



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:

End of an era? 1

Stories of the Meditations 2

For such a time as this 3

Biker's Welcome 4

News and Events 5

Radio 4 broadcast 6

Sarah Berry 7

Cloisters Trading Review 8

Programme 10

Northern Ark 10

Community Group Leaders Weekend 11

Cuddy Duck News 11

The newsy bit 12

Hetton Hall - the end of an era?

A meeting took place recently between Trevor Miller and Ian Hall, the General Manager of Lilburn Estates, our landlords at Hetton Hall. It had been arranged (on their initiative) to discuss the future of our tenancy. The result (on the surface, at least) is not good news. The bottom line is that they are not renewing our lease when it expires on November 30th 2010.



Middleton (where they have their offices) and the new Racing Stables at South Hazelrigg. This is effectively everything they bought from Lord Vinson some years ago, and includes the Hettons and the Hortons as well as the many properties dotted here and there around the place. No one is to have a renewal of tenancy or lease when they expire.

Ian was genuinely finding this conversation difficult and mentioned that Duncan Davidson had been prevaricating for some time, being so reluctant to inform us because of

who we are, our history, and because 'we have always enjoyed such a good relationship'. They

could have waited until the end of May next year and just given us the statutory 6 months notice. What they have done (in keeping with what we have always asked of them) is to give us the maximum notice they can - almost 21 months.

This is a major development in our history, and presents us with a huge challenge in relation to our future. Although this affects us all to some degree, you will appreciate that for those living in and working from the Mother House this is a major happening that impacts their home and livelihood significantly. Please be much in prayer for this situation.

As a result of the current financial crisis Lilburn Estates are 'downsizing'. They have had to make dozens of people redundant, many of them long serving workers. They have made what is an irreversible decision (whatever happens in the immediate future) to sell all their land and properties other than Lilburn itself, North

This is a major development in our history, and presents us with a huge challenge in relation to our future



Andy Raine has been explaining the stories behind the meditations in a recent series, and here's another:

Day 11 Jeremiah's Field

This meditation is based upon scriptures from the book of Jeremiah in chapters 31 and 32..

The people of God have failed Him. The prophet reluctantly brings the news that they are to be driven into exile from the land He gave them. As people begin to see these events come to pass they are tempted to despair. But the prophet tells them there is still hope for the future. As they leave and journey into exile, he tells them to set up waymarks, markers and signposts that will make it easier for those who return to find their way. Theirs it is to turn their hearts back to the Lord. Those who return will seek out the ancient paths and find where the good way is. The prophet also goes and buys a field which he has an option on, precisely when such a title-deed would appear to be worthless. This action affirms his belief in God's promise of a future and a hope.

At the time when John Skinner arranged these words and set them to music we felt that we were experiencing some of that sense of exile, asking for ourselves the question, How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? We also had a sense of the return. The old ways of this land, the Celtic paths of its monastic history, the tangible presence which so overwhelmed us in its most prayed-in places drew us to ask questions. We wanted to discover more of its secrets, to seek the living God and know His presence, His wisdom and His ways - even as Oswald, Aidan, Hild, Colman and Cuthbert had in their day.

I remember also how we first danced this song. John [as Jeremiah] wept over the fallen stones which had once stood proudly. He still remembered the power of their past glory and threw himself on the stones. Linda was one stone, Sandra another, Brenda the stubborn stone which refused to be re-awakened almost until the end. Andy was the waymark flung upright as a signpost - like the cross Oswald set up at Heavenfield after Columba appeared to him in a dream. It always felt prophetic, that we were amongst the first of many who would come to this geographic area, and to these ancient paths to ask where the good ways were. Our early forays into community, exploring Isaiah 58, reading the stories of the Northumbrian saints and their Celtic forebears, the development of what became our office, our rule for living, our struggles to find ways to live out a new kind of secular monasticism - all of these became mile-stones and waymarks in their own way for fresh generations struggling to find any way out from their sense of alienation and exile.

One Easter we danced it again at Evesham which was significant because it was from there that hundreds of years ago a small group set out to rebuild monastic centres on the sites of previous foundations. Their journey and our own ran parallel, seeking to build the new on foundations of old, often with joy, always with tears. *Andy Raine*



The picture is a lino print by Andy Foster, which was inspired by this meditation.

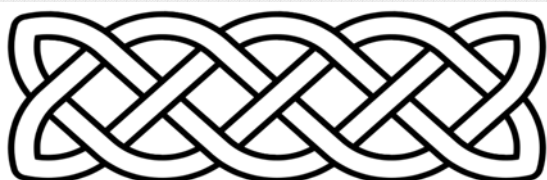
Welcome to the Spring edition of Caim!

It's lovely to see life springing from the earth again, as the evenings draw longer and the scents and colours return.

And yet, in the midst of good things all around us - just like life itself - this edition carries news of the profoundly difficult situation we find ourselves in, as a result of the termination of our tenancy at Hetton Hall, and all it will bring. Do please be prayerful as together we seek to work out the way forward for this aspect of the Community's life.

Enjoy this edition of Caim.

Jeff, & Ingrid



Slow my pace, Lord. Slow my life. Come sit by me at the well. I am exhausted.

Give rest to my heart; bring calm to my feelings. Come, lead me to the mountain. I am empty.

Give me these hours the leisure to be still, that I savour the quiet of rolling hills, tasting the presence of the Divine. Bring me from the running of the day and the doing of the duties, to the sitting in the evening to know the reward of being.

Set aside the problems of mind; soothe the aches of the heart; give rest to the body that I hear the music of my being and know a quiet that allows the soaring of the soul.

Be gentle, Teacher, teaching the truth of being. In gentleness, command: "Silence"

In stillness embrace my spirit and rekindle with love... and opening the embrace, give freedom to the soul.

Slow my pace, Spirit of Love, breathe into my being, Word....and with a mighty wind blow the incarnate word to the ends of the earth.

Monsignor Bernard Powers

Roy Searle writes:

For such a time as this

I stood by St. Mary's Lighthouse looking out across the North Sea and wept. I'd just left my Dad's house having just collected him from hospital following an operation. We didn't have to exchange words but both of us knew what we were experiencing; that in returning to an empty house, the absence of my Mum pierced both our hearts. The tears in his eyes when I left him spoke volumes. I have known, taught and observed the grief process as theory, but its practice is a different matter. The loss of my Mum - who died shortly after Christmas following a decade of struggle and an agonising last few weeks in hospital - really hurts.



Driving to one of their favoured spots by St. Mary's lighthouse I recalled the words of the Psalmist that *'the memories of a good person are a blessing indeed'*.

Through my tears of deep sadness and treasured memories which evoke much thankfulness, I was mourning the loss of someone who has been one of the biggest influences in my life. Apart from a few incidents in my teenage years when we had a bit of bother - which she seemed to grow out of by my late teens - we enjoyed a brilliant and close relationship. Unconditionally loved, valued for who I was, encouraged always - she was always there, and now she's not. Just when I need her most, she's not there!

Yet I realise her greatest gift is the inheritance of the good values and a positive view on life. My buoyancy (even though deflated recently) comes from a mother who nurtured us to always look on the bright side of life, to enjoy the present moment, to live generously and see the potential for fun and laughter in the everyday, ordinary moments. And I started to laugh; it was the rainbow through the rain of my tears. Two weeks previously we'd scattered her ashes on this spot on a blustery morning. Mum had always wanted to sail across to Norway. That morning I'm sure some of them ended up in Scandinavia!

The last few months have probably been among the toughest of my life. Mum's dying added to what were already almost overwhelming issues; pressures and problems in the family; our house; friends in crisis; colleagues suffering; the pressing issues of Community, many of them good, but a few more if not bad, then

certainly troubling - and one encounter that was quite ugly has left me physically and emotionally exhausted, and a bit wounded.

And the recent outbreak of troubles in Northern Ireland have deeply affected me. The heart that I carry for that land and its people remains, and the angst, powerlessness and disappointment that I feel is immense. We tasted the bitter herb of sectarianism when we lived there, and feared that the remarkable progress made since the signing of the Peace Process had to be sustained and deepened by more than legislation. The rampant materialistic consumerism of recent years always threatened to divert people from the need to build relationships across communities - relationships rooted in justice for the poor, which would not only dampen the fires of sectarian violence but put out the smouldering embers of a still divided society. (See page 5 re *Guardian*)

Back in 1988, I shared a picture, (not sure if it was a prophecy), with a small group of people (gathered under the banner of 'Northumbria Ministries') on Holy Island. It was a picture where I saw myself somewhere like the Metro Shopping Centre, the Mecca of a consumerist culture. Slowly but steadily, the lights went out - and darkness, chaos, fear and violence followed. It was a disturbing scenario of change, uncertainty and the loss of what had become known and familiar.

In our seeking... was born a way of living out the gospel, a Rule of Life, which carried with it the values of Availability and Vulnerability which have brought hope and coherence to many

The only comfort we derived came from a sense of calling, a Way of Life, which was to find expression in the covenant relationship that formed our own Northumbria Community, through the merging of Northumbria Ministries and the Nether Springs Trust. In our seeking, searching and questioning, was born a way of living out the gospel, a Rule of Life, which carried with it the values

of *Availability* and *Vulnerability* which have brought hope and coherence to many hundreds of people through the ensuing years.



Continued on page 4

Continued from pg 3

We are living in days of unprecedented cultural, economic and global change. Woe to those who say “peace, peace” when there is no peace. Woe to those who peddle the fantasy of revival and who struggle to accept the emergence of a post Christendom western culture, and whose response to a culture in crisis is to work harder and effectively say nothing but propagate religious patter. The world is changing, and the collapse of the financial markets is a reaping of what we have all allowed to be sown, through a consumerist value system that has damaged our souls, ruined the planet and deafened us to the cries of the poor.



How ironic is the name Madoff, the Wall Street fraudster who has now swapped his penthouse for a prison cell after being found guilty of masterminding the biggest investment scam

in USA financial history. Greed, unaccountability and lack of morality in the money markets is seeing the toppling of corrupt business empires and financial institutions across the world.

The loss of God's story, the Christian narrative that has shaped and safeguarded so much of our society, is now evident in hearts, homes, streets and workplaces. Is there any hope? Of course there is! Just as my Mum bestowed values that encouraged us to look on the bright side of life, so too I believe that our new monastic vocation is “for such a time as this”. I believe passionately that we've been given a gift, a way of life that does bring not only hope for the renewal of the church but hope for human life in society. Herein lies our monastic and missional calling; to seek God, to be rooted in him - and in living out our calling, be a prophetic voice and apostolic rebuilders, carrying the torch of the gospel into a changing culture.

An indicator of our apostolic calling is illustrated in the responses that we and the BBC have received following the recent Radio 4 Sunday Worship broadcast (the transcript of which is available on our website). It was in receiving correspondence from people on the margins of the church, self confessed agnostics and a couple of atheists, all of whom were clearly impacted by what for us is just a way of living, that we are reminded of our call: not so much to be a servant of the church, but apostles to the culture, and to hold the Christ light during turbulence, speaking the true word of peace that people long to hear. It's hard - very hard - and it's a struggle, but it is our calling.

Roy Searle

Paul Lucas is a Methodist Minister in Hull, and sent us this piece about one of his passions:

Bikers' Welcome – A Blessing and A Sending.

I read an article recently entitled 'Church welcomes everyone – does that include bikers?'

As a biker myself, at least on a day off, it set me thinking and resulted in me joining the local branch of the Christian Motorcyclist Association. At the start of the biking season, CMA members usually go to a church somewhere for a commissioning service - to be sent out as 'gospel riders' (very Wesleyan!) to wherever God's spirit leads them for the love of Christ (very Celtic!). That's usually to 'biker' events and gatherings where CMA often set up a Holy Joe's coffee bar, a helmet park and give away copies of the Biker Bible to all takers.



Half a dozen or so members and a very nice BMW 'Long Way Round' model, came into Bilton Grange Methodist Church, East Hull, last Sunday for a commissioning

service, a blessing and a 'sending out in the name of Christ'.

The thing that impressed me most was the fact that the CMA bikers are meeting others in an activity that they are all passionate about. Someone once said to me “...‘four wheels’ moves the body, but ‘two wheels’ moves the soul” and it's true. It's not an easy thing to explain but that's exactly it. Yes, it's to do with adrenalin, yes, it's to do with risk and being on the edge, yes, it's about facing the unpredictable. I'm sure all these things would have been well known to John Wesley in his travels on horse back, though I doubt he'd have swapped his trusty steed for a BMW GS1100 – well not unless it had a 'satnav' with a Bible readings option.

For me, I can find space to pray in the midst of a motorbike ride and sometimes an absolute need to pray like the other Saturday night on the way home over Blakey Ridge in the North Yorkshire Moors, in the dark, through the cloud and rain with almost zero visibility. There is something of both the pioneer and pilgrim spirit kindred to motorcycling - maybe one day we'll do the trip to Jerusalem, bearing flags of the nations for peace and reconciliation. Are you interested?

Meanwhile, it's back to basics – please pray for all those who reach out to meet people for Christ, in whatever activity they are passionate about. Meet people at their passion and you're half way there - Christ was after all, 'passionate' about people.

Paul Lucas

Linda Cross sent these words following a recent Community Gathering:

Community Gathering in Kent

On a bright spring morning in late February, a group of about twenty of us gathered in Brook Church, near Wye in Kent. The ancient church is 900 years old and its strong stone tower, medieval wall paintings and peaceful interior give a sense of the continuity of Christian worship in this place over the centuries. The relationship between the Northumbria Community and the communities of Wye and Brook has become close over the last few years and many of us are familiar with the NC Daily Office. We have much in common in the monastic heritage of Wye College and church and the beauty of Brook and the surrounding countryside. So it was wonderful to be led by Jeff and Jill in the musical version of the liturgy and some of the familiar and new songs. The words of Psalm 84, 'How

lovely is thy dwelling place' echoed in our ears as we spent time alone and together, listening to God in community. Jeff updated us on community events 'up north' and all over the world! I am sure that the internet has much to offer but don't let's lose the desire to travel the old paths and to give and receive hospitality from those we meet on our journeying. It was special to stand with others on top of the North Downs above Wye and Brook that afternoon and to see our communities and lives in the context of God's wonderful creation and loving care. Down on the ground it's easy to lose perspective and to get caught up with the worries of the day, whether they be financial, illness or loss of family and friends, or changes in circumstances. As we here face the final closure of Wye College and the 'moving on' of John Richardson our vicar, we are encouraged by the support and prayers of the Community. Thank you to Jeff and Jill and others who took time out to be with us that day. Stay in touch - we will! *Linda Cross*

Got your sea-legs?

Riding the crest of a (Seventh) Wave

Join the crew last few places available on Seventh Wave a fabulous ocean going yacht sailing around the Scottish Hebrides with other Companions and Friends from Sunday 5th to Friday, 10th July, 2009. This is the fifth year we've run such a venture and the majority of people have never sailed or been to sea before but have thoroughly enjoyed it – a once in a lifetime experience.



To sail around some of the most beautiful waters in Britain, visit the Inner Hebrides including Iona, go whale watching and see the maritime and bird life. Contact jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org

The renewal of the church will come from a new type of monasticism... it is high time men and women banded together to do this.

Claire Hunt writes of a Music Gathering

Following on from a busy and inspiring day in November, we're planning to host another music gathering in Nottingham on Saturday June 6th, from 10am to 4pm. We'll learn and play some new music again and make sure there's some time to learn some older songs too. If you're interested in coming and want more info, and/or you would like to contribute some music, please contact me. I'd also like to hear from you if you'd like to be involved but are unable to make this date.



If you'd like to know more, please contact Clare Hunt, either in the forum or by email: robandclare@hunt123.fsworld.co.uk

One of the many things which flowed from the Community's leading of the Radio 4 'Morning Worship' programme recently, was that Roy Searle was invited to write a piece for the Guardian's 'Faith to Face' series. Its available to view online at:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/mar/21/northern-ireland>

Part of our Community's ethos and vision is to speak into the public domain, sharing "a fearful hope for human life in society".

Ian Corsie recounts an early start:

At 8.10 in the morning on Sunday 8th March, in the delightfully bright and airy church in Carham, beside the Tweed and bang on the border between England and Scotland, there was a slightly nervous, expectant hush.



We were waiting for the red light to go on, indicating that those of us gathered for the Radio 4 Sunday Worship were about to 'go live'

to an audience of over 1.7 million listeners.

The service had been put together by a team from the Community led by Roy Searle to reflect on how we use our sense of imagination as we live out our faith.



Jeff and Jill Sutherland led a team of 7 Community musicians who had rehearsed

hard over the weekend to be note perfect - and also ready to adapt to any last-minute hitches in timing as the programme progressed. Shayla Waugh was ready with her headphones on to link the various elements of the service together. Pam and David Pott were ready with the Bible readings - no stuffy pious renditions here. Paul Waite, Judith Maskery and Pete Askew had prepared their prayerful contributions.

And Roy was outside the door of the church ready to introduce the service in the cold bright morning, describing the scene as the Tweed flowed majestically past.

And the rest of us Community folk making up the congregation, together with the Carham congregation and others from the nearby Borders area? We had rehearsed together on Saturday afternoon and our cheeks were aching as we followed the producer Philip Bilson's instruction to SMILE. (It had been somewhat unnerving when his disembodied voice - he was then in the mobile studio outside - boomed over the loudspeaker, 'No, no, I can hear you're not smiling.' Was this God speaking to us?!) Well, we were ready to sing our hearts out.



Once that red light came on, everything seemed to go smoothly, and there was a feeling that all the various elements hung together well. Roy's contribution to it

was, of course huge. Not only did his address capture superbly the various elements in play: the use of our imaginations; the life and values of the Community; the sense of continuity in this place with the lives of the Celtic saints; and of course the challenges to all of us brought about by the current economic crisis. But he even wrote the words of a new hymn during the week specially for the service: 'O living God we come to you' sung to the tune Repton (think 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind').

After it was all over, we were relieved and delighted to hear from the producer that it had all come across extremely well, and he was delighted with the way we had all worked together. That called for a celebration, and the coffee and bacon butties that magically appeared, thanks to one of the Carham congregation, were just the ticket.

When we got home, we were able to listen again on iPlayer (the wonders of modern technology!) and realise that what we were hearing in the church was quite different to what was being broadcast (because of the mixing between all the different microphones). But, yes, it all sounded good. And all the comments subsequently received indicate that the service blessed many listeners. It was a privilege to be part of it all.

If you were unable to hear the broadcast and would like to download it or listen to it on your computer, there is a link on the Community's homepage at www.northumbriacommunity.org/index.html

Ian



Sarah Berry, from Troy, New York, USA sent these reflections:

My Journey with Availability and Vulnerability

For those who have read, “Hinds Feet on High Places”, by Hannah Hurnard, you will remember the story of “Much Afraid” and her journey to the high places. The Shepherd promises to guide her and come whenever she calls – but will not be with her all the time. Instead, he gives her two traveling companions– Sorrow and Suffering. They are straight, stern and silent companions – and also veiled so Much Afraid can’t see their faces. She is dismayed by the Shepherd’s choice and almost as much afraid of them as she is of the journey before her. “Couldn’t you have chosen more pleasant companions?” she complains. However, as the journey progresses she finds they are strong and sure footed and more than once save her from a nasty fall.

When I began my journey with the Northumbria Community, I viewed my new companions of “Availability and Vulnerability” with much the same enthusiasm as Much



Afraid... and often thought, “Couldn’t they have chosen different words”? As good and helpful as the teaching around these concepts was (and is), I still secretly thought of them as “doormat” and “exposure”. Or “no

longer free to do my own thing” and “no place to hide”. It wasn’t until my experience on the house team at Hetton that I began to understand and appreciate these two companions. I live in a land that prizes individualism and independence – qualities which do not happily coexist with ‘community’. In my early days at the Hall, I ran into my cultural heritage quite a bit... like a brick wall. For example – when given a dinner assignment which began with “chop 20 onions” during a particularly interesting retreat week in which I wanted to participate - I immediately began planning ahead – alone. The timing was going to be tricky. I stayed up after compline the night before and did the chopping. Next morning, I was in the kitchen before Morning Prayer and starting the simmering... one of the house team members came in and when she saw what I had accomplished, her face did not mirror the approval I expected. Here I had been congratulating myself on initiative and efficiency but obviously I wasn’t “getting it”. Gently, she said, “there is a reason for the rhythm”... and then went on to say, “and, I wanted to help you”... later that day I went on a solitary walk to think over this episode and was confronted with the uncomfortable revelation that I really didn’t want anyone’s help. I wanted to do it myself and somehow prove my worth? Or just stay independent? And if the rhythm was sacrificed? But, why was I here? To be efficient? Or, to learn...

I began to watch and as I watched, began to see “availability and vulnerability” lived out in very quiet and ordinary ways. One day a request came to the house that would have been difficult, time consuming, and sacrificial at best – I was in the background chopping onions (again) and watched two of the house team deal with it. Outrageous, I thought – no way... just say NO! But, instead they began with, “is there anyway we can do this?” and went on from there... I was to witness this dozens of more times – this stopping to consider instead of a knee jerk response... and sometimes after consideration the answer would be no. But there was always the making of oneself available first – to God and to others... and the willingness to live this out in front of others even when messy – vulnerability!

A while ago, I was confronted with a difficult request – a sick relative living a plane journey away needed help. There were 4 of us in the family to call on – two were ‘unavailable’... the third had been attending to this person’s needs for awhile and needed a break – which left me. But the timing couldn’t have been worse. What should I do? What can I do? There were elements of guilt, “what will they think if I don’t come right now” coupled with, but what will happen here if I do leave now? What about this and what about that?? And then, like the two strong and sure footed companions of Much Afraid’s journey, Availability and Vulnerability came to my side – each taking an elbow and walking me forward. In the end all God was asking of me was to pause, make myself available – first to Him – then to others – and then be who I am, do what I could do, and not worry about what others would think...

I eventually made the plane journey and took over the situation – perhaps not as speedily as my brother would have liked. But, my Aunt, who was very ill indeed, had my angel of a sister in law as her bedside companion during the days she most needed company. By the time I was able to step in, the situation called for the things I was better equipped to do.

When Much Afraid reaches the high places she is amazed and delighted to find that not only has she been transformed into Grace and Glory, but her two companions have also been transformed – into Peace and Joy... I am still making my way towards the high places and although on many days it feels as though I’m only on the lower slopes, I no longer look at my companions of Availability and Vulnerability with dread. Instead, I am grateful for their unfailing support and way of simplifying what I tend to make complicated. They are indeed, very good companions for the journey. *Sarah Berry*



Some thoughts from Roy Searle on

The Importance of Cloisters, our Trading Company

It's all changing on the trading front as we enter an important season of review, growth and development for Cloisters.

Ian Corsie is stepping down, after 10 good years, running Cloisters. We are indebted to Ian for all that he has brought and for establishing the company in a way that enables us to build into the future on a firm foundation that he has helped to create.

As part of the process of looking at what the Community hopes from its trading operations, and charting a way ahead for the future, a group of Community folk, with a heart for this issue, gathered together in February. It was a very encouraging time as there were many new (and younger!) faces bringing new and fresh insights, skills and enthusiasm to bear on a business which has been somewhat in the doldrums of late - 'ticking over' rather than being a healthy and increasing reservoir of resources.

The relationship between the Community and its trading company is one that is significantly linked to the issue of economic sustainability.

One of the key questions that is inevitably raised whenever we discuss the 'why' of Community trading is whether this is primarily to resource the Community and the 'world of our influence' - in other words is it primarily 'missional'?, or is its purpose to generate income for the wider work and life of the Community?

The consultation identified a number of things that need to happen as a matter of urgency in order to facilitate some needed changes:

- The Seniors leadership team will produce new guidelines for the Community's trading activities.
- The Trading Company Board (it is a limited company legally separate from the Trust) will be refreshed with new members appointed.
- Discern and develop a number of trading aims

and new ventures as well as building on our existing operations.

- Explore new ways in which the wider Community can 'own' and help realise the potential of the trading activities.
- A key person must be found to take responsibility for leading Cloisters into this new phase of its life.

A Role and Responsibility Specification for such a post is being finalised and the draft is available for anyone who might be interested. It is envisaged that the person appointed should:

- Be a Companion in the Northumbria Community (or in the process of becoming a Companion).
- Have a heart for the need to make the resources of the Community more widely and readily available.
- Have a heart to seek the right way to combine the needs of a commercial operation with the ethos of Community life.
- Have experience either in publishing or in working in a business with similarities to Cloisters.
- Be able to carry out basic tasks in some (or all!) of the following: desk-top publishing, design, website input and basic accounting.
- Be prepared to take real personal responsibility for the development of the business whilst working within a team of other Board members and employee(s), the composition of which will depend to a certain extent on the skills and experience the person appointed will bring.

If this interests and enthruses you in any way - or if you want to know more, or to be involved in some way, please contact Ian Corsie. Similarly, if you would like to comment on what you have read, or contribute your own suggestions or ideas to the future of the Trading Company, then please e-mail Ian: ian.corsie@northumbriacommunity.org or write to him at The Shielling, Allerdean Greens, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 2TB or telephone 01289 387257.

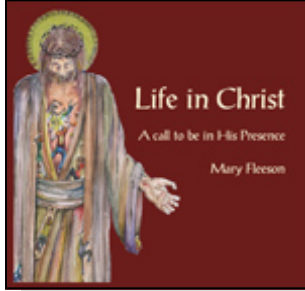
Thank you in anticipation of your involvement.
Roy Searle

Ian Corise has sent us this book review:

Life in Christ

This is the second book by Community Companion Mary Fleeson, a very talented artist who lives on Holy Island (see Life Journey for her first one).

Drawing inspiration from the Celtic artistry that gave us the Lindisfarne Gospels, Mary has developed her unique contemporary style of artwork which provides a clear spiritual message to inspire us on our journey - with myriad details to explore in the intricate detail of her



drawings and their colouring. In this book, Mary has combined her artwork with prayers, meditations, Scriptures, and suggested activities, all presented imaginatively as 'the musing of an ordinary person travelling a well-trodden

path, trying not to trip over the stones or fall over the cliff at the side. Sometimes the path goes uphill and I hope that this book will be a helping hand. Sometimes the path will be easy: take time to enjoy the details!'

This is a wonderful gift book to buy for yourself as an aid to your spiritual journey; or to buy for a friend - particularly one who is interested in the idea of spiritual journalling. It costs £15 at www.cloistersonline.com/life-in-christ-401-p.asp

(or ring Brenda on 01289 388235 to order your copy).

Shirley Searle cares for the beehives which produce the Community's honey - always a popular delicacy!

She told us that the bees are having a very rough time: disease is a real threat, and weather conditions over the Autumn and Winter have made things more difficult than usual...

We should remember to pray for God's creation, giving thanks for the order and sustenance it provides.

*Einstein wrote this about bees:
"If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left"*

Time to pray...



Pilgrim Adventure

The boat swayed, gently rising and falling on the rolling green of the sea. "It's run out of Guinness" a voice called from somewhere near the stern...

Pilgrim Adventure was born in 1987. Since then it has been a journey! We have travelled to many of the most remote and seemingly inaccessible places of pilgrimage in the British Isles, shuddered and laughed together at some of the predicaments encountered along the way, and known the delight of discovering places where for centuries people have felt especially close to God - sacred places, places of pilgrimage...

Late afternoon, September 14th, and twelve pilgrims are on board the old Mail boat noisily pushing its way through a breezy sea toward Inishbofin island, a few miles off the coast of County Galway... Mid-way through the voyage a sudden judder from the engines broke the friendly banter of the travellers and we stood in unexpected silence, save for the wash of the sea against the hull and the cry of Gulls over head. We were adrift! The boat swayed, gently rising and falling on the rolling green of the sea. "It's run out of Guinness", a voice called from somewhere near the stern...

At length we were strung out at a safe distance behind a slightly larger, slightly newer vessel and with a roar of our rescuers engine we once more headed for the island...

If you would like to find out more about Pilgrim Adventure do make contact, we should love to hear from you

David Glead.

Pilgrim Adventure. South Winds, Culver Park, Tenby. Pembrokeshire. SA70 7ED.

Tel: 01834 844212

Email: pilgrim.adventure@virgin.net
www.pilgrim-adventure.org.uk



The new programme for Nether Springs is now available, taking you from April 2009 to April 2010. We wanted to take this opportunity to highlight a few of the retreats available.

GRIEF AND LOSS – 8-10 May

Come and journey with others who are seeking God in the midst of loss. An opportunity to explore grief, share stories and listen to God in a safe space.

RE-IMAGINING CHURCH – 22-24 May

A led retreat exploring church; an opportunity to consider what is essential, what is desirable, what is context specific, what is simply past practice. How can church nurture, inspire, equip and send as it was intended to? What do the 'monastic locations' of Cloister, Refectory, Scriptorium, Chapel, Garden and Cell have to teach us?

This retreat will be led by George Lings who heads up the Church Army's research unit - The Sheffield Centre. George specialises in Church Planting and Fresh Expressions, and Anglican ecclesiology. He writes the quarterly publication 'Encounters on the Edge' and is a companion of the Northumbria Community.

COME AWAY WITH ME

This is the new title for what used to be 'Private Retreat' or 'Seeking God'. This is an opportunity to take time out to seek the Lord, focusing on our relationship with Him, with ourselves and with others, with individual accompaniment each day. There is at least one of these each month.

BEING WHO YOU ARE

This is a new retreat offering an opportunity for a spiritual check-up including some individual guidance in the context of each person's unique story. Dates this year are 27-30 July, 21-24 September, 5-8 October, 2-5 November.

TRAINING IN THE NEW MONASTIC WAY

This is a series of led retreats for companions and novices highlighting different aspects of monastic spirituality and the inner journey that lie at the heart of the Northumbria Community. The first four days include the teaching and we have deliberately followed them with a quiet weekend in which to reflect. Other titles this year are: 11-17 May – Living Alone Together; 6-12 July – Creativity and the Arts; 17-23 August – The Heart Alone with God; 14-20 September – Treasures in Darkness; 12-18 October – The Beautiful Attitudes; 16-22 November – Introduction to Spiritual Disciplines. See the full programme for more details.

Norma Charlton tells us about a 'new' venture:

NORTHERN ARK 2009

Calling 'pilgrims, poets and painters, prophets and pioneers' - Christian people gathered as the family of God to have fun and learn together, to focus on God and build relationships, to encourage and to challenge and be equipped to live as disciples of Jesus in our daily lives.

Come and join in a family camp at Hollybush, near Thirsk in Yorkshire from 16th - 22nd August. Be in at the beginning to lay the new foundations of **Northern Ark**, the successor to Northern Light (with which NC has been involved over the past few years). Come - spend a week in the field of dreams and catch God's vision for his people.

There will be children's activities and NC will again be setting up a 'Sacred Space'.

Numbers this year are limited, so if you are interested contact Norma Charlton, tel: 0191 4878065
email: norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org

This seems like a good place to include a few snippets from Ruth Barling, which she sent to tell us of her experiences in using Sacred Space during a difficult time in her life:

"It was the last thing I felt like doing but I went for the day..."

"I found a beautiful place with an inner tent of colour radiating from the centre and many separate places for prayer, with suggestions for using water, stones, wood, paper and much more for reflection and opening to God..."

"As I sat and prayed, I felt myself opening to God's presence more and more..."

"...when a young girl offered to tie a bow in my picture like hers, it was as God's hand to me..."

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. Please send them and we will try to include them in the next edition. Send them to the Office, or by email to prayerguide@northumbriacommunity.org



We asked one or two folks to give us some reflections on the

Community Group leaders weekend

On the weekend of the 1st February, a group of over 50 excited and enthusiastic community group leaders and members burst in through the doors at Hetton for another fun-packed community group leaders weekend. We personally had the privilege of bringing the youngest group member present (14 months) but all ages and most groups were represented with people from as far as the USA and the Netherlands. It was a fantastic experience: loud, chaotic, lots of laughter, great discussion, storytelling and experience-sharing. The Saturday night ceilidh was an experience not to be missed, and the blessing service on Sunday touched many people's hearts as we were given a white stone to remember that God has a special name for each of us and loves us individually, and as each community group was welcomed and blessed. Those groups without members present were carried forward by other groups. The best bits? Meeting such wonderful people from all over the country (and the world) and recognising that even though each group does things slightly differently, the principles of availability and vulnerability tie us all together in the daily struggle to live life in our 'ordinary' situations at home.

Phil and Dave Sage

It was lovely to be back at the Mother House again, meeting old friends and making new ones. This was the first group leaders' weekend for us as we only started leading the Worcestershire group in 2008. The atmosphere throughout the weekend was one of relaxed anticipation, very friendly and caring. We enjoyed Roy's teaching session, which was very thought provoking. This was further reinforced by discussion, sharing and listening in small groups, and praying for each other. We want to thank everyone present for their encouragement and willingness to share ideas, resources and group activities that they have found successful – there is a lot to digest and think about, and we are sure that the teaching we received will enhance our group sessions in the future.

Of course there was also time for fun, especially the ceilidh on Saturday evening – boy, what talent people brought to the occasion! Two weeks on and we are still remembering the blessings and the laughs that we had. Thanks and well done to everyone.

If any one event stands out to both of us it is the 'Commissioning Prayer' after Midday Office on the last day. We were both moved and encouraged by this.

Jan & Terry Ansell

Have you 'moved'?

Please remember to let Ellen know at the Community office if you change any of your contact details - including your email address! She runs a very tight database, and doesn't like it when information is unreliable...

You wouldn't want to miss an edition of Caim, would you?!

Let her know on 01289 388235 or office@northumbriacommunity.org

Some news about the Cuddy Duck:

A mixture of reasons lies behind the decision not to re-open The Cuddy Duck this year.

Despite the support we received, and the commitment of a few dedicated people, it was a struggle and pressure to run the shop in the way we had hoped.

With the Cloisters Review at the fore of our attention on trading activities, and other pressing Community matters, together with Roy and Shirley's family and housing needs, it was decided to 'mothball' the Cuddy Duck for a season - during which time we can give further thought and reflection as to what is the most appropriate way of trading and being a presence on the High Street in Wooler.

We are really grateful for the contributions, products and support that we have received from people, and for everyone who helped us in supplying, buying, praying and supporting the venture.

Jean Watson, Linsi Phillips & Shirley Searle



The newsy bit



Date for your diary:

Community Gathering in Scotland

Milnathorpe, Saturday 11th July, 2009

Congratulations to the following companions who have married this year:

Linsi Simmons to William Phillips in January.



Sue Hall to Mike Heimbecker on 21 February.

Joanna Hay to Ian Dobson in Retford on 14th March.



We've received sad news of Friends of Community who have died recently:

Edith Searle, Roy's mum, died in December last year.

Ada Hinkley, Freda Miller's mum, died in February this year.

Alan Southwell, a dear friend of some in the Community, died on 5 April in Andover after a long illness. He kept in very prayerful touch with what was going on in the Community; and we will always be grateful for his loving restoration of the bell which now hangs outside the chapel at Hetton Hall and, appropriately, calls us all to prayer.



Shayla Waugh joined the monastic team at Hetton Hall in January. This is her at work during the recent Radio 4 broadcast! (See pg 6)

Special Regional Gathering

for current and potential Group Leaders and/or Group representatives

Normally we hold a weekend for Group Leaders at Nether Springs towards the end of January each year, which is always well attended. But we recognise how difficult it can be to get to.

So we have arranged to hold a special meeting in St Catherine's Church in **Birmingham** on **Saturday 16th May**. There will



be opportunity to learn from each other and find out 'what's going on' in Community - all within the rhythm of the monastic day.

The aim is to start at 10am and finish at 4.30pm with a Blessing Liturgy.

If you'd like to come please will you register with Lynda Robinson by 1st May, preferably by email: lynda@timuk.org or write to 147 Northfield Road, King's Norton, Birmingham, B39 1EA

'Northumbrian Hospitality' offered:

Companions Rob & Catherine Davies welcome any travellers in Northumberland for a cuppa, a prayer, a meal or even a bed at their home in Alnwick. tel:07855901816 kate@pilgrimpath.net

© 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