

EVENTS

July - September 2023

Arranged by many centres and organisations across the
UK Compiled by **Living Spirituality Connections**

www.livingspirit.org.uk

July

Exhibition to 30 July. St Francis of Assisi at the National Gallery London. Described in The Guardian review as “mobile, animate, a living exhibition.....the verdant living wall outside speaks to the art within: the beauty and profundity of it all so superbly presented by the National Gallery’s own director Gabriele Finaldi.” Free of charge. Details and booking: <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions/saint-francis-of-assisi>

1 July 10:15 - 4. Poetry is Prayer: A Quiet Day with Pádraig Ó Tuama. London.
<https://www.rfsk.org.uk/>

This Quiet Day retreat explores poetry, prayer and the work of Mary Oliver. Pádraig is a skilled poet and theologian whose work centres around themes of language, power, conflict and religion. His work has won acclaim in circles of poetry, politics, religion, psychotherapy and conflict analysis. Those attending are asked to purchase Mary Oliver, selected poems, Vol 1. (Beacon Press).

Mon 3 July 11.30 - 3. Lectio Divina. An ancient monastic approach, being led by the Holy Spirit through Scripture. Leader: **Donna Worthington.** Preston.

For bookings, please contact the Parish office: 01772 335387 or email: office@saintgerards.org.uk Cost: £20.

Mon 3 July 10-4. Waiting for God: An Exploration of the Poetry of R.S. Thomas. Led by **Tony Brown.**

*... leaning far out
over an immense depth, letting
your name go and waiting,*

continued over....

*somewhere between faith and doubt,
for the echoes of its arrival. ('Waiting', **Frequencies**, 1976)*

As well as being one of the major British poets of the twentieth century, R.S. Thomas (1913-2000), was an ordained priest in the Church in Wales. The two roles, priest and poet, are inseparable in his work. Thomas served as priest in a series of parishes in rural Wales and the poetry which made his reputation in the 1950s and 1960s arises directly from his need to relate to the country people—hill farmers and labourers—whose lives and background were so different from his own. Confronted by ‘the muck and blood and hardness ... of farm life’, his struggle to minister to the rural people caused him to wrestle with his own beliefs and calling. In the poetry of the 1970s and 1980s the fleeting glimpses of the longed-for ‘good place’ where Thomas could transcend his sense of spiritual isolation and feel a sense of being ‘at home’ in some larger reality, is expressed in a vision of a rural world, simple and pure. Retirement from the church in 1978 brings fresh, and profound, questioning as the priest, freed from parish responsibilities, becomes lonely pilgrim: What is the nature of God, or ‘ultimate reality’? How does one enter a full relationship with that reality? What is the nature of prayer?

Tony Brown is Emeritus Professor of English at Bangor University, where he is Co-director of the R.S. Thomas Research Centre.

Mon 3 July 10-3.30. Christian Mindfulness & Meditation Workshop. Led by **Suzette Jones**. Surrey. <https://www.stcolumbashouse.org.uk>

Mindfulness and meditation explored and explained. How they can be used practically in our lives to enhance our spiritual journey. Meditation, prayer of heart, is said to be a ‘subtle journey of consciousness from the mind to the heart.’ Mindfulness simply means paying attention to our experience in the present moment. Suitable for all.

Suzette is a registered nurse and a Health & Wellbeing adviser. A lifelong Christian meditator and Mindfulness teacher of over ten years, Suzette facilitates sessions which are open to all, regardless of faith or none.

7 – 9 July. Julian of Norwich. Northumberland. <http://shepherdsdene.co.uk>

A weekend to celebrate various ways of prayer in this 650th anniversary year of Julian’s ‘*Revelations of Divine Love*’. Exploring prayer with the ‘*Why Pray?*’, writings of **Robert Llewelyn**, Chaplain to the Shrine of Julian of Norwich from 1976-1990, compiled and edited by **Denise Treissman**. *Continued over...*

The weekend offers you space and time to slow down, to explore the treasures of Julian, and make new discoveries, to listen to, reflect and contemplate inspirational words, as well as time for guided meditation, gentle movement, silence, sharing and creative expression, in beautiful surroundings and with resources to use in daily life.

Sun 9 July 2.30pm. Midlands Living Spirituality Connections group meets in Solihull to discuss "*Phoebe*" by Paula Gooder. Phoebe was a deacon who worked with the Apostle Paul. For more info or to book email Anne Gardner at a.gardner@me.com

Wed. 12 July. Loving Earth Conference London. <https://stethelburgas.org>

What do faith and courage look like in an age of existential risk and climate catastrophe? What's needed to safeguard inner life in our time? What can we learn from looking at our civilisational crisis as a spiritual crisis? How can we grow our capacity to respond with integrity to challenging times? **We want to galvanise a network of people in a vital conversation about how to energise Earth-centred compassionate action. We hope you'll join us.**

Fri 14 - Sun 16 July. 'Befriending Sister Death' with Jonathan Herbert and Hilary Bond. Dorset. www.hilfieldfriary.org.uk

Death is a fact of life, but although we prepare for the other big life events, how often do we think about preparing for our own death? This weekend is a place to share our fears and our wisdom about 'Sister Death' (as St Francis called her).

Fri 14 - Mon 17 July. Contemplatives in action. North East Wales.
<https://www.beunos.com>

Ignatian spirituality is a spirituality of reflection and action. People trying to live within an Ignatian perspective are encouraged to step back to discern the ways in which the spirit is working in the world and step forward to act on that discernment. This workshop will consider how we can discern and act more effectively in the arenas of social and environmental justice.

17 - 19 July. I have a Dream: Deconstructing Racism in the Church. Modern Church 2023 Conference. Herts. <https://modernchurch.org.uk/>

Speakers: The Revd **Yin-An Chen**, The Very Revd **Rogers Govender**, The Rt Revd **Rosemarie Mallet**, The Revd Dr **Raj Patta**, Canon Dr **Sanjee Perera**, The Revd Dr **Evie Vernon O'Brien**.

Mon 17 - Fri 21 July. Creation Spirituality Retreat 2023. Dying to Live. The Journey of Transformation. Led by **Anne Harnett CP, Margaret Rose McSparran CP, Nellie McLaughlin RSM & Coirle McCarthy RSM**. Northern Ireland. <https://www.drumalis.co.uk/>

“If we see ourselves as Earth rather than Earth as existing for us our perspective is changed.” - Anne Primavesi.

Tues 18 July 7-8.30 pm. Understanding Isaiah: a God of darkness and light. Speaker: **James Priestman**. Online event. By donation. <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/>

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.” So says the Lord God in Isaiah 45:7. Can the theology of Isaiah help us to understand and respond to the evil we see in world today? The prophet Isaiah was important to the first Christians (for example, see Acts 8: 26-40); yet, the prophecy contains troubling passages, including chapter thirteen, which describes crimes against humanity as aspects of the Day of the Lord. In this session we will read through Isaiah chapter thirteen and, through private reflection and group discussion, consider how the passage speaks to us and our current fears of war and environmental catastrophe. Consideration will be given to different approaches to reading scripture, such as an evolutionary approach, a cultural relativist’s approach and a “reader-response” approach.

Fri 21 - Mon 24 July Holy Rood House 30th Anniversary Celebrations and Challenges With Revd Prof **June Boyce-Tillman, David Gee, Claire Henderson Davis, Caroline Mackenzie, Dr David McDonald** and the Holy Rood House Community. N. Yorks. <http://www.holyroodhouse.org.uk/>

Mon 24 July - Fri 28 July. Wild Worship Essex. <https://www.othonaessex.org.uk>

A chance for young and old to go wild in the country and marvel at the wonders of creation. Go wild as **Rachel Summers** sprinkles Othona with her own brand of muddy magic. We’ll go bug hunting and den building, make natural art and create nature crafts, chill out in hammocks and mix up mud pies, go barefoot walking and play wide games, learn to light fires and toast marshmallows, and take part in a little mindful whittling. We’ll listen for the

whisper of God's voice in the wind as it blows through the long grass, and notice his presence among the mud and the shells on the beach. Opening creation as the fifth book of the gospels, we will explore all that it has to show us of the God who made it and us all.

Rachel is a forest school practitioner and trainer, living and working in east London. She loves to help people wonder and wander through wild places, and loves her scruffy urban wilds as much as any place of outstanding natural beauty. She is involved in the forest church network creating opportunities for people to worship outdoors, and has written a few books to help other people get this happening too.

Sat 29 July 10 - 4. Abba Amma: Improvisations on the Lord's Prayer. Led by Professor **Nicola Slee**. Surrey. <https://www.christian-retreat.org>

The Lord's Prayer or the Our Father is a prayer text and practice that unites Christians worldwide and puts us in touch with Jesus and Christians throughout the ages. People of other faiths and traditions are also drawn to this prayer. But how do we pray this prayer today, in light of our growing awareness of the dangers of patriarchal and monarchical language and thinking? In this day, Nicola Slee will share something of her own journey with the Lord's Prayer and suggest that we are called, not so much to repeat the prayer unvaryingly, as to live in its pattern and improvise around it to find our own authentic way of praying.

Sat 29 July. Our awesome bodies. Led by Rev Catherine Wood. Bucks. <https://stmichaelsconvent.sistersofthechurch.org/>

Acknowledging the pain and disability that Injury and illness cause. Focusing on God's loving presence within our very DNA.

Mon 31 July - Sat 5 August. A week focusing on the natural environment and enjoying the great outdoors! Essex. <https://www.othonaessex.org.uk> *Continued...*



We will be designing and constructing a permanent labyrinth structure at Bradwell with the expert supervision of **Penny Davis**. There will be a labyrinth workshop to find out how these are used as a meditation and prayer tool.

There will also be outdoor activities for families led by **Regina Ebner**, co-ordinator of the A Rocha partners in Action team, and **Rachel Oates**, manager of the Woodlands House of Prayer. These will include pond building, wild weaving, minibug hunts, fire making and damper bread cooking, beach exploration, bat detection, nature rally and much more.

August

Fri 11 - Sun 13 August Look For The Gold Within. A Seeking Stillness Retreat. Leaders: **Sarah Chabowska and Libby Dobson.** Sussex. www.penhurst.org.uk

This weekend is an opportunity to pause, and to dive a little deeper into the truth of your unique inner beauty. It is also a chance to rest in the gold of God's presence within you. Sarah and Libby will be offering songs, poems, visual images and reflections to support you as we journey together.

Sat 12 August. The "Book" of Nature. Near Perth. <https://www.bielsatblackruthven.org.uk>

In this retreat we will focus on ways in which God is revealed to us through nature, enjoying gentle walks around the estate and engaging nature through embodiment and the creative arts, encouraging us to listen for the ways in which God offers wisdom and nurture for our soul's journey. For more information:

<https://www.bielsatblackruthven.org.uk/courses/the-book-of-nature>

Monday 14 (noon) - Thurs 17 August (2pm) The Future of the Celtic Past. With **John Bell.**

Near Bath. www.ammerdown.org

This is an exploration of what, from the Celtic Traditions of previous eras, has not just a relevance today, but a contribution to make to such varied issues as ecology, spirituality, community life, the gifted laity and the identity of God. It is not an academic course but a series of conversations involving poetry, history, music and good humour.

John Bell is a member of the Iona Community who lectures and leads workshops at home and abroad.

Wed 16 August 10-4. Divine Nature Workshop Day. Led by **David Cole**. Surrey.
<https://www.stcolumbashouse.org.uk>



“Open your eyes and there it is! By taking a long and thoughtful look at what God has created, people have always been able to see what their eyes as such can’t see: eternal power, for instance, and the mystery of God’s Divine being.” Romans 1v20 (The Message). Discovering how to encounter and engage with God through the natural world. Taking examples and teachings from scripture and from Christians throughout the ages.

David Cole is an award-winning author of books on Christian Meditation and regularly leads retreats on Christian Mysticism and the contemplative tradition.

Fri 18 – Sun 20 August. All Shall Be Well. Living with faith, hope and love in the company of Julian of Norwich. Led by **Ian and Gail Adams**. Somerset.
<https://openpathwaycentre.org/>

2023 marks the 650th anniversary of the Revelations of Divine Love, the visions received by Julian of Norwich. We have long found ourselves nourished and challenged by Julian’s prayerful reflections on her experience. This year we are looking to her profound work to shape us ever more deeply – and we invite you to join us as we explore excerpts from ***The Revelations of Divine Love***. This weekend will offer a spacious mix of teaching, conversation, stillness and contemplative prayer, with further options for body prayer, early morning yoga and creative attention to the beautiful gardens at the Open Pathway.

Sun 20 – Fri 25 Aug. Connecting with Gaia. GreenSpirit Wild Week at Cae Mabon (North East Wales). www.greenspirit.org.uk.

Reconnect with your body and unwind in nature, breathe fresh air, listen to birdsong, wander in shady Oak woods and wild swim in a glistening lake whenever you feel like it, to say nothing of sharing delicious vegan and vegetarian food, songs and stories round the fire and a hot tub beside the rushing stream. Booking deadline and full payment: Mon 7 August.

Mon 21 Aug (3/5pm) - 10 am Fri 25 Aug. Wellbeing ...Led by Simon Parke. Devon.

www.sheldronreatreat.com

We speak so often of "wellbeing" these days, the word has become like wallpaper – too familiar to mean anything. So what does wellbeing mean? And how can I be well when so much around me is unwell? This retreat will give space for us to reflect on what personal wellbeing might look and feel like in our troubled circumstances. A foolish pipe dream? A navel-gazing indulgence? Or the greatest gift we can offer the world? This will be a silent retreat with daily addresses and liturgy. There may be structured discussion at the end of some sessions – if so, there will be opportunity to leave if you don't want to take part.

Simon Parke is a freelance author, speaker, consultant. He was a priest in the Church of England. Having published a book on Julian of Norwich he is now working on a stage production of his "All Shall be Well" musical.

Fri 25 - Wed 30 August. Discernment Retreat: Changing Direction. North East Wales.

<https://www.beunos.com>

There are times when many people need to make significant changes either in work, vocation or relationships, or would like time to explore decisions before God. This retreat draws on the wisdom of Ignatian spirituality with its resources for discernment, and offers the chance to listen to the desires of your heart and discover what God might be saying through them. The retreat will be made predominantly in silence but there will be inputs and time for sharing within the group.

September

Fri 1 - Sun 3 September. A Feather On The Breath Of God. A Journey With Hildegard Of Bingen. Leader: **Brigid Main.** Sussex. <https://www.penhurst.org.uk/>

Come and discover Hildegard, a hidden treasure of the church. Through her visions, music and words we have the opportunity to re-learn precious truths about God, our faith and the world we live in. Looking for God in the ordinary things of this world we might be inspired to seek and proclaim the vision we need in our own lives as we come to terms with this post-Covid life.

Sun 3 Sept. 1-2 pm. Julian of Norwich: Environmental Wisdom for the 21st Century.

Speaker: **Claire Gilbert**. London. <https://www.stpauls.co.uk> Free & unticketed.

Julian of Norwich was a 14th century mystic, theologian and writer. Her revelatory visions of God's love for all creation went against the prevailing and sometimes harsh doctrine of the times, and have inspired many since. Claire Gilbert will explore how Julian's spirituality can help awaken and transform our ecological consciousness, showing us how to live in such a way that we cease to do harm to creation and each other.

Sun 3 Sept 11.30 – 4. Living the Season of Creation. London. FCJ Spirituality Centre.

Bookings: bookings.fcjcentre@fcjhouse-somerstown.co.uk

Mon 4 - Thurs 7 Sept Embodied Prayer Using the Alexander Technique and Centering Prayer with Jackie Evans. Near Bath. www.ammerdown.org

Rumi: You are—we all are—the beloved of the Beloved, and in every moment, in every event of your life, the Beloved is whispering to you exactly what you need to hear and know... Listen and your whole life will become a conversation in thought and act between you and Him, directly, wordlessly, now and always.

On this retreat we will be using the principles of Alexander Technique to explore ways of becoming more present to this conversation. Busyness, resistance, clinging, and fears - all manifest as tension in the body and all are obstacles to presence. We'll be discovering how to release the tension, inhabit our bodies more fully, so beginning to loosen the hold of these obstacles that prevent us from hearing the promptings of love and truth in our hearts. During this retreat there will be extended periods of Centering Prayer twice a day, and plenty of time for silent reflection between teaching sessions.

Wed 6 Sept 10 - 3.30. Delight in All of Creation. York. <https://www.stbedes.org.uk>

Through the lens of Hildegard of Bingen, we will explore viriditas – reflecting on our own 'greening' as we immerse ourselves in her music, illuminations, natural remedies and words of wisdom for ourselves and all of creation.

Wed 6 Sept 6.30 - 9 pm. Online event. Vulnerable Us, and the Vulnerable Among Us: St. Francis for Spiritually Engaged People. With **Jon M Sweeney**. *Continued over*
<https://meditatiocentrelondon.org>

Our spiritual work is important. However it can be easy to lose sight of caring for ourselves in the midst of its demands. We must learn that it is okay to feel scared and vulnerable because we can help others by starting from our own vulnerability. Jon will look at this using examples from the life of Francis of Assisi. **Jon M. Sweeney** is the author of forty books including *The Complete Francis of Assisi*.

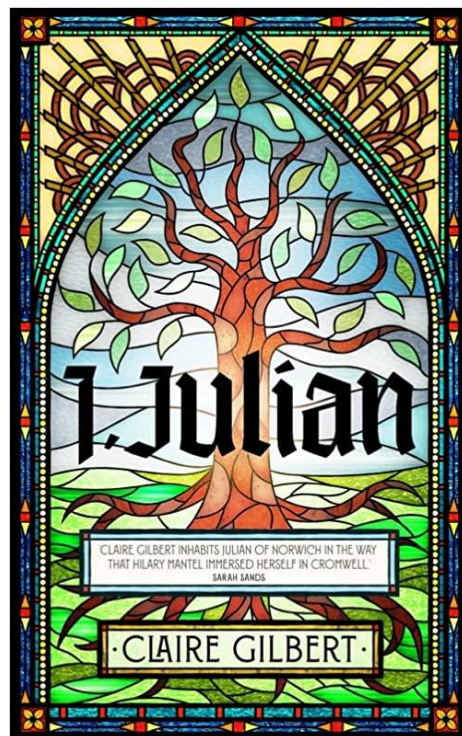
Thurs 7 - Tues 12 September. Triskelion Way Pilgrimage. Isle of Man.

<https://www.retreathouse.im>

The Triskelion Way is the Isle of Man's first pilgrimage trail, part of the Pilgrimage Isle of Man project launched in 2016. The trail runs 37 miles (60km) across the Island linking the historic centres of Rushen Abbey, the site of a medieval Cistercian Monastery, Peel Cathedral and Maughold with its ancient keills and collection of Celtic and Viking carved crosses. This four-day pilgrimage will take you from sheltered glens to scenic clifftops to dramatic waterfalls.

Thu 7 – Sun 10 Sept. Julian of Norwich 650 years on. With **Claire Gilbert**. West Dorset. <https://www.othonawestdorset.org.uk>

Continued...



A retreat with **Claire Gilbert** whose acclaimed 'autobiography' of Julian of Norwich was published this year. Covering a spiritual life guided by Julian: what it means to choose solitude, contemplative practices, Julian and ecology, and exploring some of her visions as

interpreted in *I, Julian*. Claire is Director of Westminster Abbey Institute for nurturing moral and spiritual values in public life. Her doctoral thesis was on Julian of Norwich and ecological consciousness.

Fri 8 – Sun 10 September. Living in Dark Times with William Penn. Led by **Rex Ambler**. Lake District. <https://glenthorne.org/>

An introduction to William Penn, an outstanding man of his time, the 17th century Quaker who still speaks to us today. This course gives time for participants to voice their own experience of living in a time of turbulence and anxiety. Drawing on the wisdom and insights of Penn, we then explore ways that we can respond to the challenges we face

Rex was a lecturer in theology at Birmingham University for over 30 years. He is the author of many books including *The Quaker Way, Light to Live by, Truth of the Heart* and the Pendle Hill booklet, *Living in Dark Times*.

Sunday 10 September 2.30pm. The Living Spirituality Midlands Group meets in Solihull to discuss “*The Way Under our Feet*” by Graham Usher. For details or to book email Anne Gardner at a.gardner@me.com

Mon 11 – Fri 15 September Practising Prayer – Connecting with the Source. Led by **Terry Winterton & Margaret Calvert**. Lake District. https://glenthorne.org

Everything is a gift. Our planet nurtures us, but how do we respond? Together we will explore how action and prayer are intimately linked in responding to our times. You are invited to share your experience of balancing prayer with action in a time of global emergency. There is free time each afternoon. Opportunity for individual spiritual accompaniment is also offered.

Tuesday 12 September 10-4. Slowing down to see the sacred. A Quiet Day led by **Claire Harvey**. Cornwall. <https://www.epiphanyhouse.co.uk>

Visio Divina, or ‘sacred seeing’ is an ancient form of prayer, sharing its roots and process with the spiritual practice of Lectio Divina. It is an invitation to give our attention to the visible; that the eyes of our heart may be opened to encounter the divine around and within us. We will spend time exploring and experiencing this practice, along with other ways of becoming present to our surroundings, both in and outdoors. From there, we will

move on to making a creative response to help us reflect, connect and pray more deeply using different art media (could include writing, poetry, drawing, collage, photography). Some art materials will be provided. If you have a preferred medium, you are welcome to bring your own supplies along.

Thurs 14 - Sun 17 September. New Wine New Skins. John Main Seminar. With **Andrew Harvey, Cynthia Bourgeault, Laurence Freeman.** France. <https://wccm.org/>

A wineskin was usually made of goat or sheep skin to store or transport wine. Putting new wine into old skins while it was still fermenting risked breaking the skin and losing the wine. Jesus uses the metaphor to illustrate the perennial freshness of the revolution he began and continues to drive – his empowering call to a renewed consciousness that will manifest new forms and structures of human life. Christians pray that this ‘reign of God will come on earth as in heaven’.

Fri 15 - Sun 17 September. The Embodied Contemplative with **Terry Doyle.** County Durham. <https://minsteracres.org>

We will explore finding inner stillness and peace through the practice of Christian Meditation and gentle Tai Chi movement and breath work. It is suitable for all ages and abilities. Come with a beginner’s mind and enjoy learning.

15 - 17 September. “Visions of the Living Light” North West Wales. <http://www.noddfa.org.uk/>

A retreat to celebrate the feast of St Hildegard von Bingen, using Hildegard’s own musical and illustrated compositions. Facilitated by Dr **Julie Hopkins.**

Fri 15 September 10 - 12:30. Finding Life in an Age of Change. Monthly series. Led by **Anne Harrison.** York. <https://www.stbedes.org.uk>

A space for reflection, meditation, creativity and gentle wellbeing to reconnect with our own deep spiritual resources at this time of planetary & global upheaval.

Sat 16 September 10-4. Hildegard of Bingen Mystic, Medic and Musician. With **Revd. Canon Sue Wallace.** Hampshire. <https://www.wisdomhouseromsey.org.uk>

An outstanding figure within the medieval Church, Hildegard, a Benedictine Abbess and Doctor of the Church was an extraordinary twelfth century woman, far head of

her time; who has inspiring words, songs, and images to share with us today. Come and be inspired by her poetry, her art and her music, listen to the harp and create images inspired by her visions. At a time when women were marginalized, Hildegard was a controversial visionary whose counsel was sought by kings, popes and bishops. A prophetess, writer, composer, philosopher, Christian mystic, medic, artist, environmental ecologist and scientist. Hildegard was a polymath in her day.

Sat 16 September 5.30 pm - Sat 23 Sept 8am. Iona Pilgrimage. St Columba Hotel, Iona, Scotland. <https://www.earthandsoul.org>

Join **John Philip Newell** on the sacred Isle of Iona for a week of study, spiritual practice and community.

Mon 18 September 7-9 pm on Zoom. Session on **Thomas Merton**. Speaker: **Daniel Horan**. Offered by Sarum College. www.sarum.ac.uk

Thomas Merton is one of the most significant mystical writers of the 20th century. A Trappist monk, Merton is a key figure in the dialogue of interfaith mysticism and in social action. **Daniel Horan** is the Director of the Center for Spirituality and a Professor of Philosophy, Religious Studies and Theology at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana.

Tues 19 September 10 - 4. Autumn Creative Day. **Mark Making for Deeper Meaning.** With **Helen Warwick**. N. Yorks. <http://www.holyroodhouse.org.uk>
Helen Warwick is a chaplain and creative therapist, who has worked creatively with guests for many years. Her new book '*Wisdom Calls*' will be published by Sacristy Press.

Wed 20 - Fri 22 September. Who Was Mary, the Mother of Jesus? Come and See! With Fr **Louis Maggiore**. County Durham. <https://minsteracres.org>

Our Marian Retreat explores the life, and Divine Motherhood of Mary. Adopting Franciscan perspectives on Mary, Fr Louis takes us on a journey which introduces us to the many dimensions of Mary as woman, mother and intercessor.

Fri 22 – Sun 24 September. Journeying with the Eyes of the Heart. Led by **Celine Alexander-Brown**. County Durham. <https://minsteracres.org>
God can be found in various circumstances and situations in life. Sometimes God is found in

darkness and suffering but also through beauty and creativity and when we discover joy, in the silence of our hearts. On this retreat, we will explore God's revelation of beauty, through the mediums of photography, creative writing, Scripture and prayer.

Fri 22 - Sunday 24 Sept. Finding God In Walking. North East Wales.

<https://www.beunos.com>

Thursday 28 September 7.30 - 8.30 pm. Online **Introduction to Deep Abiding Prayer** with **Petra Griffiths.** **Living Spirituality Connections** event in partnership with St James's Church Piccadilly.

We will look at the roots of this heart- and spirit-centred healing prayer in the Biblical and contemplative Christian traditions. We will practise the prayer together, and do some simple exercises to enable energy to move freely through our body with our breath.

For the Zoom link and to be sent the accompanying booklet please email:

petragriffiths@livingspirit.org.uk For further information go to:

<https://livingspirit.org.uk/events/>

The monthly Deep Abiding Prayer Zoom practice sessions, 7.30-8.30 pm, are on the first Thursday evening in the month during the autumn: 5 October, 2 November, 7 December.

Petra is coordinator of Living Spirituality Connections www.livingspirit.org.uk and is Pastoral Care Coordinator at St James's, as well as being active in the Eco Church Group.

Sat 30 Sept 10.30 - 4. Thomas Merton and the Transformative Power of Love with **Sophronia Scott.** London. <https://meditatiocentreondon.org>

Thomas Merton who lived as a contemplative monk studying, writing and praying, was also a man who could be impatient, rambunctious, charming, deceptive, in pain and, yes, in love. In other words, he was completely human and in the vulnerability of that messy humanity he most felt the grace of God. Merton came to understand that when we can express ourselves as beloved children of God, we acquire a wholeness that allows us to bring the best of who we are into the world. How do we make this connection and sense God's love for us? How do earthly and spiritual love fit together?

Advance Notices

Sun 1 October 1-2 pm. God is not a white man. Speaker: Chine McDonald. London.

<https://www.stpauls.co.uk> Free & unticketed.

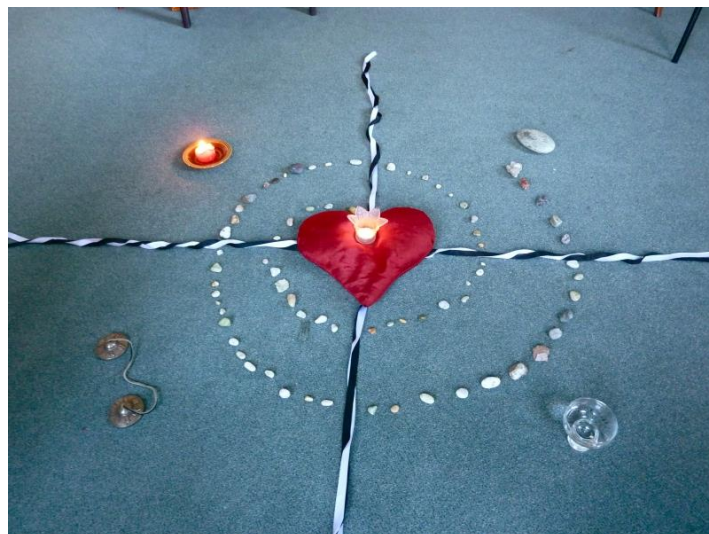
What does it mean when God is presented as male? What does it mean when – from our internal assumptions to our shared cultural understandings – God is presented as white? Chine McDonald's bestselling book ***God Is Not a White Man (and Other Revelations)*** is a 'rallying cry for the change we need to come'. She will reflect on what happens when we face hard and painful truths about race, identity and the imago Dei - the idea that every human, no matter what their colour, has a special quality that resembles the divine beauty of God.

Chine McDonald is the Director of Theos Think Tank. She is a regular contributor to BBC Religion and Ethics Programmes including Thought for the Day on Radio 4's Today programme. Her first book ***Am I Beautiful?*** explored body image among women of faith, and her second book is ***God is Not a White Man (and Other Revelations)***.

Thur 5 - Sun 8 October. Silence by the Sea.

A mainly silent retreat for those who already meditate to go deeper, drawing on the Wisdom Tradition underlying many faiths. West Dorset.

<https://www.othonawestdorset.org.uk/>



A retreat to help you draw on the revitalised spirituality that is now emerging afresh from

the mystical heart of the faith traditions. You should have an existing meditation practice of some kind and a desire to go deeper. This retreat, whilst largely silent, will include inputs and mutual sharing as we explore the Wisdom Tradition, along with daily periods of meditation and chants, mindful work, and time to appreciate the beautiful setting.

Retreat leaders are **Janet Lake** and **Richard Sloan**, both inspired by the Wisdom Schools of Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault. A limited number of non-resident places are offered on this retreat.

7th October 2023. All Life is One. A Celebration of Human Kinship with Nature.
Hampshire. www.white-eagle.org.uk

A day about awareness, acknowledging that our spiritual awareness of nature is the beginning of our resolving the problems of human interaction with the wider world. We can develop awareness so that we shun cruelty; we can develop awareness so that we discover our own healing in nature; we can develop awareness so that we replace goals of ever-increasing growth with those of regeneration and mutual survival with other species and forms of life. Awareness can open us to the subtle spheres of life; it can also help us fully and consciously live as part of a whole, giving and receiving. Within the whole, endangered peoples just as much as endangered animal species are important.

Our programme is not so ambitious as to believe it can offer a simple solution to the world's problems; more, it aims to broaden and enrich the platform from which a full and transforming understanding can be developed.