

CAIM

Issue no 25 Summer 2003

The Northumbria Community Newsletter

Welcome to the Summer 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.

Living the Questions...

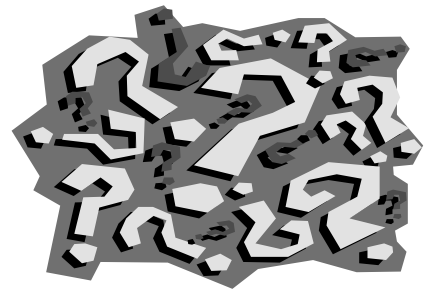
'Can you tell me a little about yourselves? What is the Northumbria Community?' These and many like them are frequently asked questions, which are not always easy to answer; not least because we 'live and move and have our being' in a multiple choice, multiple voice society with huge cultural diversity. We each have to learn to translate and apply our Way for Living of Availability and Vulnerability to and through our own unique circumstances and situations; our differing roles, responsibilities and relationships.

This commitment to adaptability and flexibility makes it very difficult adequately to respond to the many queries put to us about who we are and what we are about as a Community. There are certainly many different yet equally valid expressions we could use but I have found that a helpful, if not oversimplified outline of our Community is the following.

a] We have a Reason to be - Who is it that you seek? Our history is that we have discovered that we are internal émigrés in the changed and changing culture of our Postmodern world. Our multiple choice, multiple voice society has brought the need for reflection, retreat and refuge. Like many other new Communities we have emerged during a time of significant change in both Church and society. Our response has been like that of the Desert Fathers' withdrawal for reflection, of Bonhoeffer's experiment of a Life Together, of Taizé, Iona and L'Arche in moving from an unease with what is to a pioneering of a new way for living in a new situation that offers heart, home, hospitality and hope to many. Our Vocation, of seeking God Alone/Together is an ongoing journey, open to discovery and experimentation in order to embrace, explore and express that vocation,

b] We need a Rule of life - How then shall we live? Not a set of rules that shackle us but a framework that gives both freedom and focus. The discovery of our Celtic heritage and the wisdom of the desert, calling us to 'a new monastic' spirituality gave us a foundational ethos. Our Yes to God is centred in a Yes to Availability and Vulnerability expressed in solitude, hospitality, prayer and Mission, being teachable and open and lived in the world as Church without walls. It is a commitment to living the questions not seeking answers or solutions that are fixed. Not prescriptive but descriptive. Flexible and adaptable, always provoking us to a Way for living in today's world as it is, as internal émigrés on the inner journey, which in turn means putting that into practise

c] We need to adopt a workable Rhythm to our day - How shall we sing the Lord's song..? Drawing from monastic values and spiritual disciplines we seek a workable pattern for our life a day at a time. With the help of our



Daily Office, we live for today, seeking to develop as best we can a balance of Prayer and of Action, so that both alone and together, contemplative and apostolic, solitude and hospitality, intercession and work, cell and coracle become potential ingredients in our day. Whoever we are, whatever we are, wherever we are, we commit ourselves to seek God, know self, in order better to live with others and serve the world of our influence whether it be great or small.

This surely is one meaning of the biblical exhortation *'to work out your own salvation in fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work within you to will and to do of His good purpose.'* Phil 2:12-13

Trevor Miller

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Trust in the Lord...why should I? | 2 |
| Mission Team in Wye, Kent | 4 |
| Ile of Man | 7 |
| Easter Workshop 2004 | 8 |
| Wellspring at Nether Springs | 10 |
| Mad for Mozambique! | 11 |

Trust in the Lord... why should I?

As we gazed at the long stretch of sandy Galway beach & the wide expanse of the Atlantic ocean, Nick commented innocently, "Great place for kids!".

"Yes...if we had any...", I replied angrily as I marched away across the sand.

As I stood on a rocky outcrop, I tried to fight back my tears, and push down my anger. I hadn't meant to react like this, but the ache inside from the loss of two unborn children was unbearable at times. I felt so angry with God. We had waited so long, and with each pregnancy we were given hope only to have it dashed to pieces. The laughter of the children on the beach almost seemed to mock our childlessness.

"Will we ever have a family?" I demanded of God. But God refused to answer. Again I questioned God, clenching my fists. The only answer I got was this:

"You must trust in the Lord with all your heart, Anita, and not lean on your own understanding."

This is not what I either wanted or expected to hear. "Why should I trust you? You've let me down twice," I thought, but the answer was so clear that it had a marked impact on me. For the rest of our holiday in Galway, that phrase went round and round inside my head. I knew it was from the Book of Proverbs. I read it over and over, noting the words which followed.

'Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.'

I resolved to meditate on these words daily and to say them to myself whenever I felt overshadowed by the hopelessness and hurt of our situation. God was making no promises concerning children. Instead, I was being challenged to think about my image of God and our relationship together. The words of the Morning Office began to strike home:

"**Who** is it that you seek?" 'Who' not 'what'. Did I seek God only for what I could gain for myself, or for God's own sake?

While reading the words of the Hild liturgy, 'My soul's desire is to seek your face.', I had to confess that more often than not, I came to God with my own agenda. It is so hard to do, but at that point I knew I had to be willing to lay down all my hopes and dreams, especially the desire for children, and be willing to seek God with no agenda.

I imagine our delight and amazement when several months later I discovered I was pregnant. But with this knowledge came a great fear and anxiety. What if... I dared not hope. We both had to learn to practise Jesus' call to be concerned only for the present day. Again, I remembered the words from Proverbs, and throughout the entire pregnancy, and since the birth of our precious daughter, Erin last January, I have sought to dwell on those words, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." It was very significant and special for us to be on Holy Island as a



family for the Easter Covenant service this year. Three Easters ago, we had stood on a mainland beach at Minehead committing our first child Kim back to God. Then at Skegness a year later, having lost our second child Caelan. Now, we stood on an island looking back at the mainland, renewing our covenant with God and each other, while listening to the cries of our 12 week old daughter. One of our songs, *Carry Me* which was written

over 18 months previously became especially poignant:

*'Before me, horizons of uncertainty
Behind me, the shadows of what
might have been
Be thou my rock, be thou my
constancy
As I am crossing over.'*

Nick and I would like to thank all those friends and companions of the Community, and others whom we have never met, for taking us to their hearts and praying so earnestly for us. We are also grateful for so many of you who were willing to walk alongside us in our grief and pain. We really do value you!

Anita Haigh - May 2003

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.

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 of the Northumbria Community. A brief outline of the background and formation of the Community, as well as its vocation and vision is followed by an explanation of the process required of those considering journeying with the Community.



Greenbelt 2003 'Diving for Pearls' at Cheltenham Racecourse August 22nd-25th.

Twelve folk have so far expressed interest in being Community on site at this year's Greenbelt. Others living locally will join us daily.

We will host a hospitality tent on the campsite itself praying the Daily Offices.

Two local Churches have offered to be responsible for providing soup and cakes one lunchtime each, thus we can offer two lunches and hopefully have enough cakes to offer after Evening office too.

We also hope to encourage informal storytelling and music prior to Compline.

Please support the team by prayer:

Pray for folks attending.

Pray for financial support.

Pray for the Churches that have generously offered lunches and that a third might cover the other day of the festival.

Pray for the Festival management and contributors.

Tickets.

The cost of £75 is reduced by a group ticket. **To see if it's still possible to take advantage of a cheaper ticket price please contact Cathy Turton:**

(cathyturton@northumbriacommunity.org or via Hetton office) as soon as possible.

Anyone able to offer financial contributions to enable someone else to go, please send contributions to the Finance office.

A flag

Does anyone have or could anyone make a suitable flag so our location is easily identified?



Soulfriends

It is now a while since the booklet went out for comment to those what wanted to have a look at the material that Anna Raine developed (with others).

Thank you to everyone who has offered very helpful comments and constructive criticism, which will be incorporated into the booklet where appropriate.

At the last meeting of the Council Amund Karner was asked to work with Anne Hewson and Anne Wadey in this matter. They were asked to consider what Soulfriends means to us and how we could take this forward.

If anyone wants to contribute any experiences of, or questions about, this issue they can get in touch with Amund, Anne or Anne.

Amund.Karner@dnv.com
or 01561 361729).

Ken & Claire Humphrey



Many in the Community will have heard, read about and prayed for, and some will have had the privilege of meeting Ken & Claire Humphrey and their young family, Danny, Sian and their newborn baby Erin.

You will want to add your congratulations to Ken on being awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Ken, supported by Claire and others, has received the award in recognition of his pioneering and developing of the Mornington Community Project in the Lower Ormeau Road area of Belfast.

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. Many of you already do this and know its benefits and blessing. There is also the opportunity to participate in one of the many Led Retreats we are running in the coming months, details of which are in the current programme which is available from the Community Office.



As has been the case on previous occasions, we have need of a decent and reliable vehicle for use at the Nether Springs.

If you are able to help us it would be very much appreciated as we are having a season of troubles and hefty car bills. We could also do with some comfortable chairs for the sitting room.

Please contact the office if you are able to help!

Mission Team in Wye, Kent

In May, a Community team spent a week at Wye, Brook, and Hastingleigh in Kent; churches whose foundations were laid by the Northern Saints.

The following extracts have come from the Parishes. They



give a feel for the remarkable week and the happenings of God's Spirit at work. Clearly a relationship between the Community and the Deanery is being strengthened and deepened as together we walk the ancient paths and see God restoring some broken altars.

"Thank you for coming to us ...for the quiet, reflective times ... for the sense of God's presence, like a breath of calm blowing through the village".

"...It was very thought provoking for us and a special milestone on our personal journey...I feel sure that our paths will cross again."

"Open doors, open hearts, open friendships..."

"This has been such an important week for me, such companionship, such waiting on God, such awareness of the power of God. And

during it, a still quiet moment, a real epiphany moment of self understanding. Thank you all so much."

"To have found a new language to spread the word of life to those who have been unable to be hear..."

"For the life, joy and hope you brought as ambassadors of Christ".

"Thank you for the time to experience new things, peaceful contemporary music, dance, storytelling. May the focus of your worship continue to bring life to many. Thank you for the wonderful new experiences that have brought healing to my soul."

"Thank you Lord because I felt touched by the Holy Spirit for the first time in my life and I am so grateful."

"For the gift of time and space that you brought."

"For being real and authentic, refreshing and cleansing..."



"A beautiful week. I am a strong believer in ministry through music but I have never experienced worship as powerful yet as simple as yours, fantastic."

"This has been a great blessing and privilege to have the Community here this week."

"I have prayed for something like this to happen for many years. Thank you for responding to God's call."

"Not really my cup of tea ... but God created other things besides! Fantastic to draw closer to God in a new way. Thanks."



"Our hearts are knit with yours."

"The Lord gave us added riches to take away with us."

"A monument established to your greatness Lord."

"The intercessory prayers were a great blessing to me, thank you."

"You have given me new hope for the youth of today in finding renewed faith in simplicity and how powerful this can be!"

"Daring to let the Spirit of Christ shine through .. available and vulnerable".

"The presence of the Northumbria Community members among us proved to be a very special time - I feel the better for it!"

"I found the week very uplifting and my house guests were all delightful. It was a lesson to us

Continued opposite...

all to see how people from different denominations can worship together so happily. Maybe the fact that the prayers and music put God first instead of the dreaded 'I' that begins so many modern choruses and songs has something to do with it!"

"Last week was an eye opener! I don't need to elaborate but we both felt enriched by what and whom we saw, heard and experienced."

"... Doing the ordinary everyday things well brings life."

"As a result of the visit, it has been brought home to me that God is not so much far away waiting for me to come to him, but very close by, within me somehow, 'from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet', closer than breathing. I realise that I have been striving for salvation, when salvation is being offered to me, from within my own being, by the Christ who is there waiting for me to discover him. I have a sense of his presence deep in my existence - a presence that I had forgotten about, or perhaps found difficulty in believing was there, but which was actually sustaining me, although seemingly hidden, in the events of my life and relationships. A sense of coming home. Having this vivid awareness of his presence reassures me that, in him, I can love and be reconciled to others. I feel a 'whole' person, as I allow him to release his new life from the depths of my being. I feel a sense of joy and mystery, as I am aware of his Holy Spirit graciously opening up new possibilities and the horizons of eternal life! So, thank you for coming!"

PS We, the Community team, were likewise blessed by the privilege of seeing God at work in the lives of so many that week. Not that it was all sweetness and light; for when the Lord is rebuilding an altar there is bound to be and was evidenced enemy activity e.g. the village hall was the subject of an arson attack, there was a rape in the church yard during the night preceding our final Sunday and a 'hit and run'



incident leaving a child seriously injured. This together with cleansing the land on which pagan practices are evidenced and bringing healing and release to "disturbance" in a couple of houses - It was altogether an eventful week!

The notable memories from the Community team include the warmth and openness of people in their hearts and homes, the rhythm of the daily office saturating the parishes in quiet prayer, the joy, fun, ease of relationship and generosity that derived from working with John Richardson and others, the gathering round the restored stone altar at Brook to pray and share Eucharist, witnessing peoples response to the gentle move of God's Spirit, the love of Christ breaking down barriers of class, culture and persuasion (Roy and Dave actually shared the peace with a clear conscience with some very

entrenched Tories! The laughter and ease of conversation and prayer that sat so comfortably with the more solemn and serious moments, the discovery of the Priest's room in the bell tower and the celebration of the Eucharist on the final Sunday at Wye, which included the reclaiming and blessing of desecrated land with the elements of bread and wine.

Together with very palatable wine and an abundance of good food we feasted on the Lord's grace and goodness. As 'one' says (two of our team spent the first four days anxious to meet 'one' because they seemed to do a lot at Wye!) it was a splendid week!

Throughout Lent through to Pentecost we have witnessed an important period of mission with **Community teams** travelling to Ireland, the



I sle of Man, Midlands, Wales, and Devon, where each one has been privileged to see the initiatives of the Holy Spirit bear fruit with those who have gone and to those to whom they have gone. We also had a team leading the worship, teaching and preaching at the Easter People Conference in Scarborough, which brought a number of newfound friends and a significant number of people seeking to follow Christ in a contemporary age.

Book Review



At Sea with God
by
Margaret Silf
(DLT ISBN
023252438-6895)

Having appreciated Margaret's previous books, (Landmarks, Taste and See, Wayfaring, Sacred Spaces - Stations on a Celtic Way and A Miller's Tale) my eyes were drawn to the title of her latest work especially as I was within days of taking a sailing holiday. The purchase and subsequent read proved to be worthwhile. The book was a good companion during the hours crossing the English Channel and sailing the Normandy Coast.



One does not have to be conversant with the sea or nautical terminology to appreciate this book. The images of seafaring that Margaret takes as a motif for our faith journey are accessible to all readers. We are invited through the book to take an adventure that leaves the securities and safety of the known and familiar to venture out across uncharted waters and their associated uncertainties, risks and challenges as we seek our destination.

As with Margaret's other writings, her awareness of the realities of life's inner journey makes the book a stimulating and helpful tool on our own life of faith.

Prayer Guide

If you would like anything included in the November - February Prayer Guide, please send your requests/ information to the Prayer Guide Team at the Community office by the beginning of October.

General Chapter

Following the changes that were implemented at Easter, the General Chapter of the Community met for the first time this month and an encouraging and real start to the transition process was welcomed and noted by all who were there. This included the new Leadership team, Trustees and Council. There is a real sense of an important spiritual decision having been made and an important step forward with the ongoing life, vocation and vision of the Community. As one person commented, *"It feels both reinvigorating of some of our past and new and fresh concerning our future"*.

Mission Matters

With the growing initiative and opportunity for the Community's teams to serve both the established and emerging church scene, input into culture and also with our commitment to wander for the love of Christ, we are hoping to involve more Companions and Friends on the teams throughout the coming years. If you would like to register your availability and interest in participating in any of these ventures and also if you would like to know more about a Community team coming to your situation, e.g. Church, festival, school, workplace, please contact us at:
mission@northumbriacommunity.org
or Mission Office at Nether Springs.

You can make a difference!

It is with a sense of gratitude and thanksgiving to God that we have over recent years cleared all our debts. We continue to recognise our dependence upon God for his grace and provision and we are thankful too for the people who have blessed us by their giving and financial support.

Nevertheless, it would be a further encouragement if the growth and development of the Community could be reflected in an increase in giving. We continue to live "week by week" and the pressures are, at times, very great.

Please consider your giving to the Community and help us see an increase in regular and, where possible, covenanted giving. This would make a significant and much needed difference to the Community's finances.

Forms for covenanted giving/ standing orders are available from the Community Office. We are thankful for people who have taken new covenants with us in recent months.

For our American Companions, Friends and Supporters who are able and wish to support the Community, please send your donation to our US treasurer:

Nancy Bergstrom,
Applecross House,
315 Fairview Circle,
Wauunakee,
WI 53597,
making checks payable to
Northumbria Community (USA).

Thank you.

As Richard Foster has stated:
"Giving is a crucial spiritual discipline and a great grace."

**You can make a
difference - please do!**





Isle of Man



The Isle of Man - what springs to mind? T. T. races? Manx cats? In reality there is so much more to this beautiful island.

Approaching Douglas on the ferry, catching sight of the land I felt an excitement, an expectancy...for this land had once been renowned for its keeills (tiny chapels) set in burial grounds and often with a holy well (chibbyr) nearby. The remains of over 200 keeills are dotted across the island, once inhabited by hermits, who had dedicated their lives to solitude and prayer. A word given before we left was that the spiritual treasure lay just beneath the surface, the ground hardly needed breaking or turning over, as it was already soaked in the prayer of hermits.

The team, Ronnie, Benny, Mike and myself had not met before or visited the island so we had no preconceptions. Andy facilitated introductions! Our common bond was the love of prayer and solitude, the heart of the hermit. On arrival we were warmly welcomed by Bob and Linda people of immense hospitality. Daily we were delivered to various key sites to pray and wait upon God.

At Maughold Parish Church, myself, Mike and Benny were left to pray in the remains of three keeills, within waving distance of each other - ALONE/ TOGETHER! I found it to be an awesome experience, sensing the prayers that must have saturated the now ruined walls. At the same spot we gathered around a well holding a rope and praying a blessing in response to a word for our team that we would have unity and "deepness".

At Old Lonan Church we were met by Dave, a Manx shepherd. A section of the ruins had been rebuilt into a beautiful chapel and Dave's grandfather and father had been instrumental in the restoration...



We sang Psalm 84 - it was a lovely picture of incorporating the past and building upon it.

My memory is of the people as much as the sacred places...Nigel, racing along the cliff edge, nimble as a mountain goat, tracking a monks path, with his enthusiasm for poustinias and wide ranging knowledge of ancient sites. Dave and Ravina who invited us to share a meal and to bless their new poustinia overlooking I reland. Bob and Andrea who are involved in the restoration of an old mill complete with offices, quiet garden and prayer room. As the week unfolded there was a real sense that we were forerunners,



sent to encourage, stand alongside and pray with believers on the island. We felt God was stirring up His people, bringing a fresh awareness of the treasure and heritage in their midst. Some would discover that they too have the heart of the hermit and would come to value places of solitary prayer - "inward and deepward". A word was given that a day

was coming when God would wear the Western Isles, including the Isle of Man, like a string of pearls, as a bride adorns herself for a wedding.

It was a hectic time, but on returning, with time and space to reflect, my feelings are of thankfulness and wonder. God is so mindful and loving of His people. I want now to pray for the people of Man, for a connecting deep within them as a nation to their distinctive heritage, a treasure that is for them to unearth. As for our team I believe we received far more than we gave and in some way we still carry the treasure of Man in our hearts.

Anne Hewson of Hetton

"Quiet Waters"

Community Retreat in Northern Ireland
Sat 27th September to Thurs 2nd October
2003



An opportunity to take time out with God for quiet reflection, reading and prayer in the company of other Companions and Friends, with a daily talk and some direction given by Roy Searle, set in the context of a "monastic daily rhythm".

We will be staying in the beautifully renovated farm cottages of our friends Jim and Jeannie Morrison in Ballydugan near Downpatrick.

Spaces are limited to 12, so please book as soon as possible. Costs will be approximately £180.00, which includes half board accommodation, travel from either Northumberland or Dumfries, and retreat supervision. Limited spaces will be available to non-resident retreatants who live in Northern Ireland. Further details on request.

To register your interest, please contact Gayle-Anne Drury at the Community Office, or email gayle-anne.drury@northumbriacommunity.org

We look forward to welcoming you to this our first residential Community Retreat in Northern Ireland.



Retreat on Iona

There are two places left on this retreat, from Sat 1st to Thurs 6th November 2003.

As previously notified, cost will be £180.00.

Please contact the Community Office
As soon as possible if you are interested.



Easter Workshop

We asked Andy Raine to tell us about the background of Easter Workshops and the Easter Sunday gathering on Holy Island:

“Easter Workshops have been held each year since 1980, scaled down somewhat only for foot and mouth. In some ways these were the beginning of our scattered/dispersed Community. We always avoided including the actual Good Friday/Easter weekend every other year, and alternated between finishing on Palm Sunday or Easter. The early Workshops lasted 2 weeks!

One year a planning group met over a 6 month period to pray and prepare (almost as Community Council meets now). Also each Easter, wherever in the country Easter Workshop was held, in addition a delegation came to Holy Island and prayed in the Priory as a high praises declaration of Jesus as Lord, keeping the powers of darkness firmly underfoot.

When as a Community we formalised a Rule and began to make vows of Yes to Availability and Vulnerability, to be renewed each year, Easter Day seemed the obvious occasion, and this has been incorporated ever since.



The importance of our annual Easter Workshop cannot be overestimated and this years at Nether Springs was no exception. A good and significant time was experienced by all who attended. The theme ‘**A Forest full of Junipers**’, presented in new and creative ways, inspired all who participated, capturing hearts and imaginations. Other workshops, Stations of the Cross pilgrimage, Passover meal, vigil, gathering on Holy Island, which included Baptism in the sea, and the rip-roaring finale on the Sunday evening Ceilidh, together with all the informal conversations and happenings, the mix of first, second and third generations, the spread from young to old (in Ida’s case very old!) provided a real treat and made for a Workshop full of good memories.

At our recent Community General Chapter weekend, we were reviewing and revisiting the significance, purpose, place and timing of our Easter Workshop and **would appreciate feedback** from the rest of the Community as to your thoughts on:-



1. Do you think the Workshop should be held:-
 - a) Over Easter weekend?
 - b) Over the preceding Palm Sunday weekend?
 - c) Over the weekend after Easter?
 - d) Alternate between a), b) and c) or any combination thereof?
2. Given the commitment to Northumbria, the place of Nether Springs and the Upper Springs with its association with Holy Island, together with a commitment to other ancient and modern sacred places, should we, as on some previous occasions, be holding an Easter Workshop elsewhere?
3. Any other comments or suggestions about Easter Workshop?

Please send your comments to Norma Charlton

norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org

or at:

Community Office, Hetton Hall, Chatton, Northumberland NE66 5SD.

**Northumbria Community
South West
Day Conference**

On **Saturday 18th October 2003** a Community team will be leading this Conference at **South Street Baptist Church, Exeter.**

It is hoped that the day will bring together those who are already part of the Northumbria Community in the South West, so that a Community Group might be formed. It will also introduce the Vocation and Rule of the Community to others.

The team will also be leading services in the area on the Sunday.

For details of this event please contact:

**Elizabeth Webb
1 Barley Villas,
Redhills, Exeter EX4 1SX
Tel: 01392 436722**

Cramlington Children Catch Creativity from Community!

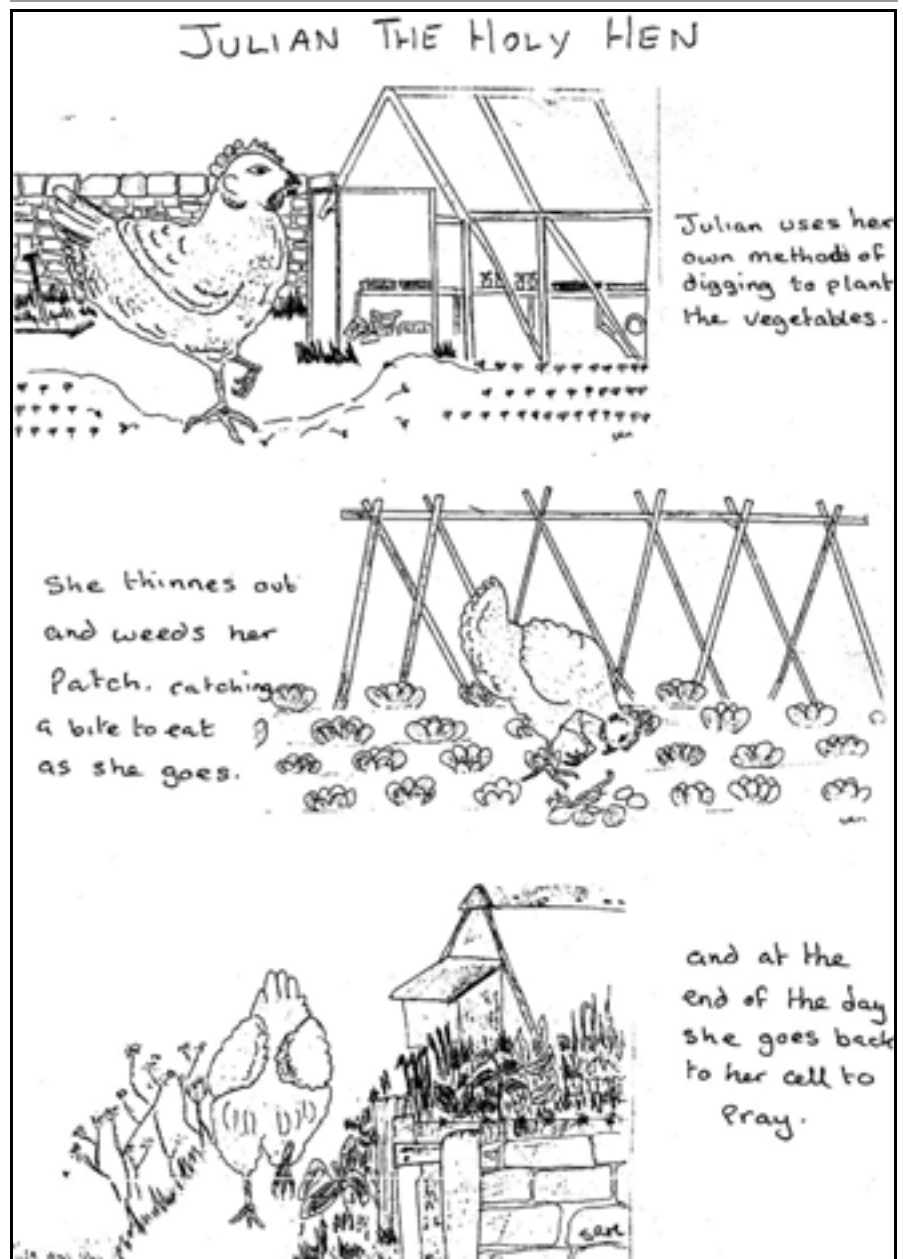
Thanks for all who supported in prayer the Celtic heritage storytelling events in Bamburgh and Cramlington in March and April.

Led by Norma Charlton and Norma Wise, 100 nine year old children were involved and affirmed in an exciting production; all the costumes and props provided. It's an experience to remember and I would wholeheartedly recommend this.

Please encourage the two Normas' ministry by booking the 'Saints Alive' package for your Church/School.

Contact them at
norma.wise@northumbriacommunity.org
or
norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org
or via the Office.

Visitors to Nether Springs will be familiar with this "hermit hen".



On the coach back from Bamburgh one group of children were inspired to write this song.

Aidan's Places (Tune: Blaydon Races)

*Before I went to Ireland
Far across the sea
I met a king called Oswald
and he was kind to me.
He told me about Jesus
He gave me food in cases
Now we're ganning up the coast
To look at Aidan's places*

*Chorus:
Oh me monks
You cannot stop the singing
Every day, every night, hear the bells a-
ringing
Working hard and praying, all day long,
And you will all find peace and joy,
singing Aidan's song.*

*The first stop was Heavenfield
A battle there we won.
Next stop Bamburgh
Castle-number one.
On to Holy island
for lots of special spaces
Come and join us ganning along
To see all Aidan's places.*

(Cathy Turton)



Wellspring at Nether Springs

In April, several members of worship group Wellspring, who have worked with the Community on several events, came on retreat to the Nether Springs. One of the group, Linda Jones, writes:



On Tuesday 8th April I travelled up to the Northumbria Community with other members of Wellspring. We had been invited to spend a couple of days at their 'mother house' at Nether Springs, Hetton Hall, with the intention among other things of getting to know each other and to explore ways we could possibly work together.

What do monastic retreats conjure up visions of in your mind? Stone floors and hard beds; sparsely decorated rooms; simple, bland meals taken in silence? Not so at Hetton Hall. The rooms were comfortable, food was plentiful, and there were two living rooms; one with a TV and the other with an inviting coal fireplace. Residents and guests warmly greeted each other and joked with each other at mealtimes. Strangers related to each other as friends. In fact the first impression I had of the place was a feeling of entering a real home, a cosy atmosphere. (I must say that I did once stay at a Cistercian monastery where I did sleep on the floor and where there were no carpets, TV or the like, but it was in the summertime and in the south of France and the singing in the abbey was most beautiful!). If you want to experience real cold at Hetton Hall, go in the winter time and spend some time in the Chapel. I wondered why the offices (services) were so short. They make up for that by having 4 a day though. You may think that sounds tedious, but I could see how important it was; not only because of

the richness of the liturgy, but the sense in which they seem to bind people together spiritually. In other words, if you had a problem with a member of the community you would have to resolve it quickly. It would be very difficult to look him/her in the eye 4 times a day. (Everybody sits round in a circle).

On Wednesday morning we spent some time with the leaders of the community in a beautifully converted house and barn owned by one of the members in a nearby village. We talked about some of our aspirations as Wellspring - another, much smaller, dispersed community - and saw how they dovetailed with the aspirations held by the Northumbria Community. We could identify with each other in the forging of new paths and felt that on some occasions we might actually work together, and indeed talked about one or two possibilities. Overall,



we sensed it was important to keep the channels of communication open in order not to miss an opportunity.

The tide and the weather were in our favour so we went across to Holy Island and spent a good couple of hours there. I sense it was a deep experience for many of us. The beauty of the island seemed inextricably linked to the idea of being in touch with our Creator, who had in the past inspired many people here. Somehow you are brought back into touch with the person you are as opposed to the person defined by what you do. When you spend all your days 'doing' and not 'being' it's almost as if you lose a sense of who you are and can only regain that if you 'set apart' time just to 'be' with God who in turn somehow adds to the beauty of the places you go to find Him in.

The following morning, we were encouraged to spend some time alone and were given some liturgy to form the basis for reflection. The written word can be very beautiful - especially when it comes from a renewed mind and a heart centred on God. Celtic monasticism relies heavily on liturgies and writings inspired by saints of the past. The Northumbria Community have revived a lot of these writings. It was very beneficial for me to do this exercise, because as a songwriter there is a framework that you confine yourself to in order to be



relevant to those you want to communicate to.

This framework, or 'mine' as I call it, has been too limited and the resources have now been depleted (apart from the Bible) which is why I believe I have lost inspiration. Over the last couple of years I have felt a desire to write poetry, or just to write what I feel even if it comes out untidily and badly formed. I was quite amazed that morning, having spent less than a couple of hours doing the exercise, that I managed to produce two pieces of writing I am not sure if you can call them poems since poetry is an art I have neglected for most of my life. However, it was an encouragement to me because the inspiration was coming almost as easily as music. It is an inexplicable joy however to be able to match music and word and I look forward to being able to continue to do that.

Photographs:

Above far left: Wellspring and Community members in the Chapel at Nether Springs

Above left: Shirley and Jo from Wellspring, on Holy Island

Above: Members of Wellsprings with Jeff Sutheran, at the 'prayer holes' on Holy Island

This article is an abridged version of the original, which can be found on Wellspring's web site:
www.wellspring.org.uk/northumbria.htm

The Telling Place

Summer Storytelling School

Saturday 16th to Thursday 21st August 2003
From Evening meal Saturday to lunchtime Thursday

at The Quinta Conference Centre, Weston Rhyn, nr Oswestry, Shropshire

Led by Angela Knowles, with Ashley Ramsden and Dave Robertson

The full cost of the five-day storytelling school is £230.00,
which includes full board accommodation plus all tuition and work materials.

For further information and booking form contact:
The Telling Place, St Wilfrid's Enterprise Centre, Hulme, Manchester M15 5BJ
Tel: 0161 227 0377 or email: thetellingplace@bigfoot.com



Album promo concert

'Opening Door - Paul Lucas'

at

The Caedmon Hall
Prince Consort Road
Gateshead

7.30 pm, Saturday 13th September

More info from:
Paul 0191 438 5017

MOZAMBIQUE 2

Or is it "Son of Mozambique" or "Return to Mozambique"?



Is he wearing that hat and shorts for a bet?

Geoff Boston in Mozambique 1

"Beware of going to Africa for the first time" a friend told me, "because it will change your life". I only realised the significance of that remark when I returned from a two week trip to Mozambique in July 2001. I was part of a team from Portrack who went out literally to construct a building which is part of a clinic/education project in Dondo near Beira.

Working alongside the Nationals and making new friends was brilliant and very illuminating. The building was up in three weeks and locals came from miles around just to see it because nothing ever happens that quickly in Africa! (I thought Northumbria time was bad!)

Seeing how they worshipped in straw and tin covered mud buildings with such joy and passion was a wonderful experience. However, seeing starving children and babies and people with immense health problems and very little health provision was hard to bear.

It didn't take much persuasion for me to plan to go back to build yet another part of the clinic complex.

This time I am going with my son Andrew who is 19. He was so taken with the stories I told him he wanted to experience them for himself. We, along with other team members, have been busy raising money for the project and we have all been overwhelmed by people's generosity when they have

caught the vision of what can be done by listening to the stories of the last visit.

We started raising money in January and have so far raised over £25,000.



Andrew raised over £700 by doing a sponsored 6 mile unicycle ride which also gained good local press coverage.

Please pray for us and the project.

We are there from 29th June - 14th July.

Geoff and Andrew Boston



The editors would like to thank all who sent contributions, and apologise to those whose articles have not been included, due to lack of space.

Mary Meredith

One of our oldest Community Companions died on 11th May. Mary was a regular visitor to the Nether Springs and in 1996 was part of a team which went on the boat pilgrimage down the river Shannon in Ireland - this in her 80's!

She was one of life's great characters and we thank God for the privilege of her friendship and the joy that is now hers having "sailed home".

Eileen Veasey

Eileen, a member of the former Community Group in Swindon, died on 11th April after a recurrence of the cancer which had plagued her for many years.

Ordination:

God's blessing on the following Community folk:

Jennie Appleby has been ordained Deacon in York Minster and has begun her curacy at St. Cuthbert's, Marton in Middlesbrough.

New address:

Jennie, Dave and Helen Appleby
37, Lambourne Drive,
Marton,
Middlesbrough TS7 8QF
Tel. 01642 314504.

Do call in if you are in the area.

Julie Watson is to be ordained to the Priesthood on 23rd July. She has begun her ministry in Redcar and at the University of Teesside.

Others ordained and starting new Parish ministries include **Rob Brown** in Upper Weardale and **James McWhirter** in Shifnal, Shropshire

Community Groups

If you would like more information about Community Groups please contact: **Norma Charlton** at the Community Office or by email: norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org

RENOVARÉ

Advance Notice

There will be two Renovaré Conferences this year in which Roy Searle, Richard Foster, James Catford and Chris Webb, together with our Community musicians, led by Jeff and Jill Sutherland will be involved.

For further details and information, contact Gayle-Anne Drury via the Community Office or by email: gayle-anne.drury@northumbriacommunity.org

Congratulations to **Chris and Cathrin Jones**, in Abingdon, on the birth of Melina on 10th June, a sister for their son Timon.

David and Margene Vessel, from the USA, have welcomed a new adopted baby daughter, **Nicole Marie**, into their family.

Intercessors

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

Northumbria Community Web Shop
<http://buy.at/NorthumbriaCommunity>

Help us fund raise just by going shopping. There is access to all the above stores and many more.

The retailers give commission back to us helping our fundraising efforts - so get web shopping TODAY!

For more information or help in using our online shop, please contact Justin Quinn, the site administrator via jprobyd@gmail.com or phone 01969 565448

© CAIM is the official newsletter of the Northumbria Community.
The Northumbria Community Trust Ltd IPS no: 28305R - an exempt charity registered in England and Wales.
Nether Springs, Hetton Hall, Chatton, Northumberland NE66 5SD
Tel: 01289 388235 Fax: 01289 388510 email: office@northumbriacommunity.org

Editors:
David & Wendy Ward
Contact via
Community office