

LADYWELL RETREAT 2017.

Over the weekend of the 7/9th July our thoughts will be guided
by the Rev Malcolm Rothwell.

The theme will be ***Lose your head and come to your senses.***

“ We spend a lot of time in our heads thinking about things.

Words often act as a barrier between us and other people and God.

This retreat will encourage you to lose your head and start to feel and sense, and
thereby get closer to God”

For bookings details please contact Brian Sherrell via email

on brian-car@hotmail.co.uk or 01883 370945

There presently 4 rooms not taken.

PARCEVALL HALL RETREAT

Appletreewick, Skipton BD23 6DG

17-19 October 2017

Celtic Spirituality

Leader: Rev Ray Simpson



Ray Simpson, a well known author, is Founding Guardian of the International Community of Aidan and Hilda and lives on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. He will lead us on Ancient Prayer Practices for a Post Christian World: learning from saints, seasons and soul friends.

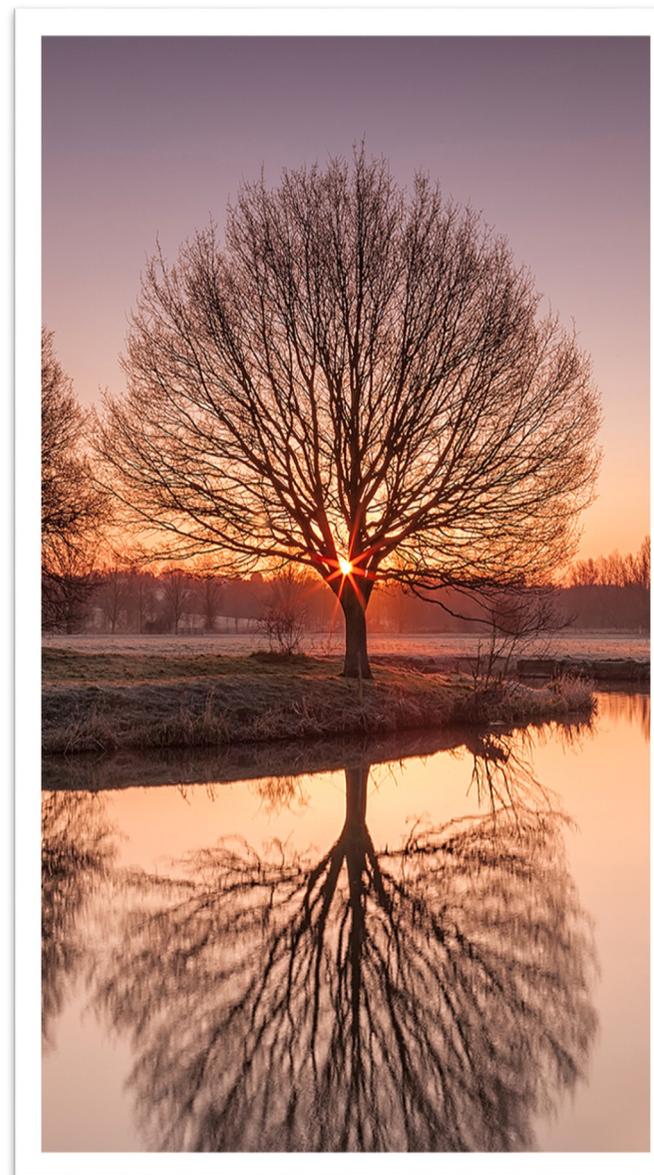
Cost £200

Contact Katharine Cheney

01756 794885 or cheney@uwclub.net



Newsletter
- November
2016



Letter from the Chair – Gill Dascombe

I was very pleased and honoured when the Annual General Meeting elected me to the post of Chair of Reflect.

I am following Chris Wood who has led us in an expert and committed way, and we owe him a great debt of gratitude for all his hard work. Chris is now taking on the chairmanship of the board of the Retreat Association, but will remain on the executive committee of Reflect, as vice-chair, to guide us. Thankfully for me!

I have been a member of Reflect, or the Methodist Retreat Group, as it was then, since 1990. I was introduced to the Retreat Movement by the late Rev Mary Holliday, a founder member of the group, and have been leading Retreats and Quiet Days since then, a role which I see as a natural extension to my ministry as a Local Preacher.

The work of Reflect is very important to our church! Spirituality is not an optional add-on to faith, it is its very life-blood! It is important therefore, that we move forward confident of the gift we are offering to others in Methodism.

In addition to our much valued regular retreats, we now have the opportunity to participate in several new ventures.

Firstly, some of you may have noticed our articles in the Methodist Recorder. The Recorder has kindly offered us a series of twelve monthly articles under the general heading of 'Ways to Pray'. Each article dealing with a different approach to prayer and contributed by different authors connected to Reflect, they are intended very much in a practical 'try it and see how you get on' mode.

Secondly, members of the Reflect executive were invited to participate in a recent Connexional consultation on Spirituality in the Methodist Church. This first meeting laid the foundations for future work, in which I shall be involved on behalf of Reflect.

Thirdly, we have begun to forge further links with the Methodist Diaconal Order with a retreat planned for next summer. This follows the much appreciated visit of Reflect members to their Convocation in 2015, with a presentation and workshops on 'Spirituality for Busy People'.

With all good wishes, Gill

Reflect Retreats for next year!

The next 2 pages advertise Reflect Retreats.

This is not an exclusive list and other retreats are available, especially as this newsletter comes to members with the Retreat Association book of retreats and places to retreat for 2017.

If you have been somewhere different in 2016 we would like to hear about this too. Tell us about the venues you have been to and the content or reflections you have been helped to have on the retreat.

Launde Abbey Retreat

Friday 17th – Sunday 19th February 2017

Leader Mari Ovsepyan

Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics

Mari's desire is to devote her life to building bridges between secular cultures and the Kingdom culture and clearing away the rocks on the way to faith. Her dream is to see meaning restored and beauty redeemed in hearts, and will base the retreat on Beauty in Silence, Beauty in Suffering, Beauty in Truth and Beauty in Sacrifice.

The retreat will follow the usual format of short inputs followed by lots of time to reflect and will be in silence from Friday night to Sunday lunch time.

A comfortable retreat house with recently refurbished en-suite rooms, Launde Abbey offers space and peace for time with God.

Cost £199

Further information from David Middleton 01353 668210
or email david@middletonhome.co.uk

Growing in God's love

This year's Reflect retreat at Ladywell Convent in Godalming was asking the question 'How do we become all that God desires for us?' Amongst the silence of the retreat were thought provoking talks by Christopher Chapman which looked at different stages of growth.

How best to describe our growing in faith and becoming fruitful? The Bible often uses images taken from nature. Christopher Chapman chose to base this weekend's time for reflection on the theme of nature – using passages from the Bible, but also the writings of people of prayer through the centuries, modern poets and other modern writers.

Comments from two of those attending the retreat:

- What made the weekend very special for me was being given a pack of quotations from such a wide range of writers Christopher used during his talks at the beginning of the weekend. They provided a wealth of wisdom and suggestions for personal prayer. I needed no other stimulus to help me focus during the weekend. I continue to use the pack in my quiet times now.

One image really struck me. A tree does not concern itself with the fruit it will bear; its focus is solely on growing strong roots – on them depends its survival – the fruit naturally follows. We should similarly not be concerned with our fruitfulness – just on developing strong roots in God – God will take care of the fruit.

- As a newcomer to retreats of any kind I was somewhat doubtful as to how I would cope with the silence. No talking from Friday evening to Sunday lunch, apart from hymns and prayers, was an unknown experience for me and not one I felt very confident about. Somewhat to my surprise I found it rather helpful in my presently hectic life. The chance to just stop and think about God's word without distractions was quite therapeutic – especially in the peace and the gorgeous setting of the convent.

Once we were allowed to talk it was good to hear feedback from the other participants – both talking as a group and over the lunch which followed. This catch-up was good and it was interesting to hear what others had to say.

All life is a gift. We do not achieve fruitfulness through our own hard work. We have work to do, of course, but our growth depends on the Spirit of God – our role is to wait, be patient and be filled with wonder at what God can do in us.

Richard Moffat and Pamela Nelson 10



Open Day Conference

Saturday November 18th 2017

Coventry Central Hall, 10.00am -3.45pm, led by

Jill Baker

Vice-President designate of the Methodist Conference 2017-2018 on the theme of

Pilgrimage

concluding with brief Annual General Meeting

Book the date now! Further details to follow



Much rain

It started mid-morning,
With spit-spots of genuine summer rain;
By lunchtime it was light mist of fuzzy wetness;
By mid-afternoon, dense rain-fog
Of slow cloud, too wet.
Birds still hopped about catching flies,
The sheep took shelter.
By late afternoon heavy rain soaked all,
Even the birds didn't know what to do
And rabbits scampered for burrows;
Though the robin continued scavenging bugs.

No view at all now.
This is Welsh rain.

Pearl Luxon - *From a Brecon individual silent retreat.*

The Virgin Eye: Towards a Contemplative View of Life.

Robin Daniels. *Review by Fr Vincent O'Hara OCD*

This is a beautiful book, full of practical wisdom. Robin Daniels (+ 2012) was a psychotherapist, in private practice for 30 years as a Jungian analyst. He was supervisor for St Marylebone Healing Centre, London, and facilitated a reflecting group at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary for hospital chaplains. He also ran marriage enrichment and bereavement groups at Methodist churches, facilitated a youth group at Westminster Central Hall, and was part of their visiting scheme for the blind.

This book is a compendium of the author's life's work. It weaves insights from psychology and literature with those of his Christian faith. It is condensed from material twice the length and lovingly edited by his wife, Katherine.

The book is a vast treasury of wisdom drawn from a whole array of sages from the past, all smelted in the author's own personal experience and presented in very readable language. The author shows an acquaintance with an immense variety of writers. Among those most liberally quoted are the two Lawrences, Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection and D. H. Lawrence, reflecting the book's emphasis on spiritual mindfulness and living in the present moment.

The book covers a vast canvas, beginning with a masterly assessment of contemporary challenges, which include the pace of change and the concomitant stress, and it then presents a vision for wholesome living, under three broad headings: God, Self and Others.

As intimated by its title, the book inculcates a pristine vision of life, drawing the reader into the experience of seeing things as if for the first time, and keeping wonder alive with the simplicity of a child. The author is a great observer, and his vision is filtered through a sympathetic eye, with tangible compassion for the human condition, but always aware of the "*immortal diamond*" that is each individual person. A quote from Matthew Arnold on the flyleaf points to one of the aims of the book: '*A longing to inquire Into the mystery of this heart which beats So wild, so deep in us*'.

There is a strong contemplative dimension throughout the book, justifying its sub-title: '*Towards a Contemplative View of Life*'. A random quote will suffice: '*What does it mean to observe? To be in the presence of, simply and humbly, without motive or manipulation, without the movement of thought, without trying to get something, anything; and not trying to change who or what you are seeing. Just watch, clearly and closely, with charity and due reverence*' (p. 116).

Report on the Reflect Northern Retreat at the Briery Retreat Centre in Ilkley Led by Gill Dasconbe 25th to 27th October - " CREATION and RE-CREATION"

We felt deeply privileged to have been able to attend this immensely helpful retreat with a subject very relevant at this time of year as we are aware of the brightness of summer fading into the beauty of autumn, before the darkness of winter.

The environment was perfect; the sense of peace and warm welcome; the superb, quiet planning; the delicious food and the beautiful surrounding countryside all gave a sense of healing. Even the weather was perfect!!

However the topic was not meant to be all comfortable!! It was challenging and designed to lead to an experience of re-creation, not retreating into the joys of past days but moving on to renewal. The basic inspiration was from a book written by Barbara Glasson "The exuberant church "describing the pain of someone feeling different from their contemporaries; their journey leading through feelings of alienation, then chaos before coming to acceptance and re-creation. That journey mimics the cycle of the seasons, of life's journey and of Christian experience. Moving through summer, rejoicing in Creation and its wonder on to autumn, which carries an awareness of the touch of death within its beauty. Then on to the darkness of winter with its fragmentation, even a world of "unknowing "and chaos before spring; followed by Re-Creation with new life and growth, even life in all its fullness

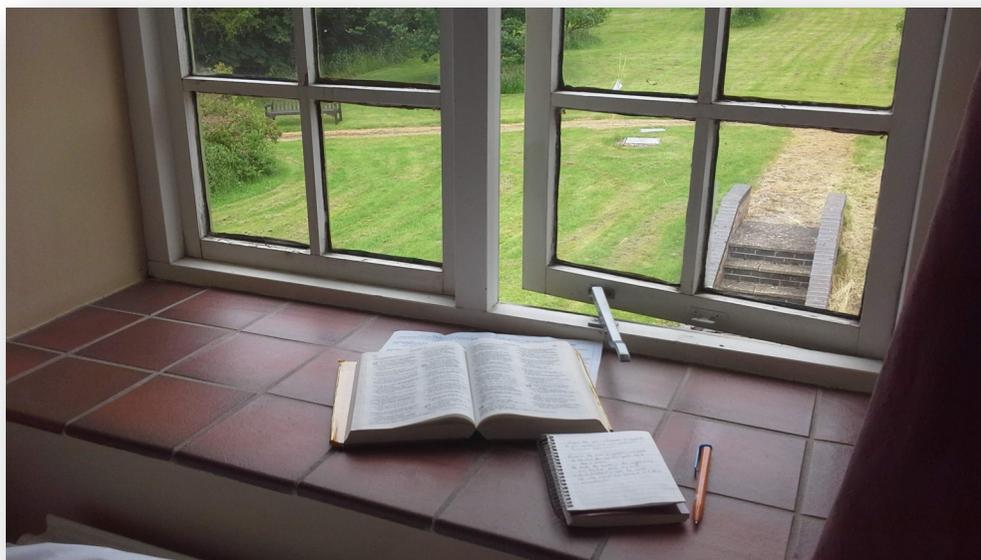
Whilst we were there as individuals we also were aware we were part of a community. However we all went on a personal journey and had the marvelous aids of music, poetry, meaningful pictures and times of prayer and quiet to help us on our way.

Finally we celebrated a great feeling of re-creation and new life in an excellent holy communion service.

How grateful we are to Gill for her superb, insightful and gentle leadership

Deo gratias,

Colin and Mary Rowe



June Grunwald at Laude Abbey

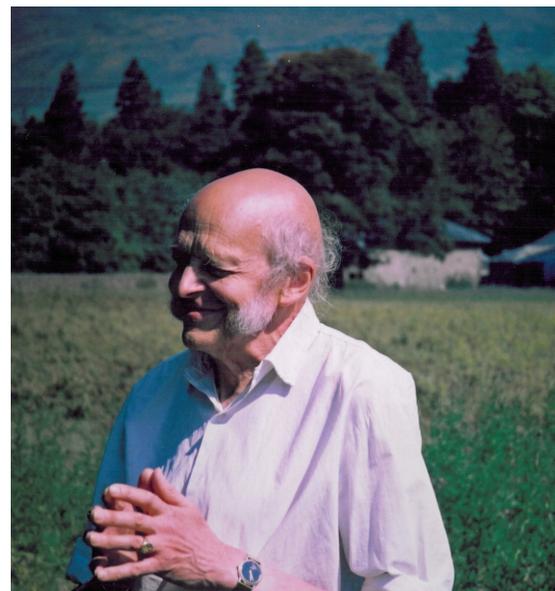
A word from the Editor—Pearl Luxon

I've been very pleased to have some great feedback on my first newsletter edit. I'd like to extend the creativity of the newsletter and also, possibly contributions that may take electronic forms of publication.

If members and friends of Reflect wish to contribute items or ideas for publication I would be happy to receive them.

I hope to include something on online tools for Spiritual reflection and growth in an edition soon. Other themes or topics would also be gratefully received. If there is space I hope to include more pictures and poems or other creative writing.

Your feedback is most welcome. Email: pearlluxon@gmail.com



The theme of beauty is also prevalent: *'Beauty is truth speaking to the senses and the soul, pointing us to the source of all beauty, all love, all goodness ... An artist sees creation enlivened. A mystic sees (or senses) the Enliver of creation'* (p. 119).

All in all, the publication is a highly-charged blend of psychology and spirituality, drawing on the author's wide practice in the former and his obvious living of the latter. There is a gentle pedagogy evident as the book devel-

ops, with the author leading the reader to gradually explore the *"immortal longings"* deep in the heart and to respond to the challenge of the open sea. A wonderful section on love towards the end of the book is a fitting coup de grace to what is a classical exposition of the spiritual journey.

The author's modesty is evident throughout the book, nowhere more so than in the lovely dedication at the beginning: *"To Katherine, who does with grace what I just write about"*.

The end product is a treasury of wisdom, gleaned from enormously wide reading and profound personal experience, and offered to the reader as a companion on the journey of life. There are gems on every page. It is a book that requires slow reading, for there is so much material to be pondered, containing riches that, if absorbed slowly, will be abundantly rewarding.

A free sample chapter is available at www.mindfulnessforchristians.com. Available on request at your local bookstore or retreat centre. This review is reproduced courtesy of Mt Carmel magazine.

Forward by Sister Wendy Beckett. Edited by Katherine Daniels. Instant Apostle, Great Britain, 2016. Pages 416. £9.99.

Fr Vincent O'Hara OCD, a Carmelite Friar and Director of the Avila Centre in Dublin.

The Five-Day Community for Spiritual Formation

'Living lightly in today's world'

Sunday 28th May – Friday 2nd June 2017

At Drumalis Retreat Centre, Larne,
Northern Ireland

Worship ~ Teaching ~ Silence ~ Reflection

with Amy Oden and Pádraig Ó Tuama

To find out more or request a registration form, contact Jill Baker (*Registrar*) at 11, Duthie Park Gardens, Glasgow, G13 1GB T. 0141 959 7951 or by email fivedaycsf@btinternet.com or visit <https://5daycommunity.com/>

The Five-Day Community for Spiritual Formation aims to:

- root spirituality in Christian faith and tradition
- provide opportunity for participation in community life
- form people for life in a changing world

The Five-Day Community is organised by a small team of Methodist Presbyters including Sheryl Anderson, Jill Baker, Oseias da Silva, Jonathan Mead and Nicola Vidamour, the team leader, plus Ken Browne.

God's Welcome (*Amy Oden*) *God welcomes us into sacred, abundant life, setting the pattern for the way we welcome others. We will explore hospitality as a spiritual practice as we reflect on welcoming the stranger in our communities, in our lives, and in ourselves.*

The Theology of Story (*Pádraig Ó Tuama*) *We tell stories all the time - stories about the day at work, about the person in the shop, about faith, about limitation and about hope. We will chart some stories of the gospels, and find ways to tell our stories with the stories of the gospels, to reflect living lightly and to uncover the hopes and underbellies of each.*

For more information about the venue, travel and facilities, see www.drumalis.co.uk

ON THE FIRST COVERING OF SNOW IN WINTER

O God, I am as waiting earth;

Let me be
Warm home to sown seeds
Of faith and trust.

Tender nourishment to rising shoots
Of hope and risk.

Firm grounding to broadcast fruits
Of love and joyfulness.

And in the chill of hostility
and the gloom of despair,
May I lie beneath the frozen landscape

Not barren

But ready

Waiting earth.

Gill Dascombe

