

Contemplative Fire Post

December 2018 – no.32



– Wisdom On The Way- Sat 10th November “Embodying Hope For The Climate”



Jane Johnston writes:

Nineteen Companions and Friends met at St Mark's Church in Sheffield, for a WOTW day entitled “Embodying Hope for the Climate”.

Rachael Hand, a member of St Marks and an artist/climate change activist, led our two morning sessions, expressing her huge concern for our beautiful world and the damage climate change is causing.

At the centre of the gathering we had placed four cloths in the colours of the liturgical year - green, purple, gold, red - and over these we placed an outline of the Trefoil in autumn leaves.



Rachael had also created 4 posters in these colours, with simple illustrations—a very helpful visual reminder of the ideas she was expressing.



Ali Dorey led us in a chant “Sing to the Lord a New Song” and briefly spoke about the Trefoil, before handing over to Rachael, who divided her morning session into four:

Green (ordinary time) - expressing our gratitude for the beauty of this world.

Purple (Advent/Lent) - expressing our pain for the world. This included a time of paired listening, and an opportunity to write our concerns and place them on the purple cloth. During this, Romans 8 v 22-27 was read.

Gold (Christmas /Easter) and red (Pentecost).

In the second session, Rachael presented the causes of climate change, using balloons to illustrate various gases/emissions, and then invited us to reflect on those areas in which we can personally take action. We shared this in listening threes, and then Ali led us in a final chant, to bring the morning to an end.



In the afternoon we walked to the nearby Botanical Gardens for a reflective walk.



*Glasshouses: Matthew 6, v28-30, with chant “You shall be like a garden”.



*Peter Pan statue and glade: Matthew 6, v26, plus body prayer/reflection on St Kevin. Caroline Newton reflected "Around the base were the words: *Find a circle of stone open up to the stars , Where huge animals live in a cage without bars*. This spoke to me of how as adult humans we are often imprisoned in our own pain and mental constructs, and here is Peter Pan (or possibly the God Pan) calling us back to our authentic selves, back to our inner child".

*Stream/little waterfall - Isaiah 36, v 6-7



Ali Dorey adds:

Following our Wisdom on the Way day, here's a piece of Sheffield-based action some of us could take. We heard from Rachael how the structures need to change and quickly, as well as our individual lifestyles. If you're not in Sheffield, *Extinction Rebellion* is happening in other places too.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/535423906921031/?ti=ia>



Report of Trustees' Meetings 24 July and 27 October 2018

Chair Francoise Pinteaux-Jones writes:

The new Board met on 27 October, although new Trustees Peter Wright, Helen Fitch-Hunter and Jack McBane had attended our 24 July meeting, which had been the last for Charlotte Wright and Elaine Wilkins on whose unstinting work for the Community we will keep building. This continuity is best illustrated in reporting the outcomes of both meetings here together.

CF Post

The first decision taken by the new Board was to pursue the possibility of reviving the much-valued CF Post -thanks to Gill and Jeremy!

CIO and legal framework

Over these last months, Jack's dogged negotiations with the Charity Commission did not after all, as Companions will know, lead to achieving CIO status. As it turns out, our main object i.e. finding a way to ensure that all Companions are members of the Trust with full voting rights on the election of trustees, the annual accounts and the annual budget, can be enshrined in our existing constitutional documents, at lesser cost and effort. The necessary amendments to our Articles of Association are in the process of being drafted and submitted by a solicitor.

Bearing in mind the efforts made to ensure transparency in our proceedings, the concerns expressed at the Community Weekend about the legality and acceptability of disbanding the Hub and co-opting its members on the Board were given a thorough review in the light of our governing documents.

It was agreed that the interest of the Community would be best served by appointing the remaining members of the Hub who were not already Trustees, to act as Directors/Trustees as from the next Trustees meeting, as per Article 26 and 29(1) of the Articles of Association. In the event, Hub members willing to be co-opted were Sharon Roberts and Ann Worrall. Should they wish to continue as Trustees, (2) of the same Article requires that they retire at the next AGM and stand for election by the membership.

The recommended amendments to the Articles of Association of Contemplative Fire have now been completed and processed and are now on Companies House website:

<https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/05141218/filing-history>

Finance

In line with decisions taken at previous meetings of the Trustees and Hub, and as explained with zest by Sally Livsey at our Community Weekend, our financial procedures have been streamlined, notably affecting the funding of local events. The AGM approval of the budget will simplify the Community Administrator's tasks related to payment procedures.

A development fund budget has been set and members' ideas/ initiatives/projects towards CF's growth and outreach are invited.

With this in mind, at our October meeting, Helen presented information on the costs of having a Takeaway tent (exhibitor tent) at Greenbelt in 2019.

Caroline gave an update on management accounts, which will be posted on the website within the Community Forum. The website is also to include a Paypal account to facilitate payments e.g. for events.

Website

It always falls to Helen to update and explain the travails of our website technical team; she took us through the complexities faced by ESP, our new host and designer, whom we have also entrusted with IT support for our administrator. They have proved supportive and responsive in redeveloping our website to meet the original spec and design more closely, while keeping it live and running online. This is no mean feat and has claimed many hours of work with Helen and Tina.

Close and regular contact with the team at ESP is yielding further improvement and developing extra options on our site. The fact that the Theological Reflections is to be for public viewing, while only online members will be able to discuss/ comment on the Reflections, demands some fine-tuning. We can but hope that you will soon all be able to enjoy a rich and fully functional site.

Spaces of Belonging

The discussion on welcoming new members reported in the last CF Post was echoed in a germane question. While the category of "Friends" exists in our Community, its vocation, hitherto largely undefined, is now going to be explored by Jack and Jeremy with the help of members of this group. In parallel, Françoise joined the group discussion on spaces of belonging at the New Monastic Communities Conference, where she collected insights and experiences from sister communities.

With much in the pipeline, we look forward to Sharon and Ann joining the Board in January, to build on the foundations patiently laid down in recent years.

Contemplative Fire Facebook Page



Ali Dorey writes:

Tina and I met to put this new group page together. We hope you like it. We're hoping to advertise public events here, so people can easily share them with others on Facebook. This is a new venture, so do bear with us. And if you have any thoughts emerging from contemplation that you'd like to share, do post them.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/188723175399620/>

Report from Meetings of The Hub The End of an Era

Steward Ann Worrall writes:

It was formally agreed at the Community Weekend in September that the Hub as it currently stood should be dissolved, and members wishing to continue in the work and not currently trustees be co-opted onto the Trustee Body.

For me, this felt a very positive and creative move. The Hub was formed at the instigation of the Review Body and with the agreement of Companions, to be a group to take the weight off trustees in the transition period after Philip and to carry the smooth running of Contemplative Fire events, building cohesion in our dispersed community. Now feels a good time to have one body, rather than duplicating communications and meetings and thus avoiding the possibilities of misunderstandings. Meeting together as one body united in the ways of Contemplative Fire will be good. (And four less meetings for Tina!)

The Hub has met quarterly over the two years it has been in existence and there has been a real effort to hold meetings in different parts of the country, so that Hub members had the opportunity to see Contemplative Fire in action and to meet others in the community. Listening to others and observing what they like (and don't like!) about CF has really informed our meetings. It has been very special too, being welcomed into Companions' homes, deepening our sense of being accompanied.

The Hub members, geographically spread, have worked together, sharing their talents generously, and we have tried to instigate a sense of building clear processes and encouraging self-leadership. As Steward, I was a facilitator, avoiding the assumptions that the Chair makes all the decisions and carries the responsibility. We all do. This is Contemplative Fire and we felt it good to challenge old formats and assumptions in order to clarify our purpose. We have tried to build into the group openings for dialogue around our own journeys and how they can be developed via CF.

We have been helped with the employing of Tina, driven through and persevered with the practicalities of the website (deep thanks to Helen) and organised the last two September Community Weekends; instigated and carried through the Community Fellowship Weekends, the February weekend retreat and several Wisdom on the Way days.

We have made it part of our planning to assess how previous events have gone and we are pleased to see that the last Community Weekend at Shallowford House was very well received, though next time we shall ensure that hot chocolate is available!

It was a big shock to me to see how far ahead these venues must be booked and the financial risks that can arise from having to pay a significant deposit in advance in order to secure sole use. If CF were ever to move into business, it seems there is a huge demand for venues where people can go to be still, in beautiful surroundings, with en suites and good food! We have Parcevall Hall booked for June in 2019 and we are hoping to develop a Pilgrimage Walk in 2020 alongside the February weekend retreat.

We had a very good meeting in July in Saltmarshe in Jeremy's beautiful annexe, mainly concerned with the Community Weekend, and

a presentation from Sally on the finances was a breath of fresh air and inspired us to contemplate how we might work from a sense of abundance in future, rather than fear. That also led our discussions on how we might grow our community, which will be a main priority in 2019. We will be looking at setting up new pilot schemes for CF practices such as Way Beyond Religion and Threes, as has been done in the North and in other parts of the country. Caroline is hoping the Midlands group will grow and if so they will take on the organising of the St Bernard's Fellowship Weekend in March. We are also planning to go to Greenbelt. But we need help!

We have had full agendas, but have always managed to get through them with positivity, love and humour. Flowers and candles appear by magic. A chant may be sung, a silent walk together punctuating the day, space for silence and for deep listening appearing alongside the 'business'. Space for our Source and our Light, who is our guide and our purpose. Thank you all my fellow Hub members past and present. It has been a blast.



Contemplative Fire

**Pilgrimage To Now/here
Saturday 19th January
9.30am for 10am – 3.30pm**

Without Winter there'd be no Spring



Led by Ali Dorey and Sally Rawthore, Contemplative Fire Companions who both love the outdoors and often find themselves connecting with God in nature. There will be a short walk, including some simple body prayer. Our time together will offer opportunities to explore and reflect on the theme of winter, the paradox that everything living is dying, and the

wonder of eternity, inspired by the landscape.

This day has been inspired by Anne Bradstreet's words; *"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."*
[Meditations Divine and Moral]

Calendar 2019

- *Trustees' Meeting , 14 Jan, St Andrews, Waterloo
- *Pilgrimage To Now/here, 19 Jan (see above)
- * Silent Retreat, 22-24 Feb, Holland House
- *Community Fellowship Weekend, 8-10 March, Mt St Bernard, Loughborough
- *Trustees' Meeting, 13 April, The Ark, Berkhamsted
- *Pilgrimage To Now/here, 27 April, Saltmarshe
- *Community Retreat, 14-19 June, Parcevall Hall
- *Wisdom On The Way: Islam – Dispelling The Myths, 22 June, Sheffield
- *Trustees' Meeting, 5 July, St Alphege, London
- *Pilgrimage to Now/here, 6 July, Derbyshire
- * Greenbelt, 22-26 August, Northants
- *Community Weekend, 13-15 September, Whaley Hall, Derbyshire
- *Pilgrimage to Now/here, 12 Oct, Sheffield
- *Art Inspired By Thomas Merton, Artist Robert Wright TBC

Do check website for additions and updates
<https://contemplativefire.org/>

DIFFERENCES IN COMMON

**A conference for members of
Anglican religious communities:
traditional & modern,
long established & new**

High Leigh 9 – 12 September 2019

The Conference, run by Anglican Religious Communities, will be an opportunity for members of Anglican and cross denominational religious communities, traditional to modern, residential to dispersed, long standing to new, to meet and share together.

Underlying the theme of the Conference is the 12th chapter of Paul's First Letter to the

Corinthians.

Speakers will include Dr Petá Dunstan and Gemma Simmonds cj.

The Conference will begin on Monday 9th September late afternoon and end after lunch on Thursday 12th September.

High Leigh is in Hertfordshire, just outside the M25. The nearest station is at Broxbourne, about 2 miles away by taxi.

The cost will be £180 for a single non en suite room and £225 for a single en suite room. We have booked all (34) of the non en suite accommodation which will be allocated on a first come first served basis. You can check availability on the website
www.conf@arcie.org.uk

Bookings open on 1 January 2019. Please send the completed booking form **together with your payment** to:

The Venerable Caroline Baston TSSF
39 Clarendon Road, Shirley, Southampton SO16 4GB
tel: 02380 512272 email: conf@arcie.org.uk .

Cheques should be made payable to The Religious Communities Fund, alternatively payment may be made by BACS within two weeks of form submission - bank details are available upon request.

Bookings may also be made online after 1 January via the website www.conf.arcie.org.uk

Anglican Religious Communities in England

**Registered Charity no 1097586
www.arcie.org.uk**



New Year CF Post

The first issue of 2019 will include an article on the Lambeth Conference, attended by Companions.

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