



CAIM

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

CAIM is the Celtic word meaning 'encompassment' or 'encircling'

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Roy Searle has pulled together a compendium of responses to

The Flodden 500 Peace and Reconciliation

Pilgrimage - a remarkable experience for all who were able to participate: pilgrims, prayer supporters and intercessors, caterers, transport co-ordinators, graphic designers, liturgical writers, poets, singers and musicians.

Everyone who was part of the experience was enriched, challenged and encouraged by engaging in a work that we believe makes a contribution here 'on earth as it is in heaven'.

It's impossible to convey in a report all that went on but by pasting some of the jottings, prayers, poems and photos, we hope that you catch something of the flavour of what the Community was able to contribute to this remarkable work of commemoration. (If you're unfamiliar with the immense importance and tragic consequences of the Battle of Flodden, which took place on 9 Sept 1513, then do research it!)

Thank you for affording me the humbling opportunity to be a part of the Flodden 500 Pilgrimage and Commemoration. It was a terrific honour in and of itself - but also proved to be a glorious four days with a dozen people I had corresponded with on Facebook or the Forum but had not met face to face!

I too would like to thank you all for the fellowship of the pilgrimage, which was deeply moving in so many ways. I have learnt so much about prayer, and trusting God to provide... as well as what "organising" Northumbria-Community-style actually means!

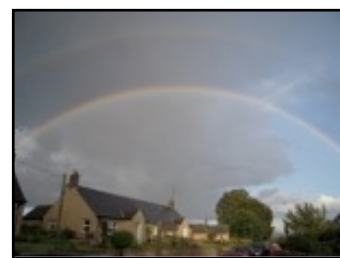
Thanks again for organising the Flodden pilgrimage. It was a privilege... and I have been deeply touched by the whole event.

What a rich few days...

I want to express my thanks to all who made the last few days so powerful. As we drove back up to Linlithgow with the Durham banner in the back of our car, an absolutely glorious sunset in front of us I felt quite bereft coming away from such an intense period of work and sharing together. So thanks to all in planning/ praying/ organising/ catering/ accommodating/ playing/ walking who made it so special and, I trust, powerful in the Kingdom.

Just a note of appreciation to thank you all for letting me join you in this venture, and for the fellowship we experienced... plus some unexpected reconnections!

Cont'd on Pg 3



At the beginning of the year Christine Robertson wrote about an Advent experience from some of the farthest reaches of the Community. It seemed a good idea to keep it till now so that you have it in readiness for this Advent.

Advent Delight

"Standing against the crass commercialism of Christmas" (Overseers Advent Report 2012), The Carrying Place joined with St Olave's Anglican Church in the west end of Toronto to attend 'First Light' at the beautifully reconstructed mission of 'St Marie among the Hurons (Wendat)', as mentioned in our Prayer Guide during December last year.



Not a reindeer or elf in sight; only candles, handmade items, warm hospitality, and the whole place lovingly decorated with simple, fragrant cedar boughs, and lighted candles in safe vessels. Three thousand of them: showing the paths, illuminating the altars, honouring the gravesite of Jean Brebeuf (priest, evangelist, martyr) and drawing the visitors out of the



dark, snowy night. What beauty and grace, joy and good cheer we enjoyed. Three of us sat near the altar in the Church of St Joseph there, and said and sang Evening Office.

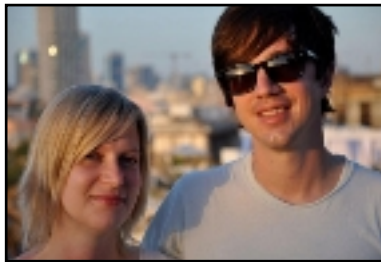
Christine Robertson

Welcome to this edition of Caim!

I had an email just today, from a friend who had visited the WW1 killing fields of Ypres last week, and it had made a deep impression upon him. In recalling the horror of what he'd learned, he said that it 'certainly puts things into perspective...' I had felt very similar emotions during the Flodden 500 Commemoration events we were part of, a couple of weeks ago. It was deeply moving, and desperately sad to reflect on the folly and 'politics' which led to tragedy, for families, communities, and nations. You can read something of the Community's contribution, and responses, through out this edition. Sobering - and cause for much thanksgiving that, relatively, 'the lines have fallen in pleasant places' in our day. Enjoy this edition! *Jeff & Ingrid*

We asked Daniel & Katrin Sicking to tell us about

A year at Nether Springs - Going into the silence, to hear one's own heartbeat again



Motorway 3 - somewhere in Germany. Our old Volkswagen Golf breathes heavily in the frosty January air. She really needs to apply herself to make headway as our personal belongings are stacked

up in the boot, packed in boxes. Packing was hard for us: what do we take with us for this year, what do we really need? Katrin, my wife, sleeps in the passenger's seat. Hardly recognisable, we cross the border to Holland. Course: North.

Black shingles, white tea

After a choppy ferry ride we're now taking the last turn of the lane. And there it is: Nether Springs. The place we were introduced to only seven months earlier. God's call to monastic living and henceforth the quest in finding our way brought us here. To be fair, we rather stumbled over Nether Springs. However, we immediately felt that this was a special place for us and that we would come back soon. Now, here we are. Here to live 'deliberate availability and vulnerability' as the Community puts it. We are warmly welcomed underneath the black shingle roof. There is white tea ready for us. And biscuits.



Live well, laugh often, love much

February comes and goes, March and April. Gradually my inner busyness is slowed down, my restlessness calmed. I can just be again. And I'm asking myself, why for goodness sake did I desperately try to crowd my life with people. Was it in order to flee from myself? Here I slowly realise: I'm able to be on my own; I actually need these times of solitude. The bell rings - inhale, everything breathes in. We gather to say prayer, these simple words that to us only frame the silence. Even after ten years of trying out forms of daily prayer this simplicity is appealing to us.

The bell rings again - exhale, and everyone meets in the dining room, chatting and joking. On the table a hearty meal is being served, with dessert on every single day. A few extra pounds around our waists are not long in coming. A plate on the wall says 'live well, laugh often, love much' - this comes true right here.

We're enjoying the rhythm of the house: being alone and together, working and praying. What we've tried to live on our own, is now surrounding us, with constant steady breath.

Cont'd on Pg 5



Cont'd from pg1

Thank-you all so much for the Flodden weekend together. What a remarkable time! So many good things - warm fellowship, great food, a meaningful time of reconciliation, the final walk together with the banners etc. I loved the creativity that came out of this adventure together.



Thank you for yesterday, and for the past few weeks and months. It's been a pleasure working with a group of clergy and lay people from other churches and organisations, in which everyone was seeking to support, encourage and help each other.

The Solemn Commemoration: with so many contributions from various sources, it could have been a dog's dinner. In the event, the whole was greater than the sum of the parts.

Some extracts from a note which Roy Searle sent to those who had been part of the Commemoration events:

Dear Companions and Friends,

The reason for my writing is very simple: to thank each and every one of you for giving of yourselves - your time, prayers, hospitality, support and encouragement with the Peace and Reconciliation Pilgrimage.

I confess that before this year my knowledge of the Battle of Flodden and its impact and consequences for the nations was very limited but as soon as I heard about it, my immediate response led me to think about how we might as a Community contribute to the Commemorations. As I prayed, the idea came to bring people from some of the assembling-places of the Scottish and English armies - to pray, walk the land, share hospitality and bring benediction, in a very different spirit to that of the armies 500 years ago. Integral to this 'vision' was the idea of carrying Cuthbert's Cross as a banner.



I believe that we have all been engaged in some very significant work for the kingdom of God, breaking some of the ties that have bound and brought a curse to lands and peoples. We have made a contribution to peace and reconciliation and sown seeds of friendship, honour and blessing, that might reap a harvest of lasting fruit for the glory of God.

I found the whole experience challenging and enriching, stimulating and provoking - and cause for much thanksgiving for the gift of Community. I want to just highlight three things from the last few days of being together:

Let us not forget nor underestimate the significance of the rainbow that appeared over us as we assembled together on Saturday, the sight of which brought a huge smile to my face and gladness to my heart. There have been many significant events in the history of our Community which seem to have been 'marked' by rainbows!

On the battlefield, in the former 'killing fields', the laying of the Northumbrian flag was, for me, about erasing the borders that man has made. I felt compelled to embrace Bill (Landale), and together we wept for joy at the friendship that we knew God had ignited between us but which was now being called to burn brighter. What might come of this only God knows - but please pray that we might find ways of being and working together as 'hands across the border, both sides o'er the Tweed'.

I shed a secret tear and a smile just before the Solemn Commemoration took place yesterday as I looked into the tent and saw some of you needing to 'fend off' those who thought of themselves as distinguished, and therefore looking for seats near the front. It struck me again that it is those who are prepared to take the lowest seat that in the kingdom of God will be given the place of honour. And that God's 'platform party' affords the lowest and the poorest the highest seats. The tear flowed as I looked outside the tent and saw the Peace pilgrims standing with the banners. Throughout the previous days, various clans, families, bands, groups and regiments had gathered for the commemoration, and I was proud to stand with 'my own clan' - a Community of brothers and sisters who had journeyed to Flodden in the same spirit that had called and inspired St. Cuthbert - walking not in the paths of war and conflict but peace and reconciliation. It was a very beautiful sight, and I believe it made a deep impact.

Let me in closing re-iterate my thankfulness to and for every single one of you; for those who walked, prayed, administered, catered, transported, designed, printed, liaised, accommodated, carried, wrote, sang and played or who journeyed with us from a distance, in prayer and intercession.

God's peace, wellbeing and joy be yours and until we meet again May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

Roy

Some extracts from the many pieces of creative writing which sprang from the Pilgrimage and Commemoration are on pg 4

One Man's Wounds - a lament for Flodden

I'll no sing the anthems of war,
of nation's pride and chieftains glory.
I'll sing that war will be no more
and peace root deep in our people's story.
Though I love our wee bit hill and glen,
its folk of every rank and order,
if "a man's a man for a' that" is true
the truth's the same across the border.

I have heard the mother's cry
as she holds her orphan sons and daughters.
As man and brother in conflict vie,
the nation's flower falls in the slaughter.
As neighbour friend to neighbour foe
turns; man on man, their honour in tatters,
her cry goes up for strife to end
and peace to come across the water.

I have dreamed to see the day
when war and strife will end forever.
When lord and chieftain hold their sway
in care for all and peace together.
Where man and man in heart are one,
a brotherhood of wounds forgiven,
for one Man's wounds shall be enough
to bring peace to all peoples under heaven.

Rob Holden

For the Brave and Craven of Both Nations

Come, cushie-doo whose kiss
will seal the lips of every wound:
hover over Branxton's slopes
where height cries out to height:
unforge each billhook, broadsword, pike,
warhead, Kalashnikov and drone:
then breathe the colour back
into the forest flowers scorched
by the heat of the fray:
unfurl as a banner the shoots
within unnumbered grains of wheat
that mourn the ground where they fall:
create at long last, here
in this deep lamenting soil,
the final loss of loss—
that longed-for sorrowless field.

Andrew Philip

('Cushie-doo' is a term of endearment)

Martin and Bekah Neil sent us an update about

Voices From The Nations

It's nearly three years since we were rescued by a 4x4 from huge snow drifts outside our stone cottage in freezing Northumbria. As we headed south, leaving behind wonderful memories of rural life, we passed tree shapes that had been re-invented due to the storm and realised a new season lay ahead, we were wandering into the unknown. Anatole France says that "Wandering re-establishes the original harmony which once existed between man and the universe". As we have learnt to carry 'home' on the road we are so thankful for the people and places that have welcomed the stranger and allowed us to experience the different colours that God paints on this amazing world.

Tanzania - update

The village of Mnase in central Tanzania was affected by severe famine this year and many people responded to our appeal for help with a food relief project. We sent money to Pastor Seth (our long time partner in crime), who because of bad local produce had to make a 1200 km round trip to his family village of Tabora. Amazingly he was able to purchase over twice as much food in this region procuring 120 sacks of good quality maize. After trucking the food back to Mnase this was then distributed to the villagers. They say "Asanteni sana" (thank you so very much) to all those who helped.



Another exciting project was completed at the village medical dispensary - it now has solar panels! This will make a huge difference to care being given at night, now that they no longer have to use lamps which caused black smoke to fill the building.

Cambodia - update

The school and home for children where we made the CD/DVD 'Garlands for Ashes' has struggled to get teachers and staff. They need medical volunteers, dental volunteers, seamstresses for making costumes, pre-school teachers and technical help in film and video. The good news is that two new volunteer members have come from America for a few weeks. One helps with vocal training, piano and song writing and the other is a ballet teacher and is helping with sewing all the ballet costumes. Noren, the founder of the school, has had successful cataract surgery on both eyes and is now enjoying clearer vision. We hope to be visiting CCAMS in Cambodia in October to help them record some new tracks featuring a drum orchestra.



Cont'd on Pg 5

Cont'd from Pg 2

Our buried dream

Back home we had good jobs: security, income, predictability - what else would Germans want. But we had this dream in our hearts, buried under the lumber of our daily sorrows, hidden behind a fence with a sign saying 'Keep out!'



There must be more, we were often thinking. We wanted to live community and spirituality amidst the mundane, the ordinary, the daily humdrum - grounded but aspiring. We were longing for a place, where people would be invited to experience and to practise such faith. Here, at Nether Springs, we are reminded of that desire. We begin to hear our heartbeat again. It is frightening though, as we know: when we follow our hearts, there will be no maps, only unknown territory.

I had imagined this differently

It's a Monday in May. Back home in Germany they have a heat wave. I, instead, get my raincoat to cross the courtyard. Yesterday ten guests departed. Left behind are their rooms that need cleaning. As I bend over white ceramics in the bathroom I'm hit by this thought: I had imagined life at Nether Springs certainly different - cleaning and cooking only. I'm convinced I could do more. I had quite a lot of responsibility back home. But what's left here? Should I talk to someone about it?



In this very moment this phrase pops up in my mind, I heard it the other day, 'go to your cell and your cell will teach you everything'. So I decide to wait, to persevere, to pray - to ask God and myself why this is troubling me so much. A few weeks later I still struggle with it. But I've learned more about my thoughts and desires and I came to realise that the crucial work for me, here at Nether Springs, is the work inside me. Only if I'm willing to go on the inner journey, the outer will continue.

Finding what has already been there

Summer. Finally. Halftime for us. On our days off we travel to Iona. Here we want to reflect on our experiences of the past six months. Go for a long walk on the north shore, sit in Oran's chapel, and meet people. In the old refectory we get to know Chris from Liverpool, talking about our year in England. "Sometimes," he says, "you need to go on a pilgrimage and when you arrive at your destination you realise: what I'm looking for, has already been there long ago."



... has already been there, it is echoing within us. Perhaps we needed to leave our home and go to England. Perhaps it was necessary, so that we could discover what was already planted deep within us. So that we could tune our lives in to our heartbeats. What was only a hazy version of a dream, now has become clear and colourful. At the same time we sensed that we couldn't fulfil our dream in a high-flying manner - we need to make a detour through our inmost being. We'll start small, in the ordinary. Though it is only halftime, this insight was already worth leaving Germany and coming to Nether Springs.

Katrin and Daniel Sicking live in the Southwest of Germany again (close to Stuttgart). They are currently in the Novitiate process, and excited about what God is doing in their region.

Cont'd from Pg 4



this time we were given a prime spot in the centre of the festival.

USA

We were invited back for the fourth time to take part in the Polk Street Block Party, the biggest annual party in downtown Amarillo, Texas. The drum circle has become a very popular part of this event and

Czech Republic

This is a country that has found its feet after years of living under oppression. Found this quote in one of my old National Geographic's - "Look, I was born in Austro-Hungary," said a man in his 80s, "I grew up in Czechoslovakia, suffered from Germans, spent 40 years in a colony of Russia - without leaving Prague!" Just about sums up their history - this has all added to the most unique

architecture, beautiful folk music and through it all they have managed to find plenty to laugh about. We enjoyed a wonderful ten days here: teaching, playing music, making new friends and drinking beer!

Cyprus

We returned to the Gateways Beyond school in the mountains of Moniatas for another week of discussing culture and encouraging students in their passion to help in the nations. We also managed to find a bit of free time to wander round the island, visiting Roman ruins, the church of Saint Paraskevi and the port at Paphos.



We are planning trips to Cambodia and Tanzania - if you have spare air miles please contact us: www.voicesfromthenations.org

Liz Brobyn was part of a group thinking about

Living Simply



I was so pleased to have the opportunity to attend this day as more than a year ago I found this was being offered as a weekend course at the Mother House but was unable to attend. The day was

held in a beautiful little church at Chewton Keynsham, situated in the countryside, and the wet weather which had been expected didn't arrive so we were able to take advantage of being outside at various times during the day. The group was made up mostly of people from the Bath and Bristol Group, joined by several from the Forest of Dean and Exeter Groups, plus a wanderer of no fixed abode.

Our day was split into two parts – Inner and Outer Simplicity. In the morning we heard about Inner Simplicity

and at the end of the session were encouraged to spend about half an hour putting this into practise by being silent, repeating a 'love word' and drawing back to this if we realised our thoughts had wandered. It was recognised that some people find it difficult to sit still for any length of time (men in particular!) and so we were told it was quite all right to take our quiet time whilst walking about. The benefits of this may not always be immediately obvious but should result in a greater peace and a closer connectedness with God.

We then had a nice long lunch time which enabled us to catch up on everyone's news and renew our friendships and then we moved into the afternoon. Basically it was put to us, that if our lives are less cluttered by material objects and unnecessary commitments or less governed by various addictions we have more time to spend on that which is really important and life enriching.

We were all so grateful to Norman and Ingrid for presenting this topic in such an interesting and varied way; for the assistance of Shayla and the hospitality and planning involved by Sarah, Malcolm and other members of their group. *Liz Brobyn*

Bradford Community Group

Recently the Bradford group had a retreat day, hosted by Norman and Ingrid Cumming at their home in Barnoldswick, near Skipton. They did us proud! The surroundings were beautifully quiet and peaceful. There were craft activities, a good selection of written materials to stimulate us, and also a quiet room in which we could pray - as well as the garden for quiet reflection.

I left with a feeling of being spiritually refreshed - it felt like a mini break at Nether Springs!

If you would like to join us for our Friday evenings in Bradford, then contact Joan Parker at

mamajohan1@googlemail.com *Lucy Emery*

North-West Gathering

A gathering of Friends and Companions took place at St John's Church, Yealand near Carnforth. We were led by Michael Connaughton and Vince Smith in tackling the delicate theme of 'same sex marriage'. Helpful input led into a time of sharing, using a 'talking stick' to enable everyone to take part – and as we sang Paul Field's song 'God of the moon and stars' the words seemed to reflect many aspects of our theme for the day, and 'Break Down the Walls' was so appropriate.

St John's Church has recently been revamped – and we now have the luxury of a new indoor toilet! We all seemed to have found the day really valuable, and it was good to have the chance to celebrate Norman's birthday, in addition to having Jan join us from Bolton for her first visit to a Community Gathering.

Do join us at Yealand for our next gathering on Saturday 16 November at mid-day. More info and directions from Di Smith: tel: 01524 782341 dianasmith1@me.com.

Lee Johnson

As a regular feature, we are hoping to highlight our various Community Groups. This was sent to us by Norma Charlton, leader of the

Tyneside Community Group

At a recent meeting of the Tyneside group we pondered over our Rule of Life, as we often do. After a period of sharing we spent some time in responding to our reflections. This found a variety of expressions among which were a picture, a pocket book summary, a conversation with Jesus and Claire-Louise Byrne's innovative 'The Rule of the Northumbria Community for the Facebook Generation':

We say YES to Connecting and Sharing

- Go online regularly and connect with God.
- Never ignore a friend who inboxes you.
- Inbox God about your friends' problems.
- Share the messages God sends you.
- Let God post on your wall and make sure you post on His.
- Look at all posts made by Jesus and His followers.
- Read the comments friends make on your posts.
- Don't be afraid to post awkward questions.
- Don't worry how many 'likes' your posts get.
- Don't only 'friend' those who think like you.



If you would like to know more about Community groups, contact: norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.com

Paul Lucas reflects on a season in Braithwaite and wonders whether he's part of an

Orthodox Revival?

No longer being a Minister of the Methodist fold and seeking the next step in life, God's gracious provision was an opportunity to live for a time in the small Lakeland village of Braithwaite near Keswick and I moved here in March between the snow storms. There are two church buildings in the village: St Herbert's C of E and the old Methodist Chapel, now leased to 'The Orthodox Community of St Bega, St Mungo and St Herbert.'

I was intrigued by the title and also by a large metal sculpture in the small front garden which depicted birds on the wing with a small comment alongside saying "are we like birds who fly away..."



Immediately I was reminded of a picture given to Northumbria Community some twenty years ago: Community being likened to a tree on which birds settle and find rest, some to remain, some to fly away and some to return again and yet again.

One cold Sunday morning I ventured inside to the warmth of the colourful icon filled chapel room, with smells and bells and a tangible sense of charisma. The priest led the community through the ancient and lengthy Liturgy of St John Chrysostom and the choral responses were, in part, strangely reminiscent of some of the Northumbria Community music. (Or is it the other way round?) It was amazing. The Lord's Prayer sung in English, then spoken in Greek by the Cypriot families, in Coptic by an Egyptian family, and last week also in Russian by the visiting Father Nicanor and his friends - it all depends on who turns up. Once the liturgy is done, the whole family share food and fellowship, finally departing on their separate ways.

Recently Father John led a pilgrimage of sixteen visitors around many of the ancient Christian sites of Cumbria

including holy wells and standing crosses, even as far away as St Ninian's cave in Galloway, Heavenfield, Hexham Abbey and St Paul's, Jarrow. The so called Celtic Saints had more in common with the Eastern Orthodoxy than the Western or Roman church - members of the Synod of Whitby may well have agreed! I joined the pilgrims for the boat trip to St Herbert's Island in Lake Derwent - the place of the hermit of whom St Cuthbert was a kindred spirit and great friend. That too was amazing, there is something great about literally treading where the saints have trod!

I had first come across the 'Orthodoxy' in a small chapel dedicated to St Felix, near King's Lynn and was impressed by how the folk stood with arms outstretched as they said the Lord's Prayer (I mean 'the Our Father'). I don't think there are many places where the Orthodox Church establishes new meeting places, but here in Braithwaite the hallmark of revival can be found and God is adding to their number. For me, this welcoming family community with an open door has been a life line in difficult times and with a touch of God's humour thrown in - there had to be a Methodist connection somewhere!

Recently, in leading worship at the small Northern Ark gathering, I shared with the folk there one of the songs from the liturgy of the Orthodox tradition and also how amazing it is that something apparently so traditional can also be so very charismatic and firmly rooted in the scriptures.



Throughout the life of God's church, people come and people go, some stay and some return; but in the passing of time and even of life times, somehow the eternal hymn of praise gathers all to one end and as the opening sentences of the Orthodox Liturgy proclaim: 'Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages'.

Paul Lucas

On Saturday 14 September **Norman Cumming** was inducted as Minister of the West Craven Baptist Fellowship (a covenanted grouping of three churches: Barnoldswick, Earby and Salterforth). Roy Searle was present to take part and bring greetings from Community. Other Community folk had gathered in support and willingly (!) took part when called out at the end to sing the blessing from Morning Prayer.

Edward Pillar was part of the team which had a special encounter with

Greenbelt...

...a 40 year journey exploring the boundaries of faith and Christian spiritual expression in an eclectic mix of music, words, art, liturgy, song and silence, protest and exploration, discussion, debate and a diverse multitude of attempts at connecting with the big questions of life.

Into this rich tapestry the Northumbria Community was invited to contribute something of its own journey. Very early on, we decided that whatever we did it would be simple. We decided that we would have only a small team and the content of our contribution would be straightforward enough for anyone to pick up and take home with them.

Greenbelt asked if we would take responsibility on the Friday evening for Sanctuary— a new stripped down venue with no frills, encouraging simplicity in approach. Our opening session was a lively, fun welcome to the Festival. To the wide breadth of folk and a large number of families with young children who found us tucked away in one of the sprawling buildings, we told the creation narrative— about the God who said, 'Let there be light' and there was light! We sang songs, ate picnics, shared Eucharist, interacted in prayer and everyone responded with life and energy. Then, in complete contrast, we shared Evening Office— a sacred hush descending as Keith Judson and Shayla Merrivale led us in singing and saying the prayers and readings.

A third session was an opportunity for us to share some personal perspectives on the interior journey and to invite questions and discussions.

The last thing we wanted was to portray ourselves as somehow having 'arrived', and so we spoke of our struggles and trials on the spiritual journey, and the questions asked of us were pointed, searching and direct.

Within each session we were intentional in including an extended period of silence, and in this workshop we had ten minutes of stillness - which admittedly for some was a struggle, against the noise of the Festival outside. But this was a real example of the challenge in daily life - to establish and practise a discipline of stillness and silence.

We concluded the evening with Compline. Over the evening we had welcomed well over seven hundred folk to share with us, and with two hundred or so at this very late hour we slowly and deliberately said the words of the Boissil compline, the candlelit stillness resounding with the heartfelt call: 'lighten my darkness, Lord.'

Ed Pillar

**LIFE
BEGINS
GREENBELT@40**

More than a year ago, we included a feature in Caim about some remarkable work in Cambodia, and the influence of our Daily Office there. Here's a brief extract:

I serve as a missionary in Cambodia among tribal groups in the northeastern corner of the country. It is a very rural area with people groups that, until recently, have been relatively isolated.

Among my responsibilities are the training of leaders for the villages churches and the development of younger emerging leaders. I serve among three language groups: the Jarai, the Kachok, and the Tampuan. Christianity is very young here; the first people became believers here in the 1990s.

The leaders have recently been asking me about how I seek God daily and, having personally practiced the Daily Office for quite some time, we are now translating it into a couple of the local languages for local people to use. We now have drafts of the Evening Prayer in Khmer (the national language in Cambodia) and Jarai.

The younger emerging leaders have embraced the practice of the Evening Prayer and are teaching it to their youth groups.

Just a few weeks ago, O'B sent us this update:

The translation of the Daily Office has proceeded very slowly. Evening prayer in the Cambodian language is completed and will be completed in Jarai very soon. Translating Morning Prayer into both languages has begun and should go more quickly.

I have teamed up with some people trained by the Wycliffe organization for the creation of an alphabet for the Kachok language; while this remote people group has existed for millennia, their language has never been in written form! We will be meeting with local people very soon, to create the alphabet. The local people will then begin translating and writing down Scriptures, the Daily Office, and some of their worship songs.

I would be very grateful for prayer for these efforts. In a place where Christianity is so new, the Daily Office can help to anchor prayer as a rhythm to seek God daily, and seek His transformation in their lives.

Many Thanks!
God Bless All
Your Service!
O'B O'Brien



IBTS (International Baptist Theological Seminary), with whom we share a very encouraging and mutually enriching partnership is on the move. Over the next year the Seminary will be relocating from Prague to Amsterdam. We continue to support the Seminary during this period of transition and in particular we remember Lina, Parush, David and Katka as they manage this important new chapter in its life. If anyone is interested in working as a volunteer at the seminary in Prague over the coming months they should email: volunteer@ibts.eu

One of the many blessings that has come out of the partnership has been the number of young students who have connected with the Community and we are delighted that Benjamin Bruggemann, who we first met while he was studying in Prague, is now with his wife Lucie, serving on the house team at Nether Springs. The team has another connection with IBTS as Laura from Lithuania, came to us through the recommendation of her friend Lina who is the Academic Dean and a Community novice.

Companions and Friends of the Community are engaged in all kinds of work and ministry and we congratulate and pray for God's blessing on the following three who have recently taken up new appointments:

Glen Marshall has been appointed as Joint Principal of Northern College in Manchester; **Joshua Searle** is the newly appointed tutor in Applied Theology and Public Thought at Spurgeon's College London; and **Lynn Green** has assumed her role as General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

As a Community, we were delighted to be in partnership with other organisations under the umbrella of North-East Action on Poverty, to welcome Tony Campolo to Durham and Teeside in September. Tony spoke passionately and provocatively on the issues of gender, justice, vulnerability and poverty. Now well into his 70s, he has lost nothing of his passion and zeal and it was a privilege to meet and hear him share his heart at a lunchtime gathering and public meeting.

Catherine Askew writes:

More on the Flodden 500 theme:

this time, some moving reflections from Karen Dunn. Karen was a visiting URC minister based in Woole and she and her family have recently returned to their home in the United States. Part of what God invited her to do was to climb to the top of Humbledon Hill each morning and to pray, especially for peace. I hadn't realised, but she was also part of a peace pilgrimage to Flodden Field on 1 January this year. Before the big Flodden weekend, I asked her for her thoughts, to see if anything had been given to her that might encourage or guide our Community in our participation. Her response is below.

Hi Catherine,

I apologise for my slowness in responding to your note, a slowness due not to my taking your request lightly, but quite the opposite.

When we pilgrims made our peace walk to Flodden Field on 1 January, Dave Herbert asked us to listen to the wind, and to what the voices of the dead might be saying to us. I have to believe that what they were saying to us was not that we pray for them in their suffering and loss, and that of those whom they left behind. What I heard was simply: Folly. They wanted us to recognise the absolute folly of the horrible waste and loss that befell them and their people. To remember them and the folly of those 2.5 hours of slaughter as we move through our own time and our own existence on this earth.

I'd like to believe that my prayers atop Humbledon Hill did exact a change, somehow, in all that is, but I imagine it changed only one thing, and that was myself, and my consciousness. I realised that in each moment I have a choice to make, for Life and Goodness - what I know as the Divine - or fear. It made me realise that the dead are indeed gone and do not need my prayers. What is needed is that consciousness that the choice is always there, and that it is up to me to decide which path I will follow. The best prayer I know now, as the gun violence continues unabated in America, and Syria has seen fit to murder nearly 500 children with chemical weapons, is that we will make the choice for Life. And that in doing so, we touch other lives, and perhaps begin to alter the balance, incrementally, toward Goodness. And peace. And the Kingdom of God.

I hope this helps. I didn't mean to go off into a mini-sermon, but there it is.

Blessings,
Karen



Roy Searle writes:

Celtic Fire has been an integral part of the Community's missional expression for many years.



From a word of prophecy given back in 1993, its many presentations and expressions have borne much fruit over the ensuing years.

In essence the prophecy and the vision led us to tell the stories of the Celtic Saints - and in so doing rekindle something of the flame of the gospel which first touched the hearts and minds of our Celtic forefathers and mothers.

We've had a couple of years during which presentations and performances have been intentionally limited, to give time for prayer for reflection and consideration as to its future.

We are now back on the road with Celtic Fire, and two recent performances, both in Northumberland, have continued to realise the promises contained in the word and vision.

We've been asked if we would consider taking Celtic Fire on the road next year in Northumbria and other sacred places.

Watch this space - and in the meantime here are some reflections from Catherine Askew on the most recent Celtic Fire which was presented in an ancient Anglo-Saxon church at Woodhorn in south-east Northumberland:

On 17 August, the Community put on a 'Celtic Fire' for Morpeth Deanery in the historic Woodhorn Church in Newbiggin-by-the-Sea. We focused on the stories of Aidan and Oswald, including how they served together for the sake of the Gospel.

The event was incredibly well attended. All the tickets sold out, and still people were coming. As the Area Dean commented "Usually 'gatecrashing' and 'Deanery event' do not appear in the same sentence!"

More significantly, people found the experience very moving. It seems to have really stirred the imaginations and faith of those present.

Though we have presented 'Celtic Fire' events in many different parts of the UK and world, celebrating this inheritance we have in the Celtic Saints within Northumberland and with local people has a surprising power. The stories go deeper even than the coal seam. And of course, they speak today.

Several of us felt that something shifted in the heavenlies that night, and that it was perhaps the beginning of a new thing God is wanting to do in the Deanery and in the Community.

We may, then — building on this event, the Celtic Fire earlier this year in Eglington and all that surrounded the Lindisfarne Gospels coming North — have a series of Celtic Fires next year at Celtic Sites throughout the area. This is still in the idea stage, but we'll keep you posted.

I personally found great joy in enacting 'Brother, Sister Let Me Serve You' with Sarah Pillar and in these two worlds of mine (local church and Community) meeting in such a creative and positive way.

The icing on the cake was coming out of Woodhorn to see a double rainbow over the coast. Perhaps we weren't the only ones smiling. *Catherine Askew*

A Community Prayer

Lord, we are your church. Nothing exists without you; all that we have comes from you.

You have given us more than we deserve; your love and grace are endless.

Thank you, Father, for the richness of our lives, our homes, our loved ones.

Thank you for uniting us by your love as a worldwide family.

Lord Jesus, you gave your life for us. You reunited us with our Father in Heaven.

Through you we have inherited eternal life.

Forgive us for taking you for granted and not giving you the time you deserve so much.

You and you alone, Lord, are worthy of our praise.

Holy Spirit, soften our hearts that we may serve each other, picking up your towel and basin.

Help us to be humble and available to each other as a Community,

sharing our gifts and our talents willingly.

Help us to remember to put our trust in you when we are afraid.

Help us to remember that all things are possible through you, our Saviour.

Empty us of self, that we may see through your eyes, and listen with the ear of our heart, and give your Holy Spirit room to love through us, that you may grow in us.

We place all our concerns into your hands.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Suzy Donaldson

Andy Raine continues to give the background to our Daily Meditations:

Day 31 Meditation

I've never really got away with the writings of Francis Schaeffer. (The arguments always seemed plausible until his sweeping statements apply to anything I actually knew about. My ideals in music, painting, philosophy were always his examples of the decline of civilisation!) How refreshing, then, to discover his wife's books. 'Hidden Art' inspires us to find beauty in attention to detail in everyday life, family, hospitality and community, and 'L'Abri' is her account of their journey as a family, and the beginnings of what was to become a hugely influential community. It's very encouraging to read about other people's painful learning experiences, their struggle to trust.

When I first read 'L'Abri' I was still at Marygate House on Holy Island, so for me the now-familiar words had a different context; praying that God would 'send the people of His choice even to a tiny, out-of-the-way place' had practical implications then, also.

Kate Tristram was one of those 'people of His choice'. Her love for teaching had brought her success, the head of RI at Hild & Bede College in Durham, a department about to

be amalgamated with the University. To her dismay, each promotion she was given had removed her further from actual teaching. As she was bemoaning this, one St Aidan's weekend on the Island, Joan Harris walked into the room with rock-buns and mugs of tea. "Never mind, Kate", Joan joked, "there'll always be a job for you here". And Kate soon forsook Durham to be warden at Marygate, and part of the rhythm of daily prayer at St Mary's, Holy Island.

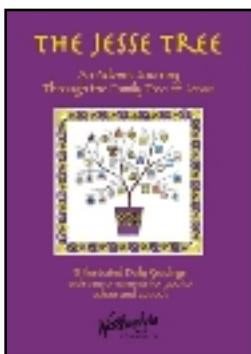
'L'Abri' reminds us all that community is not born or sustained by the wave of a virtual magic wand, but by the repeated decision to trust God for 'every step of the path as it wound through unknown territory'. These words were on many of our minds as we discerned the decision that led to the leaving of Hetton Hall and the embracing of a fresh beginning at Acton.

Andy Raine



Judith Goodfellow sent us an update about

Community Resources



With Advent almost upon us, I am very pleased to announce the publication of our Jesse Tree Pack as a delightful and richly rewarding resource for individuals, families and churches in the run up to Christmas.

Originally published in Celtic Daily Readings (now sadly out of print), this month of readings is now presented as an A5 booklet beautifully illustrated with newly commissioned drawings by Francesca Ross, and accompanied by a set of 31 double-sided card ornaments, featuring Francesca's illustrations, for you to colour, cut out and use at home on your own Jesse Tree.

The Jesse Tree readings are named after the depictions in stained glass or wood that have been used over many centuries to bring to life the characters who are part of Jesus' family tree from Jesse through David to Joseph and Mary. In many homes and churches it has become an Advent custom to use a small tree branch as a Jesse Tree and hang it with pictures or ornaments representing the people, prophecies and stories which anticipated the coming of Christ.

Some churches have a special Jesse Tree service, during

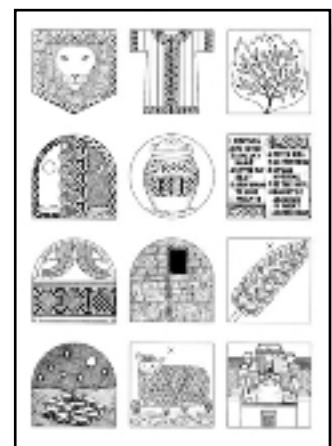
which the whole series of stories is recalled, and the ornaments added, one by one. At home it is probably more beneficial to take one reading, with its accompanying Scriptures, per day, adding the ornaments as you go through the month so that, rather like the pictures in an Advent calendar, more and more appear as Christmas approaches.

Some of the drawings and readings remind us of the people who make up Jesus' family tree. Some instead are rich in prophetic significance, or mark the feasts of Stephen, the 'holy innocents' and John the beloved. They remind us of the covenant that Jesus, the promised Messiah, invites us all to enter into with Him.

The Jesse Tree can become a much-loved focal point during December that can offset and pre-empt the onset of an increasingly commercial and secularised Christmas. We hope these readings and ornaments will help you to share in this age-old practice and, by providing a focus for prayer and memory and a spur to the imagination, enrich your Advent as they take you on a journey through image and Scripture.

You can purchase a Jesse Tree Pack through the online shop on the website for £9.99 plus p+p or over the phone by calling the office on 01670 787645.

Judith Goodfellow





The newsy bit

New Companion



On Friday 29 July, **Dan Hazen** was welcomed as a new Companion at his home in western Washington, USA.

Family, friends and Community members gathered for a barbecue and a

wonderful evening around the campfire. We opened with a composite office, containing elements of morning, midday, and evening prayer. Dan's wife, Brenda, and daughter Kellie led us with special music.

As Dan's novice mentor, I shared how gratifying it was to walk alongside him during the process and see its significance in his spiritual formation. Dan addressed the group as well, and then shared a very moving interpretive dance to a Kevin Prosch song.

After Dan declared his "YES!" to the Community Rule for Living, Diane Sekuloff spoke the words of blessing. Diane travelled from her home in British Columbia for the event. The winner of the award for farthest distance travelled, however, went to new Community friends, Rod and Amy Cosgrove, who journeyed 300 miles from their home in eastern Washington.

As we lingered around the fire, several others shared encouraging words and stories. We are seeing increased interest of a serious nature in the Northumbria Community, in both Washington (state) and nearby British Columbia. Please pray for the growing group of NC friends in these regions. *Alan Berry*

Nether Springs

After their wedding in May, **Charlotte and Adam Andrews** left the team and set off on a year of 'wandering'.

The Mother House team has been grateful for help from many short term volunteers. Joining the team more recently are **Laura Briauitytė** from Lithuania and **Benjamin and Lucie Bruggeman** from Belgium.

Dates for Gatherings

Saturday 12 October - a Yorkshire Gathering will take place at St Aidan's Church, Ridgeway, Acomb, York, YO26 5DB. For directions, go to the Acomb Parish website – www.acombparish.org

(By Public Transport: The No 1 York First bus [Blue Line] from outside the York Railway Station going to Chapelfields. Time: 10 am – 4.30 pm
Please bring a packed lunch – drinks will be provided. For further information, contact - Joan Parker, 01274 607944 email: mamajohan1@gmail.com

Saturday 16 November is the next quarterly North West Gathering at St John's, Yealand Conyers, starting with midday office. More info and directions from Di Smith ~ Tel: 01524 782341 dianesmith1@me.com

Saturday 16th November at St Ninians, Craigmailen Church Halls in Linlithgow.

From around 10.00am until 5.00pm. The theme will be 'Journeying' and we'll include reflection on the Brendan liturgy which has been a focus for our thinking as a Community this year.

Getting there: Linlithgow is well served by public transport as it is one of the few stops on the main Edinburgh to Glasgow railway line. If you have any questions email: rob.ambathach@googlemail.com

Iona and Mike Farley are rejoicing in their newly-adopted Chinese daughter **Anna Taoyun** (her Chinese name means 'peach cloud'!) after waiting seven years for the adoption process from China to come to fruition.

She is nearly two and is a sister for Imogen and Angus – and another granddaughter for Joy and Ian Corsie.



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