

## Contemplative Fire Post

August 2016 – no.15



**Community Weekend 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>  
September, Felden Lodge**

***“Contemplative Fire – the treasure we  
uniquely carry”***



*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels,  
that the excellency of the power may be of God, and  
not of us” (2 Corinthians 4:7 KJV)*

Sr Rosemary and Bishop Paul will be joining us for the weekend. Final bookings to Gill.

### **The “Hub”**

*Ann Worrall and Sharon Roberts write:*

“Following our e-mail *Shaping the Way Forward*, we have been encouraged by feedback from Companions that this is a good model to help us evolve Contemplative Fire into the future. We have received expressions of interest from Companions to be part of the Hub and we hope that at the Community Weekend others will feel called to commit some time to this important step forward. Ann and Sharon.”

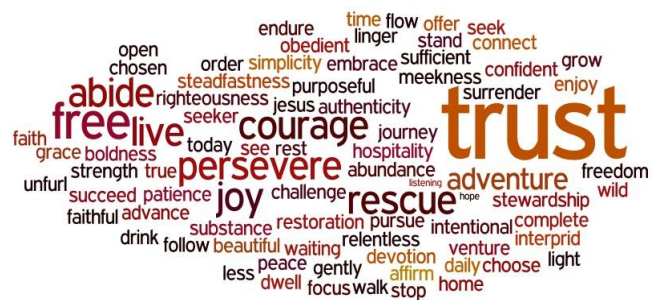


*Hilary Garraway writes:*

### **“Can I just have a word....”**

Over the years a small group of us have met as a Still Waters group on the Essex side of London. This has involved times of shared stillness and reflecting on different themes such as the Lord’s Prayer, writings from Christian saints and writers, Biblical passages on different themes and Contemplative Fire’s vision and values.

About a year ago, I was reflecting on how easy it is for me to get caught up in words. Having a piece of text in front of me gets my mind thinking and I find myself analysing instead of listening with “the ear of my heart.” Around this time I was at a Wisdom on the Way day and Philip mentioned in passing that he had been looking at prepositions in the Bible – the little words such as “on” and “with”. This made me wonder what would happen if we just reflected on one word within our Still Waters group?



As group facilitators, we compiled a list of words which we felt were often heard in Christian circles and were perhaps over familiar, such as hospitality, worship, sacrifice and forgiveness. Over the last year we have focused on one of these words – to sit with it, ponder it and seek to see it afresh. As an aid to this we developed an acronym (WISE) which people could use if they found helpful but equally put aside if not.

**Words** – what words come to mind when you reflect on this word? (This may lead some to draw a mind map of associations as a way to reflect on the word)

**Images**- what images or symbols come to mind as you reflect on this word? (Art materials are available in our group so that people can create something as part for their reflections).

**Stories** – what stories come to mind- maybe from our own lives, Biblical stories, stories from the news or other sources?

**Exceptions** – when is it difficult to do this word, what are the barriers or the opposite of this word?

I can still get lost in words and my own thoughts but having one word acts as a helpful anchor to return to. As we have shared some of our reflections as a group we have been encouraged to see how much richness and diversity can just come from one word and it is definitely an example of “less being more.”

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**Contemplative Fire Retreat, Parcevall Hall,  
July 4<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup>, 2016**



*John McEllhenney writes:*

“These thoughts are not an evaluation of the Contemplative Fire retreat at Parcevall Hall. Rather, they are reflections on my experiences during the retreat – happenings and ponderings that are continuing to be significant for me.

The ‘where’ of the retreat: Parcevall Hall’s location in the Yorkshire dales is a mural on the wall of my memory. One morning, I awoke early

and watched the first rays of the sun brush across the view from my window, colouring the leaves of the trees, then highlighting the stone-walled pastures. The great brush never rested until it brightened a distant field. Supported by the ground bass of the sheep, the birds sang their morning anthems of praise.



I had approached the retreat at Parcevall Hall, anticipating that, in the midst of beauty and silence, I would be able to find some metaphor, some image to express my theological stance. This occurred when I stood on the terrace, looked down across the gardens to the sheep pastures, and up the opposite hillside to its stony ridge. What I saw was this: my theological position is like the gardens of Parcevall Hall, not like the formal gardens of France, which lop off nature’s ragged edges and force it into geometrical patterns.



This is what orthodox creeds, doctrines, and theologies do. They impose an artificial neatness on the jagged religious experiences of human beings. Orthodoxy takes the revelations of God that are enmeshed in various aspects of life, pens them in scriptural writings and declares them to be the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth. All other God-truths, such as the truths of nature, are relegated to, at best, secondary consideration.

My theological stance, on the other hand, is like the gardens at Parcevall Hall, where the gardeners mow grass, trim hedges and weed flower beds. But the gardens themselves flow out of nature's hillside and down towards trees and pastures. Human thought and effort created the gardens and pastures, yet the raggedness, the wildness of nature remains clearly in view.

Nature's truths are primary for my theology, as for Parcevall's gardens – the truths with unkempt edges that we encounter every day. These truths – whether they emerge from personal experience or scholarly minds – cannot be unified to create one all-encompassing truth. No scientific theory, no religion, encompasses every segment of truth. So for me, theology is a matter of choosing the religious tradition that, without claiming to have the whole truth, allows me to express praise and love in the presence of the Mystery of life, and to live responsibly and lovingly in the natural and human worlds. My choice of tradition is the poetry of the Hebrew scriptures and the stories of Jesus found in the four Greek gospels, accompanied by reflections on the world's multi-coloured verities as expressed by giants of spirituality and by poets, artists, novelists, and many others.

I'll always be grateful for the way the retreat at Parcevall Hall made it possible for me to picture my theological stance as an English, not a French, garden.



In conclusion: now that I know about the retreat, would I go again? Yes. It was a time of being immersed in the natural world, which is where I most often sense the presence of God. And even the things that rubbed me the wrong way showed me which way God created my fur to be

rubbed. Oh, and I loved *visio divina* and will continue to practice it.”

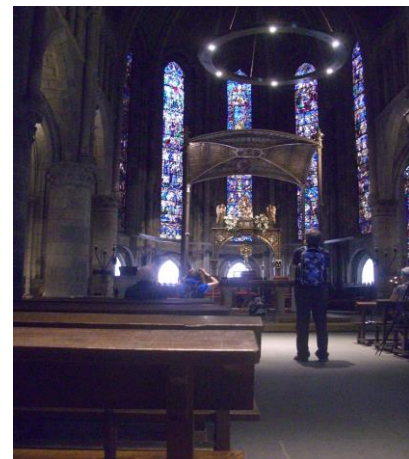
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## Wisdom On The Way

**Sat 12<sup>th</sup> November, Box Moor Trust,  
Hemel Hempstead**



**“Walking The Camino”  
Led by Tony Mealing**



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## Events

*Mike Nutt writes:*

“Thank you for helping advertise this free introduction event to OneSpirit Interfaith Foundation. They are an International organisation based in London that I'm a part of. They run an annual training course for people wanting to deepen their own spiritual journey through an interfaith pathway and potentially become Interfaith ministers. We want to attract more people from the North of England to do this



training. If anyone is interested in this training and has questions then I would be more than happy to answer either by email or meet personally. There are intro days down south too."



## Living Spirituality Who am I? What gives my life meaning?

The OneSpirit Interfaith Foundation offers a two year cutting edge experiential programme creating your unique path to wholeness and service, weaving together living community, spiritual leadership, social action, ritual and spiritual counselling.

## OneSpirit Interfaith Minister Training programmes commence each autumn.

Join us at our introductory event in

### **Manchester**

(Friends House, 6 Mount Street, M2 5NS)

**Saturday 17 September 2016**

(1pm to 4.30pm)

For further information or to reserve your place, call our administrator:  
0333 332 1996

[www.osif.org.uk](http://www.osif.org.uk) **OneSpirit** Interfaith Foundation



*"Set your sights higher than your eye can see." Rumi*

## New Monasticism: A UK Gathering of new forms of missional & religious life

Friday 14 Oct at 7pm - Sunday 16 Oct at 7.15pm

St George The Martyr - Borough High Street,  
London, SE1 1JA

This gathering and convention seeks to create an opportunity for conversation, dialogue and learning to deepen and help articulate what New Monasticism is in a UK context. In so doing it seeks to draw together practitioners in England Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who are in some form of relationship with the Anglican Churches to explore together what is a common understanding of this form of Christian vocation. Further, we seek to invite those who are sensing a calling in this area, to set up new communities.

Friday will begin with Evening Prayer St George the Martyr Church and then give time for introductions and a social with drinks and an evening meal. Saturday begins with Morning Prayer and a Short Address with Phil Potter, Missioner to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Leader of Fresh Expressions UK.

The day will then give room for a number of important dialogues reflecting important areas that need to be addressed, as well as freer conversations based on other questions participants bring with them.

On Sunday the venue shifts to the Church of St Margaret the Queen in Streatham and begins with conclusive discussions before Eucharist, where some who have a great distance to travel may leave. For those who stay on we will have lunch together with activities in the afternoon finishing with Compline led by members of the Community of St Margaret the Queen.

### **Please visit**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/new-monasticism-a-uk-gathering-of-new-forms-of-missional-religious-life-tickets-23204942608>

**to book your spot.**



## Ecology and Spirituality

Contemplative Reflections

Led by  
**Prof David Tacey**

**Thursday 8 September**  
6.30 pm - 9.00 pm

Cost £15  
Concessions £10

Light refreshments provided



Deep ecological awareness is a spiritual state of consciousness, and without the activation of spirit it is difficult to achieve this awareness. Secular policies and green politics may not be able to work the transformation that is required. This talk will explore the entry into ecological awareness as an initiation into the transpersonal and universal dimensions of spirit.

David Tacey is Emeritus Professor of Humanities at La Trobe University, Melbourne, and Research Professor at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, Canberra. He is an interdisciplinary scholar and public intellectual who has written extensively on spirituality, religion, youth experience and mental health. He is the author of fourteen books, including *The Spirituality Revolution*.

To book online visit:  
[www.meditatiocentrelondon.org](http://www.meditatiocentrelondon.org)

The Meditatio Centre, St Marks, Myddelton Sq,  
London EC1R 1XX

Contact us:  
T: 020 7278 2070 // E: [meditatio@wccm.org](mailto:meditatio@wccm.org)

themeditatiocentre

Booking : <https://io-wccm.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=68>

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### Dates for 2017

#### Wisdom On The Way (provisional)

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> March, Sat 13<sup>th</sup> May, Sat 8<sup>th</sup> July ,  
Sat 11<sup>th</sup> November

#### Community Retreat, Parcevall Hall

Fri 16<sup>th</sup> – Wed 21<sup>st</sup> June

#### Community Weekend, Felden Lodge

Sat 9<sup>th</sup> – Sun 10<sup>th</sup> September

*Elaine Wilkins writes:*

"I have received the minutes of the June ARC committee meeting. For the Community's information, the next conference is going to be on **4th-7th July 2017 at Lee Abbey**. There is no more information yet, or a title for the conference. It is purely a keep it in your diary date, if any Companions would wish to go and represent Contemplative Fire. As you may recall Philip, Ali and I went to Whitby last time. It would be good if others had the experience of connecting with all the other Anglican Communities old and new.

## God is in the Garden: Celebrating 25 years of the Quiet Garden Movement

20 May, 2017, 10:30 am - 5:00 pm

- **Dr Rowan Williams** (Master, Magdalene College, Cambridge)  
*'Arriving where you are: meditation as homecoming'*
- **Revd Lucy Winkett** (Rector, St James's Church, Piccadilly)  
*'In Quietness is Strength? How can we re-discover the wisdom that hides in quietness and silence?'*
- **Revd Philip Roderick** (Founder-Director, The Quiet Garden Movement)  
*'Body-Prayer as a resource for Quiet Garden participants'*



We will also be saying farewell to Revd Philip Roderick as Director at St John's Church, Waterloo, London on Saturday 20 May 2017. Coffee from 10.15am, programme begins at 11am, to 5pm.

**Cost** £25 standard ticket. A limited number of Early Bird tickets are available during 2016 for only £20.

Please bring a packed lunch, tea/coffee, soft drinks provided.

*All welcome but pre-booking is essential*

<http://quietgarden.org/event/annual-gathering-2017/>

