



CAIM

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

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

The editor gets the front page for the second consecutive issue! This time however, the joy is tempered by frustration. 'Patient endurance...'

Home? Coming...

It's frustrating for us that this issue of Caim is not filled with photographs and information about our new Mother House. That was certainly our hope and intention!

It has been so very heartening to receive such a lot of affirming comments expressing gratitude to God for the news of the new home for our Community's Mother House. There is a strong awareness of God's hand in the way the issue has been resolved - within months of our becoming aware of the need to move.

As we said when we gave the news in the last issue, there are a couple of 'legal' issues which our new landlord needs to resolve before he is comfortable to let the news become 'public knowledge'. We all hoped they would be resolved by now, but as we go to press one of them is

not quite completed. And so, to honour his request, we are unable to say much more just yet. We know this will be frustrating! But although it's 'no news' we want to assure you that it really is 'good news'! Our new landlords are very excited and positive about having the Community as tenants, and many

conversations and meetings have already taken place, as we continue to work with them towards our 'target' of occupying our new home around St Aidan's day at the end of August 2010.



Overseers, Seniors and Trustees are very aware of the need to build and improve our communication within Community in the coming year, as we approach such major issues. Several initiatives are under way (see pg 2 for details of one of them) and we will use all of these to spread the news about the Mother House - its location and the plans we are working up (as well as inviting you to participate in them!) - just as soon as we can. Meanwhile, it is a season to give thanks...

Jeff Sutheran

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Put one or two of these in your diary:

Community Gatherings in 2010.

We are planning to have a series of Community Gathering throughout 2010 in Britain and beyond. These will be days to gather and share together, to pray, learn and get to know each other better and hear about some of the exciting developments taking place within the Community. Some will be large gatherings, others smaller - but each one significant. There will be someone from the Community's leadership network at each of the gatherings.

Sat 20th March; Keynsham, Bristol

Sat 27th to Sunday, 28th March: Amsterdam, Holland

Thurs 1st to Mon, 5th April: Easter Workshop, Nether Springs

Sat 15th May: Poustinia, Exeter

Sat 12th June: St. Joseph's, East Midlands

Sat 17th July: London or Guildford

Sat 25th September: Herefordshire

Sat 2nd October: Limburg, Germany

Nov 2010 (date to be confirmed) Bridge House, Shillingford

Date to be confirmed: USA

Date to be confirmed: Canada

Date to be confirmed: Scotland

Further information will be available from the Community Office, on the website and in subsequent editions of Caim as dates are confirmed and plans develop.



A JOURNEY WITH CUTHBERT

A chance to explore the story of Cuthbert and make a guided pilgrimage along Cuthbert's Way next year (7-14 May 2010). It will be based on two centres, firstly at Melrose and then at Hetton Hall. Ability to walk about 15 miles a day is essential. The cost is £330 including board and lodging, packed lunches, transportation at start and finish points, knowledgeable guides and beautiful scenery.



This is not an ordinary walking holiday, but an opportunity to make an inner journey whilst walking the outer journey. Please contact the office for further details and a booking form.

Let's meet online!

One of the things that we are using to help build us together in Community is a series of video-conference Forums, which give an opportunity for us to gather together online with some members of the leadership team.



These are times to share, to hear about important developments, and to ask questions. They are very free and easy times, without a strict agenda—great for catching up!

The technology is really quite simple – you only need a computer with internet access and some speakers or headphones to watch and hear the meeting (and you can participate by typing your comments, which works better than you might expect!) - and if you have a microphone and/or a webcam, you can talk to us too..

Book the following dates in your diary and come on line to join us. Why not arrange to visit computer-owning friends or family, if you don't own one yourself?

Tuesday 26th January: 7pm for one hour

Tuesday, 23rd February: 7pm for one hour

Tuesday, 16th March: 7pm for one hour

A set of comprehensive instructions on how to take part is available from the office if you need them – just ask Ellen.

Welcome to the Winter edition of Caim!

The frosts are hard and crisp, and the days short around here. Perhaps winter is a dark and difficult season for you, when you long for the arrival of Spring... or perhaps it will give you a time to be quiet, to reflect, and restore your strength. Most probably, like much of life - perhaps it's a jumble of the good, the bad, and the indifferent.

We send warm and heartfelt greetings from Northumberland to you at this Christmas season. May you know the nearness of Christ, and may you experience afresh the astounding reality of Christmas. *Jeff & Ingrid*

Roy Searle writes some reflections and challenges for Advent and beyond::

Behold I am doing a new thing

After 400 long years of waiting, when there was no word from the Lord, God finally speaks. He speaks in a way that hardly anyone could have imagined. The first word - a baby's cry; the means - a vulnerable first-born son, born to humble parents in a stable; announced not in The Times but to ordinary working folk, shepherds on the margins of society.

The trouble with the Christmas story for many of us is its familiarity. We know it even if our understanding has been shaped by our appearing in a nativity play when we were at infant school. I guess many of us have played the part of Joseph, Mary, the shepherds, angels or, as in my case - because I giggled in the rehearsals - the third King's spare camel!

Just as that first Advent impacted and transformed the lives of those who saw God... we too have the opportunity to respond and participate in the new things that God is doing among us.

Journeying through the Advent readings this year has awakened me from the familiarity of the story to the profound things that God was doing in the coming of Christ into the world. Isaiah prophesied, to a people who were being taken into exile, that God was going to do a new thing. Through the waiting, wondering and long exile, during which many of the false images of God were dismantled, there came a new image of God - a God who comes and dwells among us; a God who inhabits humanity; a flesh and blood God. Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God and in encountering and knowing him, we discover the true nature of God. He was the new thing, and he ushered in a new way for living.

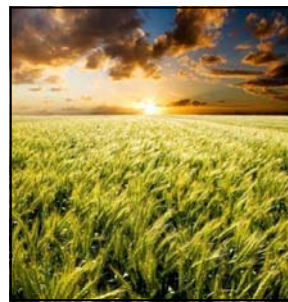
The call to Community that we share and commit to as Companions and Friends is to reflect the image of the God we see in Jesus. Thus we should expect to see expressions of newness and creativity that come from what God has birthed among us - which allow and encourage the development of new ways of being Christ's disciples in the context of a changing and emerging post-Christendom culture. The new monastic call that describes our vocation should lead to a genuine newness, a Christian spirituality that reflects God's heart and values.

As we enter into a New Year, we anticipate that it will be one of great significance for our Community. With it comes the promise and potential of many things that will

shape and inform our life and work as a Community. Approaching this New Year is like Advent, a season of preparation for all the new things that are happening. The Lord is doing a new thing among us. Whilst building the new on foundations of old, there is a great sense of anticipation and excitement about the fresh expressions, creative initiatives and new developments which will feature in the coming year. Here are just some of them:

- The **relocating of our Community's Mother House** in time for Aidan's Day, 31st August;
- The emergence and establishing of **Other Community Houses** in Britain and abroad;
- New ways of addressing the issue of **being together** including:
 - Community Gatherings. Almost every month next year will see a Community Gathering somewhere throughout Britain as well as those in America, Canada, Holland, Germany and Ireland.
 - Community Teams on the road providing new opportunities for a wider group of Companions and Friends to participate.
 - New websites and Community forums in an online world.
- The fruits of the **Trading Review of Cloisters** which will see many new products and resources available;
- Increasing **partnerships** with like-minded communities, churches and organisations;
- **New appointments** on the staff and wider leadership network;
- The developing of the new **Novitiate process**;
- A major **Call to Community** in the Spring;
- A final **Easter Workshop** based at Hetton Hall and a fitting farewell to the location of our Mother House in July;
- A range of exciting **missional opportunities** and initiatives in contexts beyond the church and in the public domain;
- Some significant **local expressions of Community** in North Northumberland and beyond.

Each one of these developments reflects life, growth and



newness. These are exciting times. Just as that first Advent impacted and transformed the lives of those who saw God in the events of Christ's coming and who responded to the new thing that the Lord was doing, so we too have the opportunity to respond and participate in the new things

that God is doing among us. Don't miss out on the promise and possibilities of next year. Trusting a known God with an unknown future we press on into a New Year, giving thanks for all that has passed and praising Him for all that's to come.

Jane Perkins sent us news of L'Abri

I was interested to see that the Community Prayer Guide compilers selected the Day 31 Meditation for 'such a time as this'.

It was one of the important waymarks on our road too in setting out on our journey in France. We have been most encouraged by the way God is still keeping his promise to 'bring the workers of His choice', and pray this may continue, both for us, and Hetton, or wherever the Mother House may be.



I am still learning to set things in motion to a point, under what I perceive to be God's direction (however halting that may be), and then let go, and allow Him to work in people's

lives, and steer the direction of conversations and events. It's a fascinating, and sometimes scary process. The impending move of the Mother House is just such an experience in which we have all been privileged to share some part. There must be others of you out there who are similarly experimenting in your own lives?!

Seeking God and keeping the sacred spaces to find Him in, continue to be a challenge, but well worth the effort. It feels so right when we can keep to the monastic day, but this is often hard to achieve in the mad working world we all live in. 'Being' is so much more important than 'doing', but is so counter to what the world expects and teaches us. Even at L'Abri a Suvigny, where everything is geared up to following the monastic principles, there are still the people who come who are 'do-ers' rather than 'be-ers', (that's got nothing to do with the aperitif either!) and the challenge is to help them to relax into something which doesn't come naturally. Particularly when they see so many 'jobs' that need doing. In today's world, perhaps Jesus would have said, 'The jobs you will always have with you, but' - I am sure the leadership meet this in relation to the Mother House and other issues..... A book I have read over the summer I found helpful. It is called 'Sacred Spaces - Stations on a Celtic Way' by Margaret Silf. Perhaps you know it?

We are thinking about our plans for next year, and it seems that the following will be the likely shape of things to come. Do join us if God moves you to do so. Thank you so much for your prayers. Please continue to uphold us.



Easter Weekend – 2nd to 4th April 2010

– A time to reflect on the Passion and Resurrection, and an opportunity to renew vows at the shrine of St Columbanus.

Community Work Week – 5th to 9th April 2010 – You could stay on after the above, or simply come for these few days of monastic rhythm and helping at Suvigny.

Invitation to Solitude and Silence – 27th to 29th July – arrive on the 26th if residential - a 3 day retreat giving time and space for yourself and God to be together. Some direction will be given each day.

De Spil Work Week 1 – 1st to 8th August – The group will come with Victor to help with the renovations within the monastic day.

Community Work Week – 9th to 13th August – an opportunity for people from the Community and beyond to join in with the renovations within the monastic day.



De Spil Work Week 2 – 15th to 22nd August – a quieter week for those preferring a smaller group, to join in with the renovations and the monastic day.

For more information or to contact us please visit www.northumbriacommunityinfrance.net or ask the office at Hetton Hall to put you in touch with us.

Jane Perkins

Everyone likes to be encouraged occasionally... we enjoyed receiving this note from Karen Noad in Oklahoma, USA - but get back to work, Karen!:

Hi Jeff & Ingrid,

I'm at work, so haven't had time to read all of CAIM, but quickly glanced through and it is MAGNIFICENT! I can hardly wait to get home and read it! Beautiful photos, and wonderful, inspiring articles that I skimmed – I'm planning to forward it to several friends and show it to all my office staff so they can see why I get so "homesick" for England! I was flooded with memories of beautiful places, some really good friends, and some amazing times with God in the midst of struggle and hardship – a great mix. Thanks for the mini-holiday I had in just skimming! Please share my thanks to all who were involved in putting this together. Must get to work, but was compelled to write. Many blessings and hugs to you all. *Karen*

Diane Sekuloff told us about the development of Northumbria Community in Western Canada

A Northumbria Community Group meeting was held over the weekend of September 26-27 in Victoria, on Vancouver Island in Canada.



About 22 people attended, from all over the island. Over numerous cups of tea and coffee, I shared about the community, using first the powerpoint presentation downloaded from our website, and then spent the rest of the day unpacking the community Rule of Availability and Vulnerability with participants. Sharing the familiar stories such as Geordie the novice, some Desert Father stories, and a few about



community folk and events in my own history was great fun - and they were all well received. The group decided they would like to journey together on a regular basis. We shared in Evening Prayer, and then ate a wonderful meal prepared by Andrew and Lorraine Gates! I looked around the table, and marvelled at how similar it looked to a meal at Hetton Hall. It felt like home!

Diane Sekuloff

The memory of a good man...

It is with sadness we have to share the news of the death of Ken Wise, husband of Norma. Ken died peacefully at his home in Newton Aycliffe on October 11th 2009 after a heroic fight with cancer. Ken's involvement in the Community went deep into the early years, being part of the initial Nether Springs Trust in the early 80s. He was a faithful Companion who loved and supported the life of the Community through the good, the bad and the ugly times. He hosted the Newton Aycliffe Community Group with his wife Norma for many years. He was a great example of an ordinary northern bloke who debunked religious pomposity but shared a real down-to-earth faith in Jesus. When he spoke, he spoke from the heart, and he had a quiet inner strength and a clear faith never better illustrated than in the way he faced death with such courage. 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter in to the joy of your Lord'.



Paul Waite was part of the team who enjoyed some Hilton Five star treatment

It was one of those gloriously sunny, clear autumn afternoons as three cars wound their way through the majestic Cairngorm mountains,

carrying the team up to the far-flung Scottish Highland town of Inverness. Our hosts were the good folk of the Hilton Parish Church and our team was led by Roy who'd ministered to the church almost exactly a year earlier. Despite that, we'd been invited back!



The Hilton church is part of the 'Church Without Walls' movement

within the Church of Scotland and is very committed to living out the gospel and sharing with the local community.

The weekend, briefly entitled: "How Jesus built community and how we build community today" began on the Friday evening with a session of teaching by Roy, supported by musicians Ingrid, Norman and Andy. We'd also brought with us storyteller Simon Airey who delighted the audience with his story "Miserable Monks"

Saturday began with a further session led by Roy, whose inimitable Geordie humour has kept many a gathering entertained at the same time as presenting some very challenging truths for people to grapple with in their own quest for community living. This was followed by three afternoon workshops: Art, led by Faith Airey, Storytelling led by Simon Airey, and Music led by our worship team.



On Sunday morning, the church was packed to the gunnels with about 300 people who were treated to another session led by Roy.

For the entire weekend, we were treated to the most wonderful (5*) hospitality by our respective hosts and good friendships have been made.

On the way back, we made a detour into the Cairngorms, to the place where Roy came to faith all those years ago – a wild and beautiful place.

We eagerly look forward to the next visit.

Duncan & Lesley Maclean are involved with Lee Abbey, and a partnership between the two Communities is flourishing. We asked them to tell us about Lee Abbey.



The Lee Abbey Movement embraces Lee Abbey Devon – a Christian Conference and Holiday Centre; two small households one at Aston Birmingham and one at Knowle West, Bristol and an International Student's Club in London.

Lee Abbey Devon, is the home to a community of about 90 people from around 19 different nationalities. It is a transient community that is continually welcoming and saying farewell to people as contracts are usually for 1, 2 or 3 years. Each community member makes initial [green badge] promises to community and after approximately three months makes further promises [red badge] that include living transparent lives. Its vision is that through being God's welcome to all who come, guests will experience a new or renewed encounter with Jesus, refreshment of mind, body and spirit. They seek also to renew and serve the church; most often through the house parties but more recently they have re-instated community teams that go out to churches or groups of churches around the country.

For community, the work of their hands may be through work in one of the various teams, such as the house,



kitchen, estate, chaplaincy, administrative, or conference teams. Their days are punctuated with times of corporate and personal prayer. The central point of their

corporate worship is their 'Corpus' service on a Wednesday morning.

We have always described Lee Abbey as 'a thin place' where it seems easier to feel the heartbeat of God. We experienced that for ourselves in 1994 when we went there for the first time, as guests. Needing direction for our future, God met with us in a very special way, using many



things not least the community themselves. Over the years we continued to visit and in 2002 at another significant time, Lee Abbey was the place where our vision for what we do

now began to take shape. Around this time, we were approached by the community to serve several times a year as pastoral helpers.

So what do we do as pastoral helpers? The role for us has developed over the years. At first it was simply being there for the guests; offering a listening ear, praying through their issues; sealing through prayer any sense of call or new direction they may have discerned. To this has been added - serving at meals; pouring teas and coffees; leading Morning Worship (CDP Morning Office – of course!) and running workshops (often expressing the ethos of Northumbria Community). During the last few years we have been asked to be available for Community too and we have had the privilege of leading one of their retreats; and last year during the interregnum we even took our green badge promises and served on community for about ten weeks.



We are delighted that the two Communities are now seeking partnership in a way that each is prayerfully supportive of the other. As the outworking of this is defined and explored, we are excited at the prospect of the

'Northumbria Week' planned for next May (10th – 14th) at Lee Abbey Devon. For more details of this, see the panel below, and for more information on all that Lee Abbey has to offer, log onto the web site www.leeabbey.org.uk

Meanwhile please pray for Lee Abbey Devon, its warden David Rowe and the community that seeks to offer God's welcome and an alternative way to live in these changing and challenging times. *Lesley MacLean*

A Northumbrian Week at Lee Abbey, Devon,

Monday 10th to Friday 14th May 2010.

Join Roy Searle, Duncan & Lesley MacLean and other Companions & Friends for a Northumbrian Week at Lee Abbey, overlooking the dramatic North Devon coast near Lynton.

Join us for a week with talks, workshops and worship in the relaxed and beautiful surroundings of

Lee Abbey. For further information and booking please go to Lee Abbey website www.leeabbey.org.uk Prices from £220



David Pott shares with us a profound episode:

My Arnhem Experience

I have never really connected with the military side of things in my family background. On both my father's and mother's sides of the family there were plenty of colonels, brigadiers and generals and I was the first for generations not to go into the army. To his credit my father never pushed me to follow in his footsteps, but he did invite me to join him on the occasions when he revisited Arnhem where he had fought in the famous battle in September 1944. Somehow it never seemed to work out for me to go while he was alive, but this last year I felt I should go for the 65th anniversary.

There were two reasons. Firstly, I had been invited by my good friend John Pressdee to join him and others on an Operation Market Garden prayer journey following the route the Allies took from Leopoldsburg in Belgium to Arnhem. Secondly, my son Joel, the lead singer of Athlete had written a beautiful song 'Black Swan Song' about my father which referenced Arnhem and we were both keen to find out more about what had really happened to him.



Joel agreed to join me for a day at the end of the journey.

On the prayer journey we visited the key sites connected with the operation and

we met with the many other people who had come for the anniversary. I had not realized before just how well known my uncle John Frost is in Holland. He had heroically held on to the bridge at Arnhem for five days against tremendous odds and was played by Anthony Hopkins in the film 'A Bridge Too Far'. The bridge in Arnhem is named after him. A team member would mention I was John Frost's nephew and people would immediately want to shake my hand and express their gratitude to me. On some occasions I was asked to speak and when I also mentioned Joel's song, several knew Athlete and I became an instant minor celebrity!

During the final weekend in Arnhem we attended a lot of commemorative events. Being John Frost's nephew meant I got a last minute invite to a reception at Arnhem Town Hall. I was particularly glad to talk with the German ambassador (the first time ever he's been invited!) and to tell him my uncle made bridges to Germans after the war and would be glad to see this day. On other days I watched 1,000 paratroopers come down on Ginkel Heath where my father had parachuted down and on the Sunday morning I attended the deeply moving memorial service at Oosterbeek cemetery. In the afternoon I had the pleasure of meeting with Floor & Ada Vogelaar, who are also Northumbria Community companions.

But the next day turned out to be most definitely one of

the best days of my life! Joel arrived with a wonderful couple (Richard & Karen) who had come to film Joel and I on our special day of discovery as we pieced together my



Dad's Arnhem story in different locations. We began where he dropped at Ginkel Heath and then followed the route his company took to the Lichtenbeek Hill just north of Oosterbeek cemetery. Here his company encountered the main defensive German line. Somehow they managed to break through, but with huge loss of life. We followed the route of the engagement to the top of the hill where we found the

very place where my Dad was wounded and lay for twenty hours thinking he was going to die. He wrote a farewell letter to my mother. It is now a very beautiful place with the trees framing it like a natural cathedral. We wrote on one of those little crosses with a poppy on and stuck it in the ground. On the cross we especially referred to those wonderful Dutch resistance guys who carried Dad to safety. Surely if they hadn't turned up, he would have died there. Then Joel sang 'Black Swan Song' in that lovely place and it was a truly sacred moment.

Later at the cemetery as we looked at the graves of those men who died in that battle beside my Dad, we met a veteran and while he didn't know Dad or my uncle, it was good to hear his story - Joel and he connected because he was a Liverpool fan! We also found the place where my Dad was taken by the Dutch stretcher party and there we reflected on how later he made a dramatic escape from a German hospital on crutches! He managed to get over to Holland but was recaptured there.

Finally at the museum at John Frost Bridge, we met a lovely Dutch man in his 70s who again told us a wonderful story about his father who was taken by the Germans to dig trenches in Normandy. He and his mother were sure he had died there and then after eight months he suddenly turned up having escaped and walked for



many nights all the way home! He described his father holding his mother for twenty minutes reassuring her that he would

never leave her and that image comes to him every day - faithfulness and love has marked his family life always.

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There were tears in his eyes as he told the story and we were just wiped out by his telling of it. It was like a seal on the day as the theme of faithfulness across the generations was, of course, central for Joel and I as we uncovered Dad's story.

In the months that followed our return, it was so encouraging that my Dad's story has been told many times over in the media because of the release of 'Black Swan Song' as a single to coincide with Armistice Day. Joel sang it at the British Legion event in Trafalgar Square before the silence. Richard and Karen did a great job producing a moving 43 minute documentary DVD called 'Black Swan Story' which has already been used for assemblies and lessons in several schools.

My basic views have not changed about militarism, but there is much to reflect upon after this visit about such things as courage, sacrifice, brotherhood and the right ways to remember. I loved the equality expressed in the simplicity of the headstones in the cemeteries with officers and men of equal value. They are beautiful places reflecting order and calm and pointing to life - all the opposites of war.

The 'Black Swan Story' DVD is available as an attractive box set for only £5 at <http://www.athletehq.com/shop/contents/en-us/d10.html> or it can also be viewed on youtube. **David Pott**

The photographs used in this story were taken by Karen Bristoll www.karenbristoll.co.uk. David's 'How Then Shall We Live' booklet called 'Journeying Home' is available from Cloisters.

We asked Pete Askew - the new 'Chairman of the Board' - to give us a

Cloisters update

Over the last ten years 'Cloisters', our trading company, has provided our Community and many others with a variety of resources to aid the journey, alone and together.

Over the years many people have helped with its growth and development. As a new Board, taking on the opportunities and challenges for this next chapter, we particularly give our thanks to retiring Board members for all the work they've done: Bob Ainsley, Ian Corsie, Mark Fleeson, Roy Searle, and Jeff Sutheran.

We especially want to take this opportunity to thank Ian Corsie, who, following his career with Pitkin Publishing, founded Cloisters, oversaw the publishing of CDP, and has been much of the driving force behind the Company.

New Products

As we look to the future, we're up and running with a new range of Community teaching CDs and this is being regularly updated as new material becomes available.

Soon to follow will be a Storytelling CD telling the life of St Cuthbert, and we're starting the process of producing some new music CDs as well, so watch this space!

The intention is that our audio CDs will also be available as MP3 downloads; you can already buy the Community teaching material in this format from the Cloisters website.

As well as audio products we're also bringing out some new printed resources in the new year, these include: a 'Pocket Daily Office', Chapel booklets, and a new range of cards.



Other projects in the pipeline for next year include: a new book of daily readings, and a 'Sacred Space' booklet.

Updates on all of our new products can be found on our website www.cloistersonline.com or for those of you who prefer a chat as you order just pick up the phone and ring Brenda on 01289 388235 (+44 1289 388235 from overseas) or write to her at this address. **Cloisters**, Hetton Hall, Chatton, Northumberland NE66 5SD, UK. email: cloisters@northumbriacommunity.org

This is the front cover of the 2010 Calendar 'Memories of Hetton'. It features A4 size photos of Hetton Hall, inside and out - and the date pages have space to write appointments and reminders. Contact Brenda at Cloisters to get your copy of this limited edition item for £9.00



Easter Workshop at Nether Springs, Thurs 1st to Mon 5th April 2010.

This coming year, we will share our final Easter Workshop at Hetton Hall, before moving on in the summer.



Mindful of the need and desire to 'leave well', the theme for Easter Workshop will be: **'Who do you think you are? Where do you think you're going?'**

It will provide us with an opportunity to retell (and hear again!) the foundational stories of Community.

We will be intentionally shaping the Easter weekend

around saying 'goodbye' to Hetton, and setting a waymark for us to note where we have come from, and where we are going in the exciting days which lie ahead.

This is a reminder that ours is an evolving story, and as we begin a new chapter we take our bearings from recalling who we follow, where we've come from, and where we are going.

The Easter narrative again draws us into Christ's life, death & resurrection. He gives us - individually and as a Community - our identity, our life and our future.



We'll spend some time reflecting on influential Writers, influential People, significant Words, and significant Places, as we weave a tapestry of past, present - and future - encounters with God.

It's set to be an important and powerful time. Clear your diary, and get to Nether Springs if you can.

Here are a few bits of information about **Easter Gatherings at some 'Other Houses'**

Duncan & Lesley MacLean are hosting a day at their home in Herefordshire on Easter Monday.

Jane & Andrew Perkins will be at L'Abri for an Easter gathering - see page 4 for details.

The Bristol and Bath Community Group will be meeting over the Easter weekend, and anyone is welcome to join us. For further details nearer the time please contact us: tel 01761 452137 or email: sarahjanebk46@btinternet.com

If you are planning an Easter Gathering, please let us know so that we can include it in the March issue.

Date for your diary:

Beyond Belief is a Radio 4 series exploring the place and nature of faith in today's world. Roy Searle took part in a studio discussion on the subject of New Monasticism. You can listen to the programme at **4.30pm on Radio 4, Monday 11th January.**

We received this email from USA with the subject

Thank You....thank you.....thank you!

Thank you for this site and the Daily Offices you have posted... I have used this material daily for about a year... what a blessing... I have your CD, and play it when I am moving about the world... It brings me such peace... Today I will read to a friend who is dying (she is truly at the end) the Daily Office, and sing to her about living in the Shadow of His Wings... This is possible because of your work... Thank You! God Bless You and Keep You.

A plea from Nether Springs

"Any old beads, any old beads, any, any, any old beads ..." If anyone has any beads (broken necklaces and bracelets or new projects that never quite got made?) that they would like to donate to Nether Springs we have all manners of craftiness in mind that require them!

We asked Elizabeth Webb to tell us about the
'OTHER HOUSES' GATHERING
Bridge House Shillingford, October 2009.

The small wooden cabin which houses the Chapel at Bridge House was crammed to capacity when we all arrived in time for Morning Prayer.

About twenty Companions and Friends from nine different places had been invited to come together to meet with Roy Searle and Pete Askew to examine more fully the emerging relationships between the Mother House and 'Other Houses'.

We had been sent a paper from the Seniors, to trigger off our deliberations. It began with the suggestion that emerging 'Other Houses' are a significant development in the Community network:

"One of the expressions of Community that seems of increasing importance is the development of other houses that are connected to the Community by their spirituality and ethos, but whose expression of living has grown up in and around the different homes and locations of different Companions and Friends".

The first part of the day was spent in sharing what we might be already doing, or what our vision was for a future house of prayer. It became obvious that some places were up and running - like Bridge House, House of Azar (Herefordshire), L'Abri (Normandy, France) and our own Poustinia here in Exeter. Others were just beginning, like the one on the edge of Bristol which Sarah and Malcolm Kinch had started. Others were still a longed-for vision, waiting to be realised.

The main question of the conference was what makes an "Other House" of the Northumbria Community? What is the family likeness that makes a certain House of Prayer recognisably Northumbrian? Roy borrowed the scientific term 'DNA', to describe the ethos that we should all have in common. The DNA of the Northumbria Community is Availability, Vulnerability, and Hospitality - which all inform the Community's way for living.



We were assured that there was no desire to duplicate Nether Springs in any way, and that each House should have its own

life, reflecting the ethos of Northumbria. Ways in which one could support the other were discussed.

Appropriate ways of resourcing, the facilitation of communication, and the use of 'Other Houses' as gathering places in the life of the scattered Community, were all topics that were touched on. It was felt it would be important to feature more of the life of 'Other Houses' in Caim and to have regional gatherings over the next eighteen months.

It was good to meet with each other, and to share thoughts and ideas. We were grateful to Rosemary and Philip Mader-Grayson for hosting the day and providing delicious food to keep us going.

Elizabeth Webb

Community Sailing Adventure around the Hebridean Islands of Scotland, 2010

Saturday 7th to Wednesday 11th August, 2010

An opportunity to go sailing with Companions and Friends of the Northumbria Community on Seventh Wave, a 49ft luxury ocean-going yacht. The boat will sail (so don't miss it!) from Croabh Marina, south of Oban, around the Inner Hebrides. For full details and information, please email: jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org or send an sae to the Community Office marked FAO Jean Watson, Sailing.



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

Judith Maskery sent us a review of a book she's enjoyed recently:

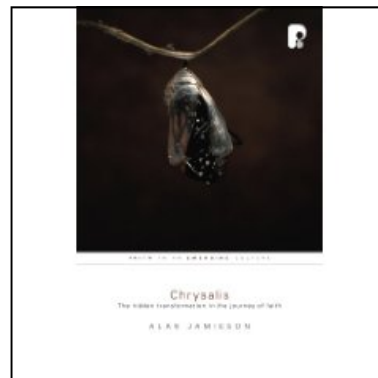
Chrysalis: The Hidden Transformation in the Journey of Faith

Alan Jamieson (Paternoster ISBN 978-1-84227-544-3)

I don't know if a butterfly can remember what it feels like to be inside a chrysalis but I can certainly remember what the early years of my ongoing, spiritual transformation felt like.

For long stretches of time my experience felt dark and uncomfortable with little prospect of change. When the sources of spiritual sustenance I had relied on for years ceased to have meaning and I found myself filled with angry, frustrated and painful questions, it was very hard to make sense of the journey. I wish I had had this little book then.

Anyone who has read Alan Jamieson's earlier work *A Churchless Faith* will know that he is good at metaphor. In *Chrysalis* he uses the life cycle of the Monarch butterfly to illustrate the process of spiritual transformation towards maturity in faith. Drawing on his experience as a fellow traveller, a pastor and a sociologist of faith, he makes sense of the painful dismantling and rebuilding of faith that has to happen to each of us if we are to grow into our own skins and become the persons God truly made us to be.



This is a book for those on that journey of faith. It is also a resource for those who walk alongside others as they travel through the dark, tough places of the spiritual life. It is a hopeful and compassionate book, an easy read but full of profound insights. It helped me articulate where my spiritual journey has been taking me but, more importantly, why I have been there and what it is achieving. The chrysalis stage does not last forever: for those who hang in there, eventually the butterfly emerges. Read this and take heart. *Judith Maskery*

We asked Andy Raine to tell us the story about the meditation for DAY 29:

Francis was naive. He threw off all his clothes in the piazza, and trusted his heavenly Father to clothe him like the lilies of the field.

He was a blessing - and an embarrassment. He refused to own anything, even a library. He embraced everything as part of a single creation, serving lepers, taming a wolf. Sun and moon were kin to him, but so were poverty and death. The body (that he should sometimes remember to treat more kindly) he nick-named "Brother Ass". He reached out to a muslim leader, and won his respect. He loved the church as completely as he gave himself to the leper, seeing Christ where others saw only corruption. His disarming example won a whole generation of disciples, and awakened faith in others. Juniper was one of his closest and earliest followers. With the transitions from Francis and the few to more and then to many, Juniper saw worrying trends of seriousness, study, property and

pragmatism. Rather than arguing, or bowing to the inevitable, Juniper acted out parables of foolishness to call his brothers to their senses, and back to their beginnings.

Our Day 29 meditation warns us of the dangers of complacency, and comforts us in times of powerlessness, scolds our anxious thoughts, and articulates our repeated struggles to trust God.

Francis said that Poverty should be the lady he wooed, the prize he won. Juniper and 'Francesco' remind us to depend on God, to relish uncertainty as freedom, to be foolish enough, child-like enough to believe. Murray Bodo in his book captures this so beautifully. Francis says, "I wish that I had a forest full of such Junipers." *Andy*



Quarterly Updates

In preparation for our quarterly Community Trustees meeting, the Overseers compile a simple 'update' report, which gives an overview of what's going on where. We think this is such a useful update that we'd like to make it more widely available - if you'd like to receive a copy each quarter, then please email Ellen at the Community Office, and she'll add you to the list; office@northumbriacommunity.org or send an A4 stamped addressed envelope to the Community Office.



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New companions

It has been a busy few months welcoming new folk into Companionship in the Community.



Tina Jefferies from Herefordshire was baptised on Holy Island on Saturday 17th October, and welcomed in the chapel as a Companion in the Community the following day.



The Exeter Community Group provided the company and, no doubt, the cakes, as Barbara May was also welcomed as a Companion in October.

November 14th was the day Judith Hayden was welcomed as a Companion in the chapel at Nether Springs.



Congratulations to Ed Pillar, from Evesham, for the hard work and inspiration that has taken him to Rome, New Orleans, and (soon) Belgium to deliver papers related to his PhD, at a variety of different conferences. Said Ed: "All in all,

loads of fun, meeting great people and challenging and stretching me."

Baby Boom?

Iona Freya Rose, little sister to Anya and Ellie, was born to Amanda and Rob Miles in North London at the end of September.



Gabriel Timothy was born to Jessica (nee Searle) and Nick Richmond, in Oxford on 28th September, their first child and Roy and Shirley's third grandson.



Geoff and Joan Boston also became grandparents – twice, as both their daughters had daughters! Frances Naomi was born 11th July to Ruth and Ainsley Callaghan (Coventry) and Lily Rachel was born 29th September to Jenni & Steve Wilkinson (Stockton on Tees).



Hot off the press is news that Mike and Sue Heimbecker in Calgary, Canada have just welcomed Jude Benjamin into their family, born Friday 11th December.



More Community grandparents come in the form of Peter and Meryl Stowe who gained the title mere hours after being at Nether Springs for a trustees meeting when Mylo Matthew, son of Matthew and Amy Stowe, made an appearance in Twickenham on 9th December.

We asked Victor Van Heudsen from De Spil, Holland, to tell us a little of what is going on in their community, as they walk in close partnership with us. We had a wonderful time in Cantignergues, France this year. We are planning what we call a sort of walk/retreat/holiday, during the second week of May 2010 (9 – 16th) We have already booked it and the retreat will be led by Joke den Oudsten (one of our workers) and myself. And... we hope to join you at Easter next year. We are working on a model of 'spiritual guidance' for our workers and for people who need this type of guidance.
Victor

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