

# CAIM THE NORTHUMBRIA COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



Issue No 10  
Autumn 1999

**CAIM** is the Celtic word meaning encompassment or encircling. This newsletter goes out to all those who are within our circle; our Community Companions and Friends, plus those who have asked to be placed on our mailing list.

## Ireland, O Ireland – A Pilgrimage

Roy Searle

*"Mission starts in the home, continues outside the home with whoever we meet but may also involve making a journey to be in the right place to be used by God at the Spirit's initiative."* From the Community Rule, Availability and Vulnerability – a Way for Living. Setting out with little more than a hunch that it was time to return to a land and its people, for whom we have continued to pray over a number of years, six of us from the Community (from England, Canada and America), made our way across the sea to Ireland. With an itinerary sparse on definitive plans, allowing us the freedom and space to go where we felt led, we assembled in Belfast. Three of us spent a delightful evening with friends of the Community in the Lower Ormeau area of the city. Here we witnessed first hand an example of those who have embraced the call to live Availability and Vulnerability in an area renowned for its tensions. Living as Protestants in this predominantly Catholic area, and despite being scared by the troubles, Ken and Claire have chosen to live in the Lower Ormeau community, with their young son, Danny. With the Peace Process fragile, the threat of unresolved issues undermining progress, and the marching season imminent, the atmosphere within parts of the Province was tense. Returning to our friend Stephen's house near Stormont, a late night phone call began the realisation of why we were in Ireland. I was invited to share at one of the churches in the city the following morning. During this time I was privileged to speak, share some of our prayers and liturgies, meet, listen and pray with some of the people deeply involved in the Peace Process. I was stirred within by the heart, depth of feeling and understanding that the pastor expressed in his moving sermon to the congregation. What happened as a result of that morning service, was to lay the foundations and provide a clear indicator for our time in Ireland. Each conversation and encounter led us further along a path that was to see us pray and visit people and places of historical and contemporary significance, and engage us inwardly and outwardly on a journey that drew us closer to God and to one another. We did

not (on this occasion) spend any length of time in the well-marked pilgrimage routes of the South but along unfamiliar paths of the North, discovering little known Celtic saints along the way. Dominant themes of community, reconciliation and mission emerged wherever we traveled, along with all the inner issues within our own lives that hinder or aid such Kingdom of God themes. The Falls Road, Shankill, West and East Belfast, Armagh, Portadown, Drumcree, the Garvaghy Road, Mullaghmore, Warrenpoint, Rostrevor, Cranfield and Newry all featured in the North, together with Glendalough, Clonmacnoise, Galway and a delightful evening stopover at Christ's House at Athy in the South, the home of Roddy and Berni Geoghegan. Seeing the impact that the early Irish saints made upon the culture of their day, we looked and prayed for signs of hope and the renewal of broken altars for our own lives and contemporary cultures. Would the same Holy Spirit who inspired such profound change within the consciousness of people in times past, touch and transform our lives and those of our contemporaries in today's culture? As the gospel brought the fruits of peace, justice and community then, would it bring hope and healing now? As we journeyed, prayed, argued, studied, laughed, ate and drank we were forcibly reminded that the problems that were perceived to be 'out there' resonated deep within our own lives. Personal, social, cultural, ecclesiastical differences were evident among our small group and we were to find in our being together that our unity in Christ and our being Community was something that required much grace and humility! We drew much inspiration from the life of St. Molaise, a 6<sup>th</sup> Century Irish monk whose life and work influenced and shaped many individuals and the society of his day. The monastic communities he founded played a significant role in the shaping of Irish culture and provides for us a valuable model as we continue to pioneer a Way for Living as believers in our changing, transient contemporary

culture. Following in the footsteps of Molaise we journeyed west from Clonmacnoise to Galway and then up to Sligo and onto Mullaghmore harbour where we met with a local writer. He took us out on his boat to Inishmurray Island where Molaise had founded a monastic site in 520 AD, one of several he established in Ireland throughout that period. Left alone on the uninhabited island, the silence was broken only by the call of the seabirds, the buzz of the harvesting bees and Gordon's wheezing chest! Gathering around the beehive cells and the stone altars in the monastic ruins, it was not hard to imagine ourselves back in time on this sacred isle, formed by the Creator and founded as a place of community in prayer. The following day we journeyed to Devenish in County Fermanagh to visit another of Molaise's monastic community sites. Set on an island in Lough Erne, just a couple of miles up river from Enniskillen, it is just one of a chain of island monasteries throughout Ireland. [Those who partook or read about the Shannon Boat pilgrimage back in 1997 will recall their significance spiritually]. Many of the foundational decrees Molaise laid down for the communities he founded under God, have relevance for the Northumbria Community today: Committed at the core and loose around the edges, huge diversity but with a common unity of heart, geographically dispersed but one community, stability and spontaneity, disciplined yet reckless and full of adventure. These communities, rooted in a diverse monastic spirituality, had a profound impact on Irish culture for generations. We value the journey of those who have gone before us not by replicating them but by learning from them. Again, as at Inishmurray, we were able to close our eyes and imagine the past. My contemplation was however pleasantly interrupted at this point by the sound (and

(Continued on page 6)

## Mission Initiatives

Roy Searle

***Then to be available for participation in mission of various kinds according to the calling and initiatives of the Spirit.***

Mission cannot be seen in isolation from the Way of Life God has called us to embrace and the danger of highlighting specific events is to minimise the ongoing mission being fulfilled in the everyday, ordinary journeying of Community Companions and Friends. However there are some planned opportunities from praying, to planning and going, where more Community folk can be involved.

### CELTIC FIRE.

Telling the story of the Celtic Saints in song, story, dance and music with associated workshops in schools, arts venues, cathedrals and churches is moving beyond its early embryonic stages to going on the road and touring cathedrals in the next couple of years.

### SPRING HARVEST.

The Community will be leading the worship at next year's Spring Harvest. This will be for weeks 2 and 3 at Minehead which is entitled *A Royal Banquet*. The dates are Wednesday 19 – Monday 24 and Monday 24 – Friday 28 April, 2000. The theme for the weeks focus is on the person of Jesus as revealed in John's gospel, a theme that has been close to the heart of the Community and particularly to those engaged in the research project on the Johannine tradition.

### HEARTLAND and ON THE EDGE

Next year the Community will be involved specifically in three cities in the North of England, with teams, groups and individuals sharing in a variety of ways under the auspices of *Heartland* and *On the Edge*. Working with believers from different church backgrounds in both church and cultural settings we will be participating in mission in Hull, Doncaster and Bradford in the heart of the cities and on the urban fringes. It is hoped to have a number of Community folk praying and working with others from the Community in sharing the life we embrace together in Christ in these urban, city settings, building on the relationships that have been formed with people over recent years.

### CATHEDRALS and ABBEYS,

### FESTIVALS and

### TOURS

Seeking to be obedient to the leading of the Spirit we are excited at the prospects and potential of sharing at a number of cathedrals and abbeys in the coming year throughout Britain. Continue to pray for Adrian Snell and Murray Watts, together with Bible Society for the requiem, *The Cry* that will be on tour from next autumn. We

also envisage the Community's potential involvement in a number of arts festivals, including the opportunities to share as Christians, at some new age events. Glastonbury, both the Festival and the Abbey will see teams from the Community sharing at the events planned for next year. Plans are underway to take a Community team on the road to Scotland for a week presenting Celtic Fire in various places; Edinburgh, Fife, Perthshire, the Moray Firth and the Black Isle. We are also in the early stages of preparing for a team to go out to Canada and North America in the autumn. We also anticipate being involved with the developing storytelling network that is growing throughout the country. Greenbelt, back to its August Bank Holiday weekend will again see Community folk participating. Together with these events, through workshops, seminars and missions, we have commitments to pilgrimages, churches, conferences, retreat houses, colleges, and other communities. The Community is on the road, ***carrying the torch of the gospel wherever the Father leads.***

## Report on Communities Conference

Noel Bevan

On July 31st the Northumbria Community prayed for this event in the Prayer Guide under the title 'the Network of Christian Communities Conference.' It was the first time that our Community had been represented at this Assembly and I was give a very warm welcome. It had a very comprehensive composition and included representatives from residential communities, from centres of mission, reconciliation, retreat, healing, arts and crafts; one sister from a convent: network communities like Northumbria; and individuals who give vital personal support. Speakers included Therese Vanier, sister of Jean Vanier who founded the L'Arche Communities, Colin Craig, leader at Corremeala, Northern Ireland, and Paddy Lane, Secretary of The Retreat Association who helped us consider the future of NACCAN. At the AGM the various Officers were appointed and several members added to the co-ordinating team. My wife, Wendy, was elected to this body and would be glad to receive any concerns from you to bring to their meeting on October 19th.

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Autumn edition of CAIM the newsletter of the Northumbria Community. Once again we have tried to include in this issue as many contributions as we can from the wider Community, as it remains very important to reflect through the pages of our newsletter the fact that we are so wonderfully diverse, so widely dispersed. However, we can only include that which is sent to the Editor and thus far only a small percentage of our Community Companions have contributed in this way. We realise that as CAIM is primarily a newsletter which seeks to provide insight, information and hopefully inspiration in regard to the life and work of the Northumbria Community, each issue will always have very similar ingredients but as the following theological statement shows, the changing of emphasis from time to time is important. 'Heaven is an English home, an American salary, a Chinese cook and a Japanese wife. Hell is a Japanese house, a Chinese salary, an English cook and an American wife.' So to keep the balance right we need your news snippets, your articles to challenge both head and heart, your reflections on the journey we share together, along with relevant book reviews and Community happenings in your area. It will be good to hear from you!



## Journeying with the Northumbria Community

A booklet with the above title is available on request from the Community Office. It is designed for those wishing to explore what it will mean in actual practice to become a Companion or Friend of the Northumbria Community. A brief outline of the background and formation of the Community, as well as its vocation and vision is followed by an explanation of the process required of those considering journeying with the Community.

## Nether Springs

Phyl Blockley

**Keep the laughter bubbling up,  
Like Nether Springs in rain  
Keep the love of listening hearts  
Like our Lord's, remain  
Keep the tears in jars of clay  
Like oil which soothes the pain  
Keep the hope of heavenly peace;  
Till we come again.**

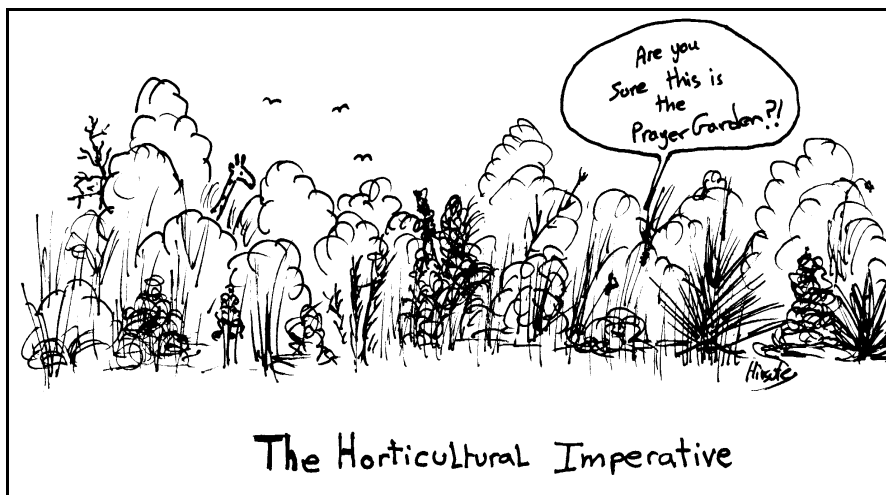
## BOOK REVIEWS

James Hawes of Hetton followed by Liz Charles of Lydney review two very important and highly recommended books, the first fairly new, the other reprinted. **Christi-Anarchy – Dave Andrews**  
Published by Lion at £6.99

Modernity, Postmodernity, Post-Evangelical and now a book on Post-Christianity, Yes I suppose it had to come! Christianity is past its sell by date, so Dave Andrews asserts in his new book - Christi-Anarchy. The 90's has thrown up many disturbing questions for Christians and the Church; in fact you could say Christianity is facing an identity crisis. One such question is 'what is Church?'. Instead of painfully embracing the question in a fast moving culture it has generally responded by seeking to be relevant, trendy and fast moving with new movements and gimmicks on a regular basis. The problem however is that the seasoned Church consumer has chosen to shop elsewhere, desperately wanting Christ but not the baggage, structures and subculture that goes with it.

This book is heretical, (must be sound!) radical and provocatively written by an activist who practices what he preaches and has a dream of people living their lives in the light of Christ and calls us to a life of compassion worked out in the whole of our lives. Mostly the book is a practical notebook of advice, information, illustrations, and real life examples of how and why we should live a Christ centred life.

Andrews begins his argument by deconstructing Church history, illustrating how the Church and the State through Colonialism and Mission unified to create systems that basically abused people, native cultures, traditions and the land. How these Cultures and Structures that have been constructed around the system of Christianity has become central rather than Christ. He calls this structure 'Closed set' which creates clear boundaries, a precise and clear message but often reduces Christ to a formula. (For Evangelicals 'The Sinners Prayer' becomes the pass-word to enter into this set.) Andrews quotes Gandhi as saying about Jesus "I believe he belongs not to Christianity but to the entire world". Thus people asking the question 'What is Church?' are often disillusioned with the gap between what is preached and what is practised. The Church is full of bible believing Christians but do they do what the Bible says? Is it possible to live out the ideals of Christ? There is a real longing for authenticity, a deep yearning to bring belief and behaviour together. Andrews answer to these questions is simple - you need to be prepared to suffer to live like Christ. He proposes that we need to rediscover the tradition of anarchism that



predates the Imperial Christian tradition. A Centred Set perspective which he terms Christi-Anarchy. He doesn't aim to create another tradition but simply suggests that its not the Church, not charismatic leaders, not systems, not formula's, not new strategies and projects or new gimmicks but Christ (who is greater than Christianity), who should be at the centre. This is a way of life, a way of compassion, a way of suffering he advocates for all communities of faith and which has huge parallels with our own Community's ethos. Where boundaries are unclear and messy at the edges, where love is the central message, subversion is the method, and living compassionately is the lifestyle.

*NB Such has been the impact of this book that Jenni Crisp, a Community Companion from Newcastle, has asked if any other readers of Caim would be interested in being part of a reading group to read and study it together. They would meet from time to time perhaps at the Nether Springs for this purpose. If you are interested you can contact Jenni on*



0191 2403496.

**In Search of a Way – Gerard Hughes.**  
Published by DLT at £7.95.

A few months ago I heard a GP give a presentation to a conference. It was inspirational not only because of his vision (which was in no way unique), enthusiasm and dedication, but also because of who he was – a doctor. That is what made it so unusual. He could see beyond the limits of his own professional boundaries and training. It gave the talk an added dimension and appeal; the person had not been subsumed by the role. There is a parallel with Gerard Hughes' book. Here is a Jesuit priest, an establishment figure, a representative of

the Roman Church. This book would be valuable whoever wrote it but it carries more hope, more significance because of the status of its author. If a cleric (of any denomination) can think like this and still remain in post there is surely hope for the Church! The book is subtitled 'Two Journeys of Spiritual Discovery'. It takes us on an arduous physical journey on foot from Glasgow to Rome, 1760 kilometers away. The second journey is the one we are more familiar with – the inner journey of the soul. The venture was prompted by a comment from a student during his days as a University Chaplain in the mid '70's: 'You don't know who you are'. At the end of the journey he does not claim some victory of self-discovery, but rather that the comment no longer disturbs him. He accepts his ignorance as part of the human condition. In this book you will find much with which we are familiar as a Community. The spirit of peregrinatio, vulnerability and availability, doubt and darkness and plenty of the heretical imperative (although I doubt he had ever heard of such jargon!) It is frequently humorous and very easy to read. His honesty is compelling and leads me to feel that this is someone who is travelling the same road as I am – a companion on the way. He concludes with this prayer. If you resonate with this I think that you will enjoy the book. 'Lord save us from every form of certainty which can rob us of this precious ignorance. Help us to keep searching after you, our way, until we reach the end of our pilgrimage, when every tear will be wiped away and we shall know you, our God, as you are and in you be at one with ourselves, with all men, and with all creation'.

### POETS CORNER

Anne Cope of Leeds writes of images remembered from a candlelit compline while at Nether Springs this summer, and also a visit to Holy Island.

#### Candlelit Compline

In the quieting dusk  
The compline bell calls;  
I walk in silent meditation  
Towards the single candle  
Flickering at the Chapel door.

Inside the darkening sanctuary  
Twin rows of tiny night lights  
Guide my steps  
Towards the community of worship,  
Gathered in the warm gentleness  
Of candle-glow.

Your word is a lamp to my feet  
And a light to my path.  
Drawing me in to meet with You again  
In the midst of Your people.

And as I sit in the after-silence,  
I see again the candle path  
Leading now towards the open door  
Where unknown things to come  
Wait their time  
In the darkness.

Your word is a lamp to my feet  
And a light to my path  
Drawing me out to meet with You again  
In the midst of Your world.

#### The Way to Lindisfarne

When the tide recedes  
You can follow the road  
Across the sea  
To Lindisfarne.

And you'll see the poles  
As they lead away  
To mark the path  
That pilgrims tread.

The road is metalled,  
Clear and broad  
Across the bay sands  
By the grass dunes' edge.

Tall pilgrim poles  
Will guide you sea-shod  
Through quicksand, rock, weed  
Out into the bay.

So travel the road  
In comfort and ease  
To arrive with convenience  
At Lindisfarne car park.

Or walk with the pilgrims,  
Leave the road behind,  
Spend time, carry risk  
To reach the Holy Island.

### PILGRIMAGES 2000

Pilgrimages and wanderings have always featured in the life of the Community. Several folk are currently exploring the possibilities of journeying next year to a number of places. If you would be interested in joining such a venture or if you are aware of other pilgrimages that Community folk would be interested in please contact us at the Community Office. We will plan to publish further details of happenings next year in the December issue of Caim. It is envisaged that among the places we will be going to include Ireland – North and South, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, France and throughout Northumbria.

### RESEARCH

Over ninety folk from very diverse backgrounds gathered for a day conference in July at Newcastle University as part of the research project we have been undertaking on the Johannine Tradition. Stephen Barton from Durham was the keynote speaker for the day and several of the research core group members presented and led workshops. Some of the papers and research findings will hopefully be available for publication at a later date. Anne Dyer who has been coordinating the research programme for the last year is going on to do further research, studying for an MA. Pray for her in the new challenges and opportunities ahead.

### COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Community Council together with the Trustees serve the Community in a variety of ways and support the leaders in the responsibilities of seeking to be obedient to the call of God upon the Community's life and vision. Reformed this year, the Council meets quarterly for a weekend at Nether Springs. The current Council members are: Bob Ainsley, Midlands; Geoff Boston, Teesside; Dave Callow, Cumbria; Liz Charles, Forest of Dean; Norma Charlton, Tyneside; Dave Hay, Weardale; Steve Hartley, Cumbria; Anne Hewson, Cheshire; Amund Karner, Aberdeen; Lesley Killen, South Yorkshire; Trevor Miller, Nether Springs; Paul Moore, Essex; Pam Pott, London; Andy Raine, Lindisfarne; Jonathan Roe, Humberside; Roy Searle, Northumberland; Jeff Sutheran, Northumberland; Bill Whitfield, Northumberland; Anne Wadey, London; Joanna Winston, Midlands; Mike Wright, Manchester.

### TRUSTEES

The current Northumbria Community Trustees are: Bill Clementson, Newton Aycliffe; Dominic De Saulles, Cardiff; Gordon Joice, Sedbergh; Pete Ross, Manchester and Jackie Urwin, Tyneside.

### Complementary Community Leadership



Roy on a bad day



Trevor on a good day

## A W A L K W I T H G O D

Rob Kelsey of Newcastle writes of lessons learned on a recent retreat.

Clergy are encouraged to go on retreat once a year. A retreat is a period of time spent mostly in silence, which gives the opportunity to reflect on one's spiritual life and to give more time and space to God. Christ himself often withdrew from the hustle and bustle of his earthly ministry.

This year I decided to go on a walking retreat. Rather than stay in a retreat house, I spent five days walking, usually for about ten hours a day. I camped for the first three nights, with the 'high point' being The Cheviot on the fourth day. I spent my last night at Hetton Hall, the Mother House, near Wooler, of the Northumbria Community. It was a wonderful experience. I was very much alone, and yet I know that God was with me, helping me on my way. On each of the first three days I felt tired towards the end of the day, and doubted that I would reach my destination. But I found my strength renewed sufficiently to carry on. The weather was generally on my side, and on several occasions things turned out 'just right' for me.

I remember sitting on the top of a hill near The Cheviot, bathed in sunshine, while clouds hung in the sky above the hills all around. Did God make the sun shine on me? I rather doubt it. And yet it felt natural at that moment to thank God for his goodness. I might have felt a great sense of achievement at the end of it all, but I'm well aware that, had the weather turned nasty, it might all have ended in failure. Although I know that God was helping me along, I also know that, at the same time, I had to make the journey under my own steam. There were no angels to carry me. And this teaches me that, in our daily lives, God works 'with the grain'. He gives us comfort, not by sitting us down in a comfy chair, but by helping us to keep going. And often the ways in which God helps us can only be recognised with the eyes of faith.

Towards the end of the second day I wanted to get to the top of Simonside. At one point I decided to leave the path and walk straight across the moorland. I thought a direct route would be quicker. But it was very hard going underfoot, across boggy ground and springy heather. This taught me that, although we sometimes learn a great deal by working things out for ourselves, at other times it's simply hard work. Sometimes it's easier and better to follow in the footsteps of those who've gone before us. This applies, of course, to the journey of faith, as well as to walking in the countryside.

Although I was mighty glad to reach the top

of The Cheviot, in retrospect it wasn't the highlight of my journey. The highlight was the fact that God had been with me throughout the journey. This taught me that the major incidents and achievements of our lives are often, in truth, incidental. The main thing is that God is with us throughout our lives. And a life lived in the presence of God is better than a life full of achievements.

Finally, my walking retreat has 'put flesh on' my journey of faith. I used a form of daily prayer, and the words, 'Bless to us, O God, the moon that is above us, the earth that is beneath us . . .' (said last thing at night) and, 'O God of love, . . . shine into our hearts like the rising sun . . .' (said first thing in the morning) seemed more vital and alive because I was sleeping outdoors. Having twisted my ankle on the first day, I was only too glad to say a prayer each morning which included the words, 'May we, this day and all our life, walk without stumbling along the way which you have set before us.' In the middle of the day I prayed, ' . . . guide us on our pilgrimage of faith, that we may walk with him who is the way, the truth, and the life.'

In future, when I hear phrases such as 'journey of faith' or 'spiritual pilgrimage', they will have a deeper meaning for me. Soon after I returned from my walking retreat I heard the story of the call of Abram (Genesis 12): *Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country . . . to the land that I will show you." . . . so Abram . . . set forth to go to the land of Canaan. . . . From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent. . . . And Abram journeyed on by stages.'* In my mind's eye I pictured Abram walking in the Cheviot hills.

## A n n u a l R e t r e a t

All Community Companions and Friends are encouraged to build into their lives an Annual private retreat at the Nether Springs. This would be a time of reflection, of quiet and waiting upon God with individual direction. Many of you already do this and know its benefits and blessing. Also to participate in one of the many Led Retreats we are running in the coming months, details of which are in the current programme which is available from the Community Office.

## Y o u A r e V e r y S p e c i a l

An anonymous article with an important message

In all the world there is nobody. nobody quite like you. Since the beginning of time there has never been another person like you. Nobody has your smile, your eyes, your hands, your hair. Nobody owns your handwriting, your voice. You're Special. Nobody can paint your brushstrokes. Nobody has exactly your taste for food or music or dance or art. Nobody in the universe sees things as you do.

In all time there has never been anyone who laughs in exactly your way, and what makes you laugh or cry or think may have a totally different response in another. So - you're Special. You're different from any other person who has ever lived in the history of the universe. You are the only one in the whole creation who has your particular set of abilities. There is always someone who is better at one thing or another. Every person is your superior in at least one way. Nobody in the universe can reach the quality of the combination of your talents, your feelings. Like a roomful of musical instruments some might excel in one way or another but nobody can match the symphonic sound when all are played together. Your symphony.

Through all eternity no one will ever walk, talk, think or do exactly like you. You're Special. You're rare and in all rarity there is enormous value and because of your great value the need for you to imitate anyone else is absolutely wrong. You're Special and it is no accident you are. Please realise that God made you for a special purpose. He has a job for you to do that nobody else can do as well as you can. Out of the billions of applicants only one is qualified. Only one has the unique and right combination of what it takes and that one is You. You're very Special.

*See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands. Isaiah 49:16*

## C h a r i t a b l e S t a t u s i n N o r t h A m e r i c a

Plans are proceeding with a view to incorporate the Northumbria Community Trust as a legal body in both the USA and Canada. This is a complex procedure but we feel one that is worthwhile because of the growing interest in the Community from North America. Once complete it will enable those people from the States and Canada who wish to contribute to the Community's life and work to have tax exemption. Thanks to Bob Hammond and Norman Lea for initial hard work.

## NEWS FROM CLOISTERS

Ian Corsie.

### **Celtic Daily Prayer CD**

This has proved amazingly successful with over 400 copies sold in two months and before the main promotion gets under way in September. It has nearly paid for its costs and will soon be making a real contribution to Community funds. We have received many favourable comments on its quality and content. If you haven't yet purchased a copy for yourself, please consider doing so. And how about sending them as Christmas presents to friends and relatives; it's much easier than trying to find a form of words to explain what the Community is all about! Order your copies by using the enclosed Cloisters Books and Music Mail Order Form. The RRP in the shops is £12.99, so the mail order price of £11.50 represents a real

saving. An audiotape version will be available later in the year, as will a music

sheet booklet. An A4 colour leaflet promoting the CD is now available. Getting the CD into individual Christian bookshops and other outlets up and down the country is a big task for the small Cloisters team; if you can take a leaflet and letter into your local outlet it would ensure it gets into the right hands. Please let us know if you can help in this way.

### **Combined Office Book**

HarperCollins, the publishers of 'Celtic Daily Prayer' and 'Celtic Night Prayer' intend to combine the two books into one high quality softback edition later next year (giving it the look and feel of a quality prayer book) and a team is currently looking hard at all the detail of the present books to see what needs improvement. If you have any thoughts or comments, this is a good time to send them in (address them to Ian Corsie). Don't worry that the liturgies and prayers will cease to be available in cheaper paperback form; as Daily/Night Prayer go out of print in their present form, they will be replaced with a series of paperback extracts from the combined book (probably: the liturgies and complines for daily use plus the meditations; liturgies and prayers for special occasions; year by year collections of daily readings).

### **Publications List**

Thanks to those of you who volunteered your services after seeing the request for writing and editorial help in the last Caim. We now have a team of folk who are working on various ideas and projects which we hope will form the basis of an expanded



publications list. Meanwhile, an updated list of what is currently available is enclosed. You will see that we now have the facility to accept payment by Credit card.

### **Christmas Cards and Calender 2000**

Once again we are making available through Cloisters a range of Christmas Cards and a Calender for the coming year. Please see the enclosed order form.

### **Cloisters Team**

Carey Miller is having to give up the task of Cloisters general factotum as she now has her hands full with 13 month old Connor and another baby due in October. She has been an invaluable member of the team (and we hope she will find the time to do some more designs for us). Ellen Niven will now take on her tasks (in addition to her duties in the Community Office).

## Impressions of Nether Springs and Upper Springs

Many folk find inspiration and space whilst visiting the Nether Springs at Hetton Hall or the heart of Upper Springs on Holy Island to put down their thoughts, feelings and impressions in poetry, prose or pictures. Many others would do so given some spur to action! We have it in mind to make a collection of such impressions,

making them available in some form if they deserve a wider audience to convey in outward form something of

the inward journey undergone by so many who visit the Nether Springs and Upper Springs. So you budding poets, authors and artists; brush off those ideas and submit them to Ian Corsie c/o the Nether Springs by the end of December. If you have some unusual, arty or highly effective photos (prints or transparencies) which are your own, please let us have a look (but not 'holiday snaps' or people shots please).



## Greenhouse Wanted

Anyone able to give the above for the Nether Springs Garden, please contact the Community Office. Dismantling and collection no problem.

## O Ireland

(Continued from page 1)

with eyes now wide open), at the sight of the only other visitors to the island, the Northern Ireland finalists for the coveted Rose of Tralee beauty contest! One of many lighter and pleasurable moments on our pilgrimage. [I hope Ms Antrim won!] We ended our time, as we'd begun, back in Belfast after spending our last evening in Ireland relaxing with Stephen at his cottage in Cranfield by the Mountains of Mourne. With two hours before our ferry departed we went to the Petals of Hope exhibition at Belfast's Waterfront Hall.

The visit to the exhibition was one of the highlights of our time and left a deep impression upon me that has further deepened my own and I trust the Community's heart and commitment to Ireland.

After the Omagh bombing in 1998 floral tributes were left for the people of the town from all over the world. The flowers had been collected and used in the artwork exhibition that featured hand made paper decorated with the flowers, petals and leaves. Under the guidance of a Christian textile designer many individuals and groups worked on the artworks. They are powerful reflections and tokens of their grieving and care. In some of the exhibits olive leaves sent from Nairobi, could be seen. Originating in Italy, children had sent the leaves as a symbol of love, support, friendship and prayer after the explosion at the American Embassy there. A missionary from Nairobi sent some of the leaves to Omagh with the same sentiments echoed. Their inclusion in the exhibits stand as a lasting testament to the thousands around the world who have stood with the people of Ireland in their prayers. I pray God, we as a Community continue to stand with the people of Ireland in our prayers and intercessions.

Seamus Heaney, the poet, dedicated the following words to the people of Omagh. They sum up our prayer and hope for Ireland:

*So hope for a great sea change  
on the far side of revenge  
Believe that a further shore is  
reachable from here  
Believe in miracles and cures and  
healing wells.*

NB For those who wish to have a copy of David McMillan's sermon which addresses some of the issues facing the people of Northern Ireland, please send a cheque for £3.50 [payable to: Northumbria Community Trust] to cover all costs. Also those who wish to increase their understanding of the situation in the North of Ireland should consider subscribing to *The Lion and the Lamb* published quarterly by ECONI. Contact ECONI Howard House, 1 Brunswick Street, Belfast, BT2 7GE.

## BEWARE OF THE ABBOT

Hugh Barnett



Your wine Father Abbot,  
is simply out of this world.

## FINANCE

Trevor Miller

A Companion of our Community has recently told me that she will soon be able to give the Community a substantial cash gift following an insurance pay out. She had been greatly taken by a leaflet she had just received from the Courage Trust which reported that an individual person had pledged a sum of money with one condition. It was that they would match the giving of others and more. So that for every £10 given by others this person would give a further £50. She asked whether or not we could do that with the wider Community. It was and is very tempting but my reply was that those who have a heart to give, be it £5, £50 or 50p will already have given without such an incentive. Perhaps I am wrong! In some ways it would be good to be wrong because what is abundantly clear is that we urgently need to increase our regular covenanted giving simply to live week by week, as well as receive the necessary resources to begin to pay off debts that have been with us since the early days of the Community's life. Her generosity will help us to begin to do this, but it remains our hope and dream to see this year as a year of Jubilee, so that we can begin a new year, a new decade, a new millennium debt free. If you can help in any way please contact the Finance Office at the Nether Springs.

*Each one should give what they have decided in their heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. II Corinthians 9:7*

## Reflections on a Community Group Weekend

Alun and Mary Brookfield of Swindon write

As a group, we had spent a weekend together at Nether Springs the previous year and everyone was keen to go back. Not even a 7-hour car journey could put us off! The Swindon Community Group attended a private led retreat at Nether Springs during March 1999. It was great to have fun and fellowship around the dining table, and to allow the peaceful atmosphere surrounding Hetton Hall to refresh us. The sessions were led by Trevor Miller under the title "Alone Together - what it means to be part of a dispersed community". We were reminded that what we believe shows itself in how we live; that where you are is where you belong; that the Christian faith is a journey without maps. Knowledge should lead to a teachable spirit; understanding to responding with insight; wisdom to seeing with discernment; and that we *are* the Northumbria Community, seeking to live the Rule even though we live 340 miles away. It was affirming to us to know that it doesn't matter whether or not anyone comes to the Mother House of the Community - we exist to seek God wherever we are. We were very pleased that the tides that weekend made it possible for us to worship at St Mary's on Holy Island on the Sunday morning, and that was an added bonus to our time there. We thoroughly recommend this type of weekend to all Community Groups - it really strengthens the bonds between the group itself, and between the group and the Mother House. On April 15th we celebrated our 3rd birthday as a Community Group (with plenty of wine and pizza!) and are glad to have one another's continual support on the journey. If any Caim readers live in or around the Swindon area, we would be very pleased to see you at our group meetings. They're always on the 15th of the month, whatever day of the week that falls on, at 7.30pm at 16 Fairholm Way, Upper Stratton, Swindon (01793 825658).

## BOOK AMNESTY

As we have many library books particularly from the reference section at Nether Springs currently unreturned, would it be possible for you to check whether or not you have overlooked any such books, and if so could you please return them. We would be very grateful.

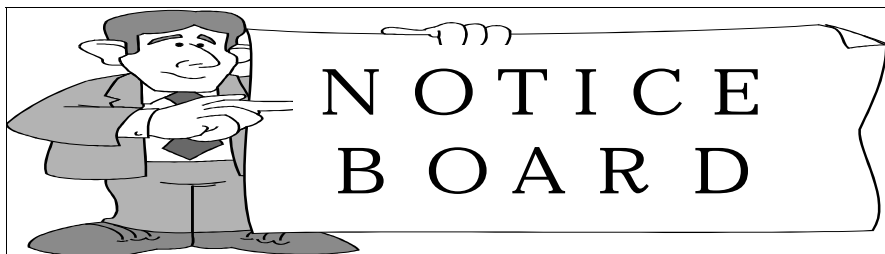
## The Telling Place at Greenbelt

Susie Minto

Greenbelt 99. Hot and steamy outside. Great for camping - but who stole the breeze? However, of much more import was what was happening inside to capture the imagination - and one 'inside' in particular: the storytelling tent which, once again, became nominated by those who flocked to it as the most compelling venue, not least aesthetically. No doubt, one could tell stories in a cardboard box or a bus shelter and soon have the listeners so absorbed they would forget where they were. But add a few hundred yards of flowing fabrics in gentle colours, weave them into a roof and walls, drop in a soft covering of furry carpeting, some 'peel me a grape' style cushions and a few zany chairs and you have much more than a space for people to hear and tell a few stories. It becomes a total experience of hearing, seeing, telling, listening but especially BEING. It is impossible to do justice here to the artistic creations of Pam Pott and her team - so you will have to take my word for it or ask to see the photos! It is also well nigh impossible to describe or



critique the spectrum of thought-provoking discussions, awesome telling extravaganzas - for example all of Esther and most of Mark - and inspiring workshops and opportunities for both tellers and listeners which were brought together into three days of stimulating activity under the Bible Society's partnership with the Northumbria Community in the Open Book project. There is something eternally compelling about sitting next to another human being and sharing a story and, as the millennium turns and many people ask many questions about how far information technology will take over our lives, my vote is securely in the camp of the storyteller. I want to retain all that is real and naturally creative in me and in you so that, together, we can listen and tell, teach and heal, encourage and excite through the power of story. If you haven't had a chance to experience this yet, find out from the Telling Place office at the Nether Springs or ask at your local library or arts centre where storytelling may be happening near you. Hearing is believing!



The notice board is more about persons than about ideas. It is an opportunity for Companions and Friends to write in to the Editor, with news snippets, prayer requests and updates of happenings across the Community family.

**John Hopper** of Dunfermline became the proud Grandfather of Aaron John in July.

**Natasha Rumientseva**, a Community Companion from St Petersburg, who is spending a second period of time at the Nether Springs until the end of September, is hoping to extend her stay in the UK until mid November. She has applied to the Simon Community in London which specialises in working with the young homeless and addicted. This will give Natasha invaluable experience of working in the inner city with people whose problems are similar to those of the many young people in St Petersburg.

**Ken and Norma Wise** of Newton Aycliffe have been able to arrange the gift of a car to the Nether Springs. Although it is very old (X registration, yes *that* old) it has a very low mileage and is generally in decent condition. It is very timely because the Mother House is in desperate need of reliable transport. Living in such an isolated place with no public transport at all, necessitates reliability above all. A good example of this is the fact that (often 2 or 3 times each week) people coming on retreat have to be picked up from and taken to Berwick Railway station, a double round trip of 64 miles each time. This is only one of the many transport tasks required each week. We could really do with a mini bus or a bigger car as well. Can you help?

**David and Corinne Pearson** and their family have felt it right to remain in the States a further two years, to continue David's employment. They live in Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Norman Lea** of Toronto, who has been studying Christian Communities

for 20 years, was able to represent the Community at a Conference on Iona in late August. The conference considered Base Christian Communities in Eastern Europe (and what we can learn from them) with representatives from 8 countries as well as the UK. Those interested in the output from the Conference can write to Norman c/o the Community Office.

#### PRAYER CORNER

**Robin and Karen Noad** of Hetton Hall have had to fly back to the States in early September having received news of the sudden death of Karen's younger sister Sheri in tragic circumstances. Pray for much wisdom in this situation, especially about the future of Sheri's children aged 14 and 10.

Pray for God's peace and comfort for **Justin and Joy Dunne** of Wakefield who are grieving the loss of their first baby Hannah who was still born.

Pray for those known to you who are having to undergo intensive tests, radiotherapy and other long term treatment. We think especially of **Bill Whitfield** of Wooler and **Sally Pringle** of Farnham and thank God for positive results. Pray also for **Kitty Hay** of Andover at this time.

#### INTERCESSORS

If you wish to know more about how you can be part of this vital ministry, please telephone: **Norma Wise** of Newton Aycliffe on: 01325 312930.

#### What's on?

##### Some happenings

**Sat Oct 9<sup>th</sup>** – Celtic Spirituality Day at St Bede's Centre York.

**Sat Oct 16<sup>th</sup>** – Youth Worship Day with Leicester Diocese

**Sat Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Storytelling Workshop at Manchester. Nazarene college.

**Sat Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>** Community Gathering at Manchester (Venue to be confirmed)

**Sun 7<sup>th</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> Nov** – Community Team at Stocksfield.

**Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Nov** – Celtic Fire at Hexham

**Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Nov**- Storytelling workshop at Bath.

**Sat 8<sup>th</sup> January 2000**, Community Gathering at Bradford. St Christophers C of E, Holmewood. 11am to 4pm.

For further information about these and other events please contact the Community office. On 01289 388235.

#### Community Groups

If you would like more information about Community Groups; please contact: Norma Charlton at 84, Kells Lane, Low Fell, Gateshead NE9 5XY.

#### GIFT OF BOOKS

We are delighted to have received the gift of some excellent books for the library at Nether Springs from Community Companion Iain Collins of York. Good books are always gratefully received for the library and for the research work we are currently undertaking. Pray for Iain and his family as he prepares to go home to be with the Lord following his battle with cancer over the last few years.

#### MAILING LIST REVIEW

*We now send CAIM to 1300 people, all of whom have taken the initiative over the years to ask to be placed on our mailing list. We realise that it is a fact of life that for many an initial interest is not maintained, largely because of commitments to other aspects of the Lord's work. If you are in this category it would greatly help us in so many ways, if you asked to be taken off the mailing list. A note or a phone call to the Community Office would suffice. Thanks to all who have taken the time to do this.*

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