserve the earth
- because this book is about learning from nature, not imposing our will on it
- because by unselfishly observing and studying nature, without thinking about what it can do for us, we can understand it and learn to work with it and for it, instead of constantly seeking to exploit it for our own narrow, short term and, as we can now only too clearly see, destructive ends
- because it's not about us!
- because the environment, the cosmos, supports us and we are in reality totally dependent on it – we might call this "God"

Some people have criticised Tony Juniper for "putting a price on Nature", for valuing all the things it does for us in economic terms (e.g. the value of the clean fresh water or oxygen it provides, or the carbon dioxide it absorbs, or the fertile soils it creates and sustains). But he is being pragmatic – we are where we are; we are not yet transformed into the wonderful

selfless beings the green movement wants us to be; Juniper is talking in the language of the present world of politics and economics, and, hopefully, convincing our leaders and shakers that they need to change their policies for energy, agriculture, transportation, water supplies and so on. In the process he gives a wonderful picture of the extraordinary gifts the natural world makes to us, and continues to make despite our abuse of it, and our almost complete domination of the world. Today 40% of the plant life on the planet is grown by human beings – this astonishing figure is both very frightening (because of the crude and short-sighted nature of most human agriculture) but also hopeful – because if we can learn to farm in ways more in harmony and sympathy with nature, we could make a dramatic change to the state of the planet very quickly.

BRINGING MEDITATION TO YORKSHIRE

Helga Engel

When I knew back in 1994 that we would have to leave London and move to Leeds in Yorkshire I wondered whether there would be a meditation group. I had started to meditate 4 years earlier and, of course, I wanted to continue. I made some enquiries but found only 2 groups which were in the process of dissolution. At that time groups existed mainly in the south and around London; I knew of a group in Manchester and one in Cumberland where David Wood was active but in Yorkshire meditation, it seemed, had not yet arrived.

When we moved to London in 1985 I knew nothing about Christian meditation but luck would have it that we settled in the Parish of 'Christ the King' in Cockfosters which was Fr. Laurence's base and it was easy for me to join a group in the church there. Now that we were moving away the outlook was uncertain but friends in our group advised me to start my own group which seemed a daunting prospect but might be the only way forward. So in the spring of 1995 I eventually summoned up enough courage to test the waters but that is no easy task when you don't know anybody who might help with some introductions and generally lend some support. I used the starter pack material, posters, contacted various local religious leaders and generally tried to spread the word. But these were still relatively early days – at least in this area - and what I found more often than not in people's reaction was distrust and suspicion. People saw meditation as an eastern and unchristian practise; Meditation, even Christian meditation was something unheard of and to convince them that there was now a new form of meditation, Christian meditation,

would have needed a person in authority and not a simple new parishioner like me. Speaking one day on the phone to a man responding to a poster which I had been allowed to display in our church and who wanted to know more about this meditation I could clearly hear the doubt in his voice It was not until some time later when Fr. Laurence came to York - to speak to an audience of hardly 2 dozen people – that this man, a retired headmaster, was sufficiently reassured that it was safe to join our small group.

In that first year in Leeds I found one person who wanted to learn to meditate and sometimes we would meditate together. Occasionally someone rang to find out more but mostly I meditated on my own, wondering whether one day there might be a group, however small. Time went by and all that kept me going was the occasional telephone call, an enquiry here and there but very little real progress. In fact I nearly gave up hope. Then one day there was a call from a lady who seemed to know a lot about different kinds of meditation. She was quite keen to come and start and when she did she brought 2 friends along and suddenly we were a group, a wonderful day! This lady, of course, was Sue Giuntoni and to have her in the group was a true gift. From then on more people came but many stayed for a limited period only.

I am glad, I did not give up. I always felt Christ's command 'feed my sheep!' was in some small way directed at me and keeping me waiting was simply God's way of testing my patience. It is very good to watch how these days new groups come into being and how the community is growing, something which was difficult to imagine 19 years ago but well worth waiting and working for.

'STRIKE THE CLOUD'

REFLECTIONS ON THE TEACHING DAY LED BY GRAEME WATSON AND ORGANISED BY THE SURREY BRANCH

Andrea Sheargold, Brockham group

I have been reflecting recently that the most important thing about my Christian faith is my relationship with God...not the work that I do or even the way I live my life. So when Graeme Watson opened his reflective day on the Cloud of Unknowing with "we cannot 'think' our way to God, we can only come to Him through love", I knew I was in the right place! Graeme continued that our only duty is to accept that we are loveable and to respond to His love because God is love!

He then explained how meditation is the 'Royal Road' to finding that love and that we are **all** suited if we are prepared to persevere.

"Pray in your inner room – go into the inner room of your heart and close the door. Be present to God, the love of your heart"

When I first began my mediation practice several years ago I did indeed experience it to be a 'Royal Road' to coming into the presence and love of God. But for a longer time than I care to reflect on it had been more of a struggle. My intentions were good but as soon as I began my meditation time anxious thoughts would flood in, chasing each other around in my mind.

Drawing on the title of the day, when we meditate, Graeme talked about the need for us to 'Strike the cloud' with our word. I wasn't exactly sure what that meant but it sounded relevant to my struggle so I was eager to learn more. He said that we need to recognise that we struggle and that we can be oppressed by our dominant thoughts and emotions which inhabit our mind and separate us from God. Striking the cloud, Graeme explained, is both active and passive. We need to approach our practice with the **intention** to enter the presence of God giving Him the **attention** He deserves. We also need to let go of these thoughts and emotions into the 'Cloud of Forgetting', the space in which we can put all of our unwanted thoughts.

This is what it means to Strike the Cloud, to fasten my word (mantra) to my heart as my weapon, my shield and my spear!

I learnt something new which has really helped my practice ... that I need to put a little effort into saying my 'word' and to be full of desire to open my heart to the presence of God. Graeme also helpfully said we should never leave behind the thought of God Himself - not what we have done or will do for Him, or what we are praying for... but the person of God Himself.

This guidance has really helped my meditation to become deeper and it has also helped to strengthen my relationship with God. I find I am finding it easier to pray and I want to pray more.

I now pray that this reinvigorated practice will also bear fruit in my relationships with others. This is particularly important to me in my work as a counsellor. As Graeme said *"love alone has the power to open ourselves up to God and others. Never make this your aim. Aim for God and God will give you the grace"*.

Judging by the general atmosphere of the day which had qualities of both peace and intense concentration, I think all of us who attended this helpful day received something valuable to help us in our practice, so many thanks to the organisers.

Graeme was speaking from his new book 'Strike the Cloud ... Understanding and practising the teaching of 'The Cloud of Unknowing'.

MY BLUE BOX

David Wood

A word bite from Laurence Freeman seeking to express the sublime deep in the heart of contemplative practice, Christian meditation – "I want nothing. I know nothing. I am nothing" – so elusive, he points out, is any experience of union with God to describe.

So where am I, trying to describe it of myself? All I can do is to own these words:- Anything? Nothing? Letting Go (detachment)? Emptiness? All these things. I stand on the edge of nothing. I don't believe in anything anymore, and that's because I believe so much in everything. Because somehow I have come to know that "every motion of the slightest part, weaving patterns of exchange and transformation, affects the whole". I know it because it is a description of me. I am no bystander here looking through a kaleidoscope, rather am I recognising what I have always been, a disintegrating participant. There is in the end no division, no lots to be cast because we are all one seamless garment. Everything is warp and weft. I'm not exploring me, I am being explored. Indeed it has always been so; it just takes an awful long time, usually, to discover we've got it the wrong way round.

I feel constantly in freefall, falling through everything. And it's all so fast – the fear and the relief, the joy and the sorrow, the tears and the laughter, the good and the evil, the hurt and the healing – all seem to happen one after the other; such rapid oscillations, such immediate succession. All converging at speed, as modern physics would describe it: we are somehow much more alert, much more aware (awake!), so little passes us by in our converging world and expanding universe.

And in freefall I always arrive at the same place – The Beyond. The Edge of the Unknown (what _ astrophysics might call A Black Hole). The Point of Discovery. Beginning again. Is this what they call the second innocence?

I have a picture of Dr. Who's Blue Police Box always falling into and through yet another abyss into new unveilings of mysteries. The constant is the blue box, without it nothing would be possible. In a similar way my repeated sinking into nothing – and nothing again – the edginess of it all (all these thresholds!) is only real and possible because of the one constant in me – my faith. For me Jesus, in and with and through Jesus. And the recognition that this gift of the Eternal Spirit, faith in the eternal goodness that has been there since my beginning, everyone's beginning, is part of my DNA. My blue box, often so battered about and shabby, yet somehow constantly restored, is in fact my divinity being unveiled as I am ready to receive it. Jesus

forever praying in us, in all things, and so in me.

All this brings some moments of 'Unclouded Vision' as the wise ones say. Not often. But enough.

In the meantime, I recently came across these words, probably for me the most satisfying way of describing contemplative / meditative practice:- 'resting in a presence I cannot feel but somehow know'. Or as a dear friend said more recently "I know it, I know it in my bones".

THE MUSTARD SEED

David Simpson

We were preparing to meditate at Meditatio House in Ealing and someone read out Father Laurence's Lent reflection. He talked about a pregnant young woman who had just had her first scan and who said that "it" (it was still an it) was now the size of a lemon. It set me off, in the meditation, thinking about the parable of the mustard seed. I have never really got it (not least because I think here Mr Colman grows bushes not trees, although I recently saw a photograph of a huge mustard tree in the Holy Land, bigger and more spreading than an English field oak.)

I began to think, all the time returning to the mantra, of other kinds of 'mustard seed'. The tiny embryo, smaller than the head of a pin, that becomes a mature adult; the singularity at the Big Bang that becomes this cosmos of thousands and billions of galaxies spread across ungraspable stretches of space and time; Jesus, one man, giving birth to a faith that includes billions of human beings today; the 'Body of Christ', his Church, and God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would be as numberless as the grains of sand or the stars in the sky.

And what do all these images, parables, have in common? They are organic, living, evolving, ever responsive to their environments, creative, natural, growing unities, each of them a One. So this is what the Kingdom is like. And, as it happens – with the exception of 'The Church' – they are all without heads, hierarchies, authorities, judgements or punishments. They are all manifestations of creative love. *Maranatha.*

IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA 'ANCIENT AND MODERN'

Bridget Hewitt

In February a group of 10 people from the UK, led by Patrick and Sam Woodhouse, took part in a 12 day study tour based in a small village just outside Bangalore, with trips both east and west, looking at aspects of the ancient spirituality of India alongside the rapid rate of change that is happening there.



It is our final afternoon in India. I sit under the shade of the trees growing in that dry red sandy soil. Leaves fall, lying as a carpet on the ground, baked by the sun, which creates shadows and patterns on the ground. The warmth and sleepiness of early afternoon siesta time.

Memories and thoughts are stirred from some deep place below the surface. Stillness, depth, ancient myths, connection with the landscape.

These past ten days have offered a huge raft of experiences and emotions as our senses have been both bombarded and gifted with aspects of India old and new.

The beauty of a south Indian dawn, as night gives way to the evocative mix of sights and sound that herald the onrush of a new day. A cacophony of sound, the haunting calls of exotic birds, the never-ending tooting of motor bikes, cocks crowing, dogs barking, amplified Indian-style music: a symphony of timeless variety.

Coconut palms, banana trees, paddy fields; ox carts, bicycles, motor bikes laden with massive bundles of sugar cane.

People working in fields, planting paddy, winnowing rice, minding sheep and goats



Unfolding miles of rural life, apparently almost untouched by the march of 'progress.'

The massive and fast-growing city of Bangalore:

huge, sprawling, expanding with an apparent sense of unplanned chaos. Busy and noisy; the madness of traffic – madness that actually works with that enigmatic Indian methodology which appears incomprehensible to western eyes. But it does work: it is, after all, India..... and in that sense, strangely refreshing!

Squawking, tooting, screeching, hoot hoot hoot: the incessant noise of Indian traffic.

People everywhere; People, and traffic, and cows, all jumbled together....

Lorries, busses, cars, motor bikes (with passengers of all ages pinioned on the back), rickshaws.

Every lane of the road is used – with no apparent sense to which particular lane one should be in....

In the villages litter lies deep along the roadside. Paper used to be burned: ever-prevalent plastic waste has not, apparently, found a place in which to lie – other than the roadside.

Old India and new India: a confusing – yet strangely enticing – onslaught on the senses.

And underneath all of this what did we experience, or learn, of the ancient spirituality of India?

It was this exploration that gave our time such depth and richness, that in a sense provided the heart of our experience – an experience that was ‘held’ each day by sharing morning and evening prayer in our own tradition.

We were introduced on our first day to various wayside shrines, temples, sacred trees, termite mounds: many many living examples and symbols of a rich spirituality that has permeated the land for generations. And throughout our travels this visible recognition of the sacred at every turn and in the everyday was constantly in our awareness. The ruined 13th century temple at Somnathpur, with its incredible

wealth of imagery and legends written in intricate carving, is a vivid example of the power of story and myth in Hindu life.

To have the eye of our hearts thus attuned was to be awakened to depths – and perhaps needs – in our own daily lives that we neglect at our peril. Where are the sacred stones and trees and mountains in our own lives? How might we awaken, in ourselves and in others, that sense of the sacred that is all around us?

From our base just outside Bangalore we travelled both east and west. To the west was the Jain pilgrimage site at Sravenabelagola, with its stunning and massive statue of a man, Bahubali, carved over 1000 years ago from a single piece of rock, standing on top of a mountain of rock. The legends tell his story: renunciation of kingdom and ego; and the extraordinary carving carries within it the same story: a face of love and compassion gazing out over the surrounding landscape. Vines growing around his body give a sense of the years of renunciation, years of waiting in stillness, from which grow the wisdom and love that flow out over the universe. We climb the steep stone steps, and stand at his feet, tiny human beings beside the immensity of the statue. Gazing up at this extraordinary figure, letting one’s busy mind come to rest, pondering on the prayerful skill of those who carved him, one sees not the face of one man from a thousand years ago, but the face of all humanity in its fullness, ego renounced, self united with the Oneness and Love that is at the heart of creation. It is a powerful and humbling realisation.

For many of us, however, the great highlight of the trip was on our eastern travels, at the city of Tiruvannamalai, in Tamil Nadu. Tiruvannamalai, with its stunning ancient temple, sits under the shadow of the sacred mountain of Arunachala, the mountain of the red dawn. Adjoining it is the ashram of Ramana Maharshi, a remarkable holy man of the last century, who spent years living in silence in caves on the mountain, and was increasingly sought out for his spiritual wisdom. Although we spent only two nights at Tiru, we were offered an extraordinary feast of spiritual input: not easy to digest in the time available, but appetite-whetting in the extreme.



Ramana Maharshi, his unusual story, and the present-day worship and practices at the ashram, catapulted us into the deep-end of a sensitivity to the sacred that was both utterly different – and strangely familiar – to aspects of spirituality at home. Arunachala, the sacred mountain, with its magnetic beauty and its caves that have housed holy men, people who have renounced all in the yearning pull towards the Absolute, over the centuries, held, for me, a particular fascination. As we sat in morning prayer on the roof of our hotel, under the shadow of the mountain, we were led in thought towards the mountains of our own tradition, Sinai, the sermon on the mount, the mount of Transfiguration, the hills of Calvary. And I thought too of my own love of mountains in Britain, often places of revelation. Is it all one mountain? What is this search for the Divine that calls humanity to that which is beyond? Always beyond – and yet so close. Mysterious – yet ultimately simple. We walked half way up the mountain to the various caves in which Ramana had lived, drinking in the beauty, the strangeness, the mystery, the simplicity.

Later, in the heat of afternoon, as we entered the inner courts of the great temple in the centre of the city, the words of a Taizé chant spontaneously erupted in my heart, and as we were led into that inner chamber to receive a blessing I found myself humming the chant: *Jesu Christe Filius Dei...* It was as if, amidst all the oddity, the strangeness, the confusion of not really understanding what was going on, the Cosmic Christ, surpassing all religions, was inviting me to enter the mystery, speaking in and to my heart that something holy is happening here, even if you don't understand it. Strange and incomprehensible though much of it was, Jesus Christ, God incarnate, was turning tables inside my being, and I could respond only with wonder and silence.

Intermingled with all of this we spent an evening and a morning at Quo Vadis, an interfaith centre close to the ashram. Sharing in Christian evening prayer in a Hindu setting, with Hindu chanting, was a beautiful example of inculturation in worship, leaving us all deeply moved. This extraordinary time came to a culmination as we sat on our final morning, on the rooftop of the building, the sacred mountain of Arunachala towering above us, listening to a riveting talk and presentation by Kumeron, a Tamil South African Anglican priest, on connections between Hinduism and Christianity. We left with minds and hearts buzzing, enlarged, challenged, but most of all gifted. We (or at least some of us) had been offered a glimpse of a garden of Delight, released into a Reality and that our yearning spirits long for, and been offered a compelling invitation to journey on – a journey that can only happen alongside silence and contemplation.

And so I sat on our final afternoon, the sun dappling its shadows over my dry dusty feet, my whole being saturated with the wonderful life of India that we had experienced during the previous days. A land of rapid change, some of which is exciting, potentially life-enhancing, other aspects more worrying, particularly as water shortage becomes a real issue in the particular area we were in. A land of ancient spiritual wisdom and riches from which the West has much to learn. A land of extraordinary resilience and hope and optimism. A land of friendly open-hearted people. A land in which western secular consumerism pounds its way remorselessly forward in the name of a thing we call 'progress'. Can the new and the old co-exist? Will the old be engulfed by the new, or is there a way of integration?

There are no answers, of course, to these questions. They play around somewhere in my psyche. They are questions not only for India, but crucially for each of us, in our own hearts. For we are all bombarded by the same issues and conflicting messages, as we grapple with how to live true to our faith, true to our humanity, amidst the fast moving world of the 21st Century.

AN EXCEPTIONAL ECUMENICAL EXPERIENCE

Michael Anderson

During a recent WCCM pilgrimage to the holy places of eastern India and Nepal one of my most profound experiences was to spend a day in the company of the Dalai Lama, but I also had another experience which I will never forget. The majority of our pilgrims were Roman Catholics and because I was the only priest in our party I was asked by our leader Eugene, a charming anaesthetist from Florida, if I would say mass under the tree where Buddha received his first enlightenment and where there is now a magnificent Buddhist Temple, at a place call Bode Gaya.



Preaching during the Mass at Bodegaya. The Gospel was read by the man on the left, Eugene Bebau, who is an anaesthetist from Florida.

My first thought was that this could cause offence to the Buddhists and also that some of the Roman Catholics might feel uneasy at an Anglican Priest taking a Roman Catholic Mass. I then remembered what St Paul said about speaking the word of God in his letter to the Romans and should have had no qualms at all. The word of God is indeed in my heart and I should not have had any fear of confessing it with my mouth, in whatever form is appropriate for the time and place. The same God created all Christians and Buddhists, and we are all blessed by him.

I was assured that all our Roman Catholics would like me to say mass for them, so I decided that that was the least I could do, and, having been lent a Catholic Missal, I agreed to say mass under the tree. When we got to the temple we discovered that it was thronged by hundreds of Buddhist Monks chanting their prayers and I wondered if I could make myself heard.



Where do we go to hold our Mass?

Nevertheless, I found a small space with a stone plinth for an altar and we started the Mass. Some of the monks, whose body language seemed to indicate that they knew exactly what was going on, began to gather round us. With the prayerful chanting in the background and my fellow pilgrims gathered around me in worship, I began to feel that there was something wonderfully spiritual about the time and place in which we found ourselves. Because the Gospel reading had been the story of the wedding at Cana, I gave a short address on 'The Virgin Mary's special relationship with God, which not only touched many of my fellow pilgrims, but also pleasantly surprised them! They later told me that to be at a Roman Catholic Mass taken by an Anglican Priest who preached on the 'mother of God' at a Buddhist temple was a uniquely ecumenical experience, and will be remembered by them for a very long time.

OUR UK COMMUNITY'S ACTION GROUP - AN INSIDE VIEW.

Margaret Comerford

The WCCM very much values the fact that it has developed and continues as a grassroots movement, putting the local groups and individual meditators at the heart of the community. However, as communities grow it is necessary to have some supportive structure. And this is where the UK Action Group fits in.

It meets on average three times a year and its remit is to take forward and action priorities for the UK Christian meditation community, which have been identified at the annual UK National Council in November attended by Regional and Special Interest Co-ordinators (RCs and SICs). It is a committee of the CMT UK Board of Trustees who delegate to this group the day to day operation of the UK community. It acts as a sounding board and support to the National Co-ordinator, Janet Robbins who is the link, back to the Board of Trustees. As regards the membership of the group, it is considered important to have representation from across the country. Current members are: Janet Robbins, Andrew Cresswell RC for Mid Wales, Eileen Mc Dade, one of the London RCs, Liz Watson, Philip Kitchen, Ray Lamb, Roz Stockley, RC for Dorset and SIC for Good News Books and myself, Margaret Comerford.

This Action Group may come alive a little and engage some interest if I share my own experience. I had been a meditation group leader for several years and then felt drawn to explore the Oblate path, making a commitment to this in 2008. This process led me to want greater involvement with the meditation community and my Regional Coordinator who had been a member of the Action Group suggested I might like to take over from her. I have found it very interesting to get to know in more detail how the community in the UK operates, and also a privilege to have the opportunity to contribute and participate in its life. I was involved in the planning and organising of the first UK 5day silent retreat, attended by 100 meditators and led by Father Laurence, a wonderful time together.

Along with others, I also worked on researching possible alternatives to our book distribution, which resulted in the current effective arrangement of selling through Good News Books.

It is unlikely I would have become involved in these activities if I had not been an Action Group member or ended up volunteering to help organise that first UK national retreat last year!

MEDITATION COMPANION

Janet Robbins



Over the past year or so, we have been developing the role of Meditation Companion, an idea proposed by Anne McDonnell, a member of the School Resources Group and a long standing Regional Coordinator.

We were asked by Anne to consider this idea for the

UK Community and it has since been discussed and approved at the UK National Council in November 2012. The role of Meditation Companion will offer a one-to-one contact for anyone in the community who wishes to talk personally about something relating to their meditation practice or spiritual life, generally.

Of course, we recognise that this need is often met within the region, either by local group leaders or regional coordinator or other experienced meditators from within our community. Some people have their own spiritual director, others a counsellor who offer more long term support. However, we feel that within our ever growing community, it could be helpful to complement the help that already exists by establishing a recognised team of meditators who are known to be available for immediate short term one-to-one contact by telephone or e-mail.

Our UK wide retreats and conferences provide some opportunity for private interviews with an experienced meditator, although it is not always possible to book an appointment and there may well be some sense of 'taking away' queries that it has not been possible to voice at the time.

No Meditation Companion will see themselves as an 'expert' but rather, someone whose commitment and involvement with the WCCM enables them to share the benefit of their experience with others. It is an offer of individual, confidential support and sharing to anyone who may feel a need for it.

Meditation Companions will be at the UK Conference in June (14th -16th June at High Leigh, Hoddeson), but in the meantime, if you would like more information about Meditation Companions, please contact Anne McDonnell email: anne.mcdonnell@talk21.com or call on 01603 810646.



Christian Meditation with Children

TRAINING THE TRAINERS.

Roz Stockley - Dorset Regional co-ordinator

In 2012 the Dorset group leaders met and decided that they wished to know more about Christian Meditation with Children in schools, families and parishes. The next stage was to hold a half-day presentation/discussion for those meditators in the county who wanted to be involved – I invited my email list so that not just group leaders could attend. I led this with the aim of providing a basic understanding of what was required and to help the meditators to self select for the ongoing activity either as presenter or in a support role. The upshot was that we believed we needed to know more about the technology and to be more prepared for the issues that might arise. I raised this with Charles and Patty, which led to a very fruitful 'Training the Trainers' session, as we called it, for 7 people from Dorset and 2 from Hampshire, held in March. This was a nearly full day of presentations, discussion, group work and meditation. As this was a pilot project for all of us, feedback forms were devised to provide as much help to Charles and Patty should other regions wish to receive such training. In addition, Charles has developed some excellent software (standard forms, letters, presentations etc) which, through testing with the Dorset region and others, will now be available for regions should they wish to have it.

The Dorset region now has 3 presenters (one taking the project to Cape Verde), with maybe 2 more developing after they have been supporters for a while. Also, with the confidence the team has developed over the last 6 months, we now have 1 inset day arranged, 1 twilight session and a presentation to diocesan RE teachers, along with tentative discussions with other schools. The Dorset team really believe that Christian Meditation with Children is a project close to it's heart and want to take it forward in as effective way as we can and we believe we are now prepared for this.

POSTSCRIPT:

As meditation is not a question of "training" or "technique", the title of future sessions has been changed to - "Christian Meditation in Education - sharing the gift". If you would like to arrange a similar event in your own region please contact Charles Posnett: email charles@posnett.entadsl.com or text +44 (0) 7973 331038.

There are also 2 events scheduled entitled "Meditation with Children – A Training Day for Educators" to be held on Saturday 4th May and Saturday 5th October at the new Meditatio Centre at

St Marks Myddelton Square London EC1R1XX.
Please visit the website www.wccmmeditatio.org. If you would like any further information about outreach programs or events please contact the Meditatio Centre by email meditatio@wccm.org or call + 44 (0) 20 7278 2070.

OBLATE NEWS

Eileen Dutt

UK oblate coordinator

Our day with Fr Laurence in December 2012, the first at 32 Hamilton Road, was very well supported by oblates, some of their family members and friends old, and new. We gathered in the 'upper room', (the office). In the spirit of the Rule we began by praying Morning Prayers and just knowing that the following day the space we were occupying would be filled with a different energy gave meaning to the monastic phrase 'ora et labora', work and labour.

During his talk Fr Laurence received 2 new postulants and 6 novice oblates and then later, during the Mass, he received the Final Promises of our three new oblates. A great day all round!

TWO SPECIAL EVENTS FOR WCCM OBLATES AND OTHERS

We are restricted on numbers, so early booking is highly recommended. Both are one day events, which will take place at the Monastery of Christ our Saviour, High Street, Turvey, Bedford MK43 8DE

Saturday May 11th "Abiding": a day hosted by oblates and led by oblates, Geoffrey Barton and Janet Robbins. We will gather at 10am, spend some time together before joining the monastic community (and another group of oblates) for Mass.

This day is open to meditators but we are restricted on numbers so do let me know, preferably by email, (details below), if you wish to attend.

Please bring your own lunch and a suggested donation of £10.00.

Sunday Sept. 29th UK oblate day with Fr Laurence. I am hoping this autumn date coupled with the fact B&B is also available, and in a wonderful setting, will attract oblates who are geographically distanced from London, to join us. We miss you!

I will be posting further details about this, and our event on 11th May, on the oblate webpage (www.christianmeditation.org.uk)

If you are travelling from afar, accommodation is available at a suggested £25 B&B with £10 for each additional meal.

If you are interested, please contact Eileen Dutt on: e. eileendutt@yahoo.co.uk
m. 07721 574767 (if sending a text it would be helpful if you could begin by adding either May 11th or Sept 29th)
h. 01462 621418

THE LONE MEDITATORS NETWORK

AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS 'LINKING HEARTS'

Pam Winters

By my recollection the Lone Meditators Network was born about 9 years ago. It was the brainchild of Sister Christina, a nun in the Anglican Priory at Walsingham. She had discovered Christian Meditation and introduced the practice to her Sisters and also to other people living nearby who visited the Community. Living in a country district, she realised that there must be others also living in more isolated areas, away from towns, who couldn't get to a local meditation group. And, of course, at that time there were not so many meditation groups as today.

Sister Christina, an enterprising person, contacted the Centre at St Mark's and outlined her plan for a way of linking lone meditators to others in the same situation. This was to link people together, in prayer and Meditation, via a contact list with times when people meditated – thus establishing a Meditating Community by correspondence, so to speak. Each member could look at the list and be aware when others were meditating around their time and feel part of a community of like-minded people.

Desley Deike, who was working as London Centre Co-ordinator at this time, welcomed Sister Christina's idea and with the help of a volunteer devised a form to put the idea into practice. And so it was that in its early stages Desley asked me if I'd like to take on the project. Little did I know how popular it would prove to be. From a base of around 10 or so people 9 years ago – today we have 70+ 'Linking Hearters'!

Being Co-ordinator of 'Linking Hearts' is a thoroughly enjoyable activity. It's really good to receive emails, cards and phone calls from members. I feel as if I have made new friends and I hope members of the Network feel the same. People come to the scheme via the website, the Newsletter, phone enquiry or word of mouth. The Network reaches across the UK from Fife to Penzance and Suffolk to Mid-Glamorgan! I usually advise people to join a local meditation group, if at all possible, because of the personal support given and received within these groups. But if, due to work commitments, distance or infirmity getting to a group is not possible then the Network does provide some support.

Of course there is much support available via the WCCM and Christian Meditation websites as well as the Good News Books website and the quarterly Newsletter and new people are directed to these places. A CD is sent out to members every 3 months or so. I am always available for a chat on Wednesdays

between 11.00 and 6.00pm as it is good to hear the voice and meet the new person behind the name and address. When a new person joins I email members inviting them to get in touch with the new person to welcome them.

Being part of this Network enables people to contact any other member by phone, email or letter if they feel so inclined. One member has been running a 'Thought for the Week' email conversation group for some time where people contribute their thoughts and comments.

Thus the Lone Meditators Network continues. I get frequent enquiries resulting in new members, but not everyone follows this up. I do wonder how people are getting along in the Network and send out a newsletter of greeting to test the waters! (If I get feedback I know it's alive!) It does require special discipline to carry on without the support of a real 'live' group. But 'Linking Hearts' is composed of real, live people – it does perhaps require faith and imagination to trust in this – and maybe some courage to make contact with another member, if the need is there.

I think we owe a debt of gratitude to Sister Christina for her original, brilliant idea. As one 'Linking Hearter', who knew Christina when she lived in Walsingham, said: "She had a lovely personality. She was immensely kind and encouraging, relaxed and humorous and totally committed to God and her Community. She was very happy about the success of her idea but very humble about it too." Sadly, Sister Christina died last year, but her memory lives on in the 'Linking Hearts' Network she created.

If you would like more information about the Network, please contact Pam at pam@wccm.org

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EVENTS

FOR LATEST INFORMATION CHECK THE WEBSITE

NORTHEAST ENGLAND

Ampleforth Abbey:
May 3rd – Christian Meditation (CM) and Tai Chi (TC) Workshop
May 31 - June 2 - CM Weekend Retreat (for beginners and those on the way)
July 1 - 4 - CM and TC Midweek retreat
Sept 6 - CM and TC Workshop
 For more information www.hpo.ampleforth.org.uk
Minsteracres Retreat Centre:
April 5 – 7 Weekend retreat Christian Meditation
St Antony's Priory Durham:
Sat June 8th CM and TC Workshops
Sat July 13th CM and TC Workshops
Sat Sept 14th CM and TC Workshops
 For more information www.minsteracres.org
Benedictine Centre for Spirituality, Cockfosters Sat
Oct 5th Cultivating the Inner Smile Workshop
 There are also plans to develop a Christian Meditation Recovery Support Group Network across the North East.
 For all of the above contact:
Terry Doyle terry-doyle@live.co.uk
Saturday, April 13th, 10:15 to 15:30 – A day with Rumi (the 13th century Persian Muslim poet, jurist, theologian and sufi mystic). Led by Dr Amina Alyal. Venue: The Chapel, Leeds Trinity University College, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5HD. Refreshments provided, bring your own lunch. Suggested donation £5. Contact Sue Purkis Tel 01535 632171
Saturday, June 1st 10:15 to 15:30 – Ascent of the heart (St Isaac the Syrian) led by Martin Nathanael. Venue: The Chapel, Leeds Trinity University College, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5HD. Refreshments provided, bring your own lunch. Suggested donation £5. Contact Sue Purkis Tel 01535 632171

NORTHWEST ENGLAND

Tue 7 May 10:00 ends 15:00. Living with the Mystics. Led by Bob Morley at Quaker Meeting House, Elliot Park Keswick (next to Booths) CA12 5NF. Bring your own lunch drinks provided. Contribution towards hire of room about £5.00. Helpful to know numbers so that we can book a big enough room. Contact Bob Morley rgm1@live.co.uk 016974 72644

Fri 10 May to Sun 12 May 17:30 ends 14:00. God is Ripening. Led by Patrick Woodhouse at Monastery of Our Lady of Hynning, Near Carnforth Lancashire LA5 9SE. Full board. £120.00. Now full, but contact Sarah to go on a waiting list. Contact Sarah Kirkup sarah.kirkup1@virgin.net 01768 341 258

MANCHESTER

Weekly groups meet on the last Saturday of each month at 1.30pm, in the Parish Hall of Our Lady's church, Raby Street, Moss Side, Manchester. M16 7JQ. Contact - Sheila Wood - 0161 226 2354 johncotling@aol.com New and experienced meditators welcome.
www.christianmeditationnorthwest.org

SOUTHWEST ENGLAND

Saturday, 27th April 10:00 to 15:30. Meditation: A Christian Way? Led by Roger Layet, Barbara Jones, and Fr Donal Daly. Venue: Monastery of Our Lady and St Bernard, Brownhill near Stroud GL6 8AL. Drinks provided, bring your own lunch. Suggested donation £8. Please book. Contact: Roger Layet 01275 463727; bristol@christianmeditation.org.uk

SOUTHEAST ENGLAND

13 April 2013 11:00 to 16:00 Awakening to the Mystery of Love, a study day led by Liz Watson. Thame Barns Centre, Church Road, Thame, Oxfordshire. OX9 3AJ
 Suggested donation £12.50 – lunch not included, plenty of places nearby or bring packed. Pre-booking essential. Contact Jacqueline Russell: jacq.russell@ntlworld.com or phone: 07812 152684/ 01296 488450
Saturday, 20 April 2013 10:00 to 16:30. Day of Reflection (The Spiritual Dynamic of Film) led by Adrian Scott. Venue: St John's Seminary, Cranleigh Road, Wonersh, Near Guildford, Surrey GU5 0QX. Drinks provided, bring your own lunch. Suggested donation £10. Please book. Contact: Brian and Sheila Longman 01483 505814; sheilaannlongman@aol.com

EAST MIDLANDS

Saturday, 25th May 10:30 to 16:00 The Silence of Love in the Heart of Nothing, Jesus words in the original Aramaic of the Lord's Prayer) led by Bob Morley. Venue: Duffield, St Margaret Clitherow Church Hall Farm Road Duffield DE56 4FS. Bring your own lunch, drinks provided. Suggested donation £10 or what you can afford. Contact: Peter Short 07748911175; peter.short12@virginmedia.com or Patricia Lloyd 01332 842 150; palloyd@hotmail.com
Saturday, 19th October 10:00 to 16:00 Contemplative Practice – where all religious traditions meet. Led by Elizabeth West. Venue: St. Peter's Church, Church Street Cogenhoe NN71LS. Bring your own lunch, drinks provided. Suggested donation £5. Please contact if you intending to come: Maggi Gordon 01604 899342; margaret.gordon191@btinternet.com

WALES

SCOTLAND

LONDON EVENTS

Fri 26 April to Sun 28 April 17:00 ends 14:00.

Conscious Contact . Led by May Nicols & Linda Kaye at The Kairos Centre , Mount Angelus Road London SW15 4JA. on site catering. email/post/phone. Contact Kate Coombs kate@wccm.org 020 7278 2070

THE MEDITATIO CENTRE, MYDDELTON SQUARE

St Marks, Myddelton Square, London EC1R 1XX

Tel: 020 7278 2070

Fax: 020 72782070 (Mondays to Fridays 9:00-17:00)

Email: meditatio@wccm.org

Weekday Meditation at 13.00-13.30 - All welcome

The official launch of The Meditatio Centre was on 19 March 2013. A variety of talks, workshops and groups are being planned, see below (where no contact is given please use above contact details)

For the full programme please email kate@wccm.org or call her on 020 7278 2070. Check the website too for updates! www.wccmmeditatio.org

First Wednesday of every month; 18:00-19:30.

Meditation in a time of loss. Led by Liz Watson.

Contact Lizwatson@blueyonder.co.uk

Fridays 18:30-20:30; 12 Workshops exploring the relationship between movement and stillness, music and silence, art and meditation. Facilitated by **Mike Rathbone and Anna Bonetto**; contribution by donation to cover costs; Contact Mike

Michael.rathbone@yahoo.com; or Anna:

bonettoanna@gmail.com

Saturday, 20th April 11am to 4pm. Deepening Our Practice led by Liz Watson. All welcome. Suggested

Donation £10 (includes lunch)

Saturday, 4th May; 11:00-16:00 Meditation with

Children a Training Day for Educators. Facilitated by **Charles and Patricia Posnett**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact Charles 07973 331038; charles@posnett.entadsl.com

Saturday, 7th May; 11:00-16:00 Christian Meditation, Mental Health and Recovery. Led by **Don Boyle**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea

provided. Contact Don: don.boyle@hotmail.co.uk

Saturday, 11th May; 11:00-16:00 Meditation and Healing of Memories in Addiction Recovery.

Facilitated by **Mike Sarson & Fr Nicholas Broadbridge**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact Mike 07887 656778;

mike@ewsn.org.uk

Saturday 8th June 11am to 4pm. Me and My Shadow

(for Northwest London groups) facilitated by **Kim Nataraja and Eileen McDade**. Suggested Donation £10 (includes lunch)

Tuesday 11th June 18:30-21:00. The Sacred and the Holy: Are they Enemies or Friends? Led by **James Alison**. Cost £15.

Tuesday 18th June 18:30-21:00. From Purity of Body to Purity of Heart: How the Gospel enables us to de-sacralise sex and re-humanize our bodies. Led by **James Alison**. Cost £15.

Thursday, 27th June; 18:30-21:00 The Common Ground – Interfaith: Jesus’s Message through the eyes of the vedic tradition. Led by **Br John Martin**; cost £15

Saturday 13th July 11am to 4pm. Meditation retreat day (especially for groups in North and East London) facilitated by **Revd Graeme Watson**. Suggested Donation £10 (includes lunch)

Saturday 7th September 11am to 4pm. Introduction to Christian Meditation facilitated by **Geoff Waterhouse and Eileen McDade**. Suggested Donation £10 (includes lunch)

Saturday, 10th September; 11:00-16:00 Being Present – Supporting Each Other’s Mental Health. Led by **Jim Green**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact Jim: jg@greenjim.co.uk

Tuesday, 17th September; 18:30-21:00 The Common Ground – Interfaith: Jewish Scriptures. Led by **Dr Jonathan Gorsky**; cost £15

Tuesday, 24th September; 18:30-21:00 The Common Ground – Interfaith: Christian Scriptures. Led by **Dr Michael Kirwan**; cost £15

Wednesday, 25th September; 18:30-21:00 The Common Ground – Interfaith: Zen Gifts. Led by **Robert Kennedy SJ**; cost £15

Saturday, 28th September; 11:00-16:00 Meditation and Healing of Memories in Addiction Recovery.

Facilitated by **Mike Sarson & Fr Nicholas Broadbridge**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact Mike 07887 656778; mike@ewsn.org.uk

Tuesday, 1st October; 18:30-21:00 The Common Ground – Interfaith: Islamic Scriptures. Led by **Ahmad Achtar**; cost £15

Saturday, 5th October; 11:00-16:00 Meditation with Children a Training Day for Educators. Facilitated by **Charles and Patricia Posnett**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact Charles 07973 331038; charles@posnett.entadsl.com

Tuesday, 15th October; 18:30-21:00 God as Consciousness. Led by **Don MacGregor**; cost £15

Saturday 19th October 11am to 4pm. Reaching out: London Group Leaders’ Day. Suggested Donation £10 (includes lunch)

Saturday, 26th October; 10:30-16:30 The Forgiving Victim: A New Paradigm for Understanding and Living the Way of Jesus Today. Led by **James Alison**; cost £30; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided

Saturday, 2nd November; 11:00-16:00 The person who live in the moment lives in eternity (Mental Health and Meditation). Led by **Peter Tyler and Hymie Wise**; cost £30; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided.

Saturday, 16th November; 11:00-16:00 The Spirit of Step 11. Facilitated by **May Nicol**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact May 07768 310666; mayMBNicol@aol.com

Saturday 30th November 11am to 4pm. Advent Quiet Retreat Day facilitated by **Geoff Waterhouse and Graeme Watson**. Suggested Donation £10 (includes lunch)

Saturday, 22nd December; 10:30-16:30 Spirit Matters; Preparing for Christmas. Led by **Laurence Freeman**; cost £30; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided

UK News Spring 2013**Thursday evenings (fortnightly) Course: Roots of Christian Mysticism:**

bookings must be made in advance for the whole term (Summer term 7 sessions £105; Autumn term (6 sessions) £90. All sessions £175

April 25: Jesus – A teacher of contemplation by Laurence Freeman

May 16: The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: Irenaeus of Lyon by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware (tbc)

May 30: Dionysius and Medieval Victorine Spirituality by Peter Tyler

June 6: Roots in the Desert by Kim Nataraja

June 20: St Benedict; Father of Monasticism by Stefan Reynolds

July 4: Return to the Heart by Br Patrick Moore

July 18: Meister Eckhart: Preacher of the Wayless Way by Anthony Finnerty

September 12: Mystics for our Century by Patrick Moore

September 26: The Cloud of Unknowing by Graeme Watson

October 10: The Spanish Mystics by Julienne McLean

October 24: The Sacrament of the Present Moment by Liz Watson

November 7: Thomas Merton and the contemplative call today by Elizabeth Holmes

November 19 (exceptionally Tuesday) **John Main** by Laurence Freeman

Bodyworkshops:

Mondays, 16:00-16:45; Children's yoga and meditation (suitable for ages 5-7) led by **Lucy Fawcett**; cost £5 each class. Payable half-terminally in advance (April 15-July 15; Sept 9 – Dec 9)

Mondays, 19:30-21:00; Yoga by Lucy Fawcett; cost £14 drop-in, £12 for 6 classes £8 concessions. (26 Mar-22 July; 9 Sept-16 Dec); contact Lucy: lucy@fawcett@me.com

Saturday, 13th April; 11:00-16:00 The Ground of our Being (Yoga and Meditation). Led by **Lucy Barnes**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided; contact Lucy 07904 166123; lucybarnes@btinternet.com

Saturday, 18th May; 11:00-16:00 Refreshing our Boy Maps: How to come to the present moment through awareness of the body (Yoga and Roifing). Led by **Wojtek Karczmarzyk**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact Wojtek; wkarczmarzyk@gmail.com

Saturday, 22nd June; 11:00-16:00 Cultivating the Inner Smile (Tai Chi and Chi Kung with Meditation). Led by **Terry Doyle**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact: Terry: 07739 983047; terry-doyle@live.co.uk

Saturday, 21st September; 11:00-16:00 Holding on and letting go (Yoga). Led by **Rebecca Brevin**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact: Rebecca: 07896 936625; rebecca@handtoearth.net

Saturday, 12th October; 11:00-16:00 Under Standing Yoga for the Meditator. Led by **Giovanni Felicioni**; cost £25; please bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact: Giovanni: gravity@rolfing-yoga.com

Saturday, 23rd November; 11:00-16:00 Giving Attention (Yoga). Led by **Chris Hurley**; cost £25; please

bring a packed lunch, coffee and tea provided. Contact: Chris: 07583 570242; chri8hurley@gmail.com

MEDITATIO**CHRISTIAN MEDITATION RETREAT CENTRE**

32, Hamilton Road, London W5 2EH
t: 0208 579 5911 | e: meditatio@wccm.org

Daily Meditation: at 7:00 (8.00 am Saturday and Sunday); 12:00 and 19:00

Mondays: 19.30 Introduction to Meditation led by Fr Laurence Freeman OSB or others.

Wednesdays: 18.00 Young Meditators meet for meditation, yoga and dinner

Sundays: 12.00 Children's meditation group

THE BENEDICTINE CENTRE FOR SPIRITUALITY

29 Bramley Road, London, N14 4HE
www.benedictinecentreretreats.org.uk

Saturday, 5th October 10:00 to 16:00 Cultivating the Inner Smile (Tai Chi and Therapeutic Touch) led by Terry Doyle. Bring packed lunch, refreshments are available. Cost £15 contact: BCS Kath Barnard 0208 4492499; retreats@bcsuk.wanadoo.co.uk

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

Daily Meditation: 12.30-1pm Monday – Friday. In the chapel in St Paul Bookshop. All welcome.

First Wednesday Quiet Days. The first Wednesday of each Month is a retreat day held in the Hinsley Room in Morpeth Terrace, next to Westminster Cathedral from 12 noon to 4.30pm.

1st May Who are You Looking for? Eileen Dutt, coordinator of WCCM oblates (UK)

5th June Human Beings Can't Live on Bread Alone. Fr. Robin Burgess, spiritual director and on parish team at Ealing Abbey.

3rd July The Truth Will Set You Free. Antonio Benet, lay contemplative and writer.

7th August Come to Me all You Who Labour and I will Give You Rest. Sarah Richards, spiritual director.

4th September When You Pray, Go into Your Private Room. Michael Moran, Salesian and worker for peace & reconciliation.

2nd October Anyone who has Ears for Listening, should Listen! Michael Dorey, spiritual director, CLC chaplain.

6th November Unless a Grain of Wheat Shall Fall upon the Ground and Die... Mary Lean, spiritual director and writer.

4th December In the Beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God. Margaret Lane, leader of retreats and quiet days. Student of Augustine of Hippo.

SILENCE IN THE CITY

All talks at: Westminster Cathedral Hall, London SW1P 1QH. www.silenceinthecity.org.uk; email: info@silenceinthecity.org.uk. 0207231 6278 or 020 7252 2453. Prebooking necessary.

Wednesday 10 April 2013 7-9 pm Metropolitan Kallistos Ware: Word and Silence in Orthodox Prayer

Wednesday 4th September 2013 7-9 pm (Refreshments from 6.30pm) **Fr Robert Fruehwirth.**

Silence and Self-Acceptance: Julian of Norwich and the Journey to Wholeness. Suggested donation £10.

Wednesday 9th October 2013 7-9 pm (Refreshments from 6.30pm) **Edwina Gately: Title tba**

Wednesday 7th May 2014 7-9 pm (Refreshments from 6.30pm) **Rt Revd Dr Rowan Williams**, former Archbishop, now Lord Williams of Oystermouth and Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge: Title tba

Tuesday 18th November 2014 7-9 pm (Refreshments from 6.30pm) **Fr Timothy Radcliffe O.P.** Title tba

Benedict's 12 Steps to Humility

- Continual reverent mindfulness of God and watchfulness over our behaviour and inner thoughts
- Desire to live in harmony with God's will
- Willingness to respond to others' legitimate desires and commands out of love for God
- Quiet acceptance of necessary suffering in life without finally succumbing in our struggles with anger, depression and the desire to run away
- Straightforward revelation of our inner thoughts, good and bad, to a mature and trusted other
- Contentment with shabby treatment by others
- Sincere and peaceful acknowledgement in our heart that we are no better and could very well be worse than others
- Ability to live in community without the compulsion to establish or make a point of our unique identity by acting contrary to others
- Capacity to refrain from speaking on every topic and in every situation
- Avoidance of silly, sarcastic and demeaning laughter
- Simple, gentle, authentic self presentation
- Quite, non-ostentatious bodily demeanour

DONATIONS

If you would like to make a donation to support the work of WCCM in the UK please send cheques to: The Christian Meditation Trust (UK), 32 Hamilton Road, London, W5 2EH

Please provide your Name & Address and make cheques payable to: CMT (UK)

GIFTAID: If you are a UK taxpayer you can also Gift Aid your donation, which increases the amount we receive at no extra cost to you.


Please let us know if you would like to gift aid your donation by writing the following declaration and signing it.

Declaration: I wish the Christian Meditation Trust (UK) to treat this gift and any donations made by me in the previous four years and any donations made by me in the future as Gift Aid donations.

I am resident in the United Kingdom. I have paid/will pay basic rate income tax on the gross amount given. If you have any queries or would like to set up a standing order or electronic transfer please, contact the UK office:


Tel: 0208 280 0049 uk@wccm.org

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