

Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire

(A Body in Association with Gloucestershire Churches Together)



From the Coordinator
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NEWSLETTER NO. 59

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Dear Network Member,

Easter blessings to you all! May the hope, joy and peace of the risen Christ be with you and those you love through this Easter season.

Each of the gospel writers tells us a slightly different version of the Easter story but all four gospels tell of the empty tomb first discovered by the women early in the morning on the first Easter Day. The stone which had covered the entrance had been rolled away and the body of the crucified Jesus was nowhere to be found. One by one the disciples would encounter the risen Jesus in their own particular way during the coming days.

In much of our thinking, the word *empty* often has negative connotations – an empty purse, the empty chair, an empty promise. But, the word empty can be full of promise too – think of an empty nest. The chick (or the child) has grown up and has embarked on a new life of adventure in the world. Think too of the empty cocoon discarded as the adult butterfly emerges.

Whatever happened on that first Easter morning changed everything. The empty tomb didn't rewind the past – the risen Christ still bore the marks of the nails used during the crucifixion but what once was closed was opened. What once was lifeless was restored. What once was lost returned. In the resurrection of Jesus, God did something new and the empty tomb speaks to us of new life, new possibilities, new hope beyond the despair of grief, loss, shame and defeat. The challenge of the Easter season is to let the message of the empty tomb take root in us anew and discover again what it means to be Easter people in the world of today.

As some of you are aware, the Lent Quiet Day planned for 3 March unfortunately had to be cancelled because of bad weather. However, I am pleased to tell you that Revd. Dilwyn Edwards has offered to come and lead a Network day in 2019. Other significant news is that Core Group member Revd. Liz Palin has been appointed as Team Vicar in the Stroudwater Team and from the end of this month will be living in Frampton-on-Severn. Congratulations go to Liz on her new appointment and best wishes as she commences her new role. She will continue as the Spirituality Adviser for the Diocese of Gloucester.

Our next Network event is on **Saturday, 19 May** *A still point in a turning world* A Day of Study and Reflection led by Revd. Duncan and Mrs. Lesley MacLean at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4HL. Cost £12.

Duncan and Lesley MacLean live in North West Herefordshire where their home is a house of hospitality. Duncan is a Baptist Minister and Lesley's background is in nursing and health visiting.

They have a shared passion to encourage discipleship and transformation of the heart. In 2004 they left church ministry to set up House of Azar (meaning to help and to succour) from where they offer space, retreat, a listening ear and spiritual direction www.houseofazar.org.uk As Companions of the Northumbria Community their home reflects the rule and rhythm of the Community. They also travel taking the ethos of Community into many different settings.

To reserve a place, please contact Revd. Diane Daymond daymondrd@gmail.com 01242 524869.

Please also do put in your diaries

Saturday, 13 October

Fools for Christ in a Challenging World A Day of Prayer and Reflection led by Angela Ashwin at Christchurch, Abbeydale, Gloucester GL4 5EQ. Cost £12. To reserve a place, please contact Revd. Liz Palin lzpalin@gmail.com 01452 741147. Booking opens 13 August. **PLEASE NOTE THE NEW CONTACT DETAILS FOR LIZ PALIN**

Wednesday, 5 December

Who do you think you are? The surprising women in Jesus' family tree. A Quiet Day for Advent led by Revd. Liz Palin at the Harnhill Centre of Christian Healing, Harnhill, Cirencester GL7 5PX. Cost £10.

To reserve a place, please contact Revd. Dr. Alison Evans CTGlos@outlook.com 01453 824034
Booking opens 1 October

All our events begin with coffee at 10 a.m. for a 10.30 start and finish at 3 p.m. Tea and coffee are provided but please bring a packed lunch.

An updated leaflet is enclosed giving information about the remaining events for the year, together with a poster for the **May meeting** and we do ask that you pass this on at church and to anyone who you think might be interested.

Here are details of some other forthcoming events which may be of interest:

Thursday, 17 May 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. **The Contemplative Minister: *Leading from the Still Centre*** A day particularly for those in parish ministry led by Ian Cowley at the Harnhill Centre, Harnhill, Cirencester GL7 5PX. Cost £15 including lunch. Please contact Revd. Duncan Munro, Hosanna House, 43 Cudnall Street, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham GL53 8HL dmunro@glosdioc.org.uk **Closing date 30 April.**

Wednesday, 9 May 7.15 p.m. **Contemplative Christianity for Today's World.** A talk by Revd. Dr. Sarah Bachelard at Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institute, 16-18 Queen Square BA1 2HN. For more information, or to book (essential) contact bristol@christianmeditation.org.uk or 01275 463727
Suggested donation £10. An event organised by WCCM www.christianmeditation.org.uk

You may be interested to hear of the new **Rule of Life** developed by the Gloucester Cathedral Community which has at its heart the vision of living in tune with heaven and in touch with daily life. Recalling the origins of Gloucester Cathedral as a Benedictine Abbey, it is based on the Rule of St. Benedict and pays special attention to five Benedictine 'rules' or rhythms of life – prayer, study, work, re-creation and hospitality. It is available on the Cathedral website www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk and in booklet form.

Please note my new contact email which is CTGlos@outlook.com

I look forward to seeing you at future Network events.

ALISON EVANS

www.snfglos.org.uk