



CAIM

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

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

After a difficult journey, Pete Askew tells the story of how we came

HOME AT LAST!

On Sunday the 13th of February 2011 the words of the day 13 meditation were read aloud for the first time in our new 'Nether Springs' at Acton Home Farm.

How apt and moving they were as we sat and prayed after this long journey to our new home, "...What is it that you want?' And she said to him, 'Give me a blessing, for you have given me this dark, desert land; now give me also springs of water.' And her father gave her the upper and the nether springs." This was the first day that the Community had been able to gather at our new Mother House, and the story of Achsah and Othniel from the book of Judges was a clear reminder of God's faithfulness and provision for us as a Community after the turmoil of leaving Hetton Hall.



It is so wonderful to be here, almost unbelievable. We have been greatly blessed with this place of simple beauty and peace. 'Nether Springs' has been at Acton Home Farm for over a month now, and the buildings that were so recently a building site are being made a home by the many Companions, Friends and visitors that are coming here. The place feels new, and yet also somehow very familiar, a real sense of

this being a continuation of our story. The rhythm of the day unfolds to the ringing of the same bell, but its sound fills a different space in this new and exciting chapter of our Community's life. *Cont'd on Pg3*



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We find these little snippets so encouraging:

"I received my copy of CAIM today, and have got 'stuck into it'. It's truly inspirational. I'm in Australia, living in Residential Care with 59 others, with a narrow range of ages - 80 to 105. I'm a mere boy at 86, and

celebrated the Eucharist in the Anglican Cathedral today - I love sharing my experience of my Lord God's Love. May our Beautiful Lord God, enrich you all. Your prayerful 'companion' Rob de Caen, (fr.)"

"I am no good with formalities, so I'll just come out with it: I really enjoy reading Caim. Keep up the good work." Raymond Lonser (Arizona)

"I'm a novice solitary, a contemporary Nazarite - it's a short term vow. The Celtic Daily Prayer Book has been tonic to my soul and companionship on a lonely road. Thank you - it is beautiful, it's unique, it's community. Rosie"

Sarah Berry told us about a Friend called Bill Clementson: 'he pastors a home church in NJ. He regularly sends very encouraging letters through the mail. He has never had any face to face contact with the Community but loves our liturgy and uses it in his church. He always writes positive and grateful notes. Here is an excerpt from his last letter:

"I really appreciate the Northumbria Community... I like being a Friend of the Community as opposed to a minister of an established denomination or completely autonomous and doing my own thing. I like the 'out of the box' modern monastic outlook of the Community which keeps Christianity accessible and gives it a clear focus. I intend to keep in contact and donate when I can..."

"Thank you for having the daily office, scripture readings, and other resources available on your website. Having access to these resources is helping me work through a rough patch in my spiritual journey and allows me to focus without the trappings of religion as I know it." Tina Krumnow

Welcome to the Spring edition of Caim!

Despite our best efforts and intentions to move to Acton Home Farm in November, it didn't quite work out, and we were frustrated... and yet now, it feels so very appropriate to be settling into our new home just as the days lengthen and the earth brings forth its new life. So much promise, and so much to be thankful to God for, in these Lenten days. Enjoy this issue of Caim!

Jeff & Ingrid

Stories from the Future



There will be a weekend conference at Sneaton Castle Centre Whitby 2-4

Sep 2011 – hosted by the Order of the Holy Paraclete, the Northumbria Community and the Anabaptist Network (imagine them as three strands of a guide rope) – exploring the not-too-far-away future of our society and culture, surmising how we might be 'singing the Lord's song' in this strange land, building on the foundations of old to embrace a fearful hope for this future. More details are on the insert included with Caim—don't miss it!

Community M@il

If you've received a paper copy of Caim in an envelope, then we'd like you to consider whether you could live with an email copy.



A good proportion of Friends and Companions choose to receive their regular communications electronically now. This obviously saves money for Community, by reducing printing and mailing costs - but it also means that they

can easily receive more communication from Nether Springs.

There are certain documents which we can only send by email - eg the quarterly Overseers report, and the occasional Community Visitors' report. Many recipients tell us how interesting and insightful they are, and how they help to build a picture of what's going on in Community.

We do understand that sometimes there's nothing quite like settling down for a good read with Caim in your hand. If that's how it is for you, that's fine - we'll carry on sending Caim in an envelope for you.

But if you think you might prefer to give the email version a try - and remember that the photos are in colour in that version! - then drop Ellen an email office@northumbriacommunity.org and she will make the necessary arrangements.



Cont'd from Pg 1

As the Mother House of the Community, in this new context, we're still exploring what it means to offer Heart, Home, Hospitality, Hope; to be the place where the administration and the finances of the Community are looked after, to offer a facility for study and learning, and, most importantly, to be a space for the alone and together where God is sought, and 'where the poor in spirit sing'.



It feels like a place of renewed purpose where the 'monastic' and the 'missional' sit closer together, as we, in this neighbourhood, find an outworking of our Rule of Life. We've been warmly welcomed by the local churches and have already made some good friends in the village. There's a sense of connectedness here that wasn't so easy at Hetton because of its geographic isolation, and maybe this is an illustration for our whole Community as we look to the future.

At the rebuilding of the Abbey on Iona, George Macleod prayed a prayer that puts voice to our own prayers. He said, "It is not just the interior of the walls, it is our own inner beings you have renewed. We are your temple not made by hands. We are your body. If every wall should crumble, and every church decay, we are your habitation. Nearer are you than breathing, closer than hands and feet. Ours are the eyes with which you, in the mystery, look out in compassion on the world. So we bless you for this place, for your directing of us, your redeeming of us, and your indwelling. Take us 'outside the camp', Lord, outside holiness, out to where soldiers gamble, and thieves curse, and nations clash at the crossroads of the world... So shall this building be justified."

This is a reminder that this wonderful new building that has been given to us cannot be an end in itself, it has been given so that we might give.

The physical move to Acton Home Farm is now complete, but the transition into this new chapter of our Community's life is still continuing as we build on the foundations of old, and seek God for his purposes for



us in this amazing place. Pray for 'Nether Springs' as it settles into its new home, giving thanks to God for His provision, for the generosity of those who have contributed towards realising a vision – particularly for Alan & Eileen Ferguson - our landlords and our friends. Pray too for the work yet to be done and the life to be lived here. Come and join with us as we seek God in this place, and build a new home together.

There have been a number of house blessings, by individuals and groups, at Acton Home Farm since the 13th February, as Companions and Friends greet our new home. Easter Workshop this year will be a significant time for this, so please come if you are able, or pray a blessing for our new home, wherever you are, on Easter Sunday morning. *Pete Askew*



The physical move to Acton Home Farm is now complete, but the transition into this new chapter of our Community's life is still continuing as we build on the foundations of old, and seek God for his purposes for us in this amazing place.

In the aftermath of the terrible earthquake and tsunami in Japan recently, Roy wrote to assure Jean Wilson, a Community Companion living and working there, of our prayers. After many days she was able to write back, and what follows are excerpts from her email.

Thank you for your prayers. I don't really know what to write you. I've been feeling overwhelmed... feeling stressed out and extremely tired, and also have a kind of seasickness, something many people are complaining



about. In three days... there were over 250 aftershocks; the buildings shake violently in a rolling movement, like being on a ship; every 20-30 minutes we were running/ducking for

safety... they still happen every day, and six of them have been big enough to have been headline earthquake news under normal circumstances.

Please pray for all those physically affected by the quake; those who have lost family members, school or workmates; those whose loved ones have not been found (about 14,000 as of this writing); children who have been orphaned; those who have been traumatised; the elderly who are too sick etc to look after themselves.

Pray for hope. Japan is a group culture, where one's identity is found in the group (family, school, company,



are or why they are alive. I foresee isolation as a major problem.

Pray for speedy recovery of infrastructure--power services, trains and roads. Many, many thousands of schools and hospitals were destroyed.

Of course also the economy. Many manufacturing plants were destroyed, thus having a knock-on effect on other sectors of the economy and international business, too.



Pray for speedy resolution and repair of all nuclear problems, and God's protection for the people... and healing of the land. Pray for our safety. Pray for God's mercy on this nation and the pouring out of His Spirit to heal it.

Let me stop there. Please encourage people not to come in person or send goods for now. There is not enough infrastructure to deal with that. If anyone wants to help, please do so financially through the Japanese Red Cross.

Thanks, Jean

neighbourhood etc) one belongs to, rather than as an individual. Some people have lost their family, home and workplace in one fell swoop. They will not know who they

EASTER WORKSHOP 21-25 April 2011

CHANGING LANDSCAPES:

Remembering the past, reflecting on the present, reimagining the future



The Community has changed and grown since its beginnings in ways that no-one could have imagined. We are moving from a time of withdrawal to a time of being more open and visible, emphasising more community places without losing the importance of the solitary. We continue to journey without maps but have laid down some clear contours. There is a greater coherence now. God has watered and brought life and transformation, and we are seeing the desert in bloom. We now have more stories, songs, maps, Community Houses, and other initiatives.

Not only the Community but the cultural context of thirty years ago is very different to now. This Easter Workshop is an opportunity to consider what are the seeds sown in us in the desert time which can now be translated to the current situation? How can we be like Aidan and Cuthbert speaking prophetically into society and affecting life around? We also need to recover a little bit of the apostolic in living out the story: building, designing, creating, engaging, transforming, making things happen, making the difference. We need to imagine and experience new landscapes.

Alongside this we will be remembering the story of Holy Week from the Last Supper, through the Stations of the Cross and the midnight Vigil to the joy of Easter Sunday. The weekend will be based at the Mother House at Acton Home Farm. We will gather round Aidan's statue for midday prayer and before leaving Holy Island will renew our vows of Availability and Vulnerability.

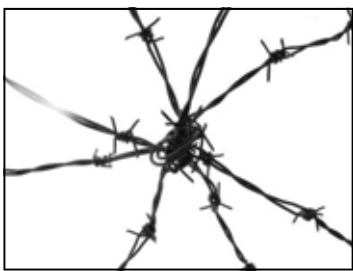
For further information about the programme, or to book a place, please email office@northumbriacommunity.org or call 01670 787645.

Roy Searle reflects on

A New Season

I enjoyed walking along the stretch of St Cuthbert's Way near our home, while celebrating this Saint's Day on March 20th.

Listening to the birdsong, seeing the fields and hedgerows bursting into new life with buds and blossom, I experienced nature heralding the coming of Spring. Blue skies, sun shining, it was a perfect day. Looking out towards the coast (as Cuthbert must have done all those centuries before), I turned to pray and then came the reminder and realisation that beyond this gentle, pleasant land is a world in turmoil. The shadow of uncertainty hangs over a turbulent Middle East, and Japan is gripped by fear in the aftermath of the terrible earthquake and tsunami. In prayer I pondered the fact that, as in Cuthbert's day, we too live in a period of instability, violence and conflict.



Pausing to take in the scenery I remembered that just a couple of months ago this walk was all but impossible because the land was under two feet of snow. It was bitterly cold, laden with ice, providing a heady mix of the beautiful and the bleak. Yet now, on this day it is so different because Spring has come. It is a reminder that the God who created the heavens and the earth can bring Spring out of Winter, light out of darkness, hope from despair and new life where once was death. Walking the ancient paths brings inspiration, and a prayer that in our age of change and uncertainty God might be planting the seeds of renewal and hope and showing us how to live in a world where everything is being shaken.

There's a real sense that we have entered a new season in the life of the Community. It would be easy to see the relocation of Nether Springs to Acton as the only major sign of this. Certainly, Acton is a wonderful sign of God's

provision, but it is only one of the many signs of new life and growth. This year for instance, we will be 'officially' recognising the establishment of three other Community Houses - in France, Herefordshire and Oxfordshire. The stream of folks connecting with the Community continues to grow and each month we welcome new people into the Novitiate process.



Writing this in the Belgian Ardennes, I am conscious of the small but significant movement of Companions and Friends across Europe, and the development of partnerships with individuals and communities with whom we share a common heart and a similar path. Commitment to the renewal or re-imagining of church increasingly means that we are engaged with initiatives and ventures beyond the walls of the church.

Monastic at heart, missional in expression, this new season is deepening our calling to live out our vocation in the midst of ordinary, everyday life, as we are engaging with the world all around us. We continue to be contemplatives in a world of action, serving the city with a heart for the desert, living out the gospel in a changing post Christendom Western culture. The stability of the monastic way gives us a rootedness from which flows creativity, imagination, adventure, courage and the confidence of faith to embrace the call of availability and vulnerability - which is for us all a call to risky living.

Thank God for the Mother House and other homes, places of prayer, welcome and hospitality - key kingdom values. They are signs of new life and growth, as well as a reminder of God's Spirit at work in the many fresh expressions and initiatives that we are experiencing alone and together as a Community. Thank God for the Springtime! *Roy Searle*



Programme of retreats 2011 at L'Abri à Suvigny

Community Work Week – 17th to 21st April 2011 – An opportunity to come for a few days of monastic rhythm and helping. Suggested donation – €20 / £16 pounds pppd

Easter Weekend – 21st to 24th April 2011 – A time to reflect, and an opportunity to renew vows at the shrine of Columbanus. Suggested donation – €25/£20 pounds pppd.

De Spil Work Week 1 – 31st July to 7th August 2011. For rates, contact De Spil at victor@retraitecentrum.nl

Family Holiday Break – 8th to 13th August 2011 – an opportunity for people from the Community and beyond

to have a holiday enjoying the surroundings, within the monastic day.

Suggested donation – €20 / £16 pounds pppd.

De Spil Work Week 2 – 14th to 21st August 2011 – a second week of Dutch friends coming to help within the monastic rhythm to the day.

Day visitors and children – we suggest any contribution in cash or kind that you feel appropriate. Please do not stay away for financial reasons.

Please feel free to browse our website:
www.northumbriacommunityinfrance.net

A report from Liz Brobyn, leader of the Forest of Dean Community Group, about the

Community Group Leader's Weekend – February 2011

What a valiant effort was made to try and get our new Nether Springs ready for the Group Leaders' weekend!



Unfortunately, due to some vital unfinished work we were unable to stay there. All was not lost however and we were able to use the village church in Felton for all our Friday and Saturday activities; accommodation was found for the weary travellers and Ann managed, without any help, to provide us with the most delicious meals.

The change in venue did not stop us from doing all that had been planned and the larger area of the church lent itself very well to the different prayer stations which were set out.



At the Saturday evening ceilidh, ably steered by Vince Smith, we were royally entertained again by many gifted people

who played, sang, read poems, told stories, jokes and funny anecdotes.

We had discussion groups where we were able to exchange helpful ideas and encourage each other, and Catherine came to tell us more about the novitiate process.

We realized that being together was the most important thing and it didn't matter where we were, though I know we were all very pleased to find that we could go to Acton Home Farm on Sunday for our final day.

I think it made that day even more special and as we said Morning Prayer together I know I wasn't the only one who shed a few tears. The readings were significant and afterwards our new landlords, Alan and Eileen Ferguson, who came to share this first Office, were introduced and stayed for coffee and a chat.

We were then all able to contribute in a very important way by blessing each area of the house, which also gave us the opportunity to check out each part of the new building.

It has all been done beautifully and visitors will experience '5 star' accommodation. It was very reassuring though to see on the walls and in the other parts of the building, pictures, furniture and objects which had been a familiar sight at Hetton Hall.



There is still work to be done outside, but that did not detract from the beauty of the setting and the surrounding

area. It was a memorable time and I felt privileged to be a part of it. *Liz Brobyn*

Liz modestly doesn't mention that the Sunday was extra special for her – it was her birthday and she was received into NC as a Companion, along with Paul Waite from Wooler.

Reflections from the Group Leaders' Weekend

We had a really special time. After such a long time of waiting, it was fantastic to see the new Mother House. It marks the start of making it a real home, and a clear waymark on our journey. *Dave Puls*

Such a lovely weekend. It was great to share with the House Team the strong sense of 'arriving after a long journey'. So good to meet with other group leaders and to learn from each other. We can't wait for our next visit.

Jan & Terry Ansell

This was my first group leaders weekend. I arrived feeling very

much a newcomer, and not entirely convinced that group leadership was part of my calling. I left with a much broader and deeper understanding of who and what we are as a Community, and a firmer sense of being in the right place. So I'd like to say thank you for the kindness and companionship, for the lifts in already over-loaded cars, for the good-natured room sharing, for prayers and humour and for the creativity that keeps life going despite the unexpected or the down right adverse. It was quite a weekend! *Judith Hayden*

For me the weekend was about connectedness, being a part of something bigger, yet rooted in reality of 'where I am' or even 'who I am'. It re-assured, strengthened, envisioned...

Doreen Sparey Delacassa

As the first guests began to arrive at the new Mother House, we asked them to write a very short 'first impression'. Here are excerpts from a selection of them:



The key impression is that this is a lovely new home which will be a delight for the house team to live and work in - and an ideal place to 'come away' for those who visit. The feeling is one of light airiness, with comfortable rooms around a 'real' cloister. Being all-new, it is snug with mod-cons all around - what a contrast to Hetton! But there are plenty of Hetton touches in the furniture and feel of the place to ensure continuity between the old and the new.

The cloister is a sun-trap out of the wind; once it has flowers, tubs, seats, etc around it, it will be a great place to just 'be'. The lounge, with lots of windows and light, looks out over the new car park and the trees where the walled garden lies and the chapel will be when it is built; and then out over rolling farmland to the sea in the distance. It will be a good place for quiet contemplation and for gathering together.

Ellen is installed in her new office; and the library is full of books. There is food in the larder and good smells from the new kitchen. The Hetton dining tables are ready for prolonged laughter and sharing over meals. *Ian Corsie*



Light and airy, comfortable and modern, secluded and beautifully designed. Enough of Hetton to make it feel like home, yet unmistakeably a brand-new start for Nether Springs.

And so it seemed apt to make my Community vows here this weekend, conscious that I too have been travelling in this direction for many months, and there is still much to be done in my life! Yet whatever the next phase of life may hold, for Nether Springs or me, we travel together, the people of God in Community, looking to Him and to each other. I can't wait!

Julie Lazonby

It's been a joy to see the building site slowly but surely be tidied up and become the Community's New Mother House. Many items: bells, office cards, rickety aga stools, memorable furniture and particular fittings, etc have been carried from Hetton Hall by those who journeyed on foot as a pilgrimage, or in the many van and car loads. However the ethos, the feel and heart of our home has been taken there by those who have begun to live in, visit or stay at Acton Home Farm, those who carry in their hearts the Northumbria Community as part of who they are. It is beautiful, praise God.

Joanna and Ian Dobson



We had a super time meeting with other group leaders, and of course it was an honour to see the new House in readiness! *Sally Hardman*

Who was it who said, "you've got to change to stay the same"? I remember reading it somewhere and was reminded of it on our first visit to Acton Home Farm. It was different.... but at the heart, just the same. Our visit was long anticipated and didn't disappoint - Acton Home Farm is obviously very different from Hetton - new, warm, 21st century living but Community isn't about the building, it's about the people - and so as always it was a delight to catch up and share the offices together in the new mother house of the Northumbria Community! And there was the joy of an en suite bedroom, to boot! *Margaret and Peter Bone*

It was great to see the new Mother House as bricks and mortar, as part of a landscape, as both work completed and work in progress. Yet, so much of what I took away was intangible - the hopes - and the anxieties - we share as we write the next chapter of the community's story; the strength of our prayers as we blessed the new Nether Springs. *Judith Hayden Cont'd on Pg 8*

LANCASHIRE GATHERING

A very successful Northumbria Community gathering was held in January at St. Oswald's Church in Warton, near Carnforth (Lancs).

Di and Vince Smith had been working hard to plan the day and although wild wet weather was battering the old church as it swept in across Morecambe Bay, the welcome and warmth (both human and central-heating!) in the church really made the day special.

I attended with my wife, Julie. A group had come down from Northumberland to help prepare the day and St. Oswald's church was thoughtfully arranged with separate areas to provide prayerful inspiration. The labyrinth was particularly popular. The day was well supported by both people familiar with the Northumbria Community and local people keen to learn. The Vicar, Revd Damian Porter, was very welcoming and supportive.

The day began with worship led by Jeff and Jill Sutheran. We all enjoyed the excellent music, and this was followed

by an illustrated update on the development of Acton Home Farm. Jeff really did a good job in explaining all the changes, and this was much appreciated by those encountering the Community for the first time.

Although most folk had taken their own packed lunches, there was an excellent array of hot soup and cakes available – much appreciated on such a wild winter's day. Revitalized for the afternoon, a choice of sessions had to be made – not easy since they all sounded really interesting. I opted to join Jeff and Jill for a music workshop, which was superb. Julie went to Annie Candeland's "De-stressing" session and came back full of enthusiasm.

As we came away from Warton, we both felt that it had been a really worthwhile and memorable day. The good news is that Di and Vince have been encouraged to build on this and establish a Community Group in the North West (with meetings four times a year). The next one has been arranged for Saturday, 21st May, in Yealand Village Hall (close to Carnforth), starting with mid-day office at 12.30pm. I'll certainly be there! *Lee Johnson*

Cont'd from Pg 7

Our new spiritual home is as warm and welcoming as it has always been and new beds, bedding and an en suite add to the comfort. The potential of the immediate surroundings is starting to show through the work in progress and the view of the sea on a clear day is a joy.

Jenny Cooper



Staying at Acton:

Acton is a big change from Hetton - no sense in trying to pretend otherwise. However, for me the moment of 'coming home' was saying the familiar and deeply life giving words of the office together in the new lounge - then Acton Home Farm truly became 'Nether Springs' and all the differences disappeared.

The landscape and surroundings are new yet feel familiar. The people are reassuringly the same - so the transition was easy. The neighbours and village folk are friendly (and there's a very nice pub in the village for being 'missional'!)

The monastery team are a wonder - after delays, and more delays and yet more delays - they moved in...sort of... and immediately began welcoming folks, catering, caring, laundering, and cleaning. Things still to be put away,

storage to be found, things installed or finished, messes still being made, workmen still on site, electricity being disrupted at a moment's notice, things being moved, moved again, and moved again - and they all still functioned with cheerful good humour and made it all look easy. Watching Availability and Vulnerability being lived out in the midst of all of this was truly inspirational - Well done you all!



I made a point of sitting in every chair and sofa in Caedmon and loved the view and aspect from each one - so much light! One direction are the far fields and low hills - another the

woods and fields beyond, another the soon to be garden lined by trees - or one can sit around the corner near the fireplace, hunker down and withdraw into snoozy contemplation with the Prodigal Son. Looking back towards the courtyard at sunset (evening prayer) provides a glimpse of pink and purple and orange through the far cottage windows... *Sarah Berry*

It took me about 3 minutes to feel at home at Acton Home Farm. Long enough to drop my bags, poke my head around the lounge door, then walk to the dining room and get my first offer of tea!

It was the same as Hetton but not, it is rooted in the traditions of the Nether Springs, but it has a new road to walk. Two weeks on the team left me intrigued and hopeful about how and where our new Nether Springs will flow. *Caroline Ramsey*

What motivates you?

I've been reading "Drive" by Daniel Pink (a Willow Creek Global Leadership Summit speaker) on what motivates people. He says that for simple tasks carrots and sticks may work, but for anything more complex and creative they are ineffective - even counterproductive. His point is that we are motivated by "Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose." In other words self motivation comes when we feel a sense of ownership and can see opportunities to improve the way we do things set in the context of a bigger, clear purpose.



Thinking about this recently it struck me how this mirrors many aspects of my relationship with God. Although he is the ultimate authority he gives me a massive amount of autonomy and freedom to decide

what to do, where and when. He puts me in the driving seat in my relationship with him and asks - well how much of me do you really want? Rev 3:20 comes to mind - "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." The handle is on the inside of the door.

I don't think God motivates by using carrots and sticks - although there are many rewards in being a Christian and clear boundaries not to be crossed. God's approach seems to be mostly about encouraging each of us to be autonomous in the sense of taking ownership and working things out for ourselves (Phil 2:12 working out your own salvation etc). At the same time he is wanting and encouraging us to become more skilled and effective in the things that we do, and all this is set within the context of a big picture and purpose which stretches from now creation to new creation.

Just writing this makes me feel mightily motivated already! God's way of motivating is just so affirming.
Adrian Smith

Ross Baptist Church

Community Team/Regional Gathering

When Ross Baptist Church enquired about a Team visiting them in February this year, it seemed an ideal opportunity to maximise the resources and people to combine a number of 'events' over the weekend. On the Friday, a Leaders Day was arranged jointly with the Heart of England Baptist Association, with the theme 'Slow down you move too fast'. Over 40 Church leaders paid to come to the day which was led by Roy. The charge for the day helped to offset the costs to Ross BC of the team coming for the weekend. The feedback from this day was very positive.

On the Saturday morning a series of seminars and opportunities for response was held for 36 members of Ross BC on the theme "God in Everyday Living" - Finding sacred sanctuary in the midst of life's busyness. The teaching sessions were led by Roy and Lesley. At 1:00 our Regional Gathering began and we were joined by about 40 Friends, Companions, and newcomers - including several who had travelled all the way from Barnstaple in Devon! After a shared lunch Roy addressed the group; we then had a time of sharing and news; and rehearsed for the evening's Celtic Fire - the story of Aidan.

At 5:00pm we were joined by over 40 folk from Ross BC for a shared meal. Ross BC had arranged to cook several generous dishes of lasagne, and the Community folk provided all the salads and puddings. It was a great time of fellowship together. Many more folk from Ross then joined us for the evening.

One of the delights of the evening was the demonstration of inclusiveness expressed through the opportunity given to those for whom the gathering was their first experience of Northumbria Community. They were invited to take part in the Celtic Fire portrayal of the life of Aidan and really seemed to appreciate being part of the music group and 'choir'.

The weekend then finished with a service on the Sunday morning at which Roy preached. *Duncan & Lesley MacLean*

The Bell

In a world of noise,
Of jingles and personalised tunes,
This ancient sound
Reaches a deeper part of me.

Sometimes a loud clang
Reflecting the force and passion of the
user.
Sometimes, soft and gentle.
At best, a round ringing sound,
Singing its music
With power and purity,
Calling the listener to a deeper place.

I wonder
At the simplicity
of brass struck on brass.

The sound penetrates my soul,
A simple, pure note
Summoning me to eat, to pray, or
worship.

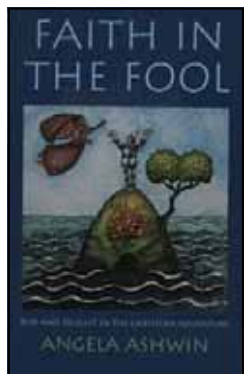
Stephen Hewitt



Robin Old writes about a book he's found helpful:

FAITH IN THE FOOL – RISK AND DELIGHT IN THE CHRISTIAN ADVENTURE – ANGELA ASHWIN

(Published by Darton, Longman and Todd 2009. ISBN978-0-232-52770-4)



This book explores numerous aspects of “foolishness” from a Christian perspective. It’s short, engagingly written chapters are sometimes humorous, sometimes sad, always thought provoking and never condemning. This is not a book of pious theories about how to be a Christian: the characters she writes about have “walked the walk”.

Although Angela tells me she has not been especially influenced by “Celtic Christianity” the ethos of this book is close to that of the Northumbria Community. It is ideal for anyone on private retreat especially because you can dip into it at any point, and you don’t have to read it all to benefit from its wisdom. She writes “The fools who appear in this book cover a huge range of human experience, from intense happiness and uproarious fun to searing pain and weakness”. Further information about this and Angela’s other books can be found at www.angelaashwin.com. *Robin Old*

We received one or two reflections from the ‘Thanksgiving Day’ idea, in preparation for leaving Hetton:

Thanksgiving – a Red Letter Day.

Word comes from Nether Springs:

Let’s make Thanksgiving Day a link with USA, Hetton and Acton.

Emails travel back and forth between Glossop, Belper and Tyneside.

Then a message goes to Companions within travelling distance of Buxton:

Shall we meet November 25th at Pavilion Gardens to share midday Office and Thanksgiving?

Wear something red and meet up about 11.45 am.

What a lot of people are wearing red!

Eventually eight of us make contact and welcome each other.

It’s bitter cold with snow flurries as we walk to a nearby red berried yew tree by the river.

A robin redbreast sings as we gather together to keep warm.

We share Office and the Thanksgiving Prayers from Nether Springs with photos of Hetton to add many memories.

Quickly we return to the shelter and warmth of Pavilion Gardens and enjoy a meal and fellowship together.

Dates and plans are discussed for gathering together again.

Christmas wishes are shared before we go our separate ways having enjoyed time together, forming new links across the Community. *Jenny Cooper*

Thanksgiving in Andover 25 Nov 2010

A number of folk with connections to the Northumbria Community (many having stayed at Hetton Hall) were invited to meet at the home of John and Janet Butt in Andover over lunch on Thursday 25 November to mark the Thanksgiving for Hetton. Some were of course unable to attend, but Simon and Charlotte Nash, Sheila Few, Lillian Hayes and Margaret Frost joined John and Janet, and Joy and Ian Corsie, who were visiting.

After a simple thanksgiving meal (with much shared hilarity), there was a good time of reminiscence about visits to Hetton Hall and of the links between Andover folk and the Northumbria Community over many years (going back to the time when Roy was invited to be Frank Cooke’s Associate Minister at Andover Baptist Church). There were many funny stories; and also some sadness, particularly surrounding the untimely death of Barry Peters not long after his memorable visit with Heather (leading to the scattering of his ashes in Harthope Valley). Hetton Hall has a special place in the lives of all those in Andover who have visited it.

The time together ended with saying together some of the relevant parts of the Achsah Pilgrimage liturgy. It was a very effective way of ‘moving on’ with the Community from Hetton to Acton.

Cheques for £150 have been sent to the Community Office as a contribution to the costs of the move.

Ian Corsie

Community Groups

are starting in **Belfast, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Lower Normandy, Norfolk and North West (England)** - 21st May. It is also hoped to begin meeting in Kent and Essex.

If you are interested in attending or getting a group together contact Norma Charlton:

norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org or via the Office

Derbyshire - The newly formed Derbyshire group would welcome more members! Our venue is convenient for all of Derbyshire and is only a pleasant drive from Greater Manchester and Cheshire. We meet again on Saturday 16 April and then Saturday 30 July from 11.30 am to 2.00 pm at St Helen’s Church, Darley Dale (just north of Matlock). If you would like more information please email John and Jenny Cooper: jcooper@glossop.co.uk or phone 01457 852740.

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

Day 7 meditation continues the themes from Day 6, but takes them into a different space. The first 'office' book was a handwritten hardbacked exercise-book and in it this is a new page with blank lines between the different thoughts.

The key new thought is the mention of the Lamb 'slain before the foundation of the world'. In Gene Edwards's books 'The Inward Journey' and 'The Divine Romance' we are shown the wonder of God's love for us and glimpses into the mystery of suffering. The greatest secret of all is a lamb, wounded and bleeding, hidden in the heart of God.

Gene Edwards also teaches that most of the Bible is the story of a great and magnificent detour. The main story is there in Genesis 1 and part of Genesis 2 and continues in the last couple of chapters in Revelation. The Fall and its consequences set off a series of events where trouble is not averted but redeemed. None of this was inevitable. There was a lamb hidden in the heart of God before the world was even begun - there had to be before we were created with power to love. Since love is a choice it can never be demanded - only invited. The choice of independence, wilfulness, selfishness and death had to be possible too, even if it was rejected, but as a safeguard there had to be the willingness on God's part to become that Lamb. Even had the Fall not happened that Lamb would still have been there hidden in the heart of God.

The whole thought of a multiplicity of possibilities is mind-blowing. God's government is a moral government, that is He has to work around our ability to make choices. As Ignatius of Loyola teaches, God writes straight with our crooked lines!

We see this idea in the prayer we use in the Hild liturgy:

'In Thy presence show me what I am,
and what Thou hast purposed me to be.
Then hide me from thy tears.'

The Charles Williams passage [quoted on March 9th] has the idea that all the might-have-beens lie hidden under the sea of God's forgetfulness and only in extreme conditions are we likely to catch glimpses of those lost and varied possibilities.

The Blood speaks of redemption. It is more fashionable today to emphasise the goodness of what God created, and rightly so. But sin, evil, failure and entropy do not disappear just because we find them unpleasant. God knows the antidote and offers Himself to create new possible futures. He goes to prepare places for us to run after Him.

Andy Raine



A Northumbrian Week at Lee Abbey, Devon,

Monday 9th to Friday 13th May 2011.

Join Roy Searle, Jeff & Jill Sutheran, Duncan & Lesley MacLean and other Companions & Friends for a Northumbrian Week at Lee Abbey, overlooking the dramatic North Devon coast. Join us for a week with talks, workshops and worship in the relaxed and beautiful surroundings of Lee Abbey. For further information and booking please go to Lee Abbey website www.leeabbey.org.uk Prices from £236.

Online Office

Have you considered joining other Community folk from around the world for our monthly online (sound and vision) Office? Always 19.40 for 20.00 (UK GMT) start of the Office, then chat to follow, held on the first Saturday of every month. If you don't have a webcam or mic there is a simple text chat facility as well. Access the meeting via the Forum and follow the link to Online Office.



Quarterly Updates

In preparation for our quarterly Community Trustees meeting, the Overseers compile a simple 'update' report, which gives an overview of what's going on where. We think this is such a useful update that we email it to every Companion. But we'd like to make it even more widely available - so if you'd like to receive a copy by email each quarter, then please tell Ellen; office@northumbriacommunity.org and she'll add you to the list of recipients.



A full range of Community resources is available from Cloisters. Visit www.cloistersonline.com or give Brenda a call on **01289 318188**.

The newsy bit



New companions



'All things work together for good...' as we discovered when the great British traffic jam made our newest Companion Julie Lazonby and her husband Norman arrive at Nether Springs too late for evening office and her own Welcome Liturgy!

As a result we were able to discover the delights of welcoming in a new Companion around the dinner table. Our humble family meal table was revealed as holy ground as we shared together good food, each other's company and the beautiful words of Welcome and Blessing. It was a wonderful chance to celebrate the love of the Lord we seek, the gift of a new Companion on the journey, and the joys of the messy, ordinary, slightly-off-the-wall life we live. Maybe it would be good to do it this way again without waiting for the A1 to force us!

Liz Brobyn celebrated her birthday in style when she was received into NC as a Companion, alongside **Paul Waite** from Wooler. This took place on the Sunday of the Group Leaders' weekend in February and it was a great way to mark the beginning of Nether Springs at Acton Home Farm.

Jane Perkins writes: **Gillian Warren** from Stebbing in Essex became a Companion on the 12 December by gathering with a small group of family and friends. We had a very special prayerful evening together with a meal and the liturgy as part of the evening.

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

We had a note from Chris Humble recently, and he dropped this into conversation:

"It occurred to me that you and many others may not have heard my great news. I am engaged to be married to Maria. We have been together for a year and I can safely say she is the love of my life!"



David Pott has written to us about the 'Two Saints Way' project, which we hope to include in a future edition of Caim. For now, here's a

pertinent bit of news: "I am going to have a go at walking 65 kilometres (40 miles) along the route from Stoke Minster to Lichfield Cathedral on my 65th birthday! The idea is to raise 65 'Friends of the Two Saints Way' who will sponsor me or agree to give some regular contribution to the project. I've walked 34 miles in a day when I was a spring chicken at 51 and I hope I am still fit enough to make 6 miles more! If you would like to support me on that day, or if you'd like to receive regular updates about the Two Saints Way Project please contact me at dlpott@twosaintsaway.org.uk"



The next **Regional Gathering in the 'South West/Marches/Wales' area** takes place on **Saturday 4 June** and is being arranged

by the Cotswolds Community Group. The venue is a private country house near Cirencester and we will be making use of the beautiful gardens and wonderful setting in Cotswold countryside. It will be an all day event and more details will be posted on the forum and the web site nearer the time. Contact: Bobbie Johns @ 01242 863317 and bobbiejohns@yahoo.co.uk

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