

# CAIM

Issue no 20 Spring 2002

## The Northumbria Community Newsletter

*Welcome to the Spring edition of CAIM, the newsletter of the Northumbria Community. CAIM is the Celtic word meaning encompassment or encircling. This newsletter goes out to all those who are within our circle of Community Companions and Friends.*

### Finding Direction and Friendship on the Spiritual Journey

Trevor Miller of Hetton Hall

On a visit to Ireland last year I read in the vestibule of the Franciscan Church in Kilarney a simple definition of spiritual direction. It was the notice said, 'not about giving answers. It was about helping each other to hear the voice of God in life's experience and to discover God's plan as it unfolds.' This latter expression about the 'ongoingness' of the journey, about discoveries yet to unfold is what differentiates spiritual direction from pastoral counselling. Although pastoral counselling can in some cases develop into an ongoing need, it is generally a one off compassionate attempt to bring healing and consolation to a 'now' situation. Spiritual direction is a conscious and deliberate attempt to accompany another on the ongoing journey of faith *as a fellow traveller*. It follows that spiritual direction needs an ongoing commitment to the development of a spiritual friendship, so as to help another to interpret life's experiences in the context of prayer and seeking God.

We are all blind to our own failings and often build defences around our fragile egos, so that it sometimes helps to have another person whose walk with God we respect sharing our inner journey. Someone who accepts us as we are, and who, through their own vulnerability, is honest enough yet gentle enough to help us discern our motives and actions.

This is why anyone who is committed to spiritual growth and the deepening of their own relationship with God can be a spiritual helper/director/friend. In one sense spiritual directors cannot be trained as the ability is a gift of God's grace but the gift can be fine tuned by training, study and the trial and error of actual experience. This alone brings the wisdom and discernment needed to be a true guide.

To find a director needs time, an openness to God in prayer, asking that the Lord will reveal someone to you whose spiritual walk you respect. You then ask them if they would explore the possibility of walking with you on your journey.

Thomas Green in his book 'The Friend of the Bridegroom' (Ave Maria Press 2000) lists six criteria for choosing a spiritual director. They are *Compatibility* – someone you feel comfortable with and who is on the same wavelength. *Shared Vision* – someone who believes in the value of prayer and discernment. *Objectivity* – someone who can maintain a healthy detachment without being emotionally distant. *A Good Listener* – someone who can listen to the heart and the movement of God beneath the externals. *Confidentiality* – someone who can respect the trust placed in them. The sixth criterion Green states is an ideal but not essential - that the *Person be someone who is ahead of you on the journey*.

This is not to encourage an elite guru mentality from either side. Nor must they assume an authority they do not have or insist on another following their tradition as the only way. This is why the term 'director' can be misleading. It has overtones of a spiritual traffic policeman popping up at the crossroads of our lives and directing us left then right. This is simply wrong. God is the Real Director and the spiritual director assists the seeker in uncovering and discovering *the direction of God* in the person's life. The best spiritual companions are those prepared to listen to our personal story, who encourage and affirm us in our faltering steps towards Jesus and who, when we are unsure or indecisive, help us to discern what God wants of us in the ordinary

circumstances of our lives. Roland Walls, a much loved and busy spiritual director for over fifty years, insists that he has never given anyone a direction in his life. It is an exploration, with suggestions and minimal advice, of the person's prayer life, their self-awareness, and their sense of vocation and whether they have a pattern to their days that encourages spiritual formation.

It's not the name but the function that matters. While it is true that there is some confusion over the different emphases of spiritual direction, soul friends, mentoring and discipling, these are surely of minor importance when compared with the task they all have at their heart which is to encourage growth in the spiritual life, increased longing for God and the imitation of Christ.

The whole issue of Soul friends in the Celtic tradition and how this practise relates not only to some of the issues raised in this article but to possible future usage in the wider Community, is being addressed at present. Companions in Community are being encouraged to request a copy (from the Community Office) of the draft booklet 'To each their Anamchara' written by Anna Raine together with input from Andy Raine and Amund Karner, in order to reflect and comment on the contents and ideas. Watch this space!

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# Churches, Conferences and Culture *within, on the edge and beyond the Church*

Roy Searle of Wooler

Throughout most of the year, Community folk; individuals or teams participate in mission of various kinds. Looking over the past year and viewing the coming months there are clear patterns as to the places and people to whom we are being called to share our story.

We continue to serve the established churches, particularly those whose ethos parallels our own commitment to church without walls, kingdom in the streets etc and increasingly we are involved in working with the emerging and experimental church scene as men and women, some of whom are Community Companions and Friends undertake the task of re-imagining church in a changing culture. The emphases have certainly been shifting from the rural and suburban to more urban settings in relation to the people and places we visit and work in. We are also working much more with younger people and church leaders together with more initiatives taking us into the *public domain* working in schools, festivals, local community and work settings. You can read about two such Community related initiatives, the Altar and Urban Space elsewhere in this edition of CAIM. Together with our ongoing partnership with Bible Society, Building Bridges of Hope, Insight, Renovare and our working with several churches and initiatives linked with the Community, through our Companions and Friends, there is much to encourage us in the quest to see 'a new monasticism' realised. In this regard it is more than interesting that just before going to print with this CAIM, Trevor was amazed yet excited by an e-mail from a recognised Merton scholar who having discovered our *Celtic Daily Prayer* in America wrote "What you describe is just what Merton longed for in his studies of action and contemplation in the modern world."

## Northumbria

Covenanted together within the love of God we share a common heart for Northumbria... There is a conscious and deliberate link between the Christian history of this area and the way for living we seek to embrace...

After last year's significant Prayer Walk in Northumberland we have continued to explore ways in which to further our awareness of the importance of Northumbria. A good opportunity for those who are able to participate is to join us for the Celtic Saints and Sites Retreat based at Nether Springs,

29<sup>th</sup> July-1<sup>st</sup> August which will combine teaching, walking, exploration and prayer.

## Ireland

Another country very close to the Community's history and heart is Ireland. After many years of visiting and praying, taking pilgrimages, together with welcoming folks from Ireland we have begun to take teams over the Irish Sea to minister and share with a growing number of Friends in both the North and the South.

In May a team will be travelling to Ireland to pray, share and visit friends and initiatives in Belfast and Kilkeel, some going on to Dublin to lead a church weekend conference and to host the first Community Gathering in Northern Ireland at Cranfield on Bank Holiday Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May. If you are interested in joining the team please contact Claire by email or by writing to the Community Office ASAP.

## Scotland

After years of sporadic wandering and prayer forays in Scotland it has been interesting how invitations are now coming from a land that has always been close to the Community's heart and prayers, e.g. there are encouraging developments at Dun-craig on Iona and contacts with young people and youth organisations throughout the Highlands and Islands continues to develop. Several churches have invited Community teams to come and serve them and Edinburgh is very much to the fore in the Community's going places this year. It is hoped to establish further Community groups in Scotland and anyone interested in their formation should contact Norma Charlton by email: [norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org) or through the Community Office at Nether Springs.

## Isle Of Man

Following intercessions and a prophetic word received last year, the Isle of Man has come into the Community's consciousness. Andy Raine and his son Joel spent a week there recently and were led to a remarkable discovery relating to Cuthbert and the island.

## Renovare

Richard Foster is currently on sabbatical in his homeland of America. He will be coming over in the autumn and the first

Renovare Conference in Britain will be held in Manchester on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> at which Roy Searle and Richard will be speaking and our musicians will be leading the worship. Make a date in your diary and plan to be there. Dallas Willard is over in Britain in May and is hoping to speak at events in London, Liverpool and Glasgow as well as meeting the UK Board.

## Beyond these Shores—USA

Similar to that which is being experienced with Ireland, America has come to the fore in our Community's thinking and activity over the last year. Companions and Friends are growing in numbers in the States and we have just established an American Trust to support the life and work of the Community. Jeff and Jill Sutheran and their family will be leading the worship at the Renovare Board Retreat in Denver and then leading a couple of Community events in Colorado and New Hampshire in June.



In September it is hoped that Trevor and Freda Miller will be able to visit the States during which time there will be a Community Weekend and Gatherings in New Hampshire and Minneapolis.

Last month, *Celtic Daily Prayer* was published in America and *Christian Insight*, led by Freddie Latham-Durrant of Hamsterley, have a team going out to the States for three weeks in April, working with churches and the Berean Publishing House on creative worship programmes.

## Journeying with the Northumbria Community

A booklet with the above title is available on request from the Community Office. It is designed to provide introductory information for those wishing to explore what it will mean in actual practice to become a Companion or Friend in 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.

## URBAN SPACE Local community Arts Cafe

Community Companions Ben Brown, Mel Rogers and Ali Rowe of Wakefield write about an exciting new venture in mission.

Urban Space is a vision to see a community arts café in the heart of Wakefield City Centre. The idea is being developed by a community of Christian artists working in conjunction with Faith Works. This will be 3 months of regular opening hours for the café, and a variety of experimental arts based activities which will culminate in Wakefield's very own Community Arts Festival. The aim is to create a space where members of Wakefield's wider community can come together and build relationship with local community artists and other members of their community, raising awareness of the arts and their own creativity. The aim is to provide an environment where all are welcomed and encouraged.



Urban Space is committed to trading fairly and providing the best in friendly service. This will include buying local, organic and fairly traded products and ingredients where possible.

Urban Space wants to play its part in addressing the current cultural hunger for spirituality through sharing genuine hospitality and nurturing creativity, recognising their Biblical responsibility towards good stewardship of their gifts, resources and time.

The community members of Urban Space are committed to the Rule of Life of the Northumbria Community, seeking to be wholly Available to God and to others, and living intentional Vulnerability before God and others.

Interested folk can contact Urban Space on 07977 131851 or e-mail [ben@urbanspace.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:ben@urbanspace.fsbusiness.co.uk)

## Silent Waiting

by Alexander Ryrie, Canterbury Press 1999, ISBN: 1-85311-257-7  
A Book Review by Cathy Anderson of Porthcawl

In this book the author asks what is meant by contemplative spirituality, defining spirituality as 'the combination of praying and living'. He concludes that contemplative spirituality includes both contemplative prayer and the attempt to relate this prayer to the rest of life.

In the first chapter he explores ideas prevalent in the church over centuries, of contemplation being the rather exclusive activity of a chosen few. He then develops an understanding of contemplative prayer that 'is available to all, regardless of how far up the spiritual mountain they may have climbed'. Ryrie argues that what emerges is not a dilution of the demands of a spiritual life but a rich and profound way of life which in its own way is no less demanding and rigorous.

He takes the reader through fourteen psalms which are rooted in 'waiting for the Lord'. Two of these psalms are foundational in the community's daily liturgy. Ryrie writes that Psalm 27 'more than any other speaks of direct communion with God'. We begin our Morning Prayer with verse 4 of this Psalm which the author tells us has been called 'the contemplatives Psalm'. Other verses are embedded in Evening Prayer, 'Wait for the Lord, have courage and wait'. Psalm 130 which we pray as the opening section of Evening Prayer is also explored. He writes of the earnestness that is part of waiting. 'This is no dispassionate unconcerned waiting but the waiting of one who peers intensely and longingly through the darkness for the first signs of the dawn.'

Ryrie movingly writes about Psalms 42 and 43. He describes the particular quality of waiting in these Psalms as the psalmist 'waits because he is acutely aware of the absence of God, which causes an intense yearning. The tension of living with unfulfilled hope is made more acute by the paradoxical fact that the sense of absence is itself brought about by a submerged memory of the presence of God.'

Again this made me reflect on our own prayer from our Evening Office,  
'Lord you have always lightened  
this darkness of mine  
And though the night is here  
Today I believe.'

In a later chapter 'The face of God' the author returns to this theme, 'It is only those who have some awareness or experience of God's presence who are conscious also of his absence. It is this sense of 'presence in absence' which causes worshippers of God to seek his face'.

Ryrie states that Silent Waiting is not intended to be an academic work. Having said this, the book is steeped in scholarly references. The author's intention is devotional and an encouragement to people of all kinds today to embark upon this way of prayer – both 'as a means of deepening and enrichment for themselves, and as a channel for the unseen activity of God in the fulfilment of his purpose in the world.' His book will be an encouragement to novices and those more experienced in prayer.

If we are going to stay close to God in trust then we need to be willing to go beyond words, and wait in silence before God.

# ACTION!

## Easter Liturgy

**If you are unable to be present on Holy Island at our Easter Sunday celebrations but would like a copy of the liturgy to be used in renewing our covenant then please contact the Community Office by telephone or e-mail and we will forward you a copy.**

## Annual Retreat

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, particularly looking at how our Rule of Availability and Vulnerability is applied to the unique circumstances of each of our lives. Many of you already do this and know its benefits and blessing. We would also encourage you to participate in one of the many Led Retreats on aspects of our ethos and spirituality which are planned for the coming months at the Nether Springs, details of which are in the current programme available from the Community Office.

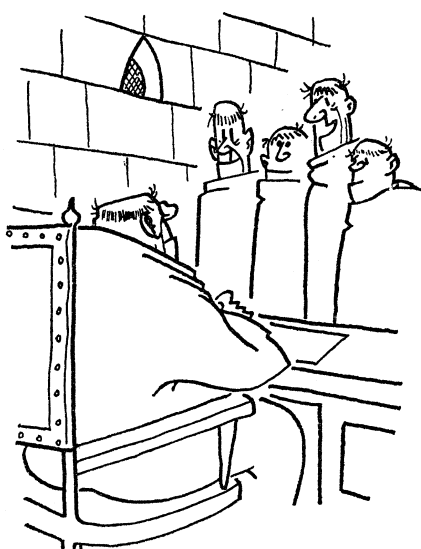
## PERSPECTIVES

### Differing Points of View

Sister Marlena entered the Monastery of Silence and the Abbot said, 'Sister, this is a silent monastery. You are welcome here as long as you like, but you may not speak until I direct you to do so.' Sister Marlena lived in the monastery for 5 years before the Abbot said to her, 'Sister Marlena, you have been here for 5 years. You can speak two words.' Sister Marlena said, 'Hard bed.' 'I'm sorry to hear that,' the Abbot said, 'We will get you a better bed.' After another 5 years, Sister Marlena was called by the Abbot. 'You may say another two words, Sister Marlena.' 'Cold food,' she said, and the Abbot assured her that the food would be better in the future. On her 15th anniversary at the Monastery, the Abbot again called Sister Marlena into his office. 'You may say two words today' he said. 'I quit,' replied Sister Marlena. 'Well, it's probably for the best,' said the Abbot, 'You've done nothing but bitch and complain since you've been here.'

## BEWARE OF THE ABBOT

Hugh Barnett



**Bad news, I'm afraid; the peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict and the healing seminar is off tomorrow because the speaker has taken ill.**

## Community Group Leaders Weekend

Norma Charlton of Gateshead

Thirteen Friends and Companions of Community came to Nether Springs in January for this year's meeting, and enjoyed a full and varied weekend.

On Friday evening poems and pictures were the creative responses to the question; 'What does my group mean to me?' or 'Why would I like to belong to a Community group?' It was a joy to see the diversity of gifts among us.

We were delighted that Roy and Trevor took the time to join us on Saturday morning. Roy gave a talk on 'Building the new on foundations of old', which was informative and inspirational. It was taped, and we hope it will be soon available on request. It was agreed that the Community groups could be useful as 'keepers and tellers of the story of Community', as well as breaking new ground as we share the journey.

Between Midday Office and lunch there was time for silent prayer, reading or reflection, and the afternoon was free for us to relax, catch up on relationships or visit Holy Island.

In the next session we shared memories of our 'best experiences in our groups this year'. These included a pilgrimage to St Paul's church, Jarrow, where the Venerable Bede lived, a 'soul friend' night, taking part in a Community team weekend, opportunities to explore/stimulate 'creativity', a dance workshop, storytelling, and a barbecue. It was agreed that whatever activities we do depend on the group and what they want to do, although it is interesting to find out about other groups.

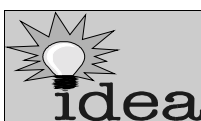
We also discussed the role of group leader/coordinator, concluding that their primary task is practical – to make it possible for the group to meet, arranging the venue and hospitality (though they may or may not act as host), and helping the group in its choice of activities (ensuring that someone takes responsibility for leading them); but it is also important that we encourage each other to hold all the members of the group in prayer.

The final topic for discussion that day was in response to Roy's request for us to look at the questions that Renovare group members use in their spiritual formation and small group sharing to see if they could be adapted for use in the context of our community. The general consensus

was that they were not appropriate for general use as they stood, but they could possibly be adapted to use in relation to our reflecting on our Rule of Life.

Saturday's programme ended with an impromptu 'ceilidh' after Evening Prayer, when bottles of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages appeared (not to mention the boxes of chocolates contributed by those who wanted the rest of us to share their Christmas calories!) and we were joined by several visitors and some of the Monastery team, who provided us with entertainment galore, ranging from Susie's hilarious rendition of Robert Burns' ode to the haggis (in authentic dialect complete with actions) and Pauline's brilliantly understated poem 'The Bath', while Dominic surprised everyone by producing a rich deep voice to give us a magnificent version of 'Ole Man River', and Steve displayed a wide range of virtuoso skills on the keyboard etc...

On Sunday morning we held an open forum including further thoughts on the Renovare 'examen' questions and their suitability or otherwise for groups/soul friends. Several suggestions were made using the framework of the Rule, and it was generally agreed that in a simplified form they could provide a useful basis for self-examination or helping each other to reflect on our Availability and Vulnerability. As usual time caught up with us; before we knew it lunch was served, and then it was time to go our separate ways, blessing each other and praying for safe return.



## Garden Plants Wanted

We are continually improving and restoring the gardens at Nether Springs in order to provide a beautiful environment for all who come here. We would be grateful for any spare garden plants which you may have and which you could bring when you visit us. Plants which we are particularly in need of include flowering border perennials, small evergreen shrubs and rockery plants. So have a look around your garden now for plants which are surplus to your needs, or which can be divided or have produced seedlings.



# The Telling Place in Manchester

## Serving the city with a heart for the desert

Roy Searle of Wooler

In the autumn of last year *The Telling Place* underwent a major reappraisal, which highlighted the need to address and change some of the ways in which we had been relating and operating. In order to facilitate the remarkable growth and impact that the Initiative has had in its four years of partnership with Bible Society, realise its potential and retain the Community's ethos and prepare for the future, several changes were made. These included a redefining of priorities, a redeployment of people on the staff, our Telling Place Forum and in the wider network which now numbers over 700 people across Britain. A 'wind of change' was felt as people, methods and ways were reordered to prepare us for the next chapter in the Telling Place's ministry and mission.

Allied to this, for some time, there has also been a growing awareness of the Community's call to the city, a calling that is lived out by the vast majority of the Community's Companions and Friends. Many years ago John Skinner, one of our founders, challenged me to serve the city with a heart for the

desert. This I now see being realised not only in my own life but echoed by the Many in the Community who have embraced the same calling to live out our Way for Living, *Availability and Vulnerability* in the city, the 'market place' of contemporary culture. To seek God in the midst of the city, to be contemplatives in a world of action.

Moving the Telling Place base of operations is done in the light of such a movement. Setting it in an urban, cutting edge environment of Hulme in Manchester is in part a response to this call of God. For over a decade we have been visiting, connecting and building relationships with people in the city and its surrounding area. Placing the new office in Manchester is part of the *building the new on foundations of old*, supported by Community folk in partnership with Bible Society, committed to storytelling and much more, very near to Colin and Dudie Amor and *the Altar*, which whilst not owned by the Community has found its way into our hearts and prayers as a natural expression of so much of our life and mission in the city. Trevor and I made a visit to the Altar in January and we

were both struck with an awareness that we were witnessing something significant within the purposes of God and something that was totally compatible to our own Community ethos and Way for Living. Taking an evening walk from Hulme around the city with Colin one night the words of our Rule under the theme of Church Without Walls kept coming to my mind, *Don't look for the Kingdom on the mountains for it's coming in the streets...* It proved a further confirmation to our relocating the Telling Place Office to the city. As Colin and I walked around the city Trevor was spending the evening with David and Wendy Ward who we have now appointed as our new Telling Place administrator. David, who together with Wendy are long term Companions of the Community, have been on the Council for the last three years and moved back to Manchester in the autumn. He and Dave Robertson, another member of our Telling Place team who lives in the city have known each other for years. Dave and Colin have become great soul friends and are exploring together new ways of being church and experimenting in the creative arts. When I first met Colin, with his unmistakable mohican hair cut, Doc Martins and creative attire I sensed the presence of God upon him. Previously from a distance and now through more regular contact we have begun to stand with him and his family in their calling in Manchester.

Colin took me on a recent trip to spend a very interesting evening with a group of Generation Xer's who are pioneering a new church within the Cathedral among their contemporaries. At one point in the evening I slipped out of the group discussion and into the Cathedral. Alone I sat and prayed, recalling the words and prophecies we have received as a Community about the place of Cathedrals in the repairing of the broken altars. It felt a sacred moment, a confirming moment that we were right to explore what God had for us to be and do in this city of which the Telling Place is a part.

So to the Telling Place Office itself. David joined the Team early in February and one of his first tasks was to set

about finding the ideal office—right size, right place, right rent and so on. Within two weeks a place was found in St. Wilfred's Enterprise Centre in Hulme and we moved



in on February 26th. The office occupies the old Confessional in this converted

Catholic Church, and despite being only nine foot square provides an ideal base to begin with. In the future we hope to take on another room to provide space for study, resources and hospitality. All communications should now be sent to:

**The Telling Place,**  
**St. Wilfred's Enterprise Centre,**  
**Hulme, Manchester M15 5BJ.**  
**Tel: 0161-227 0377**  
**or e-mail [thetellingplace@bigfoot.com](mailto:thetellingplace@bigfoot.com)**

As for the Community team, everyone's roles and responsibilities have changed: Angela Knowles is currently taking time out on 'sabbatical' in America, Dave Robertson is more involved in the creative and strategic development, Geoff Boston is concentrating on the development and deployment of the network and looking after resources and funding, Bryony is managing the finances, David Ward the administration and communications and Claire Wilson is linking Community and specific storytelling initiatives with the Community's overall involvement and activities. I endeavour to oversee and guard our ethos in the midst of all that is happening to people and the initiative.

Susie Minto, a Community Companion left at the end of January to return to Scotland, to spend more time with her mother and have some space from what has been over twenty years in work without a 'sabbatical'. We are thankful for her and the contribution she made to the Initiative working as an administrator from the Nether Springs. She will continue to be part of the network and hopes to develop her storytelling back in her native Scotland.



## A day in the life of..

Steve and Sheena Hewitt of Hetton Hall

Each day in the house was a new adventure. Of course, most days the daily rhythm of the community meals and offices gave an underlying structure to the day, though even this was varied more often than they had expected. On one level life was just the same as it had always been. There were the normal routines of getting up and getting dressed, preparing food, and washing clothes; responsibilities and duties, time off and things to moan about. Sometimes they were so tired, sometimes so cold, sometimes so unsure, sometimes – well, why do they do things this way? But somehow, for all this, life was so very different. Underneath there was an almost imperceptible joy that transfigured everything, like the golden glow of the sun that so often lit the fields around. Why this was, they never fully knew. Was it because so much was done with others. Was it because of the laughter and unbridled hilarity than raced around their feet whenever people met. Could it have been that intangible sense of security about the place, which meant that they never felt the need to lock anything when they were there. Was it the striking natural beauty of the place. Of course, the prayer was important, but you could never really identify anyone who was noticeably holy. More often than not it was the stark humanity of everyone that astounded and refreshed them. They never knew why, except that this was a place that had been appointed by God and they were pleased to be here today.

## 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.



## EASTER WORKSHOP 2002 Programme Details

Our Annual Easter Workshop is to be held at the Nether Springs from Thursday 28th March to Monday April 1st 2002 inclusive. We will be following our general theme for this year of 'Building the New on Foundations of Old' with the specific teaching input on the Friday and Saturday mornings focussing on how this can be applied to understanding and living out the Heretical Imperative in our daily experience. We would encourage as many as possible to come and share with us for the whole or part of the overall programme, especially Easter Sunday on Holy Island. All aspects of the programme will be held at the Nether Springs unless otherwise stated. There will be a Children's programme running simultaneously with the teaching sessions on Friday and Saturday mornings.

### Building the New on Foundations of Old

#### Maundy Thursday 28th March

6.00pm Dinner

7.15pm Introduction and Programme Outline followed by a Maundy Thursday Eucharist including Foot washing



#### Good Friday 29th March

9.30am Morning Office

10.30am Teaching Session [1] Understanding and Embracing the Heretical Imperative

12.00pm Midday Office

1.00pm Lunch

2.00pm Pilgrimage – Stations of the Cross Liturgy to Cuthbert's Cave

6.00pm Shabbat meal

7.15pm Evening Office

9.30pm Compline



#### Easter Saturday 30th March

9.30am Morning Office

10.30am Teaching Session [2] Utilising and Expressing the Heretical Imperative

12.00pm Midday Office

1.00pm Lunch

2.00pm Creative Workshops a) Memory Stones b) Creative writing c) Dance

6.00pm Dinner

7.15pm Evening Office

11.30pm Easter Vigil

#### Easter Sunday 31st March

9.30am Morning Office

10.45am Morning Service at St. Mary's C of E, Holy Island

12.00pm Midday prayer at St Aidan's statue followed by

High Praises in Lindisfarne Priory and the renewal of our vows by saying Yes to Availability and Vulnerability.

Picnic Lunch (Bring your own)

Please be aware that the tides require us to leave the Island at 3.00pm

6.00pm Dinner

7.15pm Evening Office

8.00pm Caedmon Evening—Bring a song, a story, a sketch or anything else to make a contribution to this informal gathering.

9.30pm Compline



#### Easter Monday 1st April

8.00am Breakfast

9.30am Morning Office

10.00am General tidy up and depart before lunch

**Christ is Risen  
Hallelujah!**

## Refining fire

A home fellowship group studying Malachi 3.3. queried this expression 'And God shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver'. One lady decided to visit a silversmith and report back. Without telling the silversmith the reason for her visit, she asked him to tell her about the process of refining silver. After his description, she commented with surprise 'so you simply sit while the work is going on?' 'Oh yes Ma'am' replied the silversmith 'I must sit with my eye steadily fixed on the furnace, for if the time necessary for refining be exceeded in the slightest degree, the silver will be injured.' The lady at once realised the beauty and comfort of the expression 'And God shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.' His eye is steady on us and He will not let us be tested beyond what we can endure. Before leaving, she asked a final question 'When do you know the process is complete?' 'That's simple' replied the silversmith. 'When I can see my own image in the silver, the refining process is complete.'

## 10 Years on An important date for the diary

Saturday November 2nd, 2002

Although the beginnings of our Community and the life lived Alone and Together, goes a lot further back than 1992 there is no doubting that it was an important year in our history and development. Among other things 1992 saw John and Linda moving to Hetton Hall, becoming a focus for the Nether Springs, Roy and Shirley moved to Wooler and Andy returned to Holy Island. 10 years on, we would like to have a Thanksgiving Day and a celebration together. An opportunity to share music and memories, stories old and new that have impacted the Community. The date is **Saturday November 2 2002** at the Nether Springs. We anticipate a huge response and therefore accommodation at the Nether Springs over the weekend of 1-3 November can only be on a first come first served basis. We will do all we can to accommodate as many as we can in and around the Nether Springs. Further details will be published in forthcoming editions of CAIM.

## The Altar and The Factory

Colin Amor of Manchester

Mention any town or city and the things that leap to mind tend to be the clichés.

London: 'Eastenders', the Queen, Trafalgar Square. Newcastle: Ant and Dec, 'Aufwhiedesen Pet', Brown Ale. Liverpool: the Beatles, 'Brookside', Fred's weathermap! Not too long ago, the images that would've sprung to mind of Manchester were probably men in flat caps walking their whippets down dark cobbled streets in the shadow of 'dark, satanic mills'. Ironically, most of these factories have now been transformed into luxury apartments as the city tries to reinvent its past and reach into the future...



Andy Warhol in 'The Factory'

If you'd said the word 'factory' to young people in the city a few years ago, however, it would've conjured up very different things: New Order, Dry Bar, the Happy Mondays, the Hacienda nightclub- all part of 'Factory' Record Company. Interestingly, the roots of 'Factory' can be traced back to Hulme, where a couple of guys took over a little-known place called the 'Russell Club' for one night a week in the late seventies and called it 'The Factory'. Unfortunately the 'Russell Club' couldn't keep up the pace with the ongoing regeneration of this area and is now lost forever under another new housing development. Fittingly enough, all that's now left of the Hacienda, once considered the best club in Europe if not the world, is a huge hole in the ground... as well as in the heart of the city.

So what's all this got to do with the Altar? Bear with me and I'll try to explain! The inspiration for the name 'The Factory' came from two very different worlds, one being LS Lowry's and the other sixties New York. The former I've mentioned already, the latter refers to Andy Warhol's studio, described by one devotee as "silver-walled, part film studio, experimental theatre, doss-house for speeding cross-dressers and artists of every stripe". In other words, it was a home for the homeless, a place for misfits to fit in, a place for the creative to create in, a space to experiment in. If you get the connection now, then you get where I am with 'The Altar'. The very first document I wrote about 'The Altar' somewhat arrogantly, perhaps, ended with these words:

"Once it was said 'The hacienda must be built' [from 'Formulary for a New Urbanism']. Now I say 'The Altar must be built'."

What I meant by this was that I was aware of the hole that needs filling in the heart of the city, in the hearts of the city's dwellers. Not that I think that 'The Altar' is ever going to be a focus for mainstream culture like the Hacienda was, but maybe more like 'The Factory' in New York that went on to inspire it. Follow the connections?

At the same time, I feel almost paralysed.

Roy recently referred to the danger of drifting into one of two extremes: 'creative anarchy', where everyone wants to please themselves and just do what **they** want to do, and 'confused apathy', where everyone's so unsure of what to do that nobody does anything at all. As soon as he said it, I told him that he'd just put his finger on where I feel I'm at with 'The Altar'! On the one hand I want to just go for it with some of the mad creative ideas I've got, but then I wonder if that would simply be self-indulgent and self-gratifying, then on the other hand God seems so quiet at the moment that I've lost the confidence to do almost anything.

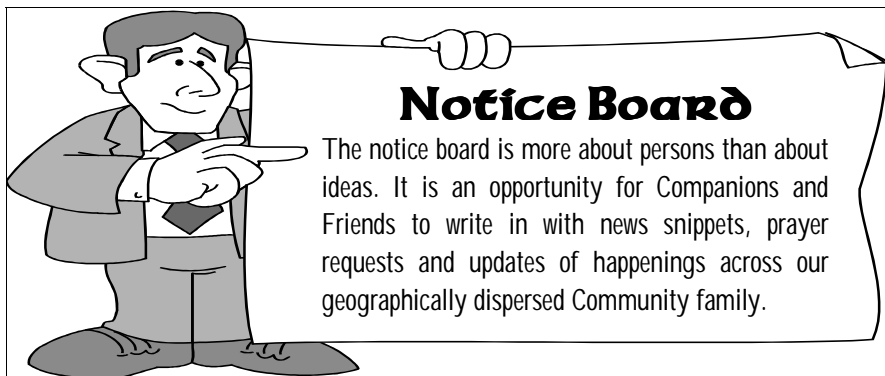
As highlighted through the recent crisis 'The Altar' and my family have been through, however, I'm so encouraged to know of the Community's support- in prayer, encouragement, and finances. I thank God for you... and please don't stop! With love, Colin, Dudie, Jamie and Malika

### The Altar - Amor Family Support

Standing with Colin, Dudi and their children Jamie and Malika as a family is an important part of our ongoing commitment to the Altar. If you are able to support them as a family and would like to do so on a regular basis please send for a gift aid or direct debit form from the Community Finance Office. Any cheques or gifts can be designated to the Amor Family. It will be much appreciated. Thanks.



Reflections of light in 'The Altar'



## Notice Board

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

It is with a great sense of thankfulness and some reluctance we have to say *bon voyage* to **Claire Wilson** of Macclesfield as she and her husband **Graham** will be leaving for Sweden in May. Claire has served and pioneered the way as a PA and Community Teams Coordinator in a brilliant way, taking considerable amount of pressure off Roy and others. Graham has been part of the Community musicians over recent years playing his bass guitar. They will be greatly missed but we pray for the blessing of God upon this new chapter in their lives and for the Community connections in Scandinavia to grow through their living there over the next couple of years. Do join with us in prayer that the Lord will bring the right person of His choice to serve the Community as Claire has done.

**Roger Green** of Bedlington has been in and out of hospital recently and would value our continuing prayer support.

**Lorna Fisher** of Berwick is taking time out from life and work at the Nether Springs to rest, reflect, re-discover home and to travel. May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you.

As the end of her first year in south-east Northumberland draws near, **Cathy Turton** of Seaton Sluice wishes to thank all who have supported her both practically and prayerfully, then as now.

**Norma Wise** of Newton Aycliffe and **Norma Charlton** of Gates-

head are doing a "Storytelling/ Drama Event" about the Northern Saints for a local school to be held at Bamburgh Cricket Pavilion, on Tuesday 16th April, 10.00am—2.30pm and would value our prayers.

**Julie Watson** of Normanby is to attend a two week pre-ordination retreat on desert spirituality visiting Israeli and Egyptian deserts and monasteries including a camel trek up Mount Sinai. She is to be ordained on 30 June at 10am in York Minster (all welcome), before moving to St Peter's, Redcar as a Minister in Secular Employment.

**James McWhirter** of Coventry is to be ordained at Litchfield Cathedral on June 29th at 6.00pm. He is to take up ministry in Shropshire.

Congratulations to **Paul** and **Barbara Revill** of Stocksfield on the birth of Catherine Grace on 24th January weighing in at 9lb.

## Community CD



A new CD of Blessings used regularly by the Community entitled 'May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you' will be available from early April. See enclosed leaflet for details.

## Getting Together

Over the next few months there are a number of occasions for folk to get together and take part in Community Team 'happenings' including:

**March 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>** Easter Workshop, Nether Springs

**March 28<sup>th</sup>- April 7<sup>th</sup>** Spring Harvest, Skegness

**April 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>** St. Cuthbert's Centre weekend at Nether Springs

**April 27<sup>th</sup>** Community Gathering, Bridge House, Shillingford

**April 30<sup>th</sup>** Spirituality and the Bible Conference, Metro Centre, Gateshead

**May 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>** Community Team to Ireland [Belfast, County Down and Dublin] including

**May 6<sup>th</sup>** Community Gathering, Cranfield

**May 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>** Church Weekend Prayer Workshops, Whitley Bay

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** Community Gathering, Manchester

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>** Altrincham Baptist Church

**June 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>** London Institute for Contemporary Christianity

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>** Northern Light Camp, Thirsk

**August 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>** Greenbelt Arts Festival, Cheltenham

For further details contact **claire.**

**wilson@northumbriacommunity.org** Or through the Community Office.

## New Trustees

The following new trustees—**Paul Moore**, Leigh on Sea, **Anne Wadey**, London, **Dave Hay**, Tow Law and **Amund Karner**, Johnshaven have joined our existing trustees **Bill Clementson**, Newton Aycliffe, **Dominic De Saulles**, Cardiff, **Roger Green**, Bedlington and **Gordon Joice**, Sedbergh in serving the Community. The Trustees and Community Council meet together every quarter over a weekend at the Nether Springs with the Community's leaders Trevor Miller and Roy Searle. Serving as an advisory, supportive, prayerful group, and representing the wider Community, they provide a collective wisdom as well as being a sounding board for the Community leaders.

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