

Contemplative Fire Post

November 2015 – no.7

Review Group update



Community Weekend

At the Community Weekend in September, the following proposal from CF North was supported by Companions present:

“That CF should set up a Review Group of Companions to:

-look at our current organisational structures in the light of our current needs and to explore whether there are other formal organisational structures that we should now consider...for where we are now and which would reflect our values of inclusiveness by being owned by all Companions

-consider the precise responsibilities of this structure and what resources, financial and human, are required to deliver them

-report their recommendations in writing and at a national open meeting of all Companions.”

Review Group

The Review Group members are:

- Ann Worrall
- Jack McBane (Steward)
- Richard Craig
- Sarah Burns
- Tom Hinds

plus Gill Greenwood as scribe.



Review Group – October 2015

Sounding Board

The Sounding Board Group members are:

- Diane Rutter (Bucks)
- Elspeth Parris (mid-Wales)
- Jo Howard (Bucks)
- Mike Nutt (Sheffield)
- Patricia Claxton (Hants)
- Peter Wright (Herts)
- Soobie Whitfield (Bucks)
- Vincent Strudwick (Bucks)



Getting To Know The Review Group!



Sarah Burns

“My introduction to CF was through a Quiet Garden host on Martha’s Vineyard whilst I was away on vacation in 2004. Through the *Living The Mystery* sessions in the early days of CF, I learnt more about the Contemplative dimension of the Christian tradition which I had not known about previously through my Baptist upbringing.

What I found in CF I had been looking for so many years - I liken it to having been starving and having been offered a banquet.

I hope that my contributions to the process of the review group will enable the community to have a way forward, to continue to support companions and engage with others seeking to explore the contemplative dimension of the Christian faith.”

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Ann Worrall

“I live with my husband Dave in Chesham. I have two grown up, married daughters and the blessing of four gorgeous grandchildren under five. (Not biased of course!) I am retired, having been, for 22 years, MD of our own manufacturing company. Before that I was an English teacher to teenagers.

I was invited to be part of the CF Development Group in its early years and it was a great privilege and a revelation to me to be travelling with such spirit-filled, learned, earnest and passionate pilgrims. I found that it was ok to question, to dance, to play, to lie in a hay field, to sing, to be in silence for a whole week, in search of God. Not only ok but positively encouraged! Wow.

Philip has profoundly impacted on my spiritual journey, helping me realise the Feminine, the creative Spirit in me, the discovery of which has given much joy to my soul. And learning to separate out my ministry from religious 'oughts' and 'shoulds'. The wisdom of Tessa and Susan and other Companions on the way has deeply enabled me. I so much value CF, Philip's devoted work and the real sense of connection when I meet with Companions. I hope I can do justice to the trust placed in me and our team, to help develop a clearer way forward, honouring the past and strengthening the future for CF.”

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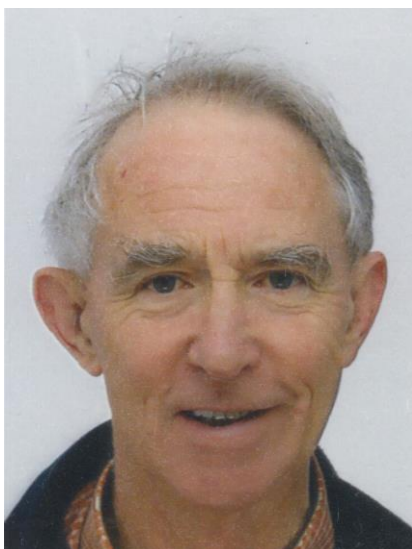


Richard Craig

“I’ve been a Companion since 2006, living in London where, with Beatrice, Elaine and Georgie, we’ve had several unsuccessful attempts to get a London group going. My contribution to the Review Group is based on my experience of Contemplative Outreach which does work here.”

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Tom Hinds

“A Companion hooked by *Living The Mystery*.

A dissident-cum-progressive Roman Catholic still.

Our marriage and Mozart string quartets are models for “co-responsibility”, the key to life-giving community.

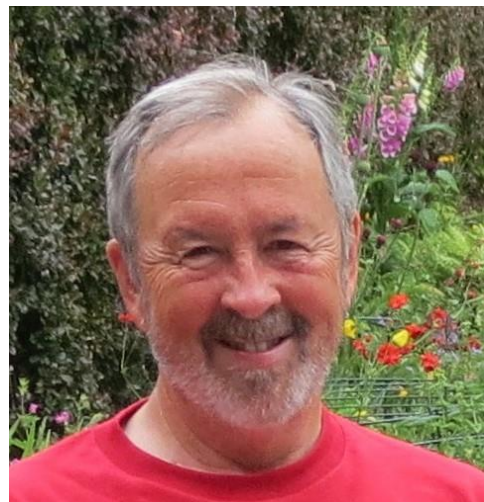
Once a secondary school and Governors’ teacher/trainer.

Educator in Local Government.

Committed to Liberal Democrats and to Europe.”

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Jack McBane

“Born Canada, 1945. Spent my career in the UK, in urban regeneration working alongside people to assist them to take some control over their lives and their place.

My trefoil/rhythm now consists of:

Prayer – the Ignatian Exercises

Study – active as a Companion in CF North

Action – maintain a large churchyard and our CF Chapel gardens/grounds (with much help from the others!)”

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Gill Greenwood (supporting the Review Group as scribe)

“I am a Sheffield Companion with an atheist/socialist/feminist background, and found faith through the transformative and sacred power of singing and through travelling with my partner on his survivor journey at the time when Philip and Jill brought CF to Sheffield. My background is in adult education and social care and I now work as co-administrator for CF with Jill.”

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Relationships

“When the group has some draft proposals of substance, we will write to the Sounding Board members and invite written responses, visit to talk face-to-face and bring back understandings, publish in CF Post and possibly talk at events like Wisdom on the Way and local groups. We will encourage all those we contact to discuss widely with Companions known to them. We want no-one to be surprised by the final report.

We feel it is important to model the values we hold, such as being thoughtful about language, having a Steward to hold the continuity of overview especially between meetings, and personal contact such as

visits and Skype where possible, for the flame to be passed on. We would also encourage Sounding Board members to take soundings themselves.”

Communication flow

- + Ann with Diane, Jo, Philip and Jill, Open Circle
- + Richard with Patricia
- + Tom with Soobie, Vincent, Elspeth, Sr Rosemary
- + Sarah with Peter, Canadian Companions
- + Jack with Mike
- + Gill with Trustees, Bishop Paul

Timetable

The Review Group met for the first time on Friday 16th October in London, to consider its terms of reference and working arrangements, and to begin to get to know each other.

The group is meeting again on December 10th – 11th at Felden Lodge. It envisages finishing by Easter 2016.

