

# Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire

(A Body in Association with Gloucestershire Churches Together)



From the Coordinator Revd. Dr. Alison Evans

Britannia Cottage,

High Street,

King's Stanley GL10 3JD

01453 824034

[malcolm.alison@btinternet.com](mailto:malcolm.alison@btinternet.com)

+

**NEWSLETTER NO. 55**

January 2017

Dear Network Member,

I trust you have had an enjoyable Christmas and on behalf of the Spirituality Network Core Group would like to wish you the blessings of peace, health and happiness in 2017.

We are of course in the season of Epiphany when we celebrate the God's revelation of himself to all the world in a baby born to a humble family in a very obscure corner of the world. Recently a friend pointed out to me the planet Venus which had risen, the first star to appear in the early evening sky. When I saw it, my thoughts turned immediately to the star of Bethlehem which led the Magi to the baby Jesus. For them, the way was clear because they were guided by that star. For those of us who are followers of Jesus today, God's way for our lives is not always so clear and is often hidden from view. We must look and pray hard for the purposes of God to be revealed but we can be sure that the light of the glory of God is most fully made known in the person of the baby of Bethlehem who became the man Jesus Christ. I am helped in this by some words from a poem by Revd. John Johansen-Berg, a minister of the United Reformed Church (who a few years ago, led a Network Advent Quiet Day).

The star was simply the sign  
of a brighter burning light.  
The birth of a child was the beginning  
of light for a darkened world.

Shine on, then, star of Bethlehem  
for we too live in deep darkness;  
lead us, spiritual thirsting seekers,  
to find the light in Jesus, prince of peace.

*Star of Bethlehem* in **Shine On, Star of Bethlehem. A worship resource for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany** (Canterbury Press, 2002)

I am very pleased to be able to let you have the details of the events organised by the Network in 2017. **All our events start with coffee at 10 a.m. and finish at 3 p.m. Tea and coffee are provided but please bring a packed lunch.**

## **Programme 2017**

Saturday, 4 March **A Lent Quiet Day** "Let your inner self grow strong" – Sr. Anna O'Connor SP  
Christ the King Roman Catholic Church Parish Hall, Castle Street, Thornbury BS35 1HA. Cost £10.  
To reserve a place, contact Revd. Canon Michael Cozens [mgcozens86@btinternet.com](mailto:mgcozens86@btinternet.com) 01453 546459

Saturday, 17 June **A Day of Study and Reflection on *Contemplative Practice in the Modern World*** led by Canon Patrick Woodhouse at St. Nicolas Church, Swindon Lane, Cheltenham GL50 4PA. Cost £12. To reserve a place, contact Mrs Gay Robins [gabrielle.robins@btinternet.com](mailto:gabrielle.robins@btinternet.com) 01452 611215  
Booking opens 1 April

Saturday, 23 September **A Day of Prayer and Reflection *Encountering the Collage of God: poetry, experience and faith*** led by Canon Mark Oakley at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, St. Patrick's Court, Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4HL. Cost £12. To reserve a place, contact Revd. Liz Palin [liz.palin@northchelt.org.uk](mailto:liz.palin@northchelt.org.uk) 01242 575547. Booking opens 1 July

Tuesday, 5 December **A Quiet Day for Advent "The Spirituality of Mary"** led by Canon Paul Williams at Tewkesbury Abbey Parish Room, Church Street, Tewkesbury GL20 5RZ. Cost £10. To reserve a place, contact Mrs Penny Lidstone [penny@lidstone.net](mailto:penny@lidstone.net) 01452 741410. Booking opens 1 October

A leaflet is enclosed giving all the information you need. Also enclosed is a poster for the Lent Quiet Day with Sr. Anna O'Connor SP on Saturday, 4 March. **Please do pass on these details at church and to anyone who you think might be interested.** If you need any further details, please let me know.

Another event in Lent which you may find of interest is a Quiet Day led by Revd. Dr. Chris Collingwood, Canon Chancellor of York Minister (and formerly Rector of Minchinhampton) on Saturday, 25 March from 10 a.m. – 3.45 p.m. at the Brownhill Monastery. The cost, including a cooked lunch is £17. Places are limited to 30. Further particulars from Jenny Tann [innovation.jt@btinternet.com](mailto:innovation.jt@btinternet.com) 01453 884142

Also, Canon Mark Oakley will be speaking on ***R.S. Thomas and the Hiddenness of God*** at a meeting of the Severn Forum at 7.45 p.m. on Thursday, 27 April. The meeting will be held in the Elwes Building Lecture Theatre TC104, The Park Campus, University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham GL50 2RH. Admission charge of £3 for non members [www.thesevernforum.org.uk](http://www.thesevernforum.org.uk)

Starting in 2017 is *A Companion's Way*, the new Gloucestershire Course in Spiritual Direction. The two year course begins in October and is based at the Marist Centre, Nympsfield, near Stroud. A leaflet giving details of the course is enclosed. A taster day is being held on Wednesday, 15 March at Nympsfield. (Cost £22 to include lunch). To book, contact the course administrator Revd. Deborah Curram, Windyridge, Amberley, Stroud GL5 4AA [gisdcourse@gmail.com](mailto:gisdcourse@gmail.com) For more information, please go to the website [www.spiritualdirectionglos.org.uk](http://www.spiritualdirectionglos.org.uk)

In recent years, if necessary, students on the course have been able to apply for a small bursary as a help towards the cost of the course fees. This bursary fund which is administered by the Spirituality Network Core Group, is now in need of replenishment. Many members of the Network benefit from the help of Spiritual Directors who have received their training through the Gloucestershire Course. We hope that you might be willing to make a small donation to the bursary fund to support the training of the next generation of Spiritual Directors. Please send your donation to the Network treasurer, Mrs Penny Lidstone, The Pike House, Saul, Glos. GL2 7JD

As you know, in the past few years, the Network has arranged a number of individually guided retreats held locally. The Core Group is in the process of rethinking this aspect of its work and we will keep members informed of any future developments.

I look forward to seeing you at future Network events.  
With every good wish and blessing,

**ALISON EVANS**

[www.snfglos.org.uk](http://www.snfglos.org.uk)