



## Open Day-Conference

2025

*Victoria Hall, Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2JB  
1st November 2025 10 for 10.30am to 3.30pm*

**Keynote Speaker:**     **Rev Richard Andrew**  
*President of the Methodist Conference 2025-2026*

**‘Living Life Whole, Together in Soul- Spirituality in Philippians 2’**

**Afternoon workshops** to include: Walking the Labyrinth,  
An encounter with the Methodist Collection of Modern Art,  
Creative contemplation...

**Bookstall provided by the Book Centre (CRFL)** [www.crfl.co.uk](http://www.crfl.co.uk)

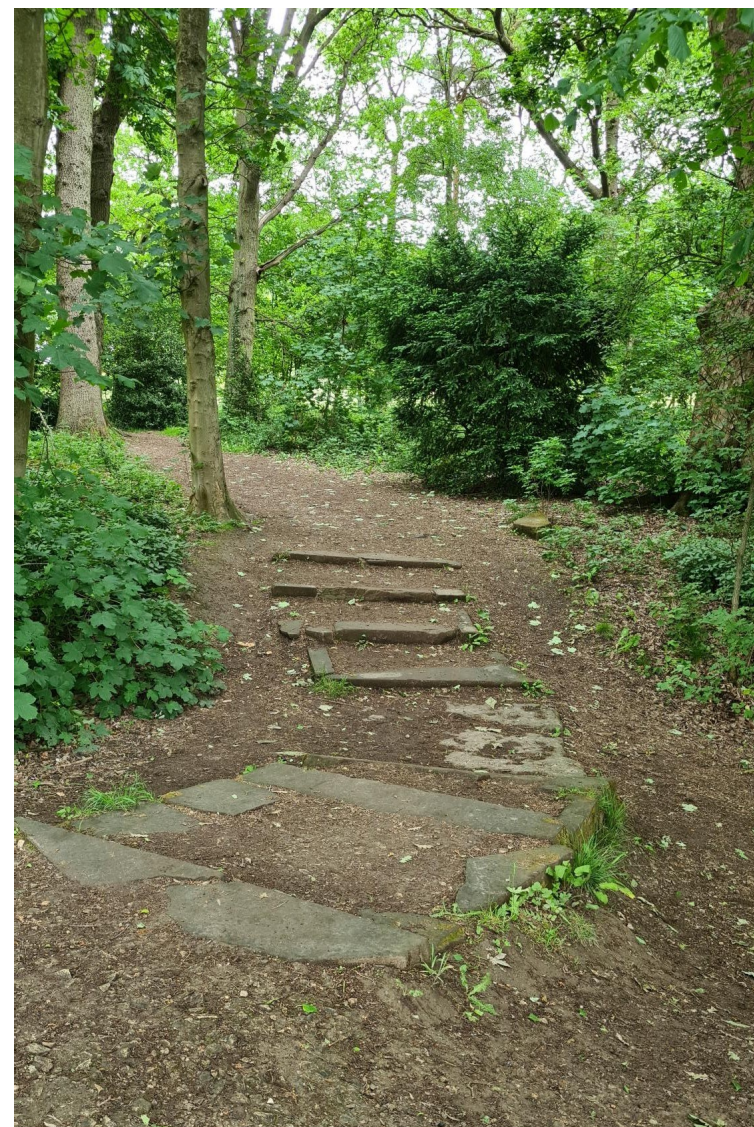
**All are welcome**

There is no charge for the day, but donations to cover costs appreciated. To reserve your place, please email [gilldascombe@hotmail.com](mailto:gilldascombe@hotmail.com) , or just turn up on the day! Please bring your own packed lunch; tea and coffee provided.

Further details at [www.refectretreats.co.uk](http://www.refectretreats.co.uk)



Please send any items for the November newsletter to [newsletter@reflectretreats.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@reflectretreats.co.uk) by 31st October 2025. Thank you.



## Chair's Report

June 2025

# Reflect

Methodist Spirituality and Retreats

Hello to you – whoever and wherever you are!  
I hope you enjoy reading the reports and other items in this newsletter and feel connected to the work of Reflect. A particular thanks to Christine who compiles the newsletters.



As you know, there is a faithful band of volunteers who organise retreats and events, and deal with the admin side of things or keep us in touch with life beyond Reflect. As always I express my gratitude to them for all that they contribute.

After our AGM last Autumn we sent out a questionnaire to all our members via our regular mailing. We were asking what you would like to attend or to be involved in. Thank you to those who replied! I didn't receive many responses so I would like to encourage you to contact me over the coming weeks if you so wish. Don't worry about filling in the form we sent. The easiest way is via email ([www.reflectretreats.co.uk](http://www.reflectretreats.co.uk)).

We are hoping to focus on our future direction at our AGM in the Autumn. Please note the date: Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September via Zoom. It will probably take place late morning on that day.

I am very aware that some of our members are not able to travel very far these days and would love to have events happening much nearer to home. I would love to encourage people with appropriate gifts and skills to offer events in their local area and to invite people to join them. There is a limit to what we can do as a national organisation.

I am also aware that, despite our technology lessons during the pandemic 5 years ago, online events are not accessible to all. However, Reflect does seem to be able to reach people with whom we otherwise wouldn't connect

# Reflect

Methodist Spirituality and Retreats

**Northern Retreat October 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**Let Nothing Disturb You – the spiritual wisdom  
of Teresa of Avila**

**Minster Acres, Consett, Co. Durham**

"Let nothing disturb you,  
Let nothing frighten you,  
All things are passing away:  
God never changes.  
Patience obtains all things.  
Whoever has God lacks nothing;  
God alone suffices."

Led by the Revd Judith Jessop,  
Chair of **Reflect**, and Methodist  
minister in the Sheffield District.

Minsteracres Retreat Centre is a spiritual place providing hospitality. It is a Christian place of prayer with a resident community of Roman Catholic Passionist priests and lay people. The retreat centre is set in a beautiful 110 acre estate in the North East of England.



**Cost £250**

Contact Rev Sandie Exley-Watts

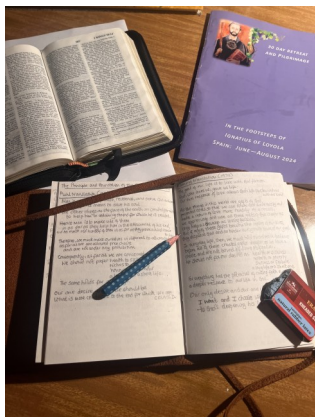
[sandie@exleywatts.me.uk](mailto:sandie@exleywatts.me.uk)

07719 925019

**Still a few places left! Contact Sandie  
for more information.**



to indifference or detachment: “ ... in as far as we are concerned, we shall not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honour to dishonour, a long life to a short life”. I could add so many more areas of indifference/ detachment to this list which continue to be revealed to me.



Journaling continues to feel a natural response to my prayer times, daily living and the books I read, which allows for regular reviews or Examens, so as to spot the movements of the Spirit, that might otherwise be hidden. The retreat did not stop when the 30 day Spiritual Exercises were complete, it continues on a daily basis.

Even with all the annotations Ignatius made to the Spiritual Exercises, and the new ways being devised to make them as accessible as possible to as many people as possible, it is still

a major commitment of time and emotional/spiritual energy. Many retreat houses offer shorter Individually Guide Retreats (IGR's) and there are other resources that can help us engage with Ignatian Spirituality. Smartphone Apps can lead us through a daily Examen (Pray as you Go) and there are many books to explore Ignatian Spirituality or lead you through a mini retreat. This Lent I reused a book that has been sitting on my shelf since I read it during Lent in 1993, when I was exploring my call to the Methodist Ministry— Gerard Hughes “Oh God Why?”. By this Easter Sunday, I felt like I had undertaken the spiritual exercises all over again, and so gained an insight into what it might have been like to undertake the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life.

Other books and authors to look out for include: James Martin (The Jesuit Guide to (almost) everything); Gerard Hughes (God of Surprises, God in all things); Margaret Silf (Landmarks: An Ignatian Adventure, Taste and See: Adventure into Prayer); David Lonsdale (Eyes to see, ears to hear: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality).

**Reverend Rachel Hextall**  
**June 2025**

through the use of Zoom. If you can think of ways we could connect with **you**, please do let me know.

Sadly, we have had to cancel the Southern Retreat scheduled for July. I had only 3 enquiries. It may be that transport difficulties were paramount for people, or that the dates were not suitable, or that personal health issues have prevented people from making a booking. I would be happy to receive any feedback. However, the Executive Committee's decision is that we will not be arranging another Southern Retreat unless there is sufficient interest and a resident in “The South” is able to organise it.

In more positive news, we look forward over the Summer and Autumn to more online Quiet Mornings, the Northern Retreat, and an Open Conference to be held in Sheffield with the President of Conference.

Blessings & Peace,

**Judith Jessop**  
**Chair of Reflect**

## Online Quiet Mornings

Fri 11<sup>th</sup> & Sat 12<sup>th</sup> July with Philip Hyne:

**“Through the Looking-Glass and out of the Crucible:  
Finding Jesus with a wider lens”**

For more information and to register, please email Judith Jessop (chair@reflectretreats.co.uk); or Lynne Tonge (2tonges317@gmail.com).

### **Looking ahead:**

Fri 17<sup>th</sup> & Sat 18<sup>th</sup> October with Christine Crabtree:

**“You do not have to be good”:**

opening up to God through the poems of Mary Oliver

Sat 6<sup>th</sup> & Tues 9<sup>th</sup> December with James Bamber

## PRACTISING RESURRECTION

### Reflect Launde Retreat 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025



How much do you know about Orthodox Spirituality – Orthodox, that is, as practised in the section of the Christian Church known as Russian Orthodox or Greek Orthodox? I for one knew nothing until I joined the February 2025 Reflect Retreat. I am a regular retreatant at Launde Abbey, and as soon as I passed through Reception on Friday afternoon I was wrapped in the atmosphere

of peace and tranquility that seeps out from the place. It always offers a space to relax and find rest and recuperation during whatever period I choose to spend there. The only drawback is that you need clothes with an elasticated waistband to cope with the wholesome and plentiful food served by hospitable staff who offer a friendly welcome even as we enjoy a silent retreat!!

Our leader this weekend was Nicholas Colloff, the son of a regular retreatant, who has Russian heredity way back in his ancestry. He is much travelled and has lived in Russia and America as well as other places around the world, currently residing in Switzerland. His subject is clearly close to his heart, the centre of being in Orthodox Spirituality, and his presentations were well sprinkled with humorous anecdotes about himself, the people he has met and the subjects of his presentations. Three talks centred on St Seraphim (the most popular Orthodox Saint, who had a bear as his companion), Dostoevsky (a Russian author and political prisoner who suffered a mock execution) and St Maria of Paris (who was born in Riga, exiled to Paris and died in Ravensbruck concentration camp). During his presentations of their lives, Nicholas traced their journeys through pain, sin and hardship to faith and good deeds, demonstrating that Saints are not “good people” but flawed people who live transforming lives making a journey from misdeeds and misunderstandings to faith and belief.



Thirty days of silence might seem daunting, but time goes surprisingly quickly! With a daily meeting with your prayer guide, four or five prayer times followed by journaling, three meals a day, Mass every evening and, this being Spain, an afternoon siesta, the days disappeared and I hardly had time to knit or explore the locality beyond the parkland of the Spirituality Centre.

It felt the right time for me to embark on this adventure; my health had been restored once more after nearly two years of living with the effects of long Covid and I was about to “sit down” (retire early) as a Methodist Minister.

A year on from the Exercises, I continue to see the on-going impact in my spiritual life and in the way I approach everyday life. I am more at peace, know the all-surpassing love of God deep within me and in Ignatian tradition have been able to “bank” those times of consolation to draw on when times get tough.

I have finally cracked imaginative prayer – the importance of “composition of place” – using all the senses to compose the biblical scene, observing who is present, both those named and those on the periphery, before stepping into the scene and allowing the Spirit to lead the prayer, often in surprising directions. Imagining the scene taking place in familiar contemporary settings was the break-through I needed to “master” imaginative prayer. Praying the same passage several times no longer feels like having to redo my homework, but an opportunity to go deeper, to unlock those “unfreedoms” – the things that no longer serve, rather than moving on to another passage too quickly.

Already being familiar with the Methodist Covenant Prayer meant the Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises felt familiar, with its call



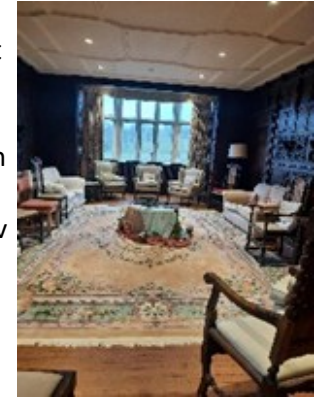
## A thirty day adventure with St Ignatius in Loyola

In writing the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius wanted as many people as possible to enjoy the Exercises, so he included several notes, or annotations, in his text. He recognised some people might not be ready for the whole 30 day Exercises, so they could complete them only in part. In his 19<sup>th</sup> annotation, Ignatius suggests that those involved in “public affairs or pressing occupations” could do the Exercises over a longer period while continuing with their daily responsibilities. Rather than praying four to five times a day for a whole month, they could pray for an hour a day over several months.

In the 475 years since they were first published, whilst the Exercises have remained the same, the way they can be undertaken has expanded beyond the imaginings of their author. Most recently this has been aided by the advent of digital platforms such as Zoom, Teams and WhatsApp video calling. The Jesuit Institute- [www.jesuitinstitute.org](http://www.jesuitinstitute.org) - has recently introduced the hybrid Spiritual Exercises, combining residential sessions with weekly on-line meetings with a prayer guide. St Bueno's offers an opportunity to undertake the Exercises in two sets of 15 days or three sets of ten days, as well as the full 30 days. The Retreat Association annual “Retreats” publication gives details of the many other retreat houses offering the Full Spiritual Exercises or 19<sup>th</sup> annotation.

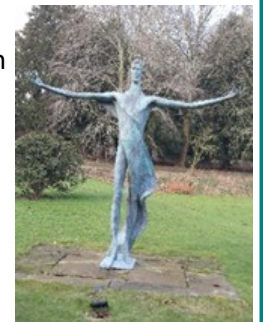
In conversation with people who have undertaken the Spiritual Exercises, I have discovered that, whichever method is chosen, people cannot imagine doing them any other way! For me it had to be the deep dive into the full 30 days, and when I discovered the Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Glasgow led the retreat in Loyola, Spain, each June/July, my application was instantly submitted and plane ticket to Bilbao booked! Even with the airfare, it was cheaper than heading to St Bueno's and much warmer, with an opportunity to sit in St Ignatius' bedroom, where he first gained those insights into imaginative prayer. His bedroom is now a chapel with a sculpture in the corner of Ignatius in his bed nursing his debilitating leg wound. *The Centro de Espiritualidad* is located next door and includes a bridge walkway into Ignatius' family home, so we could sit with Ignatius whenever we desired.

His other three talks, “Made in the image of God”, “Be still and wait” and “The Jesus Prayer”, demonstrated the basics of Orthodox Spirituality – centred on the heart, no symbols but the reality of presence in icons and life itself, finding God's presence in silence, and the power of persistent prayer. I could write so much about what he brought to us but much of it has been absorbed into my experiences in silence and pondering on what he shared with us. He quoted a 91 year-old who found the good in everyone, except Rev Ian Paisley (you have to be of a certain age to understand that comment!!), a German Jewish Buddhist nun (who suggested a way to compartmentalise distractions during silent meditation), the experience of leading a retreat for a closed community of contemplative Dominican nuns in Hollywood (who receive rent from the land they own on which the giant Hollywood sign stands overlooking Los Angeles), the fact that the Hebrew words for wounded and blessed are the same (in French “blessé” means wounded!) and “The Jesus prayer enters into the breath which is Spirit and enters the heart to become the circle of life with the blood circulating round the body back to the heart”.



All too soon the weekend was over as we celebrated Agape (Love Feast) in the Launde Abbey Chapel and enjoyed our final Sunday lunch together, able to speak and express our thanks to Sarah Leeson who once again had organised a successful weekend, ensuring that all ran smoothly, and to those who had supported her. We had enjoyed quiet fellowship together and I for one am eagerly looking forward to next year. Why don't you come and join us?

*Michael May*





## MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Am I the image of God  
Flawed as I am  
Full of sin  
Full of anger  
Full of guilt  
Full of joy  
Full of sorrow

Yet God is waiting  
For the opportunity  
For His presence  
To fill me with His love

God is always there  
He knows all there is to know  
About my flaws  
And wants to share with me  
His love and joy  
With my existence  
To give me the opportunity  
To show that joy  
To His image  
In everyone I meet  
Because they too  
Are the image of God  
And He is waiting  
To fill them too  
With His love



*Michael May*  
(a response to the talk "Made in the Image of God" at Launde February 2025)

## Reflect Local Preachers' Retreat 2025

This popular retreat was held this year at St Mary's Convent, Wantage, Oxfordshire. It was prayerfully and sensitively led by Michael and Isabel King on the subject of 'Finding Good Fruit'.

Each session focused on one of the fruits of the Spirit, and gave us insight on how each fruit may be sought in our lives and in our ministries as preachers. However, the fruits were addressed in opposite order from the way they appear in Galatians; starting with self-control, and concluding with love, which is the heart of them all.

St Mary's provided a beautiful and peaceful setting for the retreat; it was good to be able to meet the sisters of the community and share worship with them in the chapel.

self-control  
gentleness  
faithfulness  
goodness  
kindness



patience  
peace  
joy  
love