



# CAIM

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

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

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Roy Searle continues his 'Spiritual Formation series'

**I**t was one of those rare experiences for me, and its methodology I would never recommend. I was beginning to prepare to speak at a city church in Belfast on the last Sunday before we returned home to Northumberland.



I knew little about the church, except for what I had gleaned in conversation from my friends Ken & Claire. Asking that God might direct my thoughts, I picked up my Bible and it fell open - to a blank page between the Old Testament book of Malachi and the New Testament Gospel of Matthew. Nothing there - here was my text! There'd been nothing; no word from the Lord, no comfort from the priests, no challenge from the prophets - nothing. The people of God were in exile, and what was once coherent and meaningful was being deconstructed, and no longer seemed relevant. Whilst the religious leaders of the day tried to speak peace where there was no peace (Jeremiah 6:14) Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah 'defined reality' and urged people to return and seek God, and to ask the question '*How do we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?*' It was a time when their known world and all the familiar props and symbols which held life and faith together were removed.

Everything within me, and all that I've witnessed throughout my 27 years in ministry, confirms in me a belief that revival is not around the corner (even those heady, exciting days of charismatic renewal and *Wimber Wonderland* and things going bump in the evening services!). However many praise songs we sing, exhortations we hear, (which hold about as much promise for the future as the Titanic did on its maiden voyage) and prayer meetings where "if my people..." is quoted out of context, I'm convinced that God is preparing the church for exile, not revival, in the West.

Why would God put the church in exile? To call us back to himself, to take us to that place and experience where God delivers us from those things that have led us away from him and his ways, in order to prepare us, as Walter Brueggemann states, for finding *a new way to be human in the world*.

As we ask the question '*How then shall we live?*', we need courage as we journey into the new things that God desires to do among us, moving us beyond what is now redundant as a way of living, and informing our faith in a changing post-Christendom culture.

*Continued on Page 3*

*From our earliest days, the Community has had a heart for Europe. As we've been called to 'walk again the ancient paths' it seems as though the Lord is opening up new doors across the continent, and we are seeing the emergence of initiatives and 'springs' to which we are being connected. This year, Community Companions will be visiting or supporting people and places across Europe, in Austria, Italy, France, Holland, Germany, Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Hungary. Some of these 'springs' are represented in this issue of Caim. Here's the first:*

## Northumbrian Week in Prague 08



Building on the success of last year's Northumbrian week in Prague, and to deepen our partnership with the community at the International Baptist Theological Seminary, we

are returning this year! The dates for the 08 week are: **Monday, 31st March to Sunday 6th April, 2008.**

This is another great opportunity for us to 'be Community' during a week of stimulating and exciting programmed activities at IBTS. The week will consist of lectures, seminars and workshops, together with input and sharing with the staff and students. The pattern of each day will be built around the monastic rhythm of our offices, with lots of time to relax and explore the delights of Prague.

Do join us! It promises to be a really good time. The cost for half board accommodation, breakfast and lunch in Hotel Jeneralka, (which is part of the seminary complex,) is £265 per person for twin or double room and £310 per person for a single room. If booked in advance there are some very cheap flights from most UK and European airports and it will be wonderful if folks from further afield could join with us!



Please email [jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org) or write to Jean at The Northumbria Community, Hetton Hall, Chatton, Northumberland, NE66 5SD, marking your envelope 'Northumbrian Week in Prague'.

## Welcome to the Winter edition of Caim!



Welcome to another year, and another issue of Caim. We hope you have enjoyed a peaceful and refreshing break over Christmas—although I know that this is a vain hope for some of us! But we do pray that 2008 will bring a deepening awareness of the goodness of God in the life of all who walk this journey together in Community.

We're hoping that this issue will have arrived in time to remind all those who live within striking distance, of the Community Gathering on Jan 12th. See page 12!

There's something of a **European** theme in this issue, with information about several events, places, and initiatives with which the Community is linked. Perhaps 2008 might be the year when you're able to explore some of them...

But if mainland Europe is just a step too far, do pray about the possibility of joining a Community team 'on the road' this year...there's information about some opportunities to do that, on a new page we're creating on the website. See page 12 for more details. This can really deepen our sense of being Community together, and over the years has always been part of our calling. Looking forward to seeing you around!

*Jeff & Ingrid*



*Continued from Page 1*

Courage to embrace that call to *Risky living*; to break free from the shackles of old ways (that were not 'wrong', and were no doubt helpful and appropriate for a former age - but which have become religious systems, traditions and sub-cultures) that lock people into vested interests, power plays and being controlled by others whose lives are governed more by fear than faith, and insecurity more than stability.

Courage and humility to acknowledge our need of God, and a willingness to grieve for the things that we've lost or become. A weeping for the state of our own hearts, and the waywardness of our own lives, and of the church, and of our exploitative and pervasive consumer culture that blinds us to the values of God's kingdom and the cries of the poor.

Courage to recognise where we've made God in our own image, or where we've assumed God is with us. We would be as shocked as were the people in Ezekiel's day, when in their assumption that God is with them in the temple, he clears off! Such a distorted an image had the people of God made of the one, true, living God that he leaves them! It's as though God didn't recognise himself in the images, the messages and the ways in which his people portrayed him, so he cuts himself off from them. Devastating, yet in the experience of being abandoned is the necessary relinquishing of the old and the learning to live with 'uncertainty yet hope' for the future. Exile is a call to wait and wonder, to listen and discern where newness will come from. And it requires courage to live with more questions than answers, more mystery than certainty. It would be far easier to resort to a religious fundamentalism that holds on desperately, with the language of conviction to that which seems certain, (and is surely unquestionable). And it's very understandable, for when we feel insecure and face change, our 'default mode' is to hold onto what is steadfast and sure - but that is not the purpose of God leading us into exile, for it hinders our ability to see what the Spirit of God is doing in putting us through such experiences, and preparing us for the new.

The empty page from Malachi to Matthew was just one long season of waiting. Yet in the waiting, in facing reality, in accepting the loss of known and old ways, came the imagining of something new.

Read on into the gospel and you discover that God is doing something extraordinarily new. He's not in the temple, but in the stable. Not among the religious, but among the ordinary folks, the poor, the sick, the marginalised. In that inter-testamental period of exile, the false images of God portrayed by the religious leaders were dismantled. In their place came the discovery that God is not a vengeful, untouchable, judgemental figure whose pleasure came through punishing, who wasn't

tribal or nationalistic - but rather the true image of God seen in Jesus, full of compassion and love, who exercises his ministry with servanthood not power. One who comes not with might and control, but someone who embraces availability and vulnerability.

As we seek God, ask *how we sing his song in a strange land* and explore what it means to live as disciples of Christ in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, so we in our exile must wait and reflect, and allow creativity and newness to emerge.

**Look for signs of the kingdom in unexpected places, and ways. Look for the kingdom in the streets, see beyond the confines of religious sub-cultures...the new things that God is doing among us.**

Look for signs of the kingdom in unexpected places, and ways. Look for the kingdom in the streets, see beyond the confines of religious sub-cultures who are desperately hanging in on survival mode, or looking for revival that blinds the seeker from seeing the new things that God is doing among us. As in that first Advent, it was not in the Royal Courts, the religious circles, the Temple celebrations, but in the out-of-the-way places among the marginalised people that God's presence was known. Out of the waiting, silence, apparent nothingness. Out of what was quite ordinary, God came and hope was born, and a new way of being a disciple emerged.

As we enter a New Year may we do so with the knowledge of God's love and compassion, his grace and goodness and desire to lead us in exile to a place of returning, renewing and re-imagining. To a place of genuine newness, and the living out of a Christian spirituality that reflects more truly His heart and values. Spiritual formation is all about these things, and the shaping of our hearts and lives in that transforming process, which helps us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves -to embrace and live out our call to availability and vulnerability. This is the new monasticism, the journey of faith, which we are called to in exile.

*Roy Searle*



*Here's some news—and an invitation—from Jane & Andrew Perkins regarding their 'Community House' in Suvigny, France:*

## 2007 was a fruitful year at Suvigny..

..literally - in that we had our first harvest from the quickly establishing orchard, and figuratively, in the many ways God has led us on, through the offering of a 'real' retreat at Easter, to the visit from Jeff, Roy and Trevor – a time of great blessing for all - and the development of friendships old and new.

There's now a whole new look to the front of the property, with dormers added, and replacement windows and doors to keep out the swallows and the drafts! Inside, life becomes more comfortable as each new bit is done. The chapel has now moved to a garage-size shed in the grounds, and will eventually move again, to the barn, once that has been completed. A good start was made on the barn last summer, with the lovely and lively group from De Spil. During their last evening

with us, we were able to dedicate the chapel and break bread together. It was such a blessing to renew friendships with Victor and the others. The evening campfires with Compline shared around it is a special part of their stay.



There are many plans for next year, and we hope there will be more folk from the Community who would like to join in with the fun, work and space for God that being there encourages. The regular appearance of evening BBQs accompanied by the local wine or cider, seems to go down very well with most people!

Here's the list of events planned for 2008 You are very welcome to join us for any of them!



**March 28th to 30th 'Be Still and know that I am God'** retreat led by Andrew and Jane. A simple time of reading, meditation and discussion, leaving plenty of time to 'be'. (suggested donation 20 euros per person per day)

### **March 31st to 5th April Community Work Week.**

An invitation to anyone from the Community to come and help be a part of the renovations and development of the Retreat House and grounds, within the monastic rhythm of the Day. These two retreats could be combined for anyone wanting a bit of both worlds, or on an either/or basis. (suggested donation 15 euros per person per day)

**May 9th to 11th Visit to De Spil, Holland,** for European Community Gathering

**August 10th to 17th De Spil work week and Community Weekend** at Suvigny (Community Weekend - 15th to 17th)

**August 18th to 23rd Community Work Week.** As above! This could be combined with the preceding Community Weekend for anyone who wanted to do so.

Contact Jane or Andrew at [perkins.jane@gmail.com](mailto:perkins.jane@gmail.com) or the Community Office and they will put you in touch with us.

## Easter Workshop

### **Where will you be this Easter?**

An important annual event in the Community's calendar is our **Easter Workshop**. We'd love you to be part of it. This year it is being held in Northumberland, based at the Community's Motherhouse, the Nether Springs, and will run from Maundy Thursday, 20th March to Easter Monday, 24th March, 2008. Some elements of the programme which have become integral - celebrating Easter and renewing our Community 'Vows' – our Yes to Availability and Vulnerability - will feature, but there will be a number of new, innovative, creative and fresh expressions too.

If you are unable to be with us, we'd like to encourage you to get together with other Friends and Companions for all or some part of the weekend. Philip & Rosemary Mader-Grayson have open house at Bridge House, Shillingford, Oxford on Easter Monday. Last year, several Companions and Friends gathered at the ancient monastic site of Saul in Northern Ireland. Wherever you are, throughout the world

we would like to encourage everyone to create some 'Sacred Space', which provides an opportunity for people to be together as we recommit our lives, alone and together, in the renewal of our 'Vows' and to the emerging and exciting new chapters in the life of the Community.



We'd like to encourage individuals and Community groups to think imaginatively about when and where they can gather to mark this important occasion.

We will post a page dedicated to Easter events on our Community's website [www.northumbriacommunity.org](http://www.northumbriacommunity.org) very soon, so watch out for that. If you plan a gathering, please let us know by writing to us at the Office at Nether Springs or by email to [website@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:website@northumbriacommunity.org)

*More of that European flavouring; Floor Vogelaar and Roy Searle have sent these words about*

## A European Community Gathering for Pentecost, Friday 9th to Monday 12th May, 2008

**Welcome! Welkom Willkommen Bienvenu  
Benvenuto добро пожаловать Welcome  
Recepción Boa vinda Hosgeldiniz**

Do join us, as we gather as Companions and Friends from different parts of Europe, to share together in a weekend of teaching, praying, workshops, eating, drinking, and relaxing together, and celebrating and discerning what the Lord is doing among us as we live and walk the ancient paths across Europe. The Gathering is open to anyone who wishes to join us: Companions, Friends, Supporters and interested people.

The Gathering will be hosted by Floor & Ada Vogelaar, with Roy Searle, Trevor Miller, Jeff & Jill Sutheran, and other folk from France, Holland and from other places in Western and Eastern Europe.

We anticipate about 40 people joining us and really hope this includes you!

We are staying at a delightful centre, a hotel at Beekbergen in Holland, 8 kilometres from Apeldoorn, located in a beautiful woodland setting.

The Gathering begins on Friday evening and concludes mid-afternoon on the Monday.

### Costs

Full board hotel accommodation and gathering costs as follows:-

Standard twin room with en suite: £135 per person

Luxury twin room with en suite: £165 per person

Single room supplements:

Standard Room £20 for the weekend

Deluxe Room £35 for the weekend

### Travel

**By air** - most UK airports fly to Schiphol in Amsterdam and booked in advance are very cheap, e.g. two flights booked already £20 return. From the airport travel by train to the city of Apeldoorn. There is a direct train every hour. A one way ticket costs circa £10. Transport arrangements will be made from Apeldoorn to the hotel.

**By Rail/Sail** - It's possible to get some good deals travelling by train to Harwich across on the ferry and on Dutch rail to Apeldoorn.

**By Road & Ferry** - Some excellent deals can also be found on the overnight crossings with P & O from Hull and DFDS from Newcastle as well as Harwich to the Hook of Holland (Hoek van Holland).

**Extra Nights** - It is possible to stay before or after the Gathering at the hotel, but you would need to make your own arrangements directly.

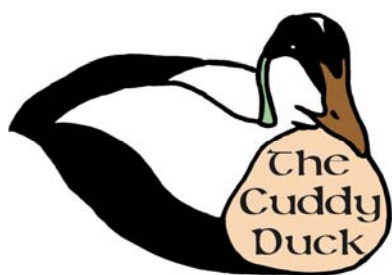
**Bursary Fund** - Whether you are able to attend or not, you might like to consider contributing to our Eastern European Fund. This will enable us to bless some people to attend who otherwise would not be able to afford such a venture – eg we would like to bring a couple of younger people from Eastern Europe. Gifts can be sent to Bryony at the Community's Finance Office (payable to Northumbria Community Trust). Mark envelopes 'Eastern European Fund'

### Booking

Please send a non-refundable deposit of £50 made payable to Northumbria Community Trust by the end of February to Jean Watson at the Community Office address, marking the envelope 'European Community Gathering'. Full payments will be required by the end of April.

Friends from Holland who want to participate can also contact YWAM-Arnhem (Floor and Ada Vogelaar), e-mail: [info@jmeo-arnhem.nl](mailto:info@jmeo-arnhem.nl) or phone: **+31 26 4459309**

We really hope you'll be able to join us and make a significant event a sacred and special happening by your presence with us.



**The Cuddy Duck** will close after Christmas and reopen at Easter. After 16 months of operation, we're taking this opportunity to pray, to 'creatively imagine' and to plan the next phase in The Cuddy Duck's work within the community. A presence in the High Street in Wooler, trading, offering hospitality, engaging missionally with the local community and visitors, are all part of The Cuddy Duck's ministry. Please pray for those involved in its development, particularly Shirley Searle and Jean Watson.

*John Burton remembers the Captain's encouragement:*  
**'This is the life me hearties'**

**The journey starts from Peterborough, on 25th August as Anne and I set out for Scotland.**

Anne will be spending a week walking (scrambling) in the Western Highlands with HF Holidays and I will be joining the crew of the Seventh Wave sailing around the Hebridian Islands.

Leaving Anne at Ballachulish, my next stop is Crabbh Haven, a marina just south of Oban where I meet the skipper of the Seventh Wave, Andrew Thompson. Soon the rest of the crew arrive, from England, Scotland and Holland. We are companions journeying together - strangers at first, but to become friends by the end of the trip.

After the Health and Safety Procedure we weigh anchor (*please be suitably impressed by my grasp of nautical terminology!*) and after a short sail in the open sea we anchor in a calm and isolated bay. With the full moon reflecting on the ocean, sitting in the open cockpit of the Seventh Wave we pray the Ita Compline - one of those 'God moments'.



After breakfast, and Morning Office with our Spiritual Leader for this trip, Joanna, we set sail through the Sound of Mull to Tobermory.

With no wind Andrew has to use the yacht's engine during the first few hours, but as the day progresses the wind freshens and the yacht is allowed to come alive as the wind fills the sails, the yacht cutting through the waves towards our new destination - another God moment. 'This is the life me hearties' as Andrew frequently reminds us.

That night, moored in quiet water off Tobermory, Victor and William, our Dutch companions, provide the next breakfast, fishing from the yacht and catching enough mackerel for all.

*Ships Log* - Tuesday 28th August 2007 we sail around the top of Mull and south towards Iona, passing Staffa an island with unusual rock formations - straight hexagonal columns looking like teeth set around the mouth of Fingal's Cave, a yawning cavern trying to swallow the sea.

As the sun comes through the mist we get our first view of Iona. In the distance the Abbey's silhouette shimmers in the haze. The yacht enters the Sound of Iona, we are escorted by a shoal of dolphins darting and leaping through the clear waters (yet another God moment)

After a short spell on dry land, visiting the Abbey and the small Community on Iona, we sail off to our night mooring

in the "Bull Hole" - named after bull seals that frequent these islands.

Next day, as the dawn breaks through the night sky revealing the mist over the water and with the sails hanging like limp leaves, we leave our moorings and head for the Island of Colonsay. The sea moves around like liquid space. We pass by the Torran Rocks. Looking across to these rocky outcrops I think about the way God uses his tools (the wind, the rain) to sculpture the landscape. Scanning this coastline I am reminded of the tales sailors would tell of adventures in rougher weather.

The weather deteriorates and we head into Loch Tarbet for the night and enjoy once more Andrew's culinary delights, comfortable in the cabin of the Seventh Wave.

The following morning after breakfast and Morning Office, thanking God for this time and space together, we leave the Loch and set sail for our next port of call - Gigha. The sun shone on Gigha as we were shuttled from ship to shore by Andrew in a small rubber dinghy to spend a few hours walking on the island. We discover tranquil gardens hidden in the small valley and what with the otters playing on the shore line and eagles soaring above the tree tops Gigha will remain in my memory for a long time. All too soon our visit is over and we return to the ship - on impulse, three of our party dive into the sea for a swim. Andrew, very concerned about the possibility of hypothermia, keeps a watchful eye. Moments of madness over and safely wrapped in warm towels all enjoy a wee dram (for medicinal purposes you understand)

Morning dawns on our last day at sea and we sail up the Sound of Iona. Again as the day progresses the wind increases but this time to a force 8. Waves crash over the bow; our Seventh Wave comes alive once more - slicing through the ever increasing swell - the yacht now at 45% - I stand at the helm with the sea spray and wind blowing in my face, the excitement of the moment blanking out the possible dangers - 'hold her steady on that bearing', Andrew's instructions to me as he begins to reduce the main



sail, and reef in the spinnaker.

Good food, good wine, good company, our final meal together, followed by

Evening Office round off for me a fantastic day.

I return to Glen Coe to meet up with Anne and due to a last minute change with our accommodation we head homewards via Edinburgh discovering, by chance, Roslyn Chapel. As we are staying overnight Sunday in Peebles we decide to return to the Chapel for Evening Prayer. This on the day of our 40th Wedding Anniversary, our Heavenly Father directing our day, we celebrate, giving thanks to God.

*John Burton*

*Bryony Stimpson, who works in the Finance Office, has written about how we've gone about*

## Making Ends Meet....

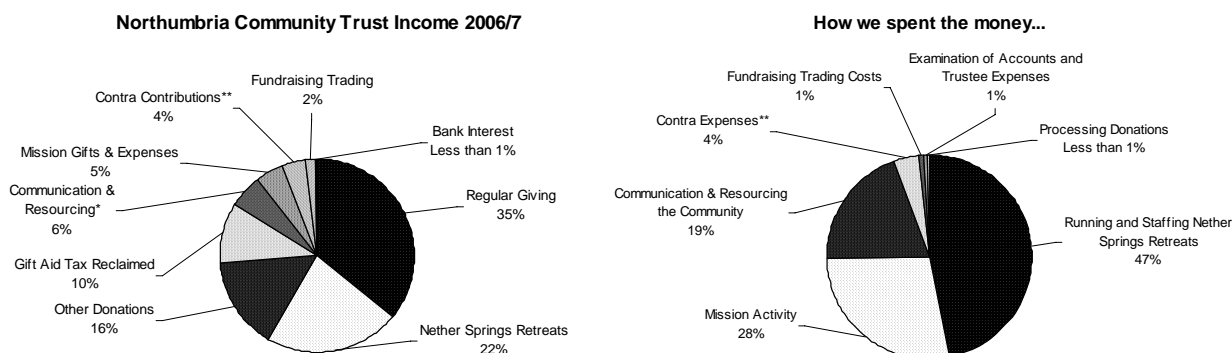
Is January the best time to write about finance and giving? If not, when is?...so here goes!

I want to start with a **sincere thank you** to all of you out there who keep the Community afloat financially by your generosity. From where I am, it feels like a daily miracle!! Regular giving – mostly monthly – now contributes over a third of our income. Add on the “as and when” gifts – many Companions and Friends share their good fortune when extra comes their way – and we’re half way there! All this can be Gift-Aided by those who are UK tax-payers, and a great deal is – last year we got over £23,000 back from the tax-man, some 10% of our income.

*From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 the basic rate of income tax in the UK is going down, so Gift-Aid will be worth less: only 25p in the £ instead of 28p. This represents a loss of income of £2,500 for us. If you find you're paying less tax, don't forget to review your giving. Sadly the lower-paid will actually pay more tax – we appreciate you may also need to review what you give.*

Another thought about Gift Aid: if you've given us a Gift Aid Declaration we will continue to reclaim tax on your donations unless you ask us not to. If you stop being a tax-payer, don't forget to tell us!

For those of you who like to know what's what, here's a summary of our 2006/7 accounts. The detailed version as required by law now gets posted on the Charity Commission Website: [www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk). You will realise that a large part of our funds go on payroll, but as a charity we have to share out those costs according to the time people spend serving the different areas of the Community's ministry. General admin costs, as well as the salaries of those of us working in admin, are also divided out between our ministry and the cost of raising and processing income.



### Northumbria Community Trust Income 2006/7

Regular Giving	83,958
Nether Springs Retreats	51,979
Other Donations	36,259
Gift Aid Tax	23,490
Communication & Resourcing*	13,289
Mission Gifts & Expenses	10,783
Contra Contributions**	9,260
Fundraising Trading	3,951
Bank Interest	452

### And How we spent it....

Running and Staffing Nether Springs Retreats	108,320
Mission Activity	64,454
Communication & Resourcing the Community	44,940
Contra Expenses**	9,260
Fundraising Trading Costs	1,961
Examination of Accounts and Trustee Expenses	1,192
Processing Donations	671

**£233,421**

**230,798**

\* Sale of resources, Mailing Donations and Royalties from our Publications

\*\* Mostly Staff contributions for accommodation

You can see that once again we just about broke even – God's grace meets the Micawber Principle! And we don't keep huge reserves – there's usually just over a month's running costs in the bank, and no other investments. If you want to contact me about any of this, leave a message with the Office or e-mail [finance@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:finance@northumbriacommunity.org).

*Martin and Rebekah Neil tell the story of a recent trip they made:*

## O Jerusalem



**“I am so sorry, but there is no room at this hotel” .... It is 4.00 am, we are weary travellers, arriving for our first ever visit to Israel, a little shocked at these immortal words, from a bygone age.** Our forlorn faces suddenly revived and turned to smiles when our host then mentioned, “we do have some servant quarters available, around the back of the hotel.” Hey, if it’s good enough for Joseph and Mary ...

Looking down from the Mount of Olives, you are overwhelmed as history itself sprawls across the landscape. “Yerushalayim” the ancient Hebrew city meaning “City of Peace”, has grown into a vast metropolis whose foundations of old are layered beneath its modern exterior. The golden Dome of the Rock, where Muslims believe that the prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven on his white steed, looms imposingly over the fragile, segregated walled city, with its Christian, Armenian, Jewish and Arab quarters, a battleground for the three great faiths. The City of David leading up to Mount Zion, the old gnarled trees in the garden of Gethsemane, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on a site that claims to be where Jesus was crucified, and the Golden gate, the place of triumphant return, all within a stones throw. As we take in this breathtaking sight, we realise that the incredible stories of Christ and the Patriarchs of our faith, would now become steps of discovery during a two week excursion into the Holy Land.

We had been invited to Jerusalem to take part in a three day youth gathering. The conference was being held in a kibbutz hotel overlooking Bethlehem, a significant southern outpost for the Israeli army during the Six Day War in 1967. The preserved archaeological ruins tell a story of constant bombardment and in the distance the

newly erected defensive wall, a reminder of today’s ongoing struggle. Now 40 years later, 450 Jewish and Arab believers in Yahweh, and five hundred people from other nations were gathering to pray for peace and unity. We had not understood how unique this event was until a pastor mentioned that he did not know that there were this many messianic believers in the whole of Israel.

As a lead up to the gathering, in record breaking temperatures, we were taken on a whirlwind four day tour of the Biblical Lands. From below sea level near the Dead Sea in the south to the disputed Golan heights on the Syrian/Jordan border in the north, our knowledgeable messianic guide brought incredible historical perspective as we waded at the edge of the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee, lapped water at the spring where Gideon’s army of 300 men were picked by God, collected 5 stones at the site of David’s encounter with Goliath, and meandered amongst the ruins of the town of Capernaum. It was here, at another “thin place” that I got a special moment of quiet saying Morning Prayer on the site of the synagogue that Jesus would have attended.



In our wanderings Rebekah and I have decided to make time for “hangin’ out”. Often it is during these times that God surprises us with very special moments. This time we had planned a further 8 days of “seeing what happens” in Jerusalem and here are some highlights.

We joined a Dutch friend, Bart, who goes daily to pray on the city walls, where a chance encounter gave us an unexpected window into the soul of the Jewish people. A group of young, potential Aliyah (returning Jews from the Diaspora to the land of Israel) Americans were walking the walls, led by an old Jewish man. As they passed we wished them “Shabbat Shalom”. His answer took me aback as he grumbled that there was no peace in Jerusalem. Noticing my drum, one of the students asked if I would play and I answered “OK, if you will sing us a song”.



Strutting towards me the tour guide declared loudly that he would give me a song. As I struck up an Israeli rhythm, the moment overtook him and he burst into life singing and dancing. As he regained his composure he explained that his song was about rejoicing with joy on the walls of Jerusalem. Perplexed with this paradox in his heart he walked thoughtfully away.

It was a rousing blast of classical music erupting from an open window in the morning sunshine that inspired us to meet the occupant, a secular Chilean Jewish sculptress, who had been an Israeli citizen for 50 years. She lived just outside the walls near the Jaffa Gate, in an unkempt yet character filled home, almost museum like which had obviously seen better days. We discovered that her late husband was one of the most famous sculptors in Israel and had designed pieces outside Yad Vashem, (the holocaust museum) and the Israeli governmental buildings. We enjoyed a wonderful morning sharing life stories and travels over tea and cakes. Later, on hearing about our musical adventures, she asked if we would play for her... so the drum came out. As we left we sang a blessing and, after a moments silence, she opened her eyes, and explained that she had felt "a wonderful vibe as we sang". She got quite excited as we were saying our goodbyes and has invited us to come back with other musicians to present a concert in her home for all her friends in the area.



A cash incentive to a smiling elderly, moustached Arab street vendor took us behind the scenes to the original Temple entrance, now paradoxically hidden amongst the colourful, bustling bazaars in the Arab Muslim quarter.

Through a friend of a friend we were able to meet a wonderful messianic Jewish lady who lived and worked in a pharmacy in an ultra orthodox town, east of Jerusalem. Her underground faith brought many remarkable stories of hope to her community in a regimental sub-culture that despises followers of Christ.

As we travel to the nations we are constantly humbled by the epitaphs of colonialism, and sadly in Israel our Christian legacy is even more poignant. Our forefathers' history of spiritual apartheid and contempt for the Jewish people started with the Crusades. After the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, Jews in England were marked with a replica of the stone tablets that Moses received and during the reign of Edward 1st all Jews were expelled and their property seized. A chance conversation with a Jewish shop keeper highlighted today's continued misunderstanding between Jew and evangelical Christians. Interestingly he was very encouraged by the Celts and mentioned that he did not meet too many people that listened to the Jewish viewpoint.

Near the end of our time in Jerusalem I donned my kippah (skullcap), it was Friday evening and we were to taste devotion at the Wailing Wall, the beginning of Shabbat. Christianity during Constantine's time separated itself from all dealings and associations with the Jewish people and now our calendars and celebrations are totally out of sync. This was to be a unique experience for us, mingling with God's chosen people as they worship. As ten or more people gathered, the individual services started. Black suited, Hassidic Jews from Mea Shearim (an orthodox section of Jerusalem) with their distinctive curly side locks, rocked back and forth as they prayed and read, stuffing written prayers into the overflowing stone cracks, designer dressed youngsters clutching their tallith (Jewish prayer shawl) linked arms, jumping, dancing and singing, and all this right under the Dome of the Rock as the call to prayer rings out from the minaret tower.

Reflecting on our journeys at Nether Springs, the Israeli theme continued during Morning Prayer in our chapel, the first reading on our return being Psalm 122: 3-9.

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
 "May those who love you be secure.  
 May there be peace within your walls  
 and security within your citadels."  
 For the sake of my brothers and friends,  
 I will say, "Peace be within you."  
 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,  
 I will seek your prosperity.*

*Here's an excerpt from some publicity for an upcoming event. You can find the leaflet itself, and the booking form, on the website.*

## **New Habits for a New Era?**

### **Exploring New Monasticism**

**The Northumbria Community and the Anabaptist Network** will be exploring 'new monasticism' in a one-day conference in Coventry on **3rd May 2008**. Through plenary sessions, discussion, worship, workshops and conversations with a wide range of resource people, we will assess its potential for the church in exile.

Anabaptism has been described as a 'lay monastic movement'. The Northumbria Community draws on the Desert Fathers and Mothers and the Celtic monastic tradition. Both groups have links with emerging churches and with old and new monastic communities. We invite you to join us, to share your experiences and questions and to learn from others.

The venue is **Warwick Road United Reformed Church in Coventry**, within walking distance of Coventry rail station (details will be sent on receipt of the booking form). The event will run from 10:00am to 5:00pm. The cost is £15 (£12 if unwaged). Hot drinks will be provided and participants can bring their own lunch or purchase it nearby.

Please email Sarah Pillar for more details and a booking form: [sarah.pillar@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:sarah.pillar@northumbriacommunity.org) or contact the office.

*Here's a challenging thought from Roy Searle for the coming season:*

## **Just a Thought**

What was a challenge to me, as a Lenten discipline, became a great delight, and I commend it for your consideration this coming Lent. Try to go through the whole of Lent without buying anything other than that which is necessary to eat or drink. Embracing the discipline of not buying any clothing, electrical goods, books, DVD's, or luxuries of any sort can be a great means to tackle head-on the compulsive, addictive influences of a 'consumer society' as well as our own perceived 'needs' - and help us to refocus and live more simply. Allied to this, plan each week to give away some 'thing' you own. You could also plan some act of generosity, e.g. pay for that person's drink behind you in the coffee shop, send a donation off to a charity, give the Big Issue seller a pleasant monetary surprise, buy a bunch of flowers or similar gift that would bless that person who you imagine may never receive such. Chronicle the experience and see what it does for your soul! *Roy Searle*

## **New from Cloisters RULE CARDS**

Here's a neat new resource available from Cloisters: a box of 52 cards (one a week for a year) each with words from, or pertaining to, the Community's Rule. The cards are credit card size, in colour, and the idea is that you can pop them in your pocket/handbag/book, or prop them on the mantelpiece/table - wherever suits you so that you are reminded of them frequently during the week and the words can sink deep and be transformative.

You can buy them online at [www.cloistersonline.com](http://www.cloistersonline.com) or give Brenda a ring on 01289 388235.

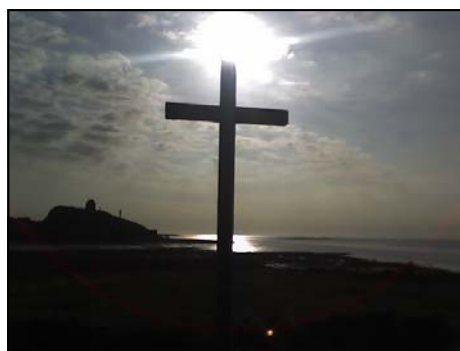
Ref Code: RULECARDS Price: £5.00 + p&p

## **On becoming a Companion**

**Y**ou may remember that in the last edition of *Caim*, Trevor shared about trying to understand better what it means to be a Companion in the Northumbria Community, in terms of vocation. The hope to re-establish a clear novitiate process will now be realised as we enter this new year.

We want the novitiate process to be a clear season in someone's life - starting at a Community weekend and coming to fruition at the point where a novice is welcomed into Companionship with a 'liturgy of blessing' amongst other Companions.

As people ask to embark on the process of 'becoming a Companion', those who are already Companions may be asked to keep company with someone as their novice mentor through this season of their life.



*Cross on St Cuthbert's Isle, Holy Island*

*We noticed Catherine Askew clutching a couple of things she seemed fond of, so we asked her to tell us about them...*

**Moment by Moment: A Retreat in Everyday Life** by Carol Ann Smith, SHCJ and Eugene F. Merz, SJ

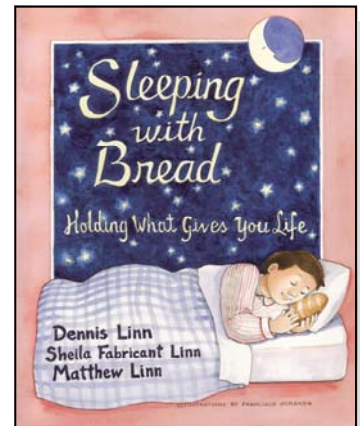
**Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life** by Dennis Linn, Shelia Fabricant Linn, and Matthew Linn

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola is a sixteenth-century text with multiple prayer exercises which invite people to reflect on the experiences in their daily life in such a way that deepens their love for and freedom in Christ. The beauty of both **Moment by Moment** and **Sleeping with Bread** is that they reflect the heart of The Spiritual Exercises while putting it into our modern context.



**Moment by Moment** contains thirty-two 'Moments', or reflective prayer experiences. Each one has a theme, scripture passages, excerpts for St. Ignatius, questions to ponder, and suggestions for practical actions that might make the wisdom from that day more tangible. I have enjoyed using this book to take an hour a week to go on a "mini-retreat" in my own home. And though I have mostly used it by myself, I could imagine sharing the insights from the exercises with my spouse or a soul-friend.

**Sleeping with Bread** is similar except that it is family-friendly and has good pictures!



It encourages us to ask ourselves two questions: "For what am I most grateful? For what am I least grateful?" The book then goes on to describe a process by which we might ask these questions each day on our own or with our family or another group of people. By asking these questions, not only do we get to know ourselves and others we love better, we can also better discern God's will. For, generally speaking, the authors say, God's will is for us to do more of whatever we are most grateful for or whatever gives us most life.

I have found the questions and practices in these books help me to be more attentive to the ways God is at work in my everyday life. By regularly reflecting on my days, I begin to recognize certain themes that point me toward God's deepest longings and desires for me. In short, they have helped me notice the fingerprints of God on my life. *Catherine Askew*

*Editor's note: Brenda tells me that Cloisters can supply each book for £7.99 plus 80p postage.*

Anne Burton wrote to tell us about the Peterborough Community Group

## Community Groups in Focus

A little about us ... We gather, sharing doubt, faith, sorrow and joy - and through prayer and worship we remind each other, that although we may not know all the answers, we are here to encourage each other.

We're a committed group of Companions and Friends in the Northumbria Community, comprising couples, singles and families, ranging from teens to seniors.

Following a similar pattern each month of bringing and sharing a meal, of just being and of worship, we meet in our homes and whoever is hosting 'leads'. Our meeting time varies, but always includes that 'bring and share' meal together.

It is quite fortunate that some of us are very musically talented and lead our worship as we pray. Cello, Guitars, Bodhran, Flute, Recorder, Northumbrian Pipes, Tambourine, Shakers and Whistles are brought along to our gatherings! And we do all enjoy singing. We enjoy story telling, and we have even tried some liturgical dance. Using and adapting the Brigid liturgy, we have blessed our homes and on different occasions followed and have been inspired by CDP Liturgies.



So you see ... our times together are very relaxed and unstructured – a safe place to be - sometimes with group and general discussion, other times with quieter individual soul sharing.

In true Community spirit we support each other in prayer and action, sharing hospitality and experiences as we journey alone and together. Co-ordinator – Anne Burton [anneburton@gmail.com](mailto:anneburton@gmail.com) 01733 252615



# What's on where—and when

## Pray and Participate

We are setting up a new page on the Community's website to alert us to 'What's On'. This will simply list some of the happenings that the Community is involved in - either as individuals, as Community teams, or simply initiatives that we are connected with.

This will enable us all to be aware of what is happening, to pray—and possibly to participate! Check out the new page, and if you want any information about any events, contact [jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:jean.watson@northumbriacommunity.org).

Please let Jean know about any things you're involved in!

## A JOURNEY WITH CUTHBERT

A chance to explore the story of Cuthbert and make a guided pilgrimage along Cuthbert's Way next Easter (28th March to 4th April). It will be based on two centres, firstly at Melrose and then at Hetton Hall. (*Ability to walk about 13 miles a day is essential.*) The cost is £300 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. Several people have already done so—how about you?



Here's a last-minute reminder that there's a **Community Gathering in Leeds on 12th Jan.** We're meeting at **St. Matthew's C.E. Primary School, Wood Lane, Chapel Allerton, Leeds LS7 3QF** from 10am. Contact the Office for more details...quickly!

## Prayer Guide

For those who are compiling our community Prayer Guide, it is really helpful to have requests and suggestions for prayer - for people, places and initiatives that are connected with the Community. Please send them and we will try to include them in the next edition. Send them to the Office, or by email to [prayerguide@northumbriacommunity.org](mailto:prayerguide@northumbriacommunity.org)

## Work & Prayer Week at Ballydugan Cottages Sunday 24th to Friday 29th February, 2008

Following the pattern of a monastic day, the mornings will be spent working in the cottages, gardens and grounds at Ballydugan. The afternoons will be spent



pottering and venturing to explore the area and the evenings relaxing together. The week will include an opportunity to join the Community of Prayer at Saul. Cost excluding travel is £100. Please send a cheque deposit of £25 made payable to The Northumbria Community and send to Jean Watson, at the Community Office address.

## No. 10 High Street, Wooler

Roy & Shirley Searle, having moved back to Northumberland, are able to offer self-catering holiday accommodation in Wooler, suitable for 2-4 people. Further details available from [no10@northumbrian.org](mailto:no10@northumbrian.org) or 12 High Street, Wooler, Northumberland, NE71 6BY.

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