

Reflect

Methodist Spirituality and Retreats

Newsletter

July 2026



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Methodist Spirituality and Retreats

CHAIR'S REPORT

A warm welcome to you to this edition of the newsletter. I am writing this at the start of the May Bank Holiday heatwave!

In May the "Reflect Exec" met for its Spring meeting. This comprises those volunteers who co-ordinate the work of Reflect either by organising retreats and events, or by seeing to the necessary administrative side, or by representing Reflect within other organisations. I am very grateful to them all.

By the way, we are still in need of someone to look after the publicity side of life. If you know of someone who might be prepared to offer some time to this, please let me know.

We are aware that some of you may be happy to receive an online version of the newsletter. If you would like to try this and to not have a physical copy arrive through the post, please let Malcolm, our membership secretary, know (membership@reflectretreats.co.uk).

The same is true for the Retreats handbook. You can find all the information from the Retreat Association online too. Again, let Malcolm know if you do not want a physical copy to arrive through the post.

For the last few years we have had an Open Day event with the President of Conference as our guest speaker. These occasions have been much appreciated. However, they have not drawn the number of people we would have anticipated. So, we're going to give this sort of event a rest for now. I would be grateful to receive your thoughts about the matter.



Our online work continues to be well supported. Thanks to a group of facilitators, we are able to offer 4 Quiet Mornings per year. Please see elsewhere in this newsletter for forthcoming events.

As a new event we have run a 5 week course on prayer. I think participants on the course in January/February valued the time to ponder together on the essence of prayer and how we might pray. I am looking to run this again in January/February 2027. Are you interested in joining an online group for 2 hours each week for 5 sessions? If so, let me know. In particular tell me when would be a good time (ie month of the year and time of day).

From September my online sessions of Lectio Divina will become Reflect events. I am hoping that they might become monthly too! Lectio Divina is an ancient way of praying with Scripture. Each session lasts approx. 35 minutes and I guide you through the meditation so that, if you are new to Lectio Divina, you will know what to do.

Other forms of meditation are available too. They are not Reflect events but are open to anyone who wishes to join. If you would like to explore this further, please get in touch with me.

Our AGM will be held online on Friday 11th September. You are warmly invited to attend. As a membership-based organisation the AGM is your chance to meet with members of the Exec and to give us the benefit of your wisdom and suggestions. Look out for details which Malcolm will send out in due course.

May I wish you well in the summer months.

Blessings & Peace,
Judith

(chair@reflectretreats.co.uk)



Reflect Retreat at Launde Abbey, Rutland

**A Time to Dance – Embracing every season of life.
Retreat Leader Alison MacTier.**

We arrived through rain and flood, but we were warmly welcomed by the the Launde reception team with tea and cake! This was followed by wonderful meals throughout the weekend.

Saturday dawned cold and sunny so we had the opportunity to explore the grounds of the Abbey. The broad swathes of snowdrops were amazing!

We were invited to join in acts of worship in the Chapel, where we were able to take part in the rhythm of prayer of the Abbey throughout the day.

The theme of the Retreat was the well known passage Ecclesiastes 3: 1 – 8: 'There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven.'

The sessions moved through the seasons starting with Spring then Summer, Autumn and Winter. Alison offered thoughts from the natural and spiritual worlds, using a wide variety of scripture, poetry, music, photography and art. Times of reflection and prayer gave us opportunities to respond in our own ways. Our shared silence, throughout the weekend, made this experience of reflection and prayer even more focused and meaningful.

We recognised that we all go through periods of change throughout our lives. God may call us towards something new and sometimes we may need to let go of something in order to move on.

The closing act of worship gave us an opportunity to share our most meaningful moments. We found this a very moving experience.

This Retreat gave us time to reflect and be refreshed. We have plenty of thoughts and material to take home and ponder on in the coming weeks and months. Thank you, Alison.

Dorothy Hutchinson and Margaret Leftley



Local Preachers' Retreat Risking and Resting on the Way

This took place between 13th – 15th March 2026, and was held at Whalley Abbey.

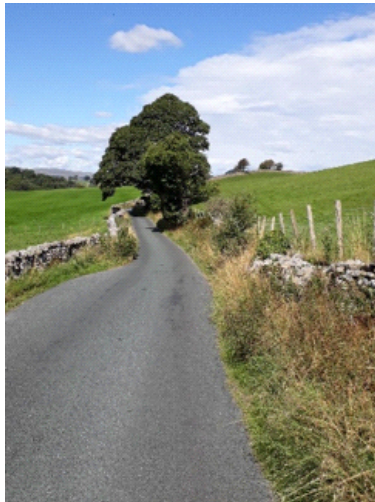
It was fully subscribed, and we took up all 17 places at Whalley Abbey, and had one day attender, with a further four people on the waiting list.

The retreat was very ably led by Jill Baker – the theme was Risking and Resting on the Way. Jill used silence in a slightly different way from that which we're used to on these retreats; each session was extended to include a period of silence after which we came together to share our experiences. This produced some helpful and quite profound conversations.

I am grateful to the Local Preachers' department in the Connexional team for continuing to provide a subsidy for this event, which keeps the costs down. In addition, the North West England District paid the entire costs for any of its preachers that attended.

We have a number of 'regulars' who come every year, but there are also new people at every retreat.

Gill Dascombe



Launde Abbey Retreat 2027
Friday 26th February- Sunday 28th February 2027

The Woman at the Well

An invitation to journey to the well, to Christ the Living Water.

At Jacob's well, Jesus broke strict rules of his time in order to reach a woman who was struggling with past relationships, exclusion and isolation; he listened to her in a non-judgmental way, saw her huge potential and she was transformed, finding her own confidence and her own voice.

We will explore this intriguing Gospel passage, which helps to illuminate women's inner soul journeys and offers an invitation to walk to the 'well', to Christ the One who restores us. The retreat will include a short theatre piece, imagery, presentation, Ignatian guided prayer, and a labyrinth prayer walk based on the beautiful journey to the well.



Led by Donna Worthington

Donna is an experienced retreat giver and leads retreats in the UK and Ireland. She is trained in spiritual direction and is a labyrinth facilitator, playwright and performance story teller.

Booking forms available in September.
For further details and enquiries contact Sarah Leeson at
sarahleeson2@outlook.com



Northern Retreat November 3rd-5th 2026

The Silence Paradox

The Briery, Ilkley

Silent contemplation is a significant and wonderful strand of Christian discipleship and a means of deep encounter with God. It has long been used as a powerful form of protest and is increasingly talked about in relation to wellbeing. Yet the Christian history of silence also reveals a malignancy where people have been silenced. Whilst perceptions of God's silence have sometimes led to a questioning of faith, many have also experienced the silence of God as transformative. This retreat explores the power of silence, both harmful and holy: when can it lead to a deeper encounter with God?

The Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt is a Methodist minister and Director of Research and Scholarship for the Methodist Church.

At the heart of her call is the question of how we grow in knowledge and relation to God, ourselves and others, and she is interested in how story and stories play a part in our discipleship and spirituality. Nicola currently lives in Lancashire with her husband (also a Methodist minister) and daughter.

Cost £270

Contact Rev Sandie Exley-Watts

sandie@exleywatts.me.uk 07719 925019

Have you benefited from one of our retreats?

Reflect is seeking a Co-ordinator for the North of England who will represent the Northern Districts on the national Committee and organise an annual retreat, as well as encouraging others to deepen their spiritual growth. The post is open to lay or ordained people.

Rev. Sandie Exley-Watts has held this role for several years and has delighted in it. However, personal circumstances mean she now needs to 'pass on the baton'. Please give her a call/email if you'd like to know more.

sandie@exleywatts.me.uk 07719 925 019

Reflect AGM

Friday 11th September 10.30am to 12 noon

We would love to hear your responses to Judith's questions in her Chair's report!

All members of Reflect are welcome to join us, to hear what we have been doing and to suggest new ideas. The meeting is on Zoom, please use these details to join:

<https://zoom.us/j/94277918027>

Meeting ID: 942 7791 8027

(No passcode; there will be a waiting room)

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REFLECT QUIET MORNING (via Zoom)

Friday 16th March or Saturday 17th October 2026

Growing in prayer and compassion
with Julian of Norwich



9.30am - Welcome, Introduction & Prayer

10.00am – Session 1: Prayer draws the soul to God

11.00am – Session 2: Wellness? – what might such
believing mean?

12 noon – Conclusion & Closing Prayer

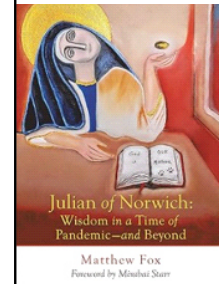
To end by 12.15pm

The morning will be led by Malcolm Knowles – Methodist deacon & membership
secretary of Reflect

If you would like to attend please email Lynne Tonge 2tonges317@gmail.com
stating which date you would like to book.

There is no charge for this event but donations (suggestion £12)
may be made by bank transfer to support the work of REFLECT
(Reflect Bank Details: Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30 96 18,
Account no. 02833113

please quote 'Quiet Day' as a reference for your payment – Thank you!)



Julian of Norwich: Wisdom for a time of Pandemic - and beyond

Matthew Fox, 2020

Written during the Covid pandemic, and comparing that time to Julian's experience of several waves of the plague, when England lost half its population. The reaction of many religious people was to see this as a punishment from God for their sins, picturing an angry and vengeful God. But Julian's view of God was very different.

The visions she had had when close to death, and on which she meditated for the rest of her life, showed her a loving and 'merry', and full of unconditional love. 'Redemption, then, is not a matter of absolving sin; it is about loving us into the wholeness of who we really are,' writes Mirabai Starr in the foreword.

Matthew Fox examines Julian's vision of a loving and non-dualistic God, and gives hope not only for a time of pandemic, but also in our time as we live with the results of our lack of care for the earth. Julian's vision of God who simply loves can give us hope for now and for the future.

The next Quiet Morning will be on

Fri 4th & Sat 5th December
and will be led by Christine Crabtree - Methodist presbyter & Reflect
Newsletter editor. The theme will be something suitably Advent-ish.



Happy are those who delight in the Lord:

'They are like trees

planted by streams of water,

which yield their fruit in season,

and their leaves do not wither.

In all that they do, they prosper.'

Psalm 1:3

Please send any items for the November newsletter to newsletter@reflectretreats.co.uk by 31st October 2026. Thank you.

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