

EVENTS

October - December 2023

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

www.livingspirit.org.uk

October

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)***.

(IN SITU) 'WOMAN AT THE WELL' TOUR - OCTOBER 2023 in venues across the **North West**.

Based on John 4:1-42. An invitation to journey to the well, to Christ the Living Water.

From **1 - 30 October. 7 - 9 pm**. Led by **Donna Worthington**. Booking info and schedule of events: <https://christianretreats.live>

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 our 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, discussion of the Gospel passage, Ignatian guided prayer based on the beautiful journey to the well and a short presentation of guitar music, words and candlelight.

Tuesdays 3 - 24 Oct. 7 - 8.30 pm Experiments with Truth and Power. Online. Led by **Laura J Rediehs**. A Woodbrooke course. <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/experiments-with-truth-and-power/>



Early Quakers saw a close relationship between truth and power. Gandhi coined a term for nonviolent action: satyagraha, which is often translated 'truth force'. What does it mean for us to live experimentally in relation to truth and power?

Thurs 5 - Sun 8 October. Silence by the Sea. West Dorset. <https://www.othonawestdorset.org.uk/>



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

Tues 3 Oct. 10 - 11 am on Zoom. Contemplative Fire Introduction.

<https://contemplativefire.org>

We are holding monthly sessions on the 3rd of each month for anyone who wants to know more about Contemplative Fire, and/or to explore becoming a “Companion on the Way” with us. Each session will be facilitated by two existing Companions, and will include a tiny taste of our practices: stillness, body prayer, and/or to explore becoming a “Companion on the Way” with us, or to ask questions.

If you are interested, please let Ali know: alidorey1@gmail.com by the 1st of the relevant month that you are coming along.

Fri 6 October 10-4. Celtic spirituality for the changing seasons: a day connecting with God’s wisdom around us through the lives of everyday saints. **Quiet Day** led by **Revd Canon Dr Lynda Barley**. Cornwall. www.epiphanyhouse.co.uk

Autumn offers a time of plenty to fill our store cupboards ahead of the colder months but after a busy summer our spiritual store houses may need topping up too. As Christians we give as much priority to contemplation as we do to activity so when at particular times we feel spiritually drained we need to grasp anew the truth that *“after the fire came a still small voice”*.

The saints didn’t have easy lives but sustained their stamina as they gave attention to refuelling in the lay-bys of life. We shall drink in their wisdom, look to their example, the world around us and our place in it. We shall use the psalms and the music of Simeon Wood to focus our monkey minds and fill any emptiness. Surrounded by Cornwall’s seas we can identify with the Breton fisherman who, as he set sail, prayed ‘My boat is so small’. The wind fills our sails afresh as we lift our eyes to look for the rainbow, and the God of surprises may inspire our own psalms of praise and prayer.

Revd Canon Dr Lynda Barley was formerly Canon Pastor at Truro cathedral and is a trustee of the Sheldon Retreat Centre. She will share from her experiences when everyday business crowds out the quiet.

Fri 6 – Sun 8 October Timeless Wisdom for Modern Life. Led by **Adam Dacey**
Lake District. <https://glenthorne.org/>

Drawing upon the wisdom shared in ancient texts we spend an inspirational weekend

applying these teachings to our daily lives and discover the secret to a fulfilled mind. Adam is a former Buddhist monk and the founder of Mindspace. He has been teaching Mindfulness since 1994, beginning at a Tibetan monastery in the Himalayas. For more information, please visit <https://www.mindspace.org.uk/>

Sat 7 October 2023. 10.30. Embracing all Life. 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.

Mon 9 October 9.45 - 3.45 Streams In The Desert. Surrey. www.stcolumbashouse.org.uk

Ever felt as if you are wandering in a wilderness, God has gone silent, your heart is downcast ...? Based on the wonderful promises in Isaiah 35, we will explore our experience of going through the desert and help us to: see purpose in the desert; find streams in the desert; follow the Highway of Holiness – a way through the desert! The workshop is open to all will include times of guided reflection, silent led prayer, music, quiet and space, giving opportunities for everyone to respond in their own way to the themes being explored.

Mon 9 October 3-4 pm. Eyes of the Heart: Photography as a Contemplative Practice with Christine and John Valters Paintner, Amanda Dillon, Aisling Richmond, and Claudia Love Mair.

Start of 8 week online course. **October 16, 23, 30, November 6, 13, 20, 27).** (30 Oct is 2-3 pm in UK). <https://abbeyofthearts.com/calendar/eyes-of-the-heart/>

Tues 10 October 6pm. Explore the sacred space of St Paul's Cathedral by walking our **Labyrinth** under the Dome. Free with a ticket. London.

<https://www.stpauls.co.uk/search-our-events>

Tues 10 October 10 - 4. The Call of the soul: Meister Eckhart Speaks to our World Today.

Led by **Bridget Hewitt**. County Durham. <https://minsteracres.org/retreats-2023/>

Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1328) was a German Dominican friar, an academic, a theologian, and most importantly a mystic – and his extraordinary writings still speak vividly to our contemporary world. This retreat day will give an insight into some of his most famous themes, particularly that of the ‘Eternal Birth of God in the Soul.’

Fridays. 13 October, 10 November 2023, 8 December (further dates to follow). Led by

Siobhan Burke. Online course offered by www.stbedes.org.uk

Once we know that the entire physical world around us, all of creation, is both the hiding place and the revelation place for God, this world becomes home, enchanted, offering grace to any who look deeply. I call that kind of deep and calm seeing ‘contemplation’. This reflective study series meets over nine sessions through the year to read and reflect on Richard Rohr’s book: ***The Universal Christ*** – how a forgotten reality can change everything we see, hope and believe.

Each session offers a guided structure for individual reflection and group sharing to help expand, deepen and embed the core content of the text. You will need to purchase your own copy of the book for the programme.

Siobhan Burke is a Spirituality Team Member at St Bede’s working in spiritual formation.

Sat 14 Oct 9.30 - 4. Extraordinary Women: Julian of Norwich. Led by **Sue Glanville**. Near

Bath. www.ammerdown.org

Julian, a mystic and anchoress, who wrote ‘*Revelations of Divine Love*’, probably the earliest piece of literature written in English by a woman.

Sat 14 Oct 9.30 – 4. St Francis a Doorway to God’s Voice in the Natural World. Led by

Adrian Scott. Close to Sheffield. <https://www.whirlowspiritualitycentre.org> *Continued...*

St Francis opened a door when he abandoned his life as a privileged young man and let go of his possessions and walked barefoot on the face of the earth. That doorway remains open to all who spend time with him and his life story. The day hosted by poet, photographer and spiritual director Adrian Scott is an invitation to go through that door and see who we find ourselves to be when follow in his footsteps. Francis could be called the founder of an eco-spirituality, a person way ahead of his time and the day will allow participants to find a deeper sense of the familial presence of the more than human world. Through, silence, sharing, poetry, music, photography and mediation we will seek to hear the voice of the world and thus the still small voice of the creator.

Sat 14 - Wed 18 Oct. Through turmoil to transformation. A retreat with **Margaret Silf**. Near Inverness. <https://coachhousekilmuir.org>

Can the turmoil through which we are currently living, from pandemic, to war, to climate breakdown, possibly be an invitation to humanity to become more than we are or think we can be? Might it be a call to radical transformation? We will reflect on this invitation using the analogy of the caterpillar, who consumes its way through every leaf in the forest, before entering a period of catastrophic breakdown and disintegration, during which terrifying experience, it transforms into a butterfly. How might this model of transformation help us navigate our own 'chrysalis time' and emerge more fully human, more transformed into the people we are created to be?

Mon 16 - Wed 18 October. Hospitality and Sanctuary for All. Led by Rev **Inderjit Bhogal**. Near Bath. www.ammerdown.org

What does it mean to offer hospitality and sanctuary to the stranger? Never has this been a more pertinent topic as a growing number of people are displaced around the world due to war, persecution, natural disasters and climate change. Inderjit writes: My understanding of hospitality is expanded by sanctuary, a deeply spiritual concept centred on mutuality, solidarity, protection and safety. It's about shared human warmth and shelter, dwelling together without fear of oppression or harm.

Tues 17 - Thurs 19 October. Listening to Your Life Retreat course. Led by The Revd **Julia Mourant**. Salisbury. www.sarum.ac.uk

This retreat offers an opportunity to reflect on your life direction or spiritual path, perhaps at a time of discernment or wondering. The retreat includes addresses and prayer together around the theme of listening to your life, drawing on reflections from the book ***Listening to***

your Life by the retreat leader, Julia Mourant.

There will be time and space to use in your own way, with suggested resources and opportunity to get out and about. There also will be time for a conversation with the retreat leader for those who wish.

Wed 18 October, 10 - 3.30. Deeply Rooted, Profoundly Open. Led by **Revd Phil Simpson**. Surrey. www.stcolumbushouse.org.uk

The day will explore being deeply rooted in our own faith, so we can enter into dialogue with other faiths. We can be profoundly open to others through 'Generous Love', 'Hospitality and Welcome'. There will be an opportunity to put it into practice and explore faith conversations with individuals from Woking People of Faith.

Revd **Phil Simpson** is Diocesan Interfaith Advisor and has spent over 30 years in mission traveling extensively in Middle East and Asia and is now part of Across ('sharing faith Across cultures in Woking') and chairs Woking People of Faith.

19 October - 28 November. Loving Earth Exploring Spirit at St John's Waterloo, London. Website: <https://stjohnswaterloo.org/event/exhibition-loving-earth-project/>

The Loving Earth Project will be exhibiting a large number of textile panels in the Crypt at St John's as part of a series of Loving Earth events in London this autumn. The exhibition will be open. Please check the website.

This exhibition will be part of **St John's Exploring Spirit Festival** <https://stjohnswaterloo.org/worship/exploring-spirit/>, linking up with Black History Month in October, the season of Remembrance and InterFaith Week in November. An opening event will be held on 19th October.

Please check the St John's website for full details of opening times and news of other events.

Fri 20 - Sun 22 Oct. Holy Wisdom and her call for justice, love and unity
With **Helen Warwick and Revd Jeanette Peirson**. North Yorks. www.holyroodhouse.org.uk

Mon 23 October 6.30 - 8.15 pm. You are warmly invited to a **networking reception** with special guest speaker **Dr. Edward Kessler** (Founder President, Woolf Institute, Cambridge). He

will speak on the subject “**The Changing Landscape of Religion and Belief: standing at the crossroads.**” There will also be contributions by Ian Finlay from Oxford Council of Faiths, and members of our Oxford Three Faiths team, who will inform us about the work of their organisations. Venue: St John’s College Oxford.

Non-alcoholic drinks and vegetarian nibbles will be provided. You can reserve your place at <https://www.wegotickets.com/sct/vYjc4QaBCb>.
<https://oxfordthreefaithsencounter.co.uk/>

Mon 30 October 3.30 - 5 GMT. Listening at the Threshold: Voices of Saints and Ancestors via Zoom. With **Christine Valters Paintner**. <https://abbeyofthearts.com>

The days around late October and early November are especially sacred in the Celtic and Christian traditions, when the veil between worlds is believed to be especially thin. It is a threshold time when the old falls away and the new is coming into birth. Heaven and earth reach toward one another. As the nights grow ever darker in the northern hemisphere we are invited to listen for the voices of the saints and ancestors. Through ritual, song, poetry, meditation, reflection, and writing exploration, we will gather in a virtual sanctuary space and honor these wise and well ones. We will listen to what guidance we might receive for the challenging times we live in. The saints and ancestors have lived through their own times of plague and unrest and embody the gift of Love which they continue to offer to us. We can hear their whispers in our blood and bones as we open to the heart of who we most deeply are.

This programme is inspired by Christine’s newest book ***The Love of Thousands: How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk With Us Toward Holiness.***

31 October 2023 - 24 September 2024 6.30 - 8.30. Online course. **Rebalancing our Relationship with Nature: rediscovering Celtic fire festivals.** With **Kim Harrison**.
<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/>

The live Zoom sessions are on Tuesday 31 October and Thursday 21 December 2023, and Wednesday 31 January, Thursday 21 March, Wednesday 1 May, Thursday 20 June, Thursday 1 August, Tuesday 24 September 2024

A year of Celtic fire celebrations honouring and rediscovering the connection between inner light and outer nature through ancient land-based spiritual traditions. Join this online journey of nature-connection for personal and planetary wellbeing. *Continued...*

Kim Harrison is Woodbrooke's Project Manager for the Climate Crisis: Spiritual Nurture and Learning Project. Kim has over 13 years experience of direct action.

November

Wed 1 Nov 10-3.30. Delight in All of Creation. Led by **Lynn Nausner**. York.

www.stbedes.org.uk

'All of creation, and humanity in particular is showered with greening refreshment and the vitality to bear fruit.' This 'greening' life-force is what Hildegard termed 'Viriditas'.

Hildegard of Bingen was a 12th century German abbess, polymath, mystic, now Saint. She believed that the earth was home, a region of joy and delight and as such must be admired, cherished and most of all protected. Through the lens of Hildegard, 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.

Lynn Nausner is an experienced spiritual director, retreat and quiet day facilitator with a special focus on women's well-being, mindfulness and meditation.

Fri 3 November 7.30 - 10 pm. Reparations and reconciliation: Forgiveness made Meaningful. Led by Mpho Tutu Van Furth. Near Bath. www.ammerdown.org.

We are delighted to welcome Mpho to Ammerdown to speak to us about Reconciliation, drawing on her direct involvement with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. Mpho is the daughter of Archbishop Desmond and Leah Tutu and the founding Director of the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation. She is known throughout the world for her advocacy work on issues including forgiveness, the safety and wellbeing of girls, and same-sex rights.

Fridays 3, 10, 17 Nov. online, 5.30 -7.30 on 3rd, and 6.30-8.30 on 10th and 17th. Angels, Saints, and Ancestors as Spiritual Companions and Guides with **Christine Valters Paintner** and **Rev. Simon Ruth de Voil**. <https://abbeyofthearts.com/>

November is a time in the Celtic and Christian calendars when the veil between worlds is said to be very thin. This is the season when those spiritual beings who dwell in what the Celts called the Otherworld are more accessible to us. These beings include angels, saints,

and our ancestors who support and inspire us throughout our lives when we learn how to connect and attune to them in various ways. These sacred beings pave the way for our journey toward communion with divine Love, even as we pass through a world rife with struggle, discord, and violence. They offer protection, guidance, healing, and wisdom and can offer profound support for our service to others. They speak the language of intuition, ritual, dreamtime, and synchronicity.

In this webinar series, Christine and Simon will help us open up our spiritual imagination to encounter these sacred presences, nourishing our capacity to become everyday mystics, and receive blessings on our life path. As spiritual companions and guides for others, we can richly benefit from being well resourced and supported in our presence to our clients. By cultivating our loving attention and reverence for these beings, we become transformed and grow into the kinds of ancestors who nurture Love's presence in the world.

Mon 6 - Wed 8 Nov. Let it flow! (Re-) Discovering living water with Felicity Lawson, Christopher Landau, Phil Stone. North Yorks.

<https://scargillmovement.org/event/let-it-flow-re-discovering-living-water/>

Jesus' promise of Living Water transforms the life of the Samaritan woman – but what does it mean today? Join ReSource for a retreat seeking to (re)connect with the source of life. Building on its foundation as Anglican Renewal Ministries, ReSource www.resource-arm.net works to enable deeper encounters with the Holy Spirit, so every Christian can flourish in their calling.

Our time together will include a variety of sung worship and prayer, Biblical teaching, and space for personal reflection, as we welcome the Spirit's unique refreshment.

Wed 8 November 10-3.30 Come and Rest – A Day Retreat led by **Suzette Jones**.

Surrey. <https://www.stcolumbashouse.org.uk/>

Take a moment to be a human being, not a human doing! A peaceful guided retreat day with lunch. This day is for anyone who needs a break. Reflect, read, colour, pray, meditate, walk or just be. "Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest". Mathew 28.

Suzette Jones 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.

Sat 11 November 10- 5.30 The Guild of Health and St Raphael Festival of Healing 2023.
West London. <https://gohealth.org.uk/shop/booking/festival2023/>

The Keynote address: **Why healing can be bad for your health and why we need it more than ever.** Speaker: **Professor John Swinton.**

Healing can be a joy or a burden depending on how we choose to define it. If we define it as a movement away from suffering, ageing, disability and sickness, then anyone who lives with such things will be destined either to be the object of our (often unsuccessful), fixing and mending endeavours, or, if we can't fix them, people with such experiences are destined always to be ill, a health status that few of us would choose. The way in which we define healing can be bad for our health! In this lecture I will explore a different way of thinking about healing that draws upon the richness of the Christian tradition and helps us to see such things as disability, dementia and mental health in fresh, new and health-bringing ways.



Prof **John Swinton** is a Scottish theologian, academic, and Presbyterian minister. He is Chair in Divinity and Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen, and founder of the university's **Centre for Spirituality, Health and Disability** and he has recently worked with The Porter's Gate on music and mental health.

15 Nov 7-9 pm. About the Cost of Living Crisis: What Do Sabbath Economics Have to Say to Us Today? Speaker: **Dr Jayme Reaves.** Salisbury. www.sarum.ac.uk

What does the Bible have to say about today's cost of living crisis and economic difficulties many are facing? There is a strong, radical tradition of economic justice in the Bible, based primarily on the Sabbath principles in both the Hebrew Bible and Jesus's teachings, that present solutions designed to care for everyone in society, including the most vulnerable. The principles do not deny wealth or its right to exist, but details a pattern whereby the division between those who have and those who have not is lessened.

What do these principles teach us about today's issues and where might we draw inspiration from?

Sat 11 Nov 10.30 – 4. Gently Into That Good Night: Lessons from John of the Cross for Today with Prof Peter Tyler. London. <https://meditatiocentrelondon.org>

Amongst Christian theologians and mystics St John of the Cross (1542 – 1591) is probably one of the most misunderstood (and misquoted). Rather than presenting the spiritual journey as a ‘gloomy dark night’ he wants to invite us into the mysteries and ecstasies that await our journey of the soul. In our day together Prof. Peter Tyler will introduce the saint and some of the key elements of his spiritual teaching.

Sat 18 Nov 11.30 – 3. Exploring the Spirituality of the Desert Mothers. Led by Donna Worthington. Preston. <https://christianretreats.live/>

Sat 18 November 10 - 4. Naming the Mystery. Led by Rhiannon Grant. Edinburgh. A Woodbrooke course. <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/naming-the-mystery/>



In meeting for worship, we come together in expectant waiting and to listen – but what are we waiting for? And what are we listening to? During this day together we will play with ways to name this mystery, sometimes known as God, Spirit, Love, or Light.

Sat 18 Nov 10 - 3. Ignatian Wisdom Day: Called Into Freedom. Led by Sr Marion Bettenworth. York. <https://www.stbedes.org.uk>

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free (Galatians 5).

St Ignatius was passionate about showing people a way to greater inner freedom. While Ignatius’ language and imagery may need a bit of ‘translating’, his wisdom and insights into how we can grow and become the person we are called to be, are as relevant today as they were 500 years ago.

This day will contain input, time for prayer and reflection, creative space and some gentle sharing.

Sun 19 Nov 2.30 via Zoom. The Living Spirituality Connections Midlands group discusses **John Inge's** book *Living Love. In conversation with the No 1 Ladies Detective Agency*. Contact Ann Gardener by emailing a.gardner@me.com in order to attend.

This book is part of a series which acknowledges that Christians are prompted to think about faith in many different ways; when they read novels, watch films or plays, or listen to music and poetry, questions and insights arise which set people thinking. The **Conversations** series engages with the writing of contemporary authors, and in so doing discovers that theological reflection can be done creatively and enjoyably by anyone prepared to ask questions about life and culture. *Living Love* considers the characters and stories of The No1 Ladies' Detective Agency series by Alexander McCall Smith. These offer many insights into love, loving and being loved which author John Inge explores in dialogue with the Christian faith.

Mon 20 - Thurs 23 Nov. Blessed to be a Blessing. Led by **Roy Searle**. Leicestershire. <https://www.laundeabbey.org.uk/>

This retreat explores how the God of blessing created us to be channels of blessing to people and places, in every place where we are. The retreat will explore the means, disciplines and resources that help us to be people of benediction whoever we are and wherever we find ourselves.

Led by **Roy Searle**, one of the founders of the Northumbria Community, a past President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and teaches at Cranmer Hall, St. John's College Durham and Spurgeons College, London. A popular conference speaker, writer, leadership and pioneer mentor and spiritual director, Roy is passionate about encouraging people to love God, listen well, think deeply, live authentically and generously.

Mon 20 - Thurs 23 November. Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing: Spiritual Development in Context (2023) course. Lead tutor: **Dr Michael Hahn**. Salisbury. www.sarum.ac.uk

This course covers the variety of ways in which spiritual development takes place over the course of a lifetime. It includes study of various models of spiritual development and the theories that underpin them. Students will explore issues of particular concern for pastoral care in the contemporary context and engage with non-theological disciplines that provide pastoral care.

The course will engage with scholarly debates on the relationship between spiritual development, suffering, and trauma. Students will examine the nature of spirituality and

spiritual development for both the very young, the elderly, those who are differently abled, and those who experience trauma.

This is a postgraduate course open to 'auditors' i.e. those attending the course who are not enrolled for academic credit. Joining this course is an opportunity to have a study break in the beautiful Salisbury Cathedral Close, where residential participants enjoy full board, access to the library and to the pattern of liturgy at Salisbury Cathedral.

Tue 21 Nov 6.30 - 9 pm Seeking God in Wild Places with Paul Kingsnorth & Martin Shaw.
London <https://stethelburgas.org/events/>

Join Paul Kingsnorth and Martin Shaw for an evening of storytelling and conversation about finding Christ in the wilderness. An in-person event at St Ethelburga's, with audience Q & A.

Fri 24 - Sun 26 November. Advent Retreat. Led by Rev **Narinder Tegally**. Near Bath.
<http://www.ammerdown.org>

As we prepare for the Advent season, we explore the themes of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love. There will be gatherings throughout the weekend when we reflect together and time in between for personal reflection. Feel free to walk in our beautiful grounds, draw on your creative skills in the Art Room, or simply be still in the presence of God.

Fri 24 - Sun 26 November. Just passing through. Led by **Sue Brayne**. Near Bath.
www.ammerdown.org

This retreat provides an opportunity to take time out from our hectic world so we can explore our relationship with mortality and the inevitability of our death. Developing an acceptance of death can open us up to profound learning and reconnect us to something far greater than ourselves. In sacred or spiritual language, this is about entering the liminal space of what it means to be Just Passing Through our physical existence, and reflect on what we may need to resolve in order to find more peace of mind and deepen our connection with the Divine.

Mon 27 - Thurs 30 Nov. Dayspring from on High: A Retreat for Advent. Led by Revd **Chris Webb**. Leicestershire. <https://www.laundeabbey.org.uk>

Continued....

Through the tender mercy of our God ...
the dayspring from on high hath visited us,
to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The old priest Zechariah prophesied that his son, John the Baptist, would welcome the coming Messiah like dawn breaking into the dark night – or, in the poetic words of the Authorised Version, as a “Dayspring from on High”. Our Advent Retreat this year will focus on hope: the hope anticipated by the great saints of the Hebrew Bible, the hope celebrated by the New Testament church, the hope that breaks into our lives like a sunburst through the gloom. We’ll enter together into this season of waiting and watching with our eyes firmly fixed on the hope set before us, the glory of Christ.

There will be times of shared reflection and prayer, opportunities to worship with the Launde community, great food a friendship, as well as generous time set aside for silence, stillness, prayer and meditation, or just rest and recovery.

Thurs 30 Nov 10 - 4.30. When Wells Run Dry - Advent themed Creative Prayer Day.

Near Perth. <http://www.bieldatblackruthven.org.uk/>

This is a quiet reflective workshop at the beginning of Advent, that encourages participants to engage in a variety of creative ways, to reflect, imagine, express, explore ourselves and listen to the voice of God, in the safe sacred space of the Bield. We will reflect on some of the elements of the Christmas story, spending time together, and alone in quiet with God, we will take time to notice what is speaking to us at this time.

No experience or artistic ability is needed, and all materials will be provided. There will be the opportunity to walk slowly and intentionally outside, time to ponder the journey you are embarking on at the start of this season, and to consider your relationship with the natural world and its creator.

“The person of hope lives in the moment with the knowledge and trust that all of life is in good hands” Henri Nouwen – *Bread for the Journey*.

Facilitator: **Liz Crichton** is the Art Facilitator at the Bield. Trained in the Ignatian tradition, leading creative retreat days is part of her ministry here, and an integral part of her own spiritual journey.

December

Fri 1 - Sun 3 December. Celtic Advent with David Cole. Sussex. www.penhurst.org.uk

Advent is a significant period in the modern Christian calendar, just as it was for the ancient Celtic Christians. During this retreat, **David Cole**, author of the book *'Celtic Advent'* (BRF), will be sharing aspects of Advent and the lead up to Christmas as celebrated and focused on by the ancient Celtic Christians and monastic centres.

Discover new aspects of this sacred season, specific dates and celebrations found in historic 'Celtic' Christian heritage, as well as inspiring stories of saints and others.

Fri 1 - Sun 3 December Honouring darkness: a winter retreat with Alex Wildwood and Rachael Kellett. Oxon. <https://www.charneymanor.com/events/>

Sat 2 Dec. Soul Song - A Day Retreat for Advent. Led by Valerie Allen. Near Perth. <https://www.bielsatblackruthven.org.uk/>

What song is stirring in your heart that you want to sing? How does your soul magnify God? During this day retreat we will ponder these questions with Mary's Magnificat as our companion. Mary's Magnificat is the oldest Advent hymn, and it is probably the most revolutionary one ever sung. It is a song in praise of the God who turns the world upside down.

We will listen afresh to the Magnificat using musical lectio. There will also be the opportunity to try writing your own Magnificat, the song of your soul.

Valerie Allen is a spiritual companion, retreat leader, and member of the Bield Pastoral Team who has a special interest in spirituality, especially women's spiritualities.

Sat 9 Dec online 10-1. Advent Workshop: A Way of Seeing. Led by **Donna Worthington.** York. www.stbedes.org.uk

Shepherds kept watch in the silence of the night, the Magi saw a vision in the sky and began to search, Herod's mind violently saw threat, the Roman Empire viewed people as numbers to count... and then, one night, a man and a woman arrive in Bethlehem, a vision of hope burning in their hearts... Donna will offer a creative space to enter into the Advent narrative

and, perhaps, open us to a fresh way of seeing.

Donna Worthington is an experienced retreat giver and theologian who is trained in Ignatian spiritual direction. Donna leads creative workshops with all ages and on various themes, including exploring the Gospels through theatre and movement.

Saturday 23 - Wednesday 27 December Christmas in Community. All ages gather for a Christmas with less 'stuff' but more heart. West Dorset.

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

Christmas at Othona is always rather special, with less of the things you want less of (television, bingeing, bickering, maybe loneliness?) and more of a spirit of peace and goodwill within a temporary 'family' that isn't your own but where you have a real contribution to make. Everyone can get involved in decorating the house, helping prepare food, plan games or whatever. Feasting, presents, prayers – all are in the mix, but none to excess.

On Christmas Eve we can visit a local organic farm for carol singing in the open air. On Boxing Day if weather permits we stretch our legs and watch hardy souls take a chilly dip in a local harbour for charity (or even join them). Equally suited to families, couples or individuals. With a bargain offer for families with two or more children 3-18.

Sat 23 Dec - Wed 27 December. Christmas House Party. Near Bath. www.ammerdown.org

Ammerdown is the perfect place to celebrate Christmas: good company, delicious home-cooked food, beautiful surroundings. As soon as you walk in and see the Christmas tree and our welcoming staff, you will feel at home. There are optional activities on offer including talks, gentle crafts, games, music and films as well as daily prayers and ecumenical services. You can join in with the activities or simply enjoy the peace, tranquility and friendship this special place has to offer. Come and join us at Ammerdown for a Christmas to remember!

30 December - 3 Jan 24. New Year House Party. North Yorks. www.holyroodhouse.org.uk