



The Christian Community movement for religious renewal

73 Cainscross Road, Stroud GL5 4HB

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Contemplation

There is a wonderfully provocative one-liner written by Hunter S. Thompson in his book *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*: 'When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro'..... implying – if one may dare to put it into other words – that when life's circumstances become challenging, it is the free and independently-minded, unconventional individual, who may ordinarily be considered weird, that manages to successfully turn misfortune into good fortune.

And the corollary might sound something like: when life's circumstances become challenging, then it is those who desperately try to hold onto one's comfort zone and traditional ways of seeing and doing things who eventually fall into even deeper misfortune than before.

Now this is of course not intended as some kind of moral evaluation – and after all who can truly judge where someone else is in fact really coming from or what the true value of someone's life really is. And yet one can't help but feel, and even experience, that there is indeed quite some truth in this rather provocative one-liner.

And this does seem to be borne out by some of the writings of this rather insightful anti-Bolshevist Yugoslavian dissident of the 1970's – Mihajlo Mihajlov – whose little booklet *The mystical experience of loss of freedom* has been on sale in our church foyer for a few months.

In the booklet he studies the experiences, described in their writings, of many different people, such as Solzhenitsyn, Shifrin, Pamine, etc (including Mihajlov's own seven years imprisonment) who have experienced extreme deprivation, torture and daily life-threatening situations in prison under the Soviets during the so-called 'Cold War'; and comes to some quite unexpected conclusions such as:

'Another paradox confirmed by the writers is that only those can preserve their bodies and physical existence who preserve their souls, i.e. those who, obeying an inner urge, are prepared to lose their physical existence. Generally one assumes the opposite – that in a difficult situation a man has to choose to save either the body or soul. Yet these writers, who have lived through situations where both body and soul were threatened, affirm unanimously that those who tried to preserve their physical existence at the expense of their souls, lost both, while those who were prepared to sacrifice their bodies for the sake of their souls, by some mysterious law, and contrary to what they expected, had their bodies, i.e. their physical existence, preserved. ---

'But man has the freedom to decide whether or not to follow the inexplicable yet so real inner voice. To put it clearly, the terrible experience of suffering in prison makes him free. --- Unalterable destiny and the highest form of freedom exist side by side. It depends on the person himself whether he submits to fate or chooses freedom. ---

'...neither the knowledge of the laws with which present-day science is concerned, nor the knowledge of these mysterious and so far unexplained laws which, contrary to every expectation and probability, save those who follow the dictates of their inner voice – neither of these gives a man power. Also, to be saved, a person needs not power but freedom. And we find freedom not by knowledge but by faith.'

The going certainly does seem to be getting weirder and weirder, and it is perhaps not surprising then, that so many today even consider the Passion of Christ weird.

Aaron

Liza and Christian Lillicrap

It is with great joy that we welcome Liza and Christian into our community on Palm Sunday the 10th April. Don't miss the day and cultural celebration – and bring-and-share lunch!

Liza was ordained in February last year in the same group as Nataliia, and comes to be a full-time priest with us in Stroud. She has been working in the Bremen congregation since her ordination. Prior to that she and Christian worked for thirty years as Waldorf teachers in Australia and prior to that for a time at the Devon Waldorf school. Many will be pleased to learn they are both born and bred English!

Bristol and Carmel

On the 15th May Carmel will hand over responsibility for the Bristol congregation to Aaron. The fortnightly visits to Bristol will continue as before alternating Saturdays and Sundays. With this step Carmel returns to official retirement but thankfully for us all will continue to lend a priestly hand from time to time.

Children's camp 2022

We already have 45 applications for our children's camp this year! That is most unusual for this time of year. It shows how much the camp is really wanted and appreciated. Unfortunately we only have space for 80 children, so do encourage those you know who are hoping to attend to apply soon. More info is available on our website www.cc-camps.org

Spring Fair

We had a wonderfully productive preparation meeting for the fair with thirteen people on 29th March and we certainly do have a lot of enthusiasm and conviction coming together to help make this a special day. Do look out for emails requesting further volunteers, Raffle items, bric-a-brac, books, cakes, cookies and crafts – and have a good think where you might still be able to make a contribution. Primarily it is about providing a relaxed, creative, fun and beautiful day for everyone – young and old – but especially for the young children – and a way of radiating something of our love for life with the broader community around us.

We are also really glad that we can offer fund-raising opportunities to some of our local friends and initiatives. Don't hesitate to contact Aaron for further details and offers of help (aaronmirkin@gmail.com).

British Regional Conference (Annual Community Meeting)

Creating sacred spaces where present and future meet – from the 10th to 12th June at Forest Row. Do see the details that are in every Community News email and consider participating in this most special year celebrating 100 years of The Christian Community. It promises to be a rich event both as regards content and social encounter – a wonderful way to broaden our view of The Christian Community and all our brothers and sisters from the different parts of the country. Contact Aaron for more details and if finances are a question in whether you could attend or not we could certainly find ways to support. Liza and Aaron are both attending and could most likely offer some transport.

LOGOS international conference

The LOGOS international conference of The Christian Community will be held from 7th to 11th October 2022 in Dortmund. Do look out in the Community

News emails for the latest details of this unique conference with members and priests from all over the world coming together to celebrate 100 years of The Christian Community together. If you are interested and want to know more or need some support do contact Aaron. There is an excellent website for the conference with many more details. Just do an internet search for *LOGOS consecrating humanity*. Liza and Aaron are both hoping to attend.