

LIVING SPIRITUALITY PARTNERSHIP (LSP)

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2013

The main item with this newsletter is the attached document in which we have set out how we see the vision for LSP, and invite your support and contributions so that this can develop in practical ways. Please do give time to look it over and give us your responses. The vision is based on both what the steering group members see as important, and the feedback from the members' survey last autumn.

I have also compiled a listing of events that may be of interest January to March, and of resources that members find useful. One of the events (see 9 March) is the first LSP gathering kindly hosted by Jenny Sandler.

My Christmas reading has been J Philip Newell's **A New Harmony. The Spirit, the Earth and the Human Soul**. This is a prophetic work for our time, in which the riches of the Celtic tradition are a source of inspiration for the profound transformation of life that is essential for our thriving on earth. Philip Newell encourages us to dig down and find the treasures within our own tradition in order to offer wisdom to one

another for our shared human journey with people from a wide variety of faiths. This is also the "interspirituality" we refer to in the vision statements for LSP, and which Andrea Wood writes of below in her account of the recent On This Day event at St Martin's.

Philip has given us permission to include as an attachment an extract from **A New Harmony**, which is also on the website he and Ali Newell (an LSP contact in Scotland) have set up - www.heartbeatjourney.org - which speaks eloquently of transformation through remembering life's sacredness, addressing life's brokenness and serving earth's oneness.

Our partnership

Sending in items that have interested you or furthered your journey is a way of making LSP work in practice, so thanks to all who have sent me items.

Petra Griffiths (Coordinator)

Just This Day

by Andrea Wood

On Wednesday November 28th, I went with a friend from our local meditation group to a meeting at St Martin-in-the-Fields to celebrate an annual worldwide celebration of stillness called Just This Day.

The day started at 8am with 3 minutes silence (repeated on the hour throughout the session) and morning prayer, followed by choral singing and then a meditation led by Father Lawrence Freeman, Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation.

A panel of speakers from varied walks of life then responded in their own ways to the proposition that stillness, silence and peace lie at the heart of the matter, and each spoke of the importance of finding this space.

David Boddy, headmaster of St James Senior Boys' School, spoke of the value of introducing positive silence in school, with different options for pupils such as meditation with a mantra or simply silence before an icon; it was instructive to see boys of Sikh Buddhist, Hindu and Christian backgrounds side by side at peace together.

Lawrence Freeman felt that there is a new shift opening up on a global scale in which silence is perceived to be the space which illuminates new ways of knowing, as we descend from the mind and analytical thought (which are necessary and good) to the simplicity of

the heart and the universal centre which is the ultimate reality.

Rajinder Singh Sandhu, Head of the Guru Nanak Sikh Academy, felt that all faiths led towards God when people committed to silence, while Paul Sternberg, who was involved in the launch of Action for Happiness, spoke of how we are hard-wired to be connected with one another (counter to education for self improvement which has been so prevalent in our culture recently). He maintained that meditation gives us greater clarity and a sense of acceptance of ourselves and others and puts us in touch with original goodness. Jeremy Sinclair of Saachi explained his belief that stillness is the starting point for creative work. Claire Foster-Gilbert, who is to become director of the Westminster Abbey Institute, spoke of how she encourages people in different situations, whether in school, homeless or in business, to see life as a journey in which it is possible, perhaps with the help of a mentor, to use silence to come to an understanding of a bigger world, which then informs their thinking as they resume their ordinary life.

In the afternoon, we also attended a delightful choral Eucharist following the theme of stillness, and for those who could stay for the evening in London, there was Music for Stillness by Discantvs, at St James's, Piccadilly.

Andrea is an LSP member in Berkshire.