

Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire

(A Body in Association with Gloucestershire Churches Together)



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NEWSLETTER NO. 54

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Dear Network Member,

I hope you have had a good summer and have had the opportunity for rest and relaxation during the holiday season.

In July I had a holiday in Crete with members of my family. During our stay, we visited the Holy Monastery of Arkadhi which is a religious community of national importance because of its part in the struggle for Cretan independence in the 19th century. You can still see the roofless vault where an explosion took place in 1866, killing hundreds of Cretan freedom fighters and their families who had taken refuge there. More recently, the monastery lent assistance to guerilla fighters during World War II. Some may be surprised by the story of the support given by the monks of Arkhadi to those actively fighting for political causes at different points in their history but our visit reminded me of the link in our Christian living between work and prayer. For those brothers, contemplation and activism are both expressions of their Christian faith because being a follower of Jesus involves both devotion to God and serving other people. It is the hope and prayer of those who lead the Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire that our events and the other activities we promote will help our members and others to foster their life with God but it is also our aim that this work should lead to practical service in the wider world, because prayer and action go together.

Our Network Autumn Meeting is on Saturday, 22 October when we are to be led in a day of prayer and reflection entitled *Walking God's Rhythm* by Rt. Revd. Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester at Sacred Hearts Hall, Charlton Kings GL53 9AU. This will be Bishop Rachel's first visit to the Network and we are delighted that she can come to lead our day together. The cost of the day is £12. To book, please contact Revd. Pauline Green on 01454 311936 pgreen@clara.net. A good number of people have already booked for the day, so if you would like to be there please do contact Pauline soon in order to be certain of a place.

On Saturday, 3 December our Advent Quiet Day will be led by Fr. Richard McKay, parish priest of St. Nicholas of Tolentino Roman Catholic Church, Easton, Bristol. The meeting will be held at the Gambier Parry Hall, Highnam GL2 8DG and the cost of the day will be £10. To reserve your place, please contact Revd. Canon Michael Cozens on 01453 546459 mgcozens86@btinternet.com Booking opens on 1 September. Posters for both these events are enclosed. **Please do publicise these meetings at your Church and to anyone who you think might be interested.**

All our meetings start with coffee at 10 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. Please bring a packed lunch. Hot drinks will be provided. Please make any cheques payable to the Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire.

Another date for your diary is the **Individually Guided Retreat** to be held at the Monastery of Our Lady & St. Bernard, Brownhill near Stroud GL6 8AL from Tuesday, 18 to Sunday, 23 October. For details, please contact Revd. Felicity Bayne 01242 237074 felicity.bayne@btinternet.com The cost is £315.

Dates in 2017

Some of you will be aware that the Network Summer Meeting this year with Revd. Canon Mark Oakley unfortunately had to be cancelled at short notice. Canon Oakley has kindly offered to rearrange the meeting and will come to lead a **Network day** next year on **Saturday, 23 September**.

Other planned events in 2017 are a **Quiet Day for Lent** "Let your inner self grow strong" led by Sr. Anna O'Connor on **Saturday, 4 March** and an **Advent Quiet Day** "The Spirituality of Mary" led by Revd. Canon Paul Williams on **Tuesday, 5 December**. Please make a note of these dates. Venues and other details of next year's programme will follow.

One of the aims of the Spirituality Network Newsletter is to signpost local events and places which provide opportunities for spiritual growth and the deepening of our Christian faith. Here are some, and others will be offered in future editions.

More Dates for your diary:

On Friday, 7 October at 8 p.m. Revd. Dr. Russ Parker will be speaking on "The Power of Blessing" at the House of the Open Door, Childswickham, Broadway WR12 7HH. Dr. Parker will continue leading reflections on this theme on Saturday, 8 October 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Lunch and overnight accommodation are available. For more details and to book, contact Lynda on 01386 852084

hod@houseoftheopendoor.org

A Diocese of Gloucester **Celebration of Healing and Wholeness** at Tewkesbury Abbey on Saturday 15th October 2016 from 1 - 4.15pm. Speaker: Elaine Storkey. The day will include worship, quiet activities, tea shop, Sacred Space, prayer ministry, and will end with the Eucharist. For more information, contact Sheila Appleton 07772 759835 sheila@graappl.plus.com

Meditation is a very ancient Christian way of prayer that was recovered for modern Christians by the Benedictine monk John Main (1926 -1982). John Main's legacy inspired the formation of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) which continues John Main's vision of restoring the contemplative dimension to the common life of Christians and engaging in the common ground shared with the secular world and other religions. For more information, go to www.christianmeditation.org.uk

The Community has its International Centre in London, but is a 'monastery without walls', an ecumenical family of national and emerging communities in over a hundred countries, each with local Christian meditation groups, supporting meditators on a weekly or monthly basis, in homes, parishes, offices, hospitals, prisons, schools and colleges - pretty well everywhere that people live and seek. The following WCCM groups meet in Gloucestershire and new members are always welcome.

Gloucester: Fridays 1.00 pm at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Churchdown, GL3 1HU (church hall)
Contact Julie Godwin 07875 366152 julie.spssc@hotmail.co.uk

Cheltenham: Tuesdays 7.30 pm at St. Mark's Methodist church, Cheltenham GL51 8PX
Contact Kate Winder 07753 138300 kate.winder@gmail.com

Longhope: Mondays 4.30 pm at Merlindene, Old Monmouth Road, Longhope GL17 0NZ
Contact Jude Carpenter 01452 831688 judith.carpenter@btinternet.com

Cirencester: 1st Thursday of the month 7.00 pm at St. Peter's Presbytery
Contact Louise Smail 01285 821378 louise@louisesmail.com

Tetbury: Fridays 10.00 am at St. Michael's Church Hall GL8 8DH
Contact Pat Jackson 01666 502854 pat1684@btinternet.com

Tewkesbury: Thursday 6.00 pm fortnightly at Beckford Village Hall, Main Street, Beckford, Tewkesbury
GL20 7AA – please check dates with group leader. Contact: Vicky 01386 881472 dvward@tiscali.co.uk

Further afield, **Holland House** near Pershore in Worcestershire offers a programme of quiet days, day retreats and workshops and residential retreats as well as accommodation for individual guests and groups. For more information, phone 01386 860330 or go to www.hollandhouse.org

Another venue for individuals or very small groups is a recently restored dovecot on two floors (each floor accommodates up to three people) at Stanton, near Broadway. Tea/coffee and a toilet facilities are available. Parking is on the roadside and there is no charge. Contact Amanda Francis, Grange Park Cottage, Manor Farm Barn, Stanton, Broadway WR12 7NE 01386 584363 amandafrancis08@gmail.com

I look forward to seeing you at future Network events.

With every good wish and blessing,

ALISON EVANS