

CAIM

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



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

Inside this issue:

Success and Failure	1
---------------------	---

Community Weekend in France	4
-----------------------------	---

Gorsley Festival	4
------------------	---

Writing your spiritual autobiography	5
--------------------------------------	---

Kathryn Shanks	6
----------------	---

'Other Houses'	7
----------------	---

Easter Workshop	7
-----------------	---

Hexham to Holy Island	8
-----------------------	---

Book Review	9
-------------	---

Hebridean sailing	10
-------------------	----

Community Group news	11
----------------------	----

The 'newsy bit'	12
-----------------	----

Trevor Miller challenges our perception of Success and Failure

As I write, the Beijing Olympics have now concluded and Team GB has won an outstanding 47 medals (19 Gold, 13 Silver, and 15 Bronze) the best performance for 100 years. Amazingly they have even gone beyond the target set by the UK Minister for Sport Gerry Sutcliffe in his announcement just prior to Beijing. 'We are looking forward to meeting the UK Sport target of 41 medals.' 'We have the best prepared British team we've ever had, the investment has gone in and it's time for delivery'.



However, as thoughts now turn to London 2012, those in the know are telling us that since it was mostly sailing and cycling that brought success, e.g. track and field athletics missed their target, there will be a 'No compromise funding policy' with relative expenditure based on success breeding success. And yet isn't this target culture foreign to the Olympic spirit? Isn't it true that this arbitrary approach to what constitutes success and failure is misleading in that it does not tell the whole story?

"...the essential thing is not to have won, but to have fought well".

Team GB included more than the medal winners. What about the vast majority of Team Members who didn't win medals? Of course we

want to do well but isn't it the taking part that is important. The founder of the modern Olympics, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, said at the London Games 100 years ago that "the important thing in life is not the victory but the contest; the essential thing is not to have won but to have fought well".



All this reminded me of the previous Minister for Sport Richard Caborn when he said that he hoped that the multi-millions to be spent on the 2012 London Games would be justified because he didn't want 'to see another Eddie the Eagle figure going down the slopes'. Recall Eddie Edwards, Olympic Ski Jumper in 1988, he wasn't very good at all, and

predictably came last but still broke the British record! He exemplified the Olympic spirit more than any Gold medal winner, surely! Isn't it the taking part? Isn't it getting a PB (Personal Best) in what ever event you're in? Apparently not – it's all about winning, they say.

Continued on page 3

The Cuddy Duck—now online!



It's now possible to purchase items from The Cuddy Duck shop in Wooler, online.

Crafts and art work can now be sent to your door - when we work out how to package them that is!

We are adding to the site and changing stock all the time - look us up at www.thecuddyduck.co.uk



Clare Hunt sent this note:

Music



Following the response to last issue's mention of gathering to play Community music, a date to gather has been arranged for Saturday 22 November. It will be at Holy Trinity Church, Kimberley, Nottingham which is only 5 minutes from Junction 26 of the M1. We will meet from 10-4 and please bring a packed lunch. For those of you travelling some distance overnight hospitality may be possible. This is an opportunity to sing and play some of the songs from the early years of Community and a chance to learn some of the new, unpublished songs which are welling up.

For further information please contact Clare Hunt, either in the forum or at robandclare@hunt123.fsworld.co.uk

Community Sailing Adventure around the Hebridean Islands of Scotland, 2009

Sunday 5th to Friday 10th July, 2009

For further details and to book a place please contact jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org or send an SAE to the Community Office marked 'FAO Jean Watson, Sailing'. Cost £440 per person, includes everything except travel to the marina and any accommodation required the night before departure.



Welcome to the Autumn edition of Caim!

Reports and reflections from around the Community, advance notice of all kinds of things coming up in 2009, details of the Nether Springs programme, lots of news, lots to pray about... and even an article about our summer's preoccupation, the weather! It's all in this edition of Caim!

Plenty to keep you occupied if your evenings are drawing in just like ours...

Enjoy this edition of Caim.

Jeff & Ingrid

A date for your diary:

Northumbrian Week in Prague -

Sunday 15th to Sunday 22nd March, 2009

Get the date in your diary now! We are going back to Prague for a Northumbrian Week with our partners and friends at the International Baptist Theological Seminary where we will also have the opportunity for a European Gathering. More details to follow in the next edition of Caim. Book early to ensure a place, and cheap flights.



Continued from Page 1

I remember watching an interview with David Coulthard, when the Scottish Formula 1 racing driver was challenging Michael Schumacher for the title. When Schumacher won, Coulthard was asked if he was going to fight on for 2nd place. He shrugged and said dismissively that as far as he was concerned, 2nd was simply the first of the losers and so he wasn't bothered where he finished.

That's an unhelpful attitude, demeaning even, because it labels everyone as losers despite their best efforts. Yet this insidious spirit of success is spreading, ruining our enjoyment. Silver medal = loser; Oscar nominee = loser. Short listed for the Booker Prize = loser.



Thank God, this is not the attitude of a follower of Jesus. Thank God that he cares more about aspiration and intention than he does about competence. Jesus loved the

failures, the marginalized and sinful people, because he saw their hearts desire, what they longed to become, and he loved them for it. Those who thought they had arrived and knew it all (Scribes and Pharisees) were given short shrift, and those who persevered despite failings and weaknesses, he gave the Kingdom of Heaven!

...in the spiritual life – there is no such thing as a loser, especially if you're seeking a personal best each day.

I used to love watching my son Jonny play football when he was younger. He lacked coordination and could be a little clumsy but he was passionate and competitive always giving 100% effort. There was joy and pleasure at taking part and as he persevered he got better and better. In his usual brilliantly insightful way G.K. Chesterton captured this when he said, 'If a thing is worth doing; it's worth doing..... badly!' because the more you do a thing, the better you get at it, as practice makes perfect!



It's the same in the spiritual life – there is no such thing as a loser, especially if you're seeking a personal best each day. As Children's Letters to God puts it: 'Dear God, I'm doing the best I can, love Frank, aged 6'. You can't do better than your best and of course we are not in

competition with each other, there are no winners and losers just participants in the game of life.

I was 62 this year and it certainly makes you think about things – Has my life been a failure? Has my life been a success? The answer, I guess, is both! I've known many failures but I've also known some success but it's so much more than that because I'm still taking part, still running my leg of the race, still involved in God's plan for me and at the end of the race, I'm a guaranteed winner because of the grace of God. You are too, for as Phil 3:13-14 'But one

Jesus loved the failures, the marginalized and sinful people, because he saw their hearts desire, what they longed to become, and he loved them for it.

thing I do; forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus'. For the followers of Jesus, everyone's a winner!

Jesus does not make impossible demands or place unreachable targets before us. 'My yoke is easy,' he said, 'My burden is light.' That's because he invites us to bear fruit - such as love, joy, peace, patience - instead of aiming religiously for targets we may never actually hit. It's liberating to think that our lives may, ultimately, not be judged by the gold medals, exam results, or work objectives we've achieved - but by the way we've tried to achieve them - a truer measure of who we really are.

So 'teach us dear Lord to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.' Wisdom to keep on keeping on, aiming for a personal best each day, yet always aware that we can always return to the ultimate symbol of failure – the Cross!

Trevor Miller

Community Prayer Guide

For those who are compiling our community Prayer Guide, it is really helpful to have requests and suggestions for prayer - for people, places and initiatives that are connected with the Community.

Send them to the Office, or by email to prayerguide@northumbriacommunity.org

Ingrid Cumming's contribution to Caim - as half of the editorial duo - is immense. But we don't often get to actually read any of her words...

Not at the same table, but we eat together

Not in the same house, but we live together

Not in the same chapel, but we pray together

These words were shared with the Community some years ago by Victor van Heusden of De Spil in the Netherlands. At the time I found them extremely moving but somehow the truth of them was only brought home to me on a recent trip to France!



Norman and I were asked to go to L'Abri a Suvigny in Normandy to share some of the Community's history and ethos with

those who would be gathered for a weekend there. Having got out our French dictionary and remembered a few phrases we found that most of those gathered were either English or Dutch.

If you have read Caim over recent years you will know that L'Abri a Suvigny (belonging to Jane and Andrew

Perkins) is a long-term project with a vision of being Northumbria Community in France. This is the third year when a group of Dutch folk have given a week of their holiday to work extremely hard in helping Andrew and Jane transform the buildings and grounds into a lovely home and place of hospitality.



We were privileged to share with them in a few days of good fellowship, good food and much laughter. I wanted to understand what kept them coming back and when I asked these were some of the answers I received: "The work they are doing is important and I want to support them." "What brings me back each year is the fellowship, the fellowship, the fellowship And the work." "It is a privilege to serve and I want to help them achieve their dream."

There are many memories to treasure from those few days: three way conversations in Dutch, French and English; sitting around the bonfire drinking wine and sharing matters of faith; BBQs in the rain; the sense of a united purpose, the joy in seeing the work take shape; the sound of guitar, violin and accordion in harmony.

So, to return to the words I quoted at the beginning, having eaten at the same table, lived in the same house and prayed in the same chapel – I am very conscious, now that we are apart, of how together we are.

Ingrid Cumming

Roy told us about a lovely weekend he shared with others at

Gorsley Festival

Several Companions and Friends of the Community were involved recently at the Gorsley Festival in Herefordshire over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Gorsley is a beautiful place nestling on the borders of the Wye Valley. The story of how God has transformed a tiny little village chapel into a large church with a remarkable ministry throughout the region and beyond is inspirational. The village around the chapel is transformed for the Festival, which brings people of all ages and backgrounds who come together to participate in what is quite an exciting venture. The Flower Festival attracted several thousand people and over 500 camped

for the weekend and participated in the programme alongside the flower exhibition.

Robin & Carol Moulton were administrators of the event. Roy Searle did some of the Bible studies with R. T. Kendall on the life of Joseph (slightly different approaches and perspectives!) Duncan MacLean, together with Roy, led a series of workshops.

It provided a lovely opportunity for Companions and Friends in the Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Cheltenham areas to meet together. Copies of Roy's and Duncan's talks are available from ReeLife Recordings www.reelife.org.uk, telephone 01524 811282

Without wishing to seem rude, when we saw Annie Hewson at Nether Springs, we asked her 'what are you doing here?'

Writing your Spiritual Autobiography

Phew! what does that mean? is it about keeping a journal? is it about putting down in some way your life story? These were some of the questions in my head as I arrived at Berwick station on a wet, windy day, to be collected with two other guests.

In fact it was neither - it was an entirely different approach in which God - not yourself - is at the centre of reflections on your life story.

Catherine Askew gave a framework which began with earliest memories and, a little bit at a time, supports were put in place so that people could feel safe to explore what might have been difficult times as well as joyful times, involving sessions sharing in small groups (where we were asked to listen and not interrupt!) as much or as little as you wished.

In all of this, the monastic day underpinned what was happening - giving time and space to bring before God what He needed to show to us. Throughout the time there was real evidence of vulnerability as people shared their life events, some very painful...there was also at times irrepressible joy as if the Lord was singing "See I make all things new I bring light and life to dark places of woundedness".

It seemed we travelled great distances on our interior journey, alone and together. On the last day we were

asked what we would take away from the weekend.. one lady said she now realised that yes, it was a serious business to follow God - but He was also a God of joy! I had learned that writing in this way is different to journaling, because I am inviting Jesus, the Word made flesh, to put flesh on the bones of my words. Being the living word, he can bring life to even words of sadness so that even difficult times He can transform, taking the sting away.. so that something new can be birthed and I can be freed from the past!

A very beautiful quote which all the group took to heart was "We cannot live our lives constantly looking back, listening back, lest we be turned into pillars of longing and regret.. but to live without listening at all is to live deaf to the fullness of the music." (Frederick Buechner)



Through my experience of this weekend I am learning to open my ears to the music of my story knowing all our stories are part of the greater story of God. It was a

privilege to be there, and to see the transforming presence of Christ at work, to see the lightness and joy in the faces at Sunday communion. *Annie Hewson*

If you would like to try this retreat for yourself, you can book now for 16-18 January 2009



New Nether Springs Programme

With this issue you should also have received the new programme for Nether Springs for 2009. Please have a good look through, there are some new retreats and some being repeated by popular demand. One of the repeats is '**Establish thou the work of our hands**' in September. This is an opportunity to come and help with much needed work in the house and grounds. No previous experience is necessary although gardeners and DIY enthusiasts will be very welcome as well. Please think

about whether this is something you could help with as we would love to have a houseful of willing volunteers!

New this time is **Training in the Monastic Way**. This is a series of led retreats highlighting different aspects of monastic spirituality and the inner journey that lie at the heart of the Northumbria Community ethos. They will take place on a Monday-Thursday each time and we hope that those attending will be able to stay on until the Sunday of that week, giving a chance to reflect further on the subject and to join more fully in the life of the Mother House.

After Kathryn Shanks had visited the Nether Springs, she sent us some of her reflections:

So I'm finally back in the States, trying to readjust to America and figure out how on earth to share my experience in England. I think this is not unusual for those who travel, but the particularly tricky thing about this trip



was that it was so...well, ordinary. At the Northumbria Community's mother house, Hetton Hall, I lived an incredibly routine life made up of

praying the daily offices, eating meals, cleaning the house, making soup for lunch, chopping firewood, digging in the garden, and enjoying other people over numerous cups of tea.

When I first arrived, everything seemed exciting, of course, but as I became acclimated and integrated into the community's life, my experience went from being a retreat to being regular life. I had some theological epiphanies, some interesting thoughts, but when I look back and attempt to point to some great learning or dramatic change, I see none. This is not because I failed to learn while I was at Hetton, but because my education was so organic in nature.

Life moves at a slower, more livable pace in the community, which allows for the heart to grow into a gentleness with itself. Here I encountered one of the most profound expressions of the Christian faith I have ever known, in part because of the kind theology associated with Celtic Christianity, but more importantly because that theology was our way of life. I have always valued deep theological and philosophical discussion, but after being at Northumbria for a while, I began to recognize a tendency of many western Christians to talk about our faith until it becomes dry and lifeless and our faith consists of little more than empty debate.

The Celtic tradition values silence as the place where we encounter Life itself, not as intellectual beings, but as spiritual ones. John O'Donohue writes that we have developed "an obsession with spiritual programs" in which we perceive ourselves as traveling along a spiritual journey in a linear fashion. Each stage of this journey has particular characteristics, and once we have completed one, we move on to the next phase. I am beginning to realize how dependent my faith has become on such programming, in which every moment is viewed only in light of its potential to get me where I want to be in life. What about now?

If there is anything that I have "learned" at the Northumbria Community, it is this: there is no program; our faith is not made up of our plans or our intentions, but of the life that is present and only available to us now. Our

...We will be confused by the unknown dark places within us, but we will also be nourished by that same shadowy mystery.

life is surrounded in mystery, and we cannot see or understand it all. We will make mistakes. And that is okay. We will be confused by the unknown dark places within us, but we will also be nourished by that same shadowy mystery. Life is not made up of our trying to be or to do, but simply of our being there to live it, in all its joy and sadness. As Rainer Maria Rilke says, "be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer." This has been my learning, to live life in all its beauty and uncertainty. And perhaps, in a slow and unspectacular sort of way, I am also beginning to grow into some of the answers.

I'm glad to be back with you all.

Kathryn Shanks

Lee Abbey

In recent years we've made good connections with the Lee Abbey Community.

Duncan & Lesley MacLean have been serving the (Lee Abbey) community in Devon on the pastoral team as well

as hosting and leading some of the programmes.

Roy Searle is returning to lead a week at Lee Abbey next year, 14th - 19th September 2009, titled **Re-habiting the Church'**.

Join him and explore how new monastic spirituality can shape and inform faith, the church and society in the 21st century. It's a great opportunity for those connected with our own Community to spend a week in beautiful Devon.

Roy Searle invites us to
Watch this space!



One of the exciting things that has emerged within the Community in recent years is that of "**Other Houses**" - local expressions, formed by people in their own place, yet linked with our Community. It has been wonderful to see among others the establishment of the Community House of Prayer and Hospitality, **L'Abri à Suvigny** in Normandy, France (left) together with some exciting new possibilities at **Bridge House, Shillingford** (below, left) near Oxford, and the **House of Azar** near the Welsh border in Shropshire (below, centre and right.)

These different expressions of Community are exciting developments, and together with a burgeoning creativity and some exciting initiatives are helping to shape something of the future of the Community and its vocational expression to culture. Watch this space!



A JOURNEY WITH CUTHBERT

A chance to explore the story of Cuthbert and make a guided pilgrimage along Cuthbert's Way next year (1-8 May 2009). It will be based on two centres, firstly at Melrose and then at Hetton Hall. (Ability to walk about 15 miles a day is essential.) The cost is £320 including board and lodging, packed lunches, transportation at start and finish points, knowledgeable guides and beautiful scenery. This is not an ordinary walking holiday, but an opportunity to make an inner

journey whilst walking the outer journey. Please contact the office for further details and a booking form. If you're undecided then read (again) the write up from this year's expedition in the last issue of Caim!



Easter Workshop next year will be held in Evesham, Worcestershire from **Thursday 9th to Monday 13th April**.

2009 will see the town of Evesham celebrating 1300 years since the founding of its abbey, of which little stonework remains, yet there is plenty that points to, and inspires us to find our place within, God's Story.

As we plan, we pray that the intertwining of the histories of Evesham and Northumbria will be echoed in this Easter workshop, to be shared alongside the churches and community of Evesham.

You may have seen news reports three weeks or so ago, when Northumberland was badly affected by flooding. Record amounts of rainfall fell in a 24 hour period.



The chaos in Morpeth was widely reported on national news bulletins, but what wasn't mentioned at all was the situation further north, in and around Wooler and Milfield Plain. Our intrepid reporter Roy Searle, putting his duty to report for Caim readers ahead of his own personal safety, went out with his camera, and captured these dramatic images of the countryside - water as far as the eye can see. Sorry, they're rather grey - but then so was the day!

The chaos in Morpeth was widely reported on national news bulletins, but what wasn't mentioned at all was the situation further north, in and around Wooler and Milfield Plain. Our intrepid reporter Roy Searle, putting his duty



David Pott writes about

A Pilgrimage from Hexham to Holy Island

In a book called “Walking the Pilgrim Ways” which is in the library at Nether Springs, I found the description of a route from Hexham to Holy Island which also passes Heavenfield, Old Bewick and Cuthbert’s Cave. For most of the way it keeps close to an old Roman Road from Hadrian’s Wall to Berwick which is for some unknown reason called the Devil’s Causeway. During my time at Hetton Hall the best plan turned out to be to take three days away from my duties, traveling to Hexham and allowing two and a half days to walk to Hetton, and then to complete the pilgrimage from the Nether Springs to Holy Island on my next day off.

Two days before I set out, I heard Roy tell the story of an experience he had with Franciscan Brother Ronald who was taking him on a journey to Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. Roy asked where they would be staying and Brother Ronald said that God would provide something for them when they got there! Sure enough Brother Ronald knocked on a door which he felt was the right door and hospitality was provided for both of them! I had felt that I should go out on this pilgrimage without arranging accommodation beforehand and this story encouraged me to follow that prompting.



On one of those glorious February mornings my dog Ceildh and I went by train to Hexham. I went to the Abbey where the pilgrimage starts, committed my way to God and was on my way by midday. I soon got far too warm

going up hill towards Hadrian’s Wall. It was good to stop and have my sandwiches at St Oswald’s Chapel just by the wall where the Battle of Heavenfield was fought. After a few miles east along the wall, my general direction for the whole walk was north north east.

As dusk fell after a glorious sunset I approached a cluster of houses called Ingoe. I had this conviction that I should especially pray for this place and that something would open up for me there. I knocked on a couple of doors to make enquiries and people were very friendly but didn’t know anyone who did B&B. Then someone told me there was a B&B about 4 miles on and as it was a bright moonlit night I thought I’d walk on to it. But then I had a prompting to knock on one specific door in a terrace of houses. A charming young couple opened up and offered me a cup of tea as they looked on the internet for more B&B information. Then another person came who was taking her own daughter and the daughter of the young couple to Brownies and when they told her about me, she quickly said I could stay at their house! She (Kim) went off to Brownies and I went to their home about five minutes walk away and met husband Mike and a second daughter Hannah. He soon told me that he and his wife had become

Christians about 5 years previously. They were really special people!

What an amazingly beautiful county Northumberland is! This was not the National Park or the famous coastline, but it’s all about space and quietness. It’s mostly farmland with a few widely scattered villages and hamlets, but it is great for solitude – much better than official routes. Between Hadrian’s Wall and Chillingham (about 50 miles) I didn’t meet one other person walking! Three farmers stopped their vehicles to chat to me - delightful people! There were houses in dramatic locations on little sandstone bluffs and there were several estates with lovely homes and parkland.

A memorable moment was crossing the Hart Burn. The pilgrim guide book had a photo of the ford in summer with plenty of stepping stones, but they were not there in early February after a wet January! I took off my boots and socks and waded through. It was cold – very cold! But after drying my feet and getting them back in my socks and boots, what a sensation of tingling energy – I went up the next hill at quite a pace!

On my second day Nancy Hammond very kindly arranged excellent hospitality with community members Rob & Catherine Davies. They’d just put a notice in Caim to say that they wanted to give hospitality to any community members passing by and I was the first to do so!

Ceildh was fantastic! She is over 10 years old and did really well. Most of the time she plodded faithfully two paces behind me. We had one nasty fright. We were walking through a field of all white cows and they seemed calm and uninterested, but then the biggest one started to come with head down towards her. I stood and shouted at it, but Ceildh suddenly bolted away and the cow gave hot pursuit. Fortunately it tripped in some soft ground and Ceildh got away and under the gate where we were headed. The scariest moment I have known with Ceildh. As you can imagine, she slept pretty solid every night!

I reached the Nether Springs at the end of the third day in time for the evening meal. On the following



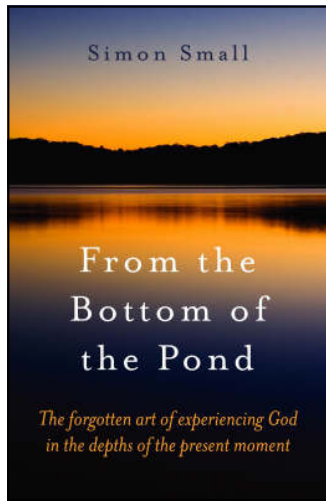
Friday week I set out again on the first day of strong winds. It was an exhilarating experience to actually be blown up the hill near Cuthbert’s Cave and to then struggle to

keep on track as I headed against the gale for the shelter of Shiellow Wood. On reaching the Causeway the wind was again pushing me on. All this was an appropriate atmosphere to meditate on the power of the Holy Spirit! So I reached the destination and as the tide came in, I spent the afternoon walking around my favourite places and enjoying the warm hospitality of Ray Simpson and the Raine family.

It was altogether a memorable time and after all those Lifeline Expedition journeys with so many people it was good to just be walking with God in the great beauty of one of His masterpieces – Northumberland! *David Pott*

We asked Peter Bone to tell us about a book he was reading

Do you long to be a better contemplative, more able to open yourself to the mystery of God in the stillness?



Whenever I have shared my own struggles and inability with others they generally indicate that they tend to flounder as well. To simply bring ourselves before God, still and open, sounds like it should be easiest thing in the world! But we commonly find that this is not so!

That's why those with the rare gift of talking and

writing about this type of prayer are so important to us. They cannot be with us as we sit before God, but their voice and their wisdom cheer us on from the sidelines, offering encouragement and re-assurance, especially when distraction and agitation is all we seem to find.

One such contemporary voice is Simon Small. Initially his book title, "From The Bottom of The Pond," sounds as if it offers us insight into the life of tadpoles and frogs, but the subtitle makes things clearer: "The Forgotten Art of Experiencing God in the Depths of the Present Moment." This is a profoundly helpful book, a gentle book, in which Simon Small shows us the terrain and draws us assuredly along. His first words are telling; "Contemplative prayer is the art of paying attention to

what is. To pay profound attention to reality is prayer, because to enter the depths of this moment is to encounter God. There is always only now. It is the only place where God may be found."

Simon Small describes the experiences of real people and there is an integrity about what he says and a realism too: "The contemplative can quickly become demoralized. The first reaction is to think that something has gone wrong; it should not be this way and perhaps, even, God is to blame."

The author offers so much which obviously comes from his own experience; this is not a cobbling together from the great writings of others. And as a reader I never felt imposed upon or manipulated, just compassionately offered glimpses, anecdotes, stories and wisdom.

This is a book which has immediate appeal for, as the publishers blurb says, it is "a book about knowing God. It is for those for whom just believing (or not believing) is no longer enough." It shows us a place to rest with God and to put aside, perhaps just for a while, our agonising, organising, and busyness. There is encouragement to be in the present and not, as RS Thomas says, "hurrying on to a receding future, nor hankering after an imagined past." It is accessible whatever your spiritual tradition (or none) and delightfully short. Its 80 pages will not take you long to read, but having read the book through once you'll maybe feel you want to read again, dwelling and reflecting on the wisdom it contains.

Small, Simon. *From the Bottom of the Pond: The Forgotten Art of Experiencing God in the Depths of the Present Moment*.

O Books, 2007. £7-99. ISBN 9781-84694-0668

Available from Cloisters

Peter Bone

Incarnational Mission: A day conference with Michael Frost

Thursday 9 October 2008 CMS Centre, Oxford
Urban Expression and the Incarnate Network invite you to join a day conference with Michael Frost to explore the implications of incarnational mission.

Michael is the vice-principal of Morling College, Sydney, and is involved in an emerging missional community in the city known as smallboatbigsea. He is also the co-author with Alan Hirsch of *The Shaping of Things to Come* and the author of *Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture*. Michael has interacted extensively with emerging churches in North America and the UK but brings a distinctive Australian perspective to discussions about mission and church today.

Michael has strongly advocated an incarnational approach to mission, rather than the attractional approach that characterised mission in the Christendom era. But what

does this mean in practice? How different is this? Are there any dangers in this approach? Is it sustainable?

The day conference will run from 10.00 until 4.30. We will ask Michael to speak twice and give the rest of the time over to interaction and discussion around the two main themes. There will also be an opportunity for an open question/answer session to explore other issues.

Our hosts will be the Church Mission Society at their new centre in Oxford. The address is CMS, Watlington Road, Oxford OX4 6BZ.

The cost for the day will be £20 (including lunch) or £15 (unwaged).

A booking form is obtainable from the Community website. Any queries, please contact Stuart Murray Williams: stuart@murraywilliams.co.uk

Sailing around the Hebrides

As the intrepid sailors set out for uncharted waters (well, almost...) we asked them to take turns in writing an entry in the 'Journal' for Caim...

Saturday 19th July

"Team Seventh Wave 08 - Joy Dunne, Helen Rengert, Michael & Sarah Parry, Johannes Borger and Jean Watson" commenced bonding with pre-dinner drinks at pub in Connel ... and showed commitment to the coming venture by sharing a starter of oysters (a new experience for 4/6 of us!) All having successfully completed the first "Sea-Tucker-Trial" we continued to enjoy our first (anointing) meal together at The Oyster Inn, with sea view and sunset included. A comfortable night's stay at our B&B, and a hearty breakfast meant we were ready for action the following morning ...

Sunday 20th July

The beauty of the West Coast grew as we meandered around the Lochs from Oban to 'Croabh Haven', rich greens and lack of human habitation made for a true peace. Our excitement grew as we reached the Haven and found The Seventh Wave – it is really happening – we are about to go on a sailing boat with proper sails and ropes and all. After a rich and filling soup we set sail (oops and a briefing with all the risks and safety tips!!)

True peace now took over gentle sway of the boat until we hit a more blustery patch and had fun sliding on the seats. The coast line is spectacular with sun streaming onto the hills and sea to reflect nature more vividly. Moored at Craignish with first sighting of the 'Paps' of Jura.



Monday 21st July

Much wildlife spotting today. The sightings of one shag and one possible puffin were eclipsed by the sight of a rare orange capped sunbather on the main deck. We were

amazed to see it accompanied by a lesser multi-coloured striped variety. Very few of these undomesticated. An unprecedented plague of Tunnocks Teacakes in the lounge completed today's sightings. The ladies of the crew appealed to the gentleman present to rescue the pair of teacakes nesting under the table. Trust we will survive wet night in Loch Aline in Morvern.

Tuesday 22nd July

Sailed from Loch Aline to Tobermory, beautiful tacking up the side of Mull. Tobermory's joy was the new showers as we relaxed in the water the 'squeals of delight' filled the room, much cleansing was had. A quick potter around the colourful shops and back to the boat for more sailing. As

it poured with rain 'ice cream' was brought back to the boat.

Mist and rain made the land invisible but the sight of basking shark was a real treat. As the wind died we motored past Mull around the island towards Staffa. Then out popped the sun for a magnificent view of Fingal's Cave – spell-binding. Large columns of rock temple-like with round rocks on top like bubbles with grass to top. Waves lashed against them. Moored in Loch Na Lathaich.



Wednesday 23rd July

Once again found ourselves against the wind and therefore 'motor-sailing' with Iona our first destination. We were treated to the wonderful sight of not one or two but four dolphins playing around our boat for several minutes as we approached the island. We made the fastest-ever pilgrimage to the Nunnery Ruins and Abbey, most of us agreeing that we would one day love to come and spend much longer in this special place. We were "waved off" by a very large seal and the four dolphins once again!

After lunch we continued on to Jura, spotting an enormous basking shark in the sea plus several seals on the rocks of West Lock Tarbert where an impromptu birthday party was thrown (or 'thrown together') for Jean. Merriment continued as the sun eventually set, with silly card games and 'blow football' using a cheesy puff!! In the midst of the extreme hilarity, however, the beauty and tranquillity of our surroundings was not lost.

Thursday 24th July

Soaking up the tranquillity of Loch Tarbert over breakfast and sighting deer on ridge of hills – seals in lock and on rocks – sailing into open ocean, up coast of Jura – spectacularly beautiful cliffs, beaches, waterfalls. Gulf of Corryvreckan – whirlpools – 14-15 knots with tide pushing us through ... to be met by tranquillity of Sound of Jura – water like glass and warm breezes ... warm air... layers off, soaking up the sun at last!!

"Silent loveliness surrounds
Peace, thankfulness as blessings abound.
Warm air breathing life onto tired bodies
Souls refreshed in the abundance of beauty.
Forces of nature, powerful & strong
Where currents clash and Corryvreckan feared
Give way to tranquillity ..."

See page 5 for details of next year's trip!

Community Group news

The Exeter Northumbria Community Group started nearly five years ago, following a regional meeting at South Street Baptist Church, when Roy was the speaker. There were about 80 people present and two groups came into being - one in Exeter and the other in Chard. The Exeter Group consists of about 15 people and it includes Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists and Methodists. We meet on the second Friday of the month at our home, Poustinia, where we have a small chapel. We gather at 7.30 and begin with the Evening Office, following this with a buffet meal and then have a time of discussion and prayer ending the evening with Compline.



When we first came together our discussions focussed on the Rule and what Availability and Vulnerability meant for us which lead naturally to folk sharing their own personal journey of faith. It is in this context that we have shared each others concerns and generally supported each other.

We are a mixed bunch as is indicated by our denominational backgrounds, and some members have had a difficult time in discovering a faith that they can really call their own. When we first met, the majority of the group members were retired, but that has changed with people at work joining the group and making a vital contribution. What we do have in common is the firm belief that the Group and the Community provide a basis of belief that we find relevant and helpful and which enables us to be more enthusiastic members of the local church.

Celtic Daily Prayer is an important part of our daily lives and we appreciate its discipline, especially when we are together. The Chapel is the focal point for our worship, in many ways reminding us of Nether Springs, and is used for Quiet Days and Personal Retreats. Though Poustinia is the base of the Exeter Northumbria Community Group we would like it to have a wider use and it is available for small groups of around 15.

We may be a long way from Northumberland, but we're glad to be a 'hub' of the Community in the South West!

Elizabeth and Peter Webb

Over the last few years, Roy Searle has formed friendship and links with some of the black led churches in London, and particularly with his friend Kingsley Appiagyei at Trinity Church in London.

Celtic and African spirituality - a potent mix - different yet complementary! The network of Ghanaian churches and their planting the gospel and churches across London and throughout other parts of Europe and Africa is remarkable.



We are asked to pray as a Community for Kingsley as he becomes President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain

next year and for the Orphanage Hope Centre that Trinity Church have established in Ghana. For more information have a look at their website: www.trinitybaptist.org.uk.

One of their very many talented musicians, Caleb Alalade is hoping to meet up with our own Community musicians in Northumbria to share and possibly do some work together.

Something to read?

Ian Stackhouse - Senior Minister of the Millmead Centre in Guildford has written a book which is to be highly commended.

'The Day is Yours - Slow Spirituality in a Fast Moving World', published by Paternoster is available through Cloisters

And so is **Richard Foster's** new book, **'Life With God - Reading the Bible for Spiritual Transformation'** published by Harper Collins.

Companions **Paul and Sally Nash** together with Jo Pimlott have written an excellent book, **'Skills for Collaborative Ministry'** published by SPCK. Sally is Director of the Midlands Centre for Youth Ministry. Paul is a tutor at the Midlands Centre, and Senior Chaplain at Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Another book to commend is **'The life and Work of a Priest'**, published by SPCK written by our friend and Anglican Community Visitor, **John Pritchard**, Bishop of Oxford.

All these titles are available through Cloisters, our trading company.

The newsy bit



Just a note to say that Brian McLaren is in Edinburgh on 6 December, in case any NC folk are interested. See <http://www.brianmclaren.2getherscotland.org/>

Chris Sunderland, someone we have worked with for many years - in The Telling Place and more recently in the creative 'think tank' Metavista - has established EarthAbbey, 'a movement of people encouraging one another to live more in tune with the earth'. Visit www.earthabbey.com

Joshua Searle married **Annie Ormsbee** on Saturday 20th September, and summer arrived for the occasion...



We rejoice with **David Dunlop and his family** as

they move from Ballynahinch to Belfast where David takes up his appointment as Pastor of the church in Windsor at the beginning of December.

Encouraging Christian Growth in Northumberland have an autumn conference at which Roy Searle is speaking. It's on Saturday 11th October from 1- 7.30pm at King Edward VI High School, Morpeth, For further information have a look at their website - www.ecg-northumberland.co.uk

Community Gathering at Wye in Kent, on Saturday, 28th February, 2008 - further details in next edition of Caim

Chris Edmondson has become the Bishop of Bolton. We pray for him, and Susan, that in this new chapter in their lives and in their returning North they may know God's grace and encouragement.



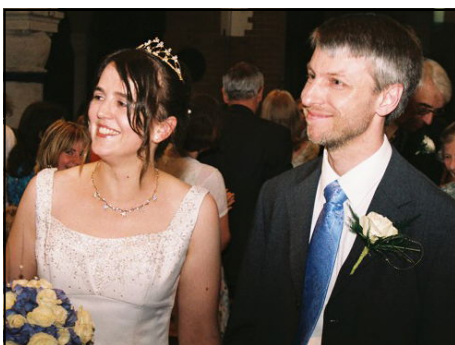
We also pray for **David Rowe and his family** as they move from parish ministry in Nottingham to take up the task of leading the community at Lee Abbey.



This is a season of major review and transition in a number of areas of Community life, and we ask you to pray for wisdom and discernment as we explore the following areas: our Mother House; Other Houses; Trading Activities; Resources; The Cuddy Duck; Community Teams; new people on the house team at

Nether Springs; developments in America and across Europe; Training; and the new Novitiate Process.

Congratulations to **Paul Friend**, Director of South West Youth Ministries who completed his MA in Missional Leadership in the summer. The Masters Course uses some modules on spirituality, soul care, leadership character and contemplation which were written by our own Community. He oversees the work and placement of almost 100 young people on full time year teams throughout the South West of England.



Lorely Charman married **Tim Rossell** in Leeds on Saturday 26 July. Afterwards, Lorely wrote me: "We had a wonderful day and 2 weeks in Skye - now settling into our house in Bradford and

gradually unpacking boxes and finding places to put all our junk..."

Ben and Ru Brown have recently joined the monastery team at Hetton Hall.

© CAIM is the official newsletter of the Northumbria Community.

Northumbria Community Trust, Registered Charity No: 1099503

Nether Springs, Hetton Hall, Chatton, Northumberland NE66 5SD

Tel or Fax: 01289 388235 email: office@northumbriacommunity.org

Caim Editors: Jeff Sutheran & Ingrid Cumming

email: caim@northumbriacommunity.org