



CAIM

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

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

Trevor Miller writes:

Change and Transition: A Personal perspective

Change is a constant in life and affects us all in different ways. We experience change daily in many forms – the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the conversations we have, the weather we experience. Some people thrive on change – they love it and want to create more of it. Others view change with anxiety and resistance. Of course the way we react is in direct correlation to how close we are to the actual change factors taking place. It can be very stressful, as we all know. Indeed, moving house and home is right up there as one of the most stressful times of our lives. So by any standards, those who have been directly involved in the life of the Mother House of our Community over these last months and years have seen a huge amount of change, some of which has impacted multiple areas of their lives.



William Bridges, author of 'Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes', states that change is an outward experience of something new happening, that more often than not has a clearly defined starting and/or stopping point. It can be sudden or something we know about in advance. Such as ending a job and starting a new one, receiving bad news or an unexpected windfall.

Transition on the other hand, is the psychological impact change has on us. Transition can be highly emotional and personal. It's an inward process that takes longer because it requires inner reorientation and a willingness to redefine who we are, through three phases. Phase 1 is all about Endings i.e. disconnecting from 'what was' and letting go of 'who we were' in that situation. Phase 2 is that awful In-Between state: this gap between leaving the old markers and accepting the new can lead to disorientation and loss of identity. It is the confusion of not knowing yet who we are and where we're going to be, let alone coping when we get there. Accepting that this is a temporary state and having the courage to see it through, brings greater clarity and renewed energy. This leads to Phase 3, which is all about new Beginnings. We accept the new reality change brings and start identifying with our new situation. "Inwardly and outwardly", you "come home."

This is what many of us are going through just now and not everyone is at the same place. Some feel excited and stimulated, active and resourceful. Others feel overwhelmed and overlooked, unappreciated and angry. We need to remind ourselves that these are normal differences in normal people but we can't change the fact that change has taken place! More especially that it had to happen.

I have come to appreciate the very real difference between intentional change and imposed change. For example, we knew we needed to move from Hetton Hall simply because our landlords were not going to renew our lease when it expired in November of last year. *Cont'd on pg3*

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We are again participating in **Northern Ark** family camp at Hollybush, Thirsk, Yorkshire. This year's camp runs from 14th - 20th August and the theme is 'Clouds of Glory'.

Celebrating our God given creativity, Northern Ark seeks to encourage people to discover or recover inspiration and gifts and to step into new things.

It combines strong teaching, prayer, praise and worship with free time to spend exploring the surrounding countryside, or simply to relax on site.

Robert Mountford will be joining us again, this time leading us through the pages of Philippians, as we seek to follow in Paul's footsteps. Mike Dalby will be heading up the children's programme again this summer. There is sure to be a lot of fun and mayhem as well as worship and teaching of the highest standard as he leads the children each morning. The music is led by our own Clare Hunt and much of the worship is based on CDP.

Anyone who is interested in joining us please contact norma.charlton@northumbriacommunity.org

Keeping in touch...



Email has made it very much easier to keep in touch within Community. But sometimes our messages 'bounce back' because the email address we're using is no longer valid.

If you do change your email address, do please let Ellen know, so we can keep our records up to date. If you're not sure whether we have your current one, then just send her an email and she'll take care of everything. She can be reached here: office@northumbriacommunity.org

If you currently receive items in the post, and would like to receive them by email - in glorious technicolour! - then let Ellen know. This saves money too.

Northumbria Community at Lee Abbey 2011

The Lee Abbey Community welcomed a team from Northumbria Community and invited us to share our rule and rhythm of the day with their guests gathered for the week.

The theme for the week was 'Living with the questions'. Roy, Duncan and Shayla shared the main teaching sessions and other members of the team led afternoon workshops on a variety of topics. Roy encouraged the guests to create two sacred spaces based on the passage in John 21 about the catch of fish and the re-instatement of Peter. Some of the guests worked really hard on these and produced some stunning results which included a charcoal fire; grilled fresh fish; leather sandals; seagulls and fishing nets. The team then creatively incorporated them into the last night Communion Service.

During the week there were some special highlights. The first was the welcoming into Companionship of Glen Graham. This was quickly followed by the presentation of a cake to Jeff and Jill to celebrate their Silver Wedding that day, and the team had an impromptu party at the end of the day.

At the 'Meeting at the Crossroads'- a variation of our Ceilidh - the two communities gathered together and provided a variety of

acts to entertain the guests. As Lee Abbey is an international Community it was a bit like 'The world's got talent'!

The Beach chapel, carved into the cliffs, provided a powerful setting for Compline one evening. The walk down to it was beautiful but the pull back up the hill to the house afterwards was not for the fainthearted, the blessing of one or two cars was much appreciated.

Conversations with the guests illustrated that for many their highlight was the Celtic Fire based on the story of Aidan. They appreciated being part of the story - Jeff had trained some of them into a great percussion team and others took part in dance and narration.

The week ended with the Eucharist service in which there was an opportunity for the guests to seal what God had been doing through the week through the act of anointing and using the sacred spaces. Thank you Rich for recording the sound of the sea to give the spaces even more authenticity!

The whole week was a real team event. A huge thank you to Roy, Jeff & Jill Sutheran, Bobby & Rich Johns, and Shayla Waugh.

A team will be there again next year from 14th - 18th May. Bookings can be made through Lee Abbey. *Duncan & Lesley*

Welcome to the Summer edition of Caim.

It's always a great pleasure to choose the articles for Caim - as well as being a difficult task! That's certainly been true this time, when we've had so many great articles submitted.

We're left feeling that perhaps we've squashed too much in; you might notice there isn't much 'breathing space' around! Still, we hope you will see this as a celebration of all the life there is in Community in this 'new season'. Enjoy this issue!
Jeff & Ingrid

The Missional Leadership School was a brilliant marriage of minds and character in George Lings and Roy Searle - with their approach and teaching styles complementing one another wonderfully. It was an excellent balance of input and reflection, the rhythm of the offices and opportunity to visit local sites. We were a very fortunate few. *Ruth Neve*

Just to say thank you to you all for your interesting website: informative, welcoming and very helpful to me.

Chris Hawkes

Cont'd from page 1



This change was imposed upon us from outside and not within our control. But it meant that we had to embrace an intentional change of location, because we needed a new home. We were so grateful to God for the

provision of Acton Home Farm as the new Nether Springs. It was something of a miraculous gift to us but it still meant that we had to go through the process of change and transition, the very real grieving at leaving what had been a much-loved familiar place, a safe place, of much blessing, to go to something new, unfamiliar and scary especially after so many years at Hetton Hall.

As part of the leadership, I was tasked (with others) with implementing those changes, which by the very nature of our situation were a mixture of intentionality and imposition. All of us resist imposed change, because all of us perceive better alternatives that will not be as uprooting

It was something of a miraculous gift to us, but it still meant that we had to go through the process of change and transition, the very real grieving at leaving what had been a much-loved familiar place, a safe place, of much blessing, to go to something new...

or painful in the implementation. Inevitably, for those shaping the change, it was a conscious assessment, that seemed gradual, solved problems and provided new opportunities. But for those on the receiving end it was out of their control, seemed sudden, has created problems and disrupted routines.

My own situation can act as an example of experiencing both sides of the equation sometimes simultaneously. The relocation after 18 years at Hetton Hall coincided with many other significant change events in my own life, not least ill health and pending 'retirement'. In August 2009 my wife Freda and I moved to Berwick-upon-Tweed after living in Hetton Hall for over 11 years. At that time of course, we didn't know where the location of the new Mother House would be, only that it would be in North Northumberland in keeping with our foundations and ethos.

Part of the reason for our move at that time was my diagnosis of having a systemic rheumatoid auto-immune disease which was to become quite aggressive bringing limitations of stamina due to the daily pain and fatigue associated with it. Our new home was better equipped for our needs and so different but we quickly learned that when in a new house, one way of making it into our home is to try to fill it with familiar, well-loved things. In doing so however, we discovered that some of those things were just plain worn out. Many things were no longer able to fit or were no longer required and had become unusable in a new situation. We were able to give some of these things to

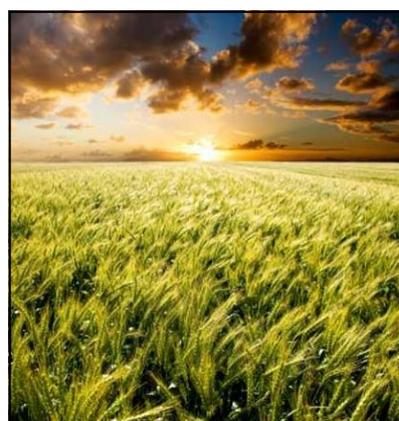
others to use but we realized that it was a time for a stock check and a review.

This is similar to what is happening at Acton. Simple and familiar things like the tables and cloths in the dining room, an Aga, and those pictures that remind us of Hetton Hall are crucially important. They provide continuity and a symbolic representation of our 'building the new on foundations of old'. Although I am no longer involved in the day-to-day living at the new Mother House, I am still among those privileged to be in the first group of those who by our prayers, saying the daily office, speaking benediction and not malediction, will bring the healing sense of God to the new Nether Springs at Acton Home Farm, playing our part in making it a safe place, a sacred place, a place of prayer, a thin place.

So, like others, many changes have come my way in these last months: moving from Hetton Hall to Berwick and from full-time work to part-time work in retirement, moving from relatively good health to ill health, from being literally next door to a 74 mile round trip. I have moved from the centre to the margins in this regard but I have a better understanding now of how the majority of Companions have to relate to the Mother House.

Going through the transition is a good teacher and I am learning many lessons. Although I have felt some disorientation, the fact that solitude is something I have always sought after and enjoyed has meant that this move was not as difficult as it could have been. I have had an even greater appreciation of the value of a daily rhythm of work and prayer.

I am still very much involved in the heart of things in terms of overall oversight, leadership, resourcing and mentoring. I am able to spend time in prayer and reflection, writing and study. I am no longer directly involved in running the Mother House and Finance, two of the areas for which I carried responsibility for many years. One of the really good things is to look on and see how succession planning has actually worked and worked well, not least in the provision of Pete Askew as a fellow Overseer who carries equal



authority and responsibility for the Community alongside Roy and myself.

Finally, I was so touched by the many stories and memories, put together in booklet form with contributions from so many in the Community to mark

my 65th birthday in March. To be able to read this, complete with many images that are positive memories for me is, as our Scottish friends would say "pure dead brilliant!". Thank you so much.

Trevor Miller

We asked some of the members of staff at IBTS Prague to reflect on the partnership between
Northumbria Community and IBTS

For the last few years there has been an informal partnership with the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS) in Prague, Czech Republic, and the Northumbria Community.

The aim has been that each year there should be an exchange visit each way, with members of the Community visiting Prague and members of the IBTS community visiting Nether Springs. However, the link is tighter than just annual visits. Each Wednesday we remember and pray for Northumbria at our weekly Eucharist at IBTS, and IBTS features in the Northumbria prayer cycle.

This year in the week leading up to Mothering Sunday a team of three, led by Roy, accompanied by Ken Humphrey from Northern Ireland and Jean Watson came to be with the IBTS community for what we now always call "Northumbria Week." For the whole week the seminary sets aside its own pattern of worship and classes for Certificate of Applied Theology (CAT - or 'kitten'!) students and we follow the Northumbria offices of morning and noon prayer and compline. The week gives the students, and whoever else wants to join, an opportunity to get a sense of the work of the Northumbria Community, to talk about the Celtic church tradition and about mission vision in today's Europe. As we were telling the CATs about the upcoming Northumbria Week, one of them exclaimed, "I don't know them, but I love them: no homework or exams for a whole week!"

Well, by the end of the week, they seemed to love the



'Northumbrians' even more, and not for an 'easy time' without homework. They had discovered there was quite a bit of work to do, even if not the usual essays or reflections. Here are some of the things that left an imprint on them:

IBTS prepared us for the Northumbria week, and indeed I was excited and waiting for it. It was not just a week "without homework". I realized how as Christians we must

live as a community and share together but at the same time, be open to the world and reach it. Like [one of the students] said in class: there should be a golden middle between these two.

Poverty and the followers of God: How many times God talks about poverty in the Bible! Jesus was with poor people more than with others. It is good to be alongside the poor bringing to them hope.

I like the idea of a concert in the Jenerálka restaurant. It was a good way to spread the Gospel. Jesus works outside, not only in, the church.

During this week and especially during the worship time around different sacred spaces, I started to think about time when I will leave IBTS. I hope that until that time I will gain as many good habits as I can.

As mentioned by one of the students, one of the highlights of the week this year was a concert of Celtic harp music and Christian folk music held in the local pub, the Jenerálka. The purpose of this was to offer



opportunity for some interaction with the village in which IBTS is set (not an easy task in the Czech Republic!) and to give our students a feel for some community missional activity. A harpist friend of Roy's from Germany came to IBTS especially to make this possible and we had an enchanting evening of words and music.

On the final evening we heard some of the stories of the Celtic saints and concluded the evening with a time of prayer and anointing with oil. The effect upon our resident students drawn from many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East is always one of fascination and delight. This year was no exception.

Last summer several students were able to visit Nether Springs, despite some initial problems in getting visas for non-EU students. This year when asked, all our present students expressed a desire to visit and spend time at Nether Springs. Now we need to join in prayer that the resources to enable a group to come will be found and that the UK Border Agency will see fit to let them.

Lina Andronoviene and Keith G Jones

John Davis writes:

I retired recently, and Linda and I moved to Bridlington in early April. Inspired by the words from the blessing in the evening office - "follow the example of good ones of old" - I did some research to see if there are any good ones of old in the area where we are now living. I'm pleased to report that

there are at least three! St John of Bridlington (14th century) was the last English saint to be canonised before the Reformation. He was the Prior of a monastic community in Bridlington. Today, there is a pub named after him ("The Prior John") in the main street.

Cont'd on pg10

Roy Searle writes:

We're on the Road Again

For the Celts, Abraham was an inspirational figure, journeying from that which was familiar in order to trust God on an open-ended adventure.



Wandering for the love of Christ wherever the Father leads has been part of the Community's story from our beginnings. In embracing our Community Rule we commit to being Available for participation in mission of various kinds

according to the calling and initiatives of the Spirit. What might that mean? This year's 'European trip' encapsulated so much of what being on the road with Community entails.

The waymarks for our journey provided us with some fixed points, not least the partnership we enjoy with the Seminary in Prague, which provided a focus for our journey. A week of lectures and seminars ensured a framework that was to be enriched further by the privilege of sharing our lives with many young people, (mainly from Eastern Europe) with whom we have growing connections. But it is often in the unplanned and spontaneous encounters that the hints of God's presence are realised, whether in our meeting an old school-friend of mine, or visiting the creative arts centre in a church in France, or our experience of 'salon' culture in Germany, seeing people come together informally to talk about issues of life and faith.

Then to Prague, where the tapestry of conversations, the renewing and making of new friendships that woven together with sharing in the seminary, down in the city and in the local pub, created something beautiful. Meeting believers, some of whom come from lands in situations of poverty and persecution, was a reminder of the universality of God's Church and the steady growth of our own Community across Europe and beyond.

We arrived in Holland and enjoyed time relaxing with good friends and trusted Companions. Conversations with the next generation of Community folk brought new perspectives, fresh insights as we encountered the living out of the Community's 'way of life' in different cultural contexts.

Then, just recently, we were on the road with a Community team of people drawn from East Anglia,

who in serving a small rural community, are trying to re-imagine what it means to be church in a post-Christendom culture. I was meeting many of these Community Companions and Friends for the first time. There was a real sense of being at home with one another in Community, a reminder of the gift that is ours in God. The creative dynamism of pulling together a team of people who within a few hours can present 'Celtic Fire' to a packed village hall. The miracle of witnessing the impact of both the story told and the transforming power that simply being Community is. To create the space for people to express their commitment to availability and vulnerability and in so doing discover gifts, talents and a way of serving that they would never have imagined. This releasing of potential, bringing healing, expressing monastery on the road is the stuff of Community wanderings.

Our journeys take us to many places to serve the renewal of the Church, to look for the kingdom of God in the streets, to give expression to a way of life that reaches people that other parts of the church cannot easily reach. In wandering for the love of Christ there is a work of God going on in the human heart. To be available to participate in mission is not so much an activity, programme or event. It is essentially about being missional and reflecting the nature of God, whose image we see in Jesus.

The Community, in one sense, does not have a 'mission'. It is we who join in God's mission. The God who loves, cares and continually works for the healing, redeeming and restoring of his creation. The God whose very nature is to go, the God who we see in Jesus, is at work in the world. Jesus is at work in the hearts of people beyond the Church just as the Saviour will not be confined to the structures or strictures of any church or religious subculture. It is this boundary-breaking Christ, whom we have come to believe and know as 'the holy one of God', that we follow. Whether alone or together, as a community we are called to the *Missio Dei* ~ the mission of God. As the statue of Aidan on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne depicts, we carry the torch of the gospel in our hearts, and on our lips and in all our ways take his light into the world where by his Spirit he is already at work.

And of course in all these travels, God is shaping, challenging and informing our lives. Journeys, people, situations, experiences - whether good, bad or ugly - are all used by God to hone, transform and re-orientate our hearts towards him and the serving of his kingdom.

On these outward journeys we discover not only places on the road but also the interior landscape of the heart.

We invited several people to reflect on their experience of 'Easter Workshop' in all its various guises this year. Thanks to all who contributed their reflections. We couldn't print everything in full, but we have tried to include something from each contribution.

Reflecting on Easter, and new beginnings...

How does one begin to describe a multiple unique experience? It was my First Easter Workshop and the beginnings of my Novitiate journey. Either would have been awesome on their own. The emotionally-charged Maundy Thursday service in Brinkburn will be forever etched in my heart. The location, the symbolic ritual coupled with the personal experience of having my feet washed still bring tears of emotion to my eyes.



Other memories abound: Ian (Corsie) ensconced in a pink rug in the courtyard during story telling; Roy talking of Community linking past and present; heated discussions on Plato and sin, environment and political impacts and on it goes.

The Fellowship truly fantastic, friends old and new. Links and ideas. Hospitality offered and subsequently accepted. Makes Community clear in a way text books and CDs can never achieve. A truly memorable experience, Blessed by God. *Hans Waltl*



We have been making the journey from Essex to Northumbria now for over thirteen years and it is always difficult to leave for home, none more so than this time. Both Susan and I felt that

we were part of the start of a new chapter in the life of the Northumbria Community - place is so important; and sitting around the dinner table sharing a meal proved to be the place of Community. We felt just as much at home. It is different at Acton, but it seemed fresh, exciting.

We haven't been able to get to many Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, but we did this year, and the walk through the valley was all new for us; a reminder of the remoteness of the new Mother House; particularly the stretch following the huge river Coquet, and finishing by the Abbey ruins, once we had won our battle of wits with

the local herd of bulls.

As part of the Oswald liturgy we were encouraged to take our own time to read 'Stand at the crossroads and look, ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it and you will find rest for your souls'. We walked this ancient path and our souls felt rested - we were reminded that Northumbria is our spiritual home. *Susan and Paul Moore*

I cannot always come to Nether Springs at Easter because of commitments to my local church but it is always a great joy when I do. If you are disabled in any way, as I am, I can assure you the new buildings are a delight, and obstacle free. Highlights for me included the Maundy Thursday service in Brinkburn Priory. What a wonderful setting and how meaningful to share communion by passing the bread and wine to each other. For me this accentuated our being together on the same journey. The monologues and the Good Friday Spiritual Reading were not only thought provoking but awe inspiring. The Easter Vigil with Simon was quiet and reflective but ended up with us all sharing Mary's chocolate she had given up for Lent!

It was good to have the opportunity to join in blessing our new home on Easter Sunday. And I shall never forget the beauty of the sun rising over the sea as we drove down to Felton to join with local Christians for a dawn celebration of the Resurrection. Yes,



there was much to reflect on but much laughter too: a great party ending with a crazy dance, the two Normas dressed as cleaners poking fun at the Health and Safety rules, and funniest of all, Pete hoisting me into the minibus without ceremony or dignity, made even more difficult because we were both laughing so much! But more than anything I shall remember the love and kindness shown to me by everyone. I am still basking in the warmth of it. *Joy Gadsby*

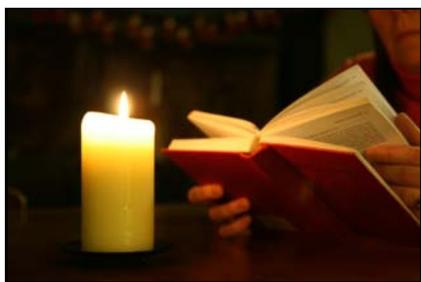
Catherine asked us what we hoped to get out of the Easter Workshop on the first evening. As well as rest and good friendships my main desire was a renewal of spiritual hope. I needed hope for the future. God went straight to work!

I opted to be creative on Saturday so whilst others were out exploring changing landscapes on foot or by boat I explored the changing landscapes of my life so far, drawing the chapters of my life and the metaphorical landscapes I have travelled through. I ended by drawing the last two years as a hole. God was in the hole with me but there has been no engagement with the world or people at all.

As I spoke to friends and listened to stories of the Community and chapters we have gone through together I became more and more aware of the wonderful way God is in control of our story. And of course Easter itself, where the greatest tragedy and pain became the greatest ever victory and renewal of hope. As I reflected on these wonderful truths I felt so full of joy!

There were many wonderful and fun-filled moments during this Easter Workshop: both the Easter vigil and the communion in the morning were special and magical services; the exquisitely beautiful song about the prodigal son written and sung by Tim; the lovely new friends I made; Joy's wonderful smile and spirit [I've decided when I'm 83 I want to be like Joy Joy Joy!], baby Nathaniel's gorgeousness and of course, the Crackers Maracas song by Claire that got EVERYBODY up and dancing. One of the best things about the Community for me is the way you can be absolutely safe, absolutely yourself, and be totally accepted and even loved!

So God did answer my prayer for spiritual hope and did so much more. He showed me it was time to climb out of my hole and to engage with others again. It's time to be that person he made me. *Elaine van Zon*



We gathered from Herefordshire, Worcestershire and mid Wales on Easter Monday to share together in the renewal of vows, fun and, of course, the hospitality of a shared meal. We gave thanks for the provision of the New Mother House at Acton and those of us who had been there shared stories and photographs.

As part of the Renewal of Vows we told the story of the miraculous catch of fish and the re-instatement of Peter and then braved the windy countryside [unfortunately there is no handy beach in the centre of Herefordshire!] to grill and eat fish together before returning to the warmth of the hall to share the renewal liturgy.



Then there was plenty of time to chat and catch up with each others' news over a meal before ending the afternoon with Evening Office.

We all felt it was special time in which we felt connected to the whole of Community through liturgy and shared values and close to each other through the fun, the serious, and the food!

Duncan & Lesley MacLean



We had such a great day at the Northumbria Community at L'Abri à Suvigny. It felt like being in an Oasis in the desert where there is so much love and

friendship, and where people are accepted whoever they are.

In the afternoon we went on our Stations of the Cross walk which was the highlight of the day. It was wonderful walking in such a beautiful countryside, and praying by waterfalls. A few days before going there, I had experienced a deep hurt. When I read my Station of the Cross on number seven, it said that even when people say "I told you so, you'll never make it," give me the strength to fulfil my promise: Lord I will go on with you. I got encouragement and felt these words were meant for me.

We look forward to our next event there because Jane, Andrew and Sarah Perkins of the Northumbria Community always give us such a lovely welcome, and are such loving people that we always feel at home there with them.

Marie-Hélène and Dominic Bradshaw

On Saturday afternoon, we joined together at 3 pm for a time of prayer, meditation and Bible and poetry readings. The sections were punctuated by recordings of some excerpts from Fauré's Requiem. The mood was of the solemnity of Christ's Passion, but underpinned by God's love for us and the promise of resurrection. The meditation finished with the hymn, O Love that will not let me go.

The Egg Hunt was really a race against time to find them before they melted in the heat of the sun! Yes, it was hot and sunny as we set off for the beach to renew our vows at the memorial to St. Columbanus. It is awe inspiring to stand in such a beautiful place and realize that Columbanus and his band of monks crossed that same stretch of sand all those years ago at the start of their journeying across Europe. The sense of being linked by waymarks down the years was very strong. We remembered with fondness, being in the same spot four years earlier, with Trevor, Roy and Jeff.

Cathy and Brian Wheatcroft

Sarah Fowle (pictured below, left - with Sarah Pillar) recently became a Companion. We asked her to reflect on the journey so far.



My journey with Jesus coincided with the Community when I got to know the Pillar family a number of years ago and it has been mostly through their modelling of love and authenticity that I have come to experience this way

of living one's faith that seems to be what Jesus was talking about all along and just makes a whole lot of sense to me.

I found the Celtic Daily Prayer really helpful and I read quite a lot of other stuff (scrounged almost entirely from bookshelves in the homes of Ruth Barling and the Pillars) and as I've bumped into, joined with and come across the Community in various places and at various times, that sense of identity with this group has grown to the point that a couple of years ago I saw the value of banding together to encourage each other and I asked to start the novitiate process.

At the same time, I learnt how to spell vulnerable. It seems to have an 'l' in it that I hadn't noticed for the first 45 years of my life! But this has become a precious word in a number of ways

and I have taken more care over it.

Through the love & friendship of two little boys who had been adopted, a crack appeared in my heart and although the cracks were painful, they let in the light and with the insightful comments of my soul friend & mentor, I realised I had something to offer....and it echoed with the hospitality of the heart, the hospitality of self, not just of home, that I'd heard talk of in the Community and which rang true with me. So I applied to adopt a child - an unknown child needing a secure permanent home and a place to belong. And for the past two and a half years now, as I've been following the novitiate process with the Community, I've also been holding open the door of hospitality, waiting for the one who will comeand surprising myself by sharing my waiting with strangers and friends in random acts of intentional vulnerability.

And finally Social Services have found a possible child but then in the same week my landlord wants to sell my house... but the Lord found me a new home that has more space and promises to be warmer in the winter and now everything is happening. Two days after moving in, I'm driving to Northumbria for the weekend because I was invited to join the Birmingham group for their weekend retreat and it's half term and the Pillars are there and Ruth calls in for tea and I get 'welcomed in' after the trifle and before the very scrumptious cake... and next week I go before a panel who hopefully will decide this child should be placed with me. And that will be the first step on this next, exciting & scary leg of my journey... walking with Jesus and now the Community.

Sarah Fowle

On 4th June, the Cotswold Community group hosted a gathering of 39 people on 'Creative Praying' led by Lesley and Duncan MacLean.

We were privileged to use Cotswold Farm as the venue - a wonderful old country house with extensive and beautiful gardens. We were blessed with a warm, sunny day, beginning with Morning Office in the garden and using the stunning setting in creative and flexible ways. We gathered together in the wood-panelled library for worship; Duncan & Lesley



shared some very helpful insights.

There were six Prayer Spaces around the house. Most of the rest of the day was spent exploring these and enjoying the other activities on offer: prayer walks / meditations; reading The Gospel of John, out loud and outside; using the Creative Space to write, draw or paint or just wandering or sitting in the garden.

Here are comments from some of those who were there:
"The gardens were inspirational and beautifully tranquil...the highlight was spending time opening up to God on an awareness walk; taking in the details of each flower, tree or wall; smelling the sublime scent of the roses or the acrid smoke of the bonfire; listening to God whisper though the wind, accompanied by the chorus of birdsong. Above all, being able to be 'alone' in this paradise, and yet surrounded by Community was so special. I have returned home feeling deeply refreshed."

"...it was a truly uplifting experience and one on which I will reflect on during the days to come. There was a wonderful atmosphere of warmth and friendship throughout the day."

"...a beautiful experience in every respect: the spectacularly lovely natural setting, the authentic hospitality and the sensitive prayer experiences indoors and out. Opportunity to be alone yet together in the many spaces in the house and garden."

"... much appreciated was the flexibility to examine prayer in our own lives as well as meeting together for worship and teaching ... the sense that we all belonged together, even though some we met for the first time."

"Alone or together we came...for a few, brief hours we were family: feasting, listening, singing, talking, praying or resting in companionable silence. We soaked up the warmth of the sun and of friendship, enjoying our surroundings... we were conscious of the generosity and love of God."

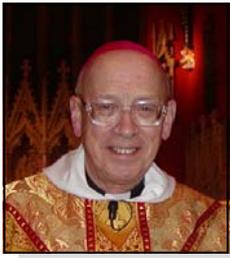
"Taking time to savour the electric blue of a dragonfly, the perfection of a waterlily, the scent of a rose; enjoying seeing others at rest and at peace, listening to John's gospel, knitting in a quiet corner, contemplating a prayer space, lighting a candle"

On contemplating a rather dull flower bed on one side and a riot of plants in full bloom on the other:
"Which flower bed are YOU? They're not all in flower at the same time, you know. Perhaps your season isn't here yet... trust in God who brings all things to fruition in the fullness of time. Dig deep, root yourself in fertile ground, and then...trust God and wait. My times are in Thy hands, oh Lord, my times are in Thy hands."

And from our hostess:

"... seeing people in ones and twos in the quiet, just being in the sunshine, warmed my heart. It made me realise that they were communicating with God - they had time to be quiet in God's presence. Each one will have a different experience - I found this most exciting."

The memory of a good person...



Bishop Ambrose Griffiths, former Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, died on the 14th June after suffering from an aggressive leukaemia.

Bishop Ambrose, former Abbot of Ampleforth as well as a parish priest, was a great supporter of the work and vision of the Northumbria Community while he was Bishop, then in his later years he accepted our invitation to be our Roman Catholic Community Visitor. His interest and warm support was a real blessing to us.

During Ambrose's illness, we wrote to assure him of our prayers, and he wrote back: *'Thank you for your concern and still more for all the prayers of the Community. I am glad to say I am not at all anxious and fully at peace. The future lies in God's hands. Ambrose'*



Kitty Hay, a dear lady and long-time friend of the Community died in May, and this is a good opportunity to publicly acknowledge her generous support to the Community at a very formative stage of its development.

Kitty lived in Andover and she and her husband Alan got to know Roy Searle in the late 80s. When Alan died, Kitty donated a substantial sum from the sale of their house to the Community and this was a huge encouragement at the time, especially to Roy. Kitty was able to visit Hetton Hall and always treasured her memories of it, although increasing ill health prevented her return. She always took a keen interest in Community developments, keeping up to date from afar.

Here was a special, lovely person who was always far more interested to know how others were getting on rather than talking about her own problems (of which she had quite a few towards the end). Her heart was for mission, and for writing, and for 'being there' for people in need. As the picture shows, she always had a wonderful smile.



Father Roland Walls of the monastic Community of Transfiguration (now Hermitage) in the village of Roslin, near Edinburgh, died on 7th April, 2011 in his 94th year. His influence and example has been a constant throughout the formation and history of the Northumbria Community. Roland, a theologian who had taught in the

Divinity faculty at both Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities, became mentor to the early pioneers and remained (along with his colleague Brother John Halsey) a key spiritual director to the Northumbria Community up to the present day. He helped initiate and shape the vocation of the Northumbria Community, introducing us to Desert and monastic spirituality. His teaching, insight and wisdom always laced with much laughter has been handed down and passed on to us as example and life.

Cloisters update



As part of our desire to resource Community with the range of products we now have within Cloisters, we will be sending e-letters to those who have given their e-mail addresses to us. Please email

cloisters@northumbriacommunity.org to be kept up-to-date. For those without e-mail, you may like to know about some of the excellent range of product we stock from Lindisfarne Scriptorium.

Mark and Mary Fleeson own and run the Lindisfarne Scriptorium on the island of Lindisfarne in North Northumberland. Mary is the artist and creative light behind the artwork and books, and Mark is the technical genius and force behind the marketing and music input. It is with great delight that we extend our range of their beautiful books and prayer cards and give them their own page on our site!

'Photographic Prayers' is a glossy soft cover book of photos of Lindisfarne taken over the seasons by Mark and Mary, with poems and prayers written by Mary in response to the images. A most beautiful book to look at time and time again.

We've also increased our range of their beautiful colouring books full of Mary's designs; these books can be used by adults or older children as a way of prayerfully meditating and focusing on God.

Duncan MacLean and Brenda Grace

As part of the Easter Workshop at the new Nether Springs, the Stations of the Cross walk took us from Acton Home Farm down to the River Coquet. We said Station 12 (Jesus dies upon the Cross) at that point, where the river flows over a most attractive weir. There is a plaque at the spot to commemorate the tragic deaths of 10 young soldiers who died crossing the river there during a training exercise in January 1945. It was a very poignant moment.

This Stations of the Cross walk was, inevitably, very different to what we have become used to over many years from Hetton Hall, walking up to Cuthbert's Cave. Rather than rising up over the glorious landscape to the cave within its protecting trees, we sank down from wide expansive views, through primrose-strewn woods into the lovely tranquil verdant sweep of the Coquet valley. But it was every bit as meaningful.

The previous evening, Maundy Thursday, we had been in Brinkburn Priory, also by the Coquet, for foot-washing and communion. The acoustics in there are magnificent, so the notes from Clare Hunt's violin and Norman Cumming's guitar took on a soaring, haunting quality as they lingered all around us. Then, the morning of Good Friday, we were again beside the Coquet in Felton's lovely church for Morning Prayer and Lectio Divina reflection on the crucifixion. The Coquet seemed to run like a sylvan thread through our Easter Workshop. *Ian Corsie*

We asked Floor Vogelaar, part of the Community's team of Provincials, to reflect on the Community in Europe.

I still remember...



About thirty years ago Jean Darnell spoke in one of the YWAM schools in Holland. As a teacher with a strong prophetic edge, she told us that the Lord had given her the impression that important influences of spiritual renewal would come from the UK and that the Netherlands would

become an important gateway for that into Europe, reaching the rest of the continent with it. My conviction is that the Northumbria Community and everything it stands for, could be one of these influences of renewal.

What about connection with Nether Springs?

But when you live in Holland or other European countries, it feels that Nether Springs is far away. The connection you experience with the Mother House is mainly through the items you find in Caim, on the website and the Prayer Guide. I'm talking now about those who have registered and are Friends and Companions and users of Celtic Daily Prayer on a more or less daily basis. And surely some of them, over time, will make the effort to go on a retreat and will get a first hand experience. But the majority of interested people in Europe don't have the money nor the fluency of the English language to go and get the real picture about the physical locality, the house team, and the structure of the daily monastic rhythm at Nether Springs.

Following the Rule in Europe.

Over the last few years, I've become very much aware of the fact that a growing amount of people love the use of CDP and really want to follow the core values of our NC-rule of availability and vulnerability. Through the efforts of a Dutch anglican priest in Cairo and with the help of NC-companion Annelies Barth and some others, everybody who understands Dutch, already for two years now, can daily download from the internet the Dutch version of the offices of that day with the translated readings included in them. Check for yourself: www.keltischegebeden.nl

Alone.

Looking at the words: "alone and together", we see more and more people beginning to follow the rule on their own; so just 'alone'. They use CDP and try to find their own way of expression. It has an influence in their lives

which shows in a changed life style of being more available and vulnerable. That's positive and encouraging, but also only part of the whole picture. Some of them will get themselves registered at the office at Nether Springs and will ask for Caim and the Prayer Guide, but the majority don't make that connection. They stay with the 'alone' part and seem to be happy.

Together.

And what about the 'together' element? Most of these interested Europeans who have no connection with Nether Springs at Acton Home Farm look for the 'together' aspect to the NC contacts they have in their area. So, in Amsterdam and Arnhem, some interested people come together regularly to investigate on a deeper level the content and consequences of the NC-rule. In both groups they end the evenings with evening prayer or compline. So, in itself there is not much difference with how other 'official' NC-groups operate, although almost none of the participants are Friends or Companions. The people in those groups just look to the organisers of these evenings. For them they are the local expression of the NC in their area. It's all about personal contact and influence. "Community gatherings" (Beekbergen, Amsterdam, France) and 'Northumbrian weeks' (IBTS-Prague) are a further help to broaden the 'together' element.

Future.

Looking at the future of the NC in Europe, I think there are some things we probably should focus on. But I'm aware that it all depends on people available and willing to commit themselves.

International communication:

- a multi-lingual NC-website with news, video/audio and articles ~ for me a great example of this is the Taize website (www.taize.fr);
- a regular podcast with teaching and news;
- using social media like Twitter and Facebook, several friends and companions are already using it.

Retreats in the rest of Europe:

- having more 'Northumbrian retreats' in different countries. Practical help with how to form a monastic rhythm in daily life, would be very much appreciated and looked for.

It's in the mixture of influencing (through teaching, example and creative expressions) and further strengthening the 'together' element through fellowship, eating and sharing, where, I think, the future of the Northumbria Community in Europe lies. *Floor Vogelaar*
floor.vogelaar@northumbriacommunity.org

Cont'd from pg 4

St John of Beverley (8th century) was a member of the Whitby community under Hilda and ordained the Venerable Bede. He was around at the time of Wilfrid and Colman.

And last, but not least, St Wilgils (7th century). He was a hermit right down on the tip of Spurn Point where the

Humber estuary meets the North Sea and is the southernmost point of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria.

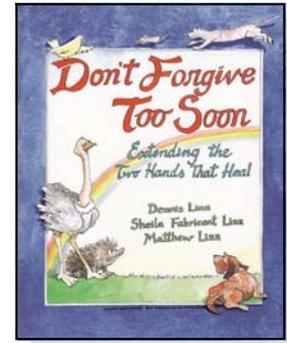
What an inheritance to follow! We couldn't make it up to Nether Springs for Easter but opted to go down to the tip of Spurn point to renew our Community vows there....what an isolated, yet inspirational place.

John Davis

Sue Taylor wrote to us about a book she'd recently discovered:

Don't Forgive Too Soon - Extending the Two Hands That Heal

By Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn and Matthew Linn



I'm not exactly an avid reader of Christian books, but I can honestly say I could not put this one down until I got to the end. This book has had a significant effect on my understanding and thinking and has caused me to review the way I live – but that's still a work in progress. It is subtitled 'Extending the Two Hands That Heal', but I think I would have subtitled it 'How to forgive without becoming a passive doormat'.

It is easy to read, with amusing sketches scattered throughout the text and is presented in quite short chunks, which makes it easy to read in brief bursts, or to allow time for reflection. There are suggested exercises at the end of each chapter, some of which I used. The rather childlike cover and illustrations might put off some people.

The book opens by using some of the passages about forgiveness from Matthew Chapter 5 and explaining them in their historical and cultural context. It goes on to suggest ways in which we can forgive without giving to the 'oppressor' what is not his/her due. It is full of practical examples from the authors' personal experience and from the lives of clients they have encountered in their professional experience as counsellors and spiritual directors. 'Most of us know that forgiveness means not striking back, but few of us have learned that ideally it also means non-violently resisting abuse' (p31) would be a key theme in the book.

The second part of the book gives exercises to help the reader move through stages of forgiveness. I have now given 3 copies of this book to friends and recommended it to many others. It would be especially appropriate for anyone struggling with forgiveness or abusive relationships and for those seeking to help them. It is full of wisdom but is very practical and I am beginning to explore some more titles by the same authors that I have seen on the bookshelves at Nether Springs. *Sue Taylor*

We asked Andy Raine to tell us the story

about the meditation for DAY 2:

Somewhere in the States at a flea-market, yard-sale or much-loved second-hand bookshop in New England I picked up a white spiral-bound delight published in 1975 by Printery House, Conception Abbey, Missouri. It was called, 'Life Is A Full Circle'. The words were handscrawled in capitals or in joined-up writing, the pictures were photographs, drawings or stencils but all in imaginative designs and psychedelic colours. I loved some of the pages so much that I tore out the others. What remained became a book to lie open in my prayer-corner, a focus for meditating on words from Gabriel Marcel or Erich Fromm, Anais Nin, various scriptures or more importantly quotes from Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Paul Brunton and Alan P.Tory. This was the sourcebook that brought me the meditations for Day 1 and 2 each month, and the reading for January 1st. Another wise merchant had gathered treasures old and new so I in turn could pass on the ones I chose to treasure, kept safely in my storehouse, and ready to be shared. [That quote by Alan P. Tory was from 'Wonder: Learning the "Ah!" of Things']



When I had not long returned to the Island and was living at Starbank Cottage I framed a grey photocopy of that scribbled meditation, 'There is a contemplative in all of us...' and when Ervin Dorschler visited the cottage with Dave Reynolds, as soon as Ervin saw those words he was shaken and had to sit down, experience the Now, unable to continue as before, while Dave was asking did the scripture, 'Ask for the old paths' mean something as he couldn't get that out of his head!

The Carmelite vow was contributed by John and Linda Skinner. It reminds us of early days when visiting convents, contact with monasteries, hermitages and the friary seemed to bring peace and sanity, connecting to silence, the calling of the bell to a rhythm of prayer, the sense that this was to be inextricably linked to our future. Activity needed to spring out of prayer, journeying and creativity out of listening, wisdom out of silence. *Andy*

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

The back page



New Companions

Paul Lugton was welcomed into Companionship on 4 June at a communion service in his local church. His father, and his mentor Rob Holden were amongst those present.



Glen Graham was welcomed into Companionship at Lee Abbey. Roy Searle led the liturgy and Glen gave a moving testimony of his journey through the novitiate process. Glen was presented with a Braille copy of the Rule and his guide dog was given a gift of 'doggie treats'! Elizabeth Webb

writes of Glen's becoming a Companion: *"Glen has been a valuable member of the Exeter Northumbria Community Group for some years and it was therefore appropriate that this step should be marked by that group of people as well. So Glen repeated his vows and promises before his group of friends several days later on the Friday evening. He spoke very warmly about the group telling us that in his whole life he has not experienced such a welcome and a sense of being included and belonging. This was very affirming for us."*

Sarah Fowle's 'companionisation' took place around the dining table at Nether Springs. See p8.

John & Linda Davis recently relocated to Bridlington, and John writes: *"We love it in Bridlington but it is a little too far to go to our old York/Leeds Community group. We wonder if there are any Companions and Friends in this East Yorkshire area who might like to meet up from time to time to pray the office, share food and fellowship and Community news? Do get in touch with us....my email is: revjhdavis@gmail.com and our phone number is: 01262-228427; we'd love to hear from you."*

Fancy a (free) Holiday near Nether Springs?

Fabulous, modern 4 bedroomed detached house available to Companions and families in exchange for caring for canine occupants when owners away. House situated 7 miles from the Mother House - children and dogs welcome. For further information email Linsi Phillips at linsi@lnznwills.com

Arrivals

Aidan James Douglas Wrenn was born on 30th April weighing 7lbs12oz, brother to Katie, son to Sue and Andrew.



On 20th May, Alice Elizabeth was born to Jessica and Nick, sister to Gabriel – grandchild to Roy and Shirley Searle.

Northumbria Community Gathering St Albans 10th September 2011 at St Stephen's Church, St Albans.

Bring something to share for lunch. All welcome, but it would be nice to know approximate numbers in advance. St Stephen's is accessible by public transport, and some lifts from rail stations might be available. There is a car park at the church. Among other things, we hope to offer the opportunity of a prayer walk following the route of the martyrdom of St Alban – Britain's first recorded Christian martyr (probably 209AD). For further details, and to let us know you'll be there, phone Netta and Mike Gibbs 01727 854860.

The new **North West group** will be meeting again on Saturday 20 August at St John's Church, Yealand, Lancashire. For more details contact: Diane Smith 01524 782341 or dianesmith1@mac.com

A small group is meeting for midday office in **Newtonmore, Highlands**, each day Mon-Sat at noon. The meeting place is the home of Jenny Jones at Meadowbank, Main Street, Newtonmore (two doors down from the Wildcat centre). Please feel free to come and join us for office and/or a cup of tea if you are in the area or just heading up the A9.

Thank God for the fulfilment of a long-held vision and pray for Cath and Ian Henzel, Pam and Paul Cavendish and others at the **Coventry Prayer House** where Celtic Daily Prayer is regularly used. Gathering and evening office fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7.30 pm. Contact Cath on 07960 723079 for details. www.coventryprayerhouse.org.uk

© CAIM is the official newsletter of the Northumbria Community.

Northumbria Community Trust, Registered Charity No: 1099503

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