

The Christian Community

Stroud Congregation Newsletter – July 2017

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Children's Camp

From 22nd July to 1st August we will hold our 8th annual children's camp from Stroud. It will again take place at Oaklands Park in the Forest of Dean and we already have 79 children signed up so we are basically full! There is possibly still space for 2 or 3 children under the age of 12. In addition we have our usual large group of enthusiastic helpers – 34 in all. So we will be around 113 people for 10 days together under canvas! All the more can we appreciate and thank in advance dear Susanne Rosch-Iles who is running the kitchen again – for the 5th time, and Catherine Linde who comes faithfully each year as our camp nurse. Unfortunately work commitments prevent Cordelia Linde coming to cook for us this year. She has carried the kitchen, with one exception, every year since we began the camps in 2010. Do come and visit us on the last day – at 11am on Tuesday 1st August – to share our final gathering of singing, skits and presentations.

Aaron

Community Support Group

The Community Support Group meets now every month. In this group, we begin with a verse and think warmly on those people in our community who need some extra support and finish with a short study, which is currently on the twelve senses. Everyone is welcome to join at any time and help nourish the substance of our community in this group.

Another aspect of the group which we want to develop is to know of people we can ask when help is needed in more practical ways. Examples such as cooking or bringing of meals, giving lifts to church and visiting people are included in this. If you are interested to help with these aspects, please speak to Selina.

Act of Consecration in Afrikaans

On Sunday the 24th September the ordination of Michael Merle will take place in Johannesburg – the first ever in South Africa and only second in Africa. Christine Vogt was ordained in Windhoek, Namibia some years ago. Selina will be attending and supporting this event down South and we in Stroud will accompany this with an Act of Consecration of Man in Afrikaans (Mensewydingshandeling). Many of the members and friends of The Christian Community in South Africa are Afrikaans as are several in our Stroud congregation. Following the service we will then hear a talk on African spirituality.

Community Retreat

We had hoped to hold this new Retreat form on the 1st July but have decided to postpone it to a Saturday in October. It arose out of the wish in the Carrying Group to share a transformed 'AGM' where we focussed more on the inner aspects of our work together in the congregation - sharing biographies, inner pictures and cultivating the connection to our Community Angel. We look forward to still bringing this about after the summer.

New Study Group

Selina will give some talks over the summer period with particular emphasis on 3rd September where she will speak of 'Christ living in the Earth'. There is an idea of forming an exploratory study group where we creatively look at this theme from the realms of nature study, paintings, music and literature. If you would be interested in this group then it could begin in October. Please express your interest to Selina if you would like to join and contribute in this exploration.

Funeral Fund

Dear Community, after some consultations with solicitors, we have now finally got the go ahead from our British Council of Management to set up and run a Funeral Fund for members and friends of The Christian Community in Stroud. Copies of the agreement can be obtained in the foyer or from Paul in the office or from one of the priests. Paul will be administering the Fund. The basic idea is that one may choose to make a loan to the congregation which is sufficient to cover the costs of one's funeral as well as any additional sum one might like to donate to the congregation as a contribution 'for the funeral, etc'. Upon death the community pays for the funeral and any surplus becomes a gift to the congregation. Our local Funeral Director, James Showers tells us that the current average cost of funerals at present is +£3000 with the figure rising a little every year. This figure naturally varies according to each one's personal wishes. These can also be defined as part of the agreement. The intended benefit is mainly that one liberates one's family and friends from having to deal with the fees when the time comes, and, until that time, the congregation can use the loan to support capital development. The agreement allows for withdrawal of the full amount from the fund at any time – for instance should one move to another congregation or indeed to another country. Do speak with Paul or one of the priests if you would like to discuss this any further.

Servers' Day on 7th October

All servers are warmly welcome to this special gathering where we can meet together and explore the different aspects of the Act of Consecration, the vestments and discovering the 'joys of service'. This is a day for you as an appreciation of your help to the congregation. Lunch will be provided! More information later but please keep the date in your diaries. Trish & Selina

Festival Group

We would like to re-establish a group of mums, dads and priests who look towards each family festival event and help to prepare for it both inwardly and outwardly. There are already a few who will join our first meeting on Saturday the 9th September from 11.30 – 12.30 at the church, but others who would like to consider being part of this are welcome to come along too. We have pencilled in two further dates in the programme but we could look at dates and times that work best for others in this first meeting. The next festivals will be Michaelmas and the Halloween Pumpkin Party.

Trip to Holland – International Whitsun Conference

Twelve youth travelled overland (and sea) with me to attend the international Christian Community conference at 's Hertogenbosch in Holland. A further four youth flew in to join us there. We spent the first three days in Amsterdam getting around on bicycles, visiting museums, churches, canal boat rides, eating pancakes and spending an afternoon and evening with a group of refugees under the wings of a charity run by connections of mine. This was a very touching, warm and stimulating encounter for all of us.

Over 1000 adults and 400 youth from all over the world attended the 'Playing with Fire' Whitsun conference which was held at the huge Brabant conference centre in 's Hertogenbosch. There were many talks, workshops and all sorts of other activities for us all to choose from, as well as five Acts of Consecration with sermons each morning in many different languages. Three of our youth attended a meeting with the Circle of Seven to speak about the future of The Christian Community and the Stuttgart Priest seminary students presented a wonderful cabaret. Every evening a 'Daily Show' took place for and with the youth with all sorts of impromptu performances, skits, singing and dancing. Our youth sang beautifully several times in the 'Daily Show' and did two humorous numbers as a thank you to the two main youth helpers on the last evening. It was our first time abroad as a group and, besides the long journey, 12hrs each way, we definitely want to do something like it again. Thanks again to those who especially gave donations towards our trip.

Aaron

Biography Workshop

Andrea Sprenger is kindly offering a weekly biography workshop *'for anybody who has either never had the chance to review their life in a structured way in a small group or those who would like to do this again to deepen their understanding of their own destiny.'* This could start in the middle of September, probably sometime on a Wednesday. The proceeds would go to the New Development Fund. There are details on the noticeboard in the foyer, or you can contact Andrea on tel: 01453 833487 or email: andrea.1102@hotmail.co.uk

Piano wanted

Selina is looking for a piano in good condition – if anyone knows of one please let her know. Her contact details are on the back of the Programme.