

EVENTS October-December 2021

Compiled by **Living Spirituality Connections**
www.livingspirit.org.uk

Many events are online. Some are in-person.

October

Sunday 3 October start of **A Triumph of Delights month-long Festival at St James's Church Piccadilly** in the lead-up to the UN Climate Conference starts today with the launch of video artwork by Esmeralda Valencia Lindström - in partnership with the Royal Academy: Seeing with Non-Human Eyes. Metaphysical poet Thomas Traherne described creation as a triumph of delights, and that is the focus of this festival which includes a diverse range of creative, artistic, spiritual and scientific events and liturgies. **Overnight vigil Sunday 31 October**, the night before the Summit starts. All are welcome to all events. Further info: <https://sjp.churchsuite.com/events/tihagzbtb>

Tuesday 5 October 10:30-11:30 Christians Awakening to a New Awareness Online Sacred Space

We are offering a ritual, an opportunity to engage with Spirit and with our own divine centre communally. This seeks to embody some of the essence of the eucharist experience in creating a sacred space of communion but within a wider framework. All are welcome to join us. Participants will bring a candle to light, a cup of water, something to represent earth e.g. stone, feather or plant, and some bread. The liturgy will be on the screen. There will be small break out groups afterwards for those who would like to join them.

Please email Bill at admin@cana.org.uk if you would like to join the event.

Wednesday 6 October 4.30-5.30 Facing the Past to Face the Future. Corrymeela (Belfast and Ballycastle) <https://www.corrymeela.org/> Spirituality of conflict series. Co-hosted with The Ohio State University's Mershon Center and Ulster University. Online event.

Harvard Law School professor Martha Minow identifies a tension that every society must confront in the aftermath of political violence and oppression: "too much memory and too much forgetting." She contends that both ends of this spectrum hold the potential to derail the possibility of forging a just and shared future. In this webinar, Minow and moderator Dr. Duncan Morrow will hold a public conversation about what it means to face the past, how to find the balance between acknowledgement and taking responsibility for injustice, while – at the same time – turning toward the possibility of transformation and social healing.

Free of charge. Booking: <https://mershoncenter.osu.edu/events/facing-past-forge-future>

Wednesday 6 October 6.30-8.30 The Celtic Wisdom of Julian of Norwich and Thomas Aquinas. An Evening with **Matthew Fox**, via Zoom. Edinburgh International Centre for Spirituality and Peace.

Matthew Fox is an internationally acclaimed theologian and spiritual maverick who has spent the last 40 years revolutionizing Christian theology, taking on patriarchal religion, and advocating for a creation-centered spirituality of compassion and justice and re-sacralizing of the earth. Matthew Fox currently serves as an Episcopal priest after he received what he calls “religious asylum” from the Episcopal Church. With exciting results he has worked with young people to create the Cosmic Mass (www.thecosmicmass.org) to revitalize worship by bringing elements of rave to the western liturgical tradition.

£15. Booking: <http://www.eicsp.org>

Thursday 7 October, 10 – 1. About the Church Through The Storm – What The Pandemic Has Shown Us About Being Church with The Revd **Paul Burden and Keith Elford**. Sarum College Salisbury, via Zoom.

The pandemic has meant that local churches have found themselves exercising their ministry in new and different ways, with differences from parish to parish. This is a moment to consider what this has revealed about the type of churches different congregations have revealed themselves to be, through online provision and pastoral engagement. Does the church that was revealed match the church we think we are, or the church we want to be? And if not, what might we do about it? We will use different models of church as a means of considering what the last months have shown, and consider what is needed now to exercise mission and ministry effectively as congregations.

£35. Booking: <https://www.sarum.ac.uk/>

Saturday 9 October 10 - 3 Journey into Silence. Embodying Centering Prayer. Led by Rev **Mark Waters**. Liverpool. <https://contemplativeoutreach.org.uk>

An exploration of the practice of silent prayer through an introduction to Centering Prayer. St John of the Cross said, “the only language God hears is the silent language of love.” This language of love has down the centuries been spoken and practised by the Christian mystics, and kept alive in the monastic tradition. But in recent years it has been re-discovered for our day. It is a language which when faithfully practised helps grow a relationship with God of great intimacy and depth. But for many of us, entering this land of silent prayer is not easy. This course aims to help participants overcome the practical struggles that many of us face when we try to pray in silence, and enable them to establish a regular pattern of silent prayer. The course will begin on Saturday 9 October with a

follow-up day on 20 November 2021, both at Liverpool Cathedral. There will be an online meeting every week in between.

Tickets can be bought at this Eventbrite link. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/journey-into-silence-tickets-165953690957> £40. Cost includes lunch on the full days.

Saturday 9 October 10-3. Spirituality of the Garden: On-line Retreat-at-home.

<https://www.hollandhouse.org> Worcestershire

Ever since the dawn of humanity, gardens have played a critical part in the sustenance and well-being of human life. Not just a resource for growing food, gardens nurture our well-being in ways that go far beyond just physical needs, as the poet Dorothy Frances Gurney put it “one is nearer God’s heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth”. Many major faith traditions place significant events in a garden, and spending time in gardens or green-spaces is becoming increasingly valued by health practitioners as at least complimentary to using pharmaceutical products.

This on-line day explores the spirituality of the garden with two fantastic garden designers, both of who are steeped in both the scientific and spiritual aspects of the garden. **Kristina Fitzsimmons and Patrick Swan** are award winning gardeners, and will be leading this special day, facilitated by Revd Ian Spencer – Warden of Holland House.

If gardens, green spaces, or even your window-sill or balcony with a potted plant or two, mean something special to you – you’ll love this retreat-at-home.

Cost: £20 per Zoom link (i.e. for each email address). Also there will be a face-to-face residential retreat as a follow-up to this event in early 2022, based at Holland House.

Wednesday 13 October 7-8.45 pm. Julian of Norwich: Wisdom in a Time of Pandemic--and Beyond. Lecture and Q&A by **Matthew Fox**. Online event.

In this talk Matthew Fox will teach how Julian empowers us to stand up to the matricide, the killing of Mother Earth through climate change and the killing of women and girls going on in the world today. Julian deconstructs the patriarchal mindset and reconstructs a healthy balance of the sacred masculine and divine feminine. Julian lived through the worst pandemic in European history—the bubonic plague--and instead of freaking out, she deepened her commitment to the creation spirituality lineage — the sacredness of nature and God-in-Nature. She has much to teach us today. We will explore some of her rich teachings and invoke practices to put them into our own bodies, minds and souls.

£10-£15. Booking: <https://www.alternatives.org.uk/>

Monday 18 October 7-8.30 pm Living Spirituality Connections Midlands group meets via Zoom. Theme: **Fruitfulness**. All welcome. For details and Zoom link email Anne Gardner: a.gardner@me.com

Tuesday 19 October 8 pm Progressive Christianity : Hope for the Future? Via Zoom. Speakers: **Deshna Shine, Jeremy Greaves**. <https://www.pcnbritain.org.uk/>

An online conference bringing together two leading and younger voices for progressive Christianity in the USA and Australia. We will learn about the possibilities and challenges for progressive Christianity, not only in America and Australia but what is common to us here in Europe. And how does the culture of richer nations, with a widely diverse population contrast to countries in the southern half of the globe? Are there common barriers and issues to progressive thinking in all our countries? Can the voices and thinking of younger leaders like Deshna and Jeremy give us hope for the future?

Deshna Shine is the former Executive Director of ProgressiveChristianity.org & Progressing Spirit where she worked from 2006 -2020.

Jeremy Greaves is Assistant Bishop of Brisbane in the Anglican Church of Australia. Jeremy has described himself as a progressive Christian who "lives on the edge of the church".

This is the final Marcus Borg Memorial Conference in association with the 2021 Carrs Lane Lectures in Radical Christian Faith. Free of charge. Booking:

<https://www.pcnbritain.org.uk/events/detail/progressive-christianity-hope-for-the-future>

Saturday 16 October Talking about the weather with Fr **Laurence Freeman**. London EC1 and online. 10.30 - 4. Meditatio Centre London. <http://meditatiocentrelondon.org/>

As part of the programme of events that the World Community for Christian Meditation has organised in the run up to the COP26 Climate conference in November, Fr Laurence is leading a day on the climate emergency. This day will include periods of meditation and, we hope, input from our meditators in Brazil – Tayna Malaspina and Cristiana Coimbra – who both know first hand of the devastating impact climate change is having on their beautiful country. Fr Laurence will introduce us to the contemplative response to climate change and why meditation is important.

£20 online & concessions. £30 in person. Booking:

<https://give.wccm.org/donations/laurencefreeman/>

We will record the talk and it will be available afterwards to all those who are registered.

22-24 October Creative Wellbeing Retreat 'Kindling Delight and Possibility' Led by **Helen Warwick**, and members of the Holy Rood community, Thirsk, N. Yorks.

This informal retreat will give space to explore creative ways to encourage health and relaxation. Helen will offer ideas, time in our large art room, poems and prayers to help us engage our creativity and connect to delight and possibility. As the world goes through challenging times this creative space will help us to reflect on what seeds of potential are emerging in our own lives.

£210 (£220 en-suite) Booking: www.holyroodhouse.org.uk

23 October 10:30 - 4. The Way of the Franciscans: Mystic Paths for Contemporary Seekers Led by **Daniel P. Horan OFM**. Meditatio Centre London. <https://meditatiocentreondon.org>

Whereas some religious traditions within Christianity offer a singular approach or spiritual focus, the Franciscan tradition is wonderfully diverse and manifold offering modern spiritual seekers an array of paths toward reflection on life, the world, and God. This retreat day explores some of these Franciscan approaches to prayer and spirituality, including Francis of Assisi, Clare of Assisi, Bonaventure and Angela of Foligno. No previous experience with the Franciscan spiritual tradition is needed and all are welcome.

£20 online & concessions. £30 in person. Booking: https://meditatiocentreondon.org/events/way_of_the_franciscans/

Mon 25 October 5-6 pm Breath Prayer: An Ancient Practice for the Everyday Sacred. Book Launch on Zoom with **Christine Valters Paintner** and **Simon de Voil**.

Christine will explore the roots of breath prayer and introduce us to it through guided practice. Simon de Voil will be offering his gift of song. Jamie Marich will offer a short movement practice connected to breath. Free of charge. <https://abbeyofthearts.com/>

Thursday 28 October 10-11.15 (repeated 6-7.15) start of series on Long Covid – Exploring Healing in Body, Mind and Spirit. Led by **Helen Warwick**. Via Zoom. Parts 2 & 3 on **4 and 18 November**.

These retreats will be suitable for anyone living with the effects of Long Covid (suffering symptoms from the Covid virus after several weeks). **Helen Warwick**, a Creative Therapist and Chaplain, will be offering healing ways to find a life-giving path through fatigue, physical and psychological symptoms, grief, loss and change of lifestyle.

The suggested donation for each event is £15. To apply please email us at enquiries@holyroodhouse.org.uk

Thursday 28 October 10am Renewal Space. Led by **Linda Courage.** York.

Some time apart to gently explore the effects of these times, find space to rest and time to re-create. This renewal space features heart-centred meditation alongside some input, time for creative activities, and gentle reflection and sharing. No experience of using the arts is necessary.

Linda is a member of the Abbey of the Arts and is Arts & Spirituality Coordinator for Living Spirituality Connections. She has a heart for encouraging and guiding others in practices which help to reconnect us to ourselves and restore our vitality and aliveness.

Held at St Bede's Pastoral Centre (£15). Booking: <https://www.stbedes.org.uk>

29-31 October The Aramaic Jesus - "Return to Ripeness" - The Beatitudes of Christ

Led by International Aramaic scholar **Neil Douglas-Klotz.** Holland House, Worcestershire. Breathing with Unity, Living with Blessing. Chant, Movement and Contemplative Prayer with the Aramaic Jesus.

We will return to the heart-awareness of the present moment with a journey through the Beatitudes of Jesus in Aramaic. Through chant, simple circle movement and contemplative prayer, we will re-enter the state that Jesus calls *tub*, "blessedly ripe—at the right time and place" We will follow the journey of one of the most profound aspects of Jesus' teaching, the Beatitudes in Matthew. This is a healing journey that takes us to deepest part of ourselves and then resurrects us in power and joy. Whether or not you have joined in these Aramaic retreats previously, this is a wonderful doorway into Jesus' native spirituality and way of meditation.

£290. Booking: <https://www.hollandhouse.org>

29 - 31 October LGBT+ A warm welcome to you. 'Creating Gardens in the Desert'

With **Urs Mattmann** and the Holy Rood Community. An inclusive, relaxed and creative Retreat. www.holyroodhouse.org.uk

Urs will guide our Retreat and enable conversation and reflection. Urs is the author of "**Coming In – Gays and Lesbians reclaiming the spiritual journey**" Urs is a Social worker and Psychotherapist using Psychosynthesis and, with his partner, Emmanuel, is part of the Holy Rood House team where he is also on the Chaplaincy team offering Spiritual Direction. Contact enquiries@holyroodhouse.org.uk

Sat 30 October 5-8pm. Writing with the Ancestors with Christine Valters Paintner

Join us for this online mini-retreat in time outside of time. The days around late October and early November are especially sacred in the Celtic tradition, when the veil between

worlds is thin. The Christian tradition celebrates November as the month of the dead. It is a threshold time, when the old falls away and the new is coming into birth. When heaven and earth kiss. As the nights grow ever darker in the northern hemisphere we are invited to listen for the voices of the saints and ancestors.

Through song, poetry, meditation, reflection, small and large group sharing, and a series of writing explorations we will gather in a virtual sanctuary space and honour those who have passed before us and what guidance we might receive in these lengthening nights for the challenging times we live in. Our ancestors have lived through their own times of plague and unrest. We can hear their whispers in our blood and bones. Come receive the wisdom they offer to us as we open to the heart of who we most deeply are.

\$50 (circa £36). Some reduced price places available. The retreat will be recorded for those who pre-register but are unable to attend. Booking: <https://abbeyofthearts.com/>

30 Oct 10 – 4. Protest and Poetry in an Age of a Pandemic with Ambrose Musiyiwa
Ammerdown Centre Near Bath.

Covid has made us more aware of the injustices in our world. In these times of racial unrest and Black Lives Matter protests, poetry offers a resource to explore the relationship between activism and connection. Join poet and editor, Ambrose Musiyiwa, for a protest poetry workshop (in the morning), followed by readings (in the afternoon). Participants will explore poetry as a form of protest, through a series of reflections, exercises and writing prompts. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to be in conversation with the poetry and poets from the ***Black Lives Matter: Poems for a New World*** anthology (2020).

This workshop is for all levels and abilities – absolutely no writing experience needed. All you need is a passion for injustice and an interest in sharing your views through creativity. This is a whole day event and participants are encouraged to sign up for the entire programme, however, you may wish to attend either the morning or afternoon sessions.

Please book. Free of charge. Donations welcome. www.ammerdown.org

November events continue overleaf

November

Thursday 4 November 3-6 (3-4 & 5-6 on Zoom). Start of **The Artist's Rule. Nurturing your creative soul with monastic wisdom.** Led by **Linda Courage.**

A twelve session fortnightly programme on Zoom, ending on 7 April, to explore together how the contemplative and creative parts of ourselves meet. The hour between Zoom sessions will be for private reflection and creativity. You will need to purchase our primary text for the programme - ***The Artist's Rule*** by **Christine Valters Paintner.**

The Abbey of the Arts (www.abbeyofthearts.com) is Linda's primary spiritual home. Linda co-ordinates the Arts and Spirituality Special Interest Area of Living Spirituality Connections (www.livingspirit.org.uk). A retired nurse and expressive artist, she loves and learns a lot from her cat, Molly, and her allotment, Lottie.

This is a **Living Spirituality Connections** event run in association with **St Bede's Pastoral Centre, York.** To book go to www.stbedes.org.uk Cost: £150.

Saturday 5 November 10.30-12.45 The Significance of Heart. Via Zoom.
A Christians Awakening to a New Awareness Conscious Conversation. www.cana.org.uk

“What our world needs if it is to function better – indeed if it is to avoid disaster – is the emergence of more awakened or deeper hearted human beings”, said Serge Beddington-Behrens. As a western society we are rapidly becoming aware of the need to change direction. So much of our habitual thinking and behaviour patterns have resulted in the destruction of life on our beautiful planet, and in the creation of inequality and poverty. We have to find a more beneficent direction for our evolution as a human species. A significant shift seems to be underway from the domination of our clever, analytical thinking towards living within the greater wisdom of our hearts, which is also the realm of our feelings. We are realising that we are now being called to be truly deep hearted, compassionate beings.

We have invited several contributors to give us some food for thought, as well as experience a heart-centred way. These include Revd Don MacGregor, Dr Jude Currivan, Janet Corbett, a student of the HeartMath Institute, and Janet Derwent of Sundial House Centre for Creative Meditation. There will also be at least two breakout sessions as well as a whole group session in which we can share our own inspirations and insights.

This topic of bringing heart and mind into balance is not new. In the Hebrew Scriptures it says “as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7 KJV). In the Gospel of Thomas, Jesus says “When you give birth to that which is within yourself; what you bring forth will save you. If you possess nothing within, that absence will destroy you.” And Anne Baring, a

contemporary mystic says: “Our ancestors understood that civilisation cannot develop unless it is rooted in the power of the heart to give birth to a feeling world....and without that feeling and that inward journey to develop soul, creation cannot continue to unfold... The message is clear: without the creative energy of love, we cannot create a true civilisation, and when we cannot create, we destroy.”

Please email Bill at admin@cana.org.uk if you would like to join this event.

Tuesday 16 November 11 – 4 Quiet Day facilitated via Zoom. Whirlow Spirituality Centre. £10. <https://www.whirlowspiritualitycentre.org/whats-on/2021/11/simple-quiet-day>



17 November - 2 February 6.30- 9.30 Lighthouse in a storm: Spiritual community for turbulent times. A ten week in-person programme for young adults (under the age of 40) from any spiritual tradition or belief system. London <https://stethelburgas.org>

How can you create a resilient spiritual life, in the midst of global crisis? How can you fully weave together your spirituality and your work for the world? How can you be a light for others in a dark time? For more information contact Justine Huxley on 0207 496 1611 or justine.huxley@stethelburgas.org

19-20 November “Once Upon A Time, In A Town Called Nazareth...” with **Betsey Beckman and Kathleen Kichline** An **Abbey of the Arts** online retreat.

As the season of Advent approaches, we invite you to join with the Abbey of the Arts Community for a time of Sabbath to journey with the young Jewish girl, Mary as she encounters the Angel Gabriel and says “yes!” to God’s call. Through creative practices, ritual, and imagination, we will explore how God calls each of us to the gift of incarnation and invites us to the birthing of new life.

The retreat will be recorded for those who pre-register but are unable to attend at the scheduled time. \$90 (circa £73). Some reduced price places available. For workshop times go to: <https://abbeyofthearts.com>

22 - 25 November About Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing: Spiritual Development in context. Led by Dr **Karen O'Donnell** and guest tutors. Sarum College, Salisbury.

This module enables students to explore 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. This module engages 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 those not enrolled for academic credit. £390 - £570 (residential). Booking: <https://www.sarum.ac.uk/>

29 November 3-4 pm start of weekly online **Advent Breath Prayer Retreat: A Companion Retreat to Christine's Book.** Facilitated by **Dr. Christine Valters Paintner, John Valters Paintner, Dr. Amanda Dillon, and Dr. Jamie Marich**

For centuries the practice of breath prayer has helped centre people from a variety of faith traditions on the sacred in everyday life. Through brief words of prayer or petition said silently to the rhythm of one's breath, this simple, meditative act combines praise for the divine with focused intention, creating a profound spiritual connection in the quiet, and even mundane, moments of the day. This retreat immerses you in this practice with extra wisdom from Christine, scripture reflections from John, reflections on biblical art from Amanda, and invitations into contemplative movement through breath with Jamie.

Weekly (**29 Nov, 6, 13, 20 Dec**). \$150 (circa £109). Some reduced price places. The live sessions will be recorded for those who pre-register but are unable to attend at the scheduled time. Booking: <https://abbeyofthearts.com>

30 Nov 10:00 - 4:00. About Christian Contemplative Prayer and Mindfulness. Course leader: **Fr Luigi Gioia.** Sarum College, Salisbury. £60. Booking: www.sarum.ac.uk .

Contemplative prayer shares with mindfulness the idea that our life spins out of control when we lose the ability to pay attention to the present moment. In the Christian approach self-awareness is part of a deeper awareness of God speaking to us through Scripture and simultaneously of his presence in our heart. Christian contemplative prayer has a lot to learn from mindfulness but the Christian approach differs from mindfulness because self-awareness is part of a deeper awareness of God's presence and action in us and in our lives.

December

3-5 December. We Await the Coming – Advent as Subversive Memory led by **Diarmuid O'Murchu**. Holland House, Worcestershire.

Advent recalls the birth of Jesus in our world, while also reminding us God's future coming at the end time. In this weekend conference, Diarmuid O'Murchu will introduce new insights on the meaning of Advent, following the guideline of Scripture scholar, John. D. Crossan: "*While we are waiting for God's intervention, God is actually waiting on our collaboration*". The challenges to Christian faith are quite substantial and through input, reflection, and dialogue, will be explored over the weekend.

£290. Booking: <https://www.hollandhouse.org>

10-12 December Advent Retreat with **John Bell**. Ammerdown Centre, Near Bath. The notion that 'Christmas is a time for the kids' has helped to turn the Advent and Christmas seasons into a babyfest. It also eclipses the significance of incarnation and the importance of adults. This short retreat will pull back the curtain on the bigger picture.

John Bell lectures and leads seminars in the areas of scripture, liturgy, spirituality and music on all continents. He is a Member of The Iona Community and founding member of the Wild Goose Resource Group.

Residential - £270. Non Residential - £185. Booking: www.ammerdown.org

Monday 13 December 7-8.30 pm Living Spirituality Connections Midlands group meets via Zoom. Theme: **Finding our inner light**. All welcome. For details and Zoom link email Anne Gardner: a.gardner@me.com

23 - 27 December Christmas Houseparty. Thirsk, North Yorks.

30 December - 3 January 2022 New Year Houseparty. Thirsk, North Yorks.

Info and booking for both events: www.holyroodhouse.org.uk