

**Christians
Awakening
to new
Awareness
(CANA)**

CANA is a network of people exploring the emergence of humanity's next evolutionary step for which Jesus has paved the way. This requires us to risk living co-creatively through attunement to the ONE.

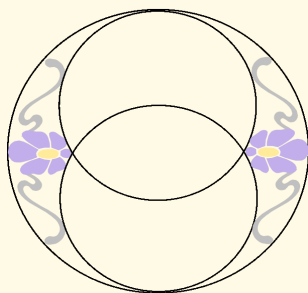
CANA offers people nurture and companionship in their process of awakening and the opportunity to find a commonality with others on a similar continuing journey.

Our collective journey has no set goal. The reality of our unity may be seen to develop. But the essential nature of our journey is one of continuing exploration.

Everyone's contribution is a valued part of the whole and none is dispensable. As we leave behind the language and interpretations of the past, we are challenged to find new expressions of the emerging vision.

CANA recognizes that we are all one through that of God within us from whatever background we come.

CANA is a group where risk becomes safe through trust and where exploration is key.



CHRISTIANS AWAKENING

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2015

Volume 4 Issue 1



Photos in this issue from RHS Wisley Gardens, Spring this year

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The core belief of all the great
world religions is that the
underlying reality of everything
is love.

Richard Rohr

Editorial

'We live in challenging times. Grief, fear and pain are rife. But equally it feels as if our collective humanity is deepening our hearts, opening to the power of vulnerability and to reconnection. Survival demands that we change our story and thankfully our instinct for survival is great'. **Jini Reddy**

'Ultimately the transition to an enlivened and sustainable civilisation needs to be experienced, inhabited, co-created by people working together in multiple places and experiments. The story of the path to sanity is being discovered and recounted through the walking of it'. **Jonathan Dawson**

Easter is a time of renewal, of rebirth, of new life shooting from the decomposition of the old. The above two quotations are from participants at the recent New Story Summit writing in the Spring 2015 issue of **Resurgence** Magazine. Each expresses a personal sense of the changes going on in our collective humanity which are affecting every area of life. Renewal is currently underway.

For example, new political groupings are forming in several countries and the outcome of the forthcoming elections in Britain seems very uncertain as the old ideologies on which the three main parties are based have been outgrown but the new ones forming are not yet well established. It seems that most young people will vote 'green' as they are aware that there is much more to life than 'just the economy, stupid!' and that we need to rediscover the Earth as a living being with all the resources that we need and with such beauty that it nourishes our inner lives as well. As Evelyn Nolt challenges us:

*'Oh Earth, living, breathing, thinking Earth.
On the day we treasure you
As you have treasured us
Humanness is born'*

Treasuring the Earth is one of the changes we need to make. This brings us to the need to rediscover and connect with the pagan roots of Christianity which were stamped out by patriarchal power structures imposing sets of beliefs that were not in the teachings of Jesus but served an agenda of political control. This is why it is now vital that Christianity reconnects with the original message of Jesus and merges with the true essence of the more

feminine and holistic values that the so-called 'New Age' has been bringing forward. In this way the mystical roots of Christianity which were aware of the '*anima mundi*', of the Gaia/ Sophia feminine aspects of the divine can now blend with the evolutionary development of humanity as we move towards the Omega point that Fr Teilhard de Chardin foresaw. This now seems to be emerging at a somewhat rapid pace and involves a call for all 'aware Christians' to cease looking forever backwards to the old and instead become a catalyst for the new.

In some places this is happening. Our contemporary and highly regarded philosopher Ken Wilbur, with a more Buddhist background himself, is shortly holding an event in Boulder, Colorado on: 'The Return of the Heart of Christ Consciousness'. The Integral Institute that he founded and which is hosting this event says: "*It is clear that the Christian tradition continues to play a crucial role in how love continues to unfold in the modern and post-modern world*"

(www.integralife.com)

Another change that we are part of is to the structures and essential messages of the institutional church. My own current surge of domestic spring cleaning has brought to light an article by Fr Diarmuid O'Murchu (One Earth Magazine- Spring 1991) in which he says that in the political agenda of past times "*the church became preoccupied with its own survival and the biblical agenda of the reign of God quickly faded into the background, eventually becoming totally subverted*". He saw that "*a church in tune with the vision of God's new reign must be fluid, flexible, creative and above all future orientated and that a truly Christian church must be global, broad and inclusive in its ambience, not in the traditional sense of converting everybody to its point of view, but by being a catalyst and model for the inclusiveness and unity that cherishes all the diversity and richness of universal life*".

Fr Diarmuid was a speaker at the very first conference that we held in CANA but his voice is not popular with those with vested interests in conserving and promoting the old. Such retrograde forces are part of the 'natural evil'

in the world and we need to tolerate them and appreciate the part that they have played.

But now coming further into our awareness is the matrix of 'deliberate evil' that is seeking to control all life on this planet. As we wake up to this we can choose to recoil in horror at the gross networks of paedophilia, the over-chemicalisation of our atmosphere and soils, the deliberate stirrings of war in many places – or we can summon the inner strength to realise that as the collective 'Christ Consciousness' approaches more closely helping us to recognise our essential unity and the power of love and compassion that hold diversity together, so the separative consciousness of the 'Antichrist' will also grow. We have been told that the Light shining in the darkness out there can and will disperse it. But we also need to remember that there are dark spots within ourselves and that each of us is faced with the necessary inner work of transformation and release of all that prevents the Light shining through us ever more strongly.

So, each time we release a little more of the 'malignant egophrenia' which is within ourselves and even more so within the groupings and institutions which we hold dear, so we contribute to dispelling it on a collective basis. But, you may well ask, 'what can I do on an individual basis in the face of such a huge tsunami confronting us'? Well, let's begin to pool our suggestions and encourage each other. These are some of my ideas but it would be helpful if you could write in and also add your own:

1) An important thing to remember is that one of the things we are leaving behind is the sense that I need to go it alone. No one of us needs to be Atlas holding the world on our shoulders! We are leaving behind the era of go-it-alone and moving into the 'cohering power of the many'; so getting together in groups to share, discuss and support each other is a sound way forward. The *One Spirit Alliance*, to which CANA is connected, is seeking to encourage the networks of local groups that already exist and link them with other networks. The Cygnus Magazine have set up 38 new groupings in the last few months (see www.cygnus-books.co.uk) and already there are links between those running groups within the One Spirit Interfaith Foundation, Spiritual Companions and Wrekin

Trust. So do find a group somewhere and connect, even if only by telephone or Skype.

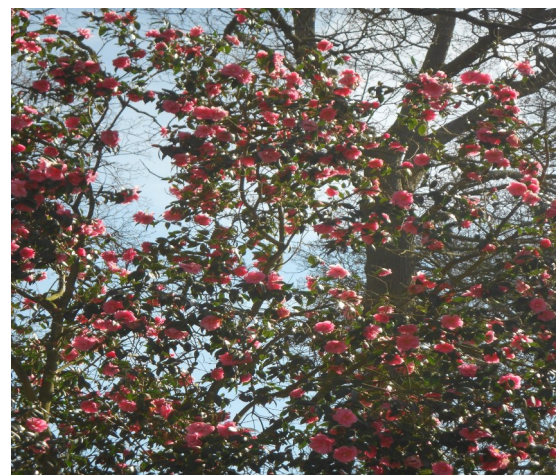
- 2) We need to have faith in our knowing that there are worlds beyond those that our physical five senses can detect and trust in their goodness and also be open to more communication and co-operation with them. Many teachings tell us that co-creation with other dimensions of being is part of our evolutionary destiny and we are now in the early stages of learning how to do this.
- 3) If we cultivate our courage and inner strength to be a truly 'spiritual warrior' then we will be poised to step up to whatever consciousness is calling each of us to do.
- 4) Then let us meditate, pray, affirm and act. As we change our thinking, our doing, our being, so too the energies around us change and the world shifts towards goodness one wee step at a time.

Last, but not least, let's remember that we were told to "Let your Light shine before men". 2015 is the **UN Year of Light** so we can perhaps rekindle that lighted flame within our hearts and let it shine. Here is an affirmation that may help to remind you:

*I am Light, glowing light,
Radiating light, intensified light
God consumes my darkness
Transmuting it into light.*

.....
*I am light, light, light
Flooding the world everywhere I move,
Blessing, strengthening, and conveying
The purpose of the kingdom of heaven
Master Kuthumi*

Janice Dolley



The Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel of Thomas was around when the early Church fathers were writing, but it was thought to be lost. It was rediscovered as one of 46 texts in the 'Nag Hammadi' collection found in the late 1940's – which after various shady dealings got to the scholars around 1955 and then only entered the Christian mainstream in the late 1970's.

Why was it hidden in the Egyptian sands? One theory goes like this. Prior to the first attempt to shortlist the canon of the New Testament in 367 AD by Athanasius, early Christianity was very fluid with no fixed canon of texts or creeds. All sorts of texts were used, some of them very far-fetched stories about Jesus and his birth, or things that the apostles did. There was a period of dispute over what should be in and what should be out, until we arrived at what we have now. When Athanasius drew up his list, many of these texts and gospel stories got left out.

It is thought that the Gospel of Thomas was among several sacred texts from a Coptic monastic library, which were placed in ceramic jars and hidden by monks around 400 AD. The monks presumably could not bear to destroy these precious and sacred texts so they were hidden as a kind of 'time capsule' for the future to receive them. The Gospel of Thomas is representative of the 'lost Christianities' – the different forms of Christianity that were around in the early centuries. Christianity began in pluralism with a whole bunch of spiritual communities at different levels of awareness and awakening, having their own favourite texts. It was only gradually that certain ones became accepted as authoritative, and others as not so much. Eventually, one view won out and asserted itself over all the others, assisted by Emperor Constantine and the might of the Roman Empire. All other views, many of them perfectly valid, got stamped on and labelled as heretical, with various horrendous penalties to be imposed if anyone was caught asserting them.

When the collection of texts was first discovered in 1945, they were called Gnostic gospels and they were demeaned as something opposed to Christianity, 'gnostic' and therefore thought to be heretical and they were 'demonised' in many circles. At first, they were thought to be of late origin and therefore theologically deficient and contaminated. However, more recently scholars have come to believe that the early sayings of the Gospel of Thomas were *very* early and only 'gnostic' in the sense that they contain wisdom and knowledge, which is what gnostic means. They may have been copied by monks in the 4th century, but stemmed from much earlier.

One scholar (April DeConnick) suggests that these oral sayings of Jesus were *gradually* collected and added to over a period of time, and that much of the Gospel of Thomas comes from 30–50 AD, ie much earlier than the canonised gospels, and contemporary with the letters of Paul. Because it is a group of sayings, rather than a narrative story, it is thought to have been added to as time went on, but the majority of it is probably very early, and reflects more of the actual words of Jesus than the canonical gospels. The early Thomas seems to come from ground zero, which is very exciting, but also very challenging, as it is not an easy read!

So what does it say? It begins like this:

I who write this am Judas Thomas - the double, the twin. Yeshua, the Living Master spoke, and his secret sayings I have written down. I assure you, whoever grasps their meaning will not know the taste of death.

That's the first saying. The second is:

Yeshua says, If you are searching, you must not stop until you find. When you find, however, you will become troubled. Your confusion will give way to wonder. In wonder you will reign over all things.

This is what happens when our old world view, our old paradigm, begins to fall apart. It's what is happening in society today. The old paradigm of constant growth and capital gain is breaking down, it has reached its limits – and we are disturbed, confused. But, says Jesus, *Your confusion will give way to wonder*. This is what happens: we find a new way of understanding the world around us, a new world view. We're still waiting for that in world economics. It can apply to our spiritual viewpoint as well, we can have our eyes opened to see truths that have been staring us in the face, but we have not seen before. This is a central message in the Gospel of Thomas – that we need to awaken to the spiritual reality of existence. Maybe this is part of the global shift happening in our times.

There are 114 sayings altogether. These sayings are typical of the type that Jesus said in the New Testament gospels, such as Matthew 10:39 *Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it*. They are not easy to understand! The sayings of the Gospel of Thomas are like Buddhist koans, short sayings designed to make you think hard, to chew them over, until some deeper revelation comes to you. It is typical of the way Jesus taught, in short sayings and also in his parables. They are cryptic, in the sense of making you go out of your comfort zone into a new way of looking at things. The idea is to lead to a transformation of consciousness, leading to the kingdom or realm of God that Jesus spoke so much about.

So, you might be thinking, if the Gospel of Thomas is the earliest recording of things Jesus said, why have the church authorities not embraced it with open arms? Well, it is still very early days – only 40 years since it became widely available for study. Changes in institutional church take longer than that! It is also a challengingly different type of gospel – no birth story, no trial, no resurrection, just things that Jesus said. But as the groundswell of opinion about it changes, these things that Jesus said could have an important impact on our understanding of what and how Jesus came to teach us. They reveal that he came to open our minds to the divine reality that is around us and in us. It also highlights how the early church failed to grasp hold of some of his teachings, or ignored them, and reverted back to a mainly sacrificial understanding of his life and death. More traditional believers will not want to deviate from the truths as handed down – but there was a lot of political and theological manoeuvring in the early church which resulted in what stayed in and what was left out. What the Gospel of Thomas says is that there is a whole other side to Jesus just waiting to be explored and integrated into Christian understanding. I find that exciting to contemplate!

Don MacGregor



AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANS AWARE (www.christiansaware.co.uk)

Christians Aware has a wide range of activities and interests, some of which can be discovered by dipping into our magazine which is published four times a year: for example, in the Spring 2014 issue reports on their annual conference “Squaring the circle, conflict resolution/transformation”. Among contributors at the conference were Zougbi Zougbi from Bethlehem, David Porter, adviser on reconciliation at Lambeth Palace, Sara Savage of Cambridge University and an expert on conflict resolution/transformation. The hope is that the

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conflicts in Sri Lanka, Iraq, Israel/Palestine and Ethiopia are not insurmountable and that we can all do something to develop understanding and bring transformation of conflict a little nearer.

Christians Aware, with the Methodist Church and other church partners, are asking for our help to explore whether our high street stores source their clothes from Bangladesh and if so: 1) Do they set minimum standards for their workers? 2) Pay fair wages? 3) Follow fire and building safety in the factories? 4) Show improved working conditions?

Other disturbing reports were from Korea, Myanmar (Burma) and the terrible plight of the refugees on Manus Island who had tried to reach Australia.

They were the problems that CA wanted our prayers for. But then there are also lots of positive reports in the magazine from Zambia, Bucharest, central Africa, the interfaith pilgrimage in Highfields, Leicester, a water project in Rwanda, interpreting sacred texts in the Abrahamic Faiths, book reviews, etc.

These are a few of the issues with which **Christians Aware** are concerned. Our overall aim is to encourage and provide opportunities in many different types of activity for contact between people of different cultures and religions. These include: arranging international visits, pilgrimages, conferences, special interest groups, and publications. This last includes leaflets, books and periodical magazines. Our motto is “*Peace is born of love, Love is born of understanding, Understanding is born of listening, Listening leads to Justice and Peace*”.

The Executive Director is Barbara Butler, wife of Bishop Tom Butler. They work with a few staff and many volunteers.

Written by **Les and Elwyn Bowles**,
for *Christians Aware*

Truth is eternal.
Our knowledge of it is
changeable.
It is disastrous when you
confuse the two.

Madeleine L'Engle

THE SHOCK OF AWAKENING: PART TWO

The first part of this article made the general point that we stand on the threshold of a new understanding of religion and spirituality in which the essence of Christianity— “taking on the mind that was in Christ” — will be seen within the context of an evolving species and of science’s discovery of a universe which began fourteen billion years ago in a moment of creation. We are now challenged to go on to a deeper understanding of “the mind of Christ” and a renewed commitment to acquire it.

New awakening has been expressed in the Jesuit Karl Rahner’s often quoted assertion that *“The Christian of the future will be a mystic or will not exist at all,”* argued also by other theologians, such as Dorothee Soelle and Thomas Berry. Rahner did not go on to explain what being a mystic implies, nor how to become one, nor the kind of community structure that will be needed to guide and support its members and propagate its new good news. Nor does he mention that “mysticism” has been repeatedly condemned by both the Catholic and Protestant branches of Christianity, as well as by Islam and Judaism. It is a sorry record. In the Roman church the teachings of Molinos, Eckhart and Madame Guyon, among many others, were banned, the Béguine communities were stamped out, Marguerite Porete was burned at the stake and in 1687 the blanket term “Quietism” was invented in a papal anathema to clearly define any movement towards mysticism as a heresy.

The Protestant record is hardly better. The Blasphemy Acts in Britain were specifically passed to crush Quakerism, which Evelyn Underhill called “group mysticism” (perhaps too enthusiastically) in her classical work **Mysticism**. In the American colonies, ostensibly upholders of religious freedom, the Quaker Mary Dyer was *“hanged like a flag for others to take example by.”* To make the same point the Moslem and Sufi mystic Al Hallaj had been crucified and chopped to pieces in Baghdad some centuries before and, Jesus himself was stoned *“for blasphemy, that you a mere man, should make yourself out to be God”* (John 10:33).

The Anglican William Law’s **A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life**, which is almost pure mystical doctrine, asserts quite bluntly that *“wherever thou goest, thou wilt have a priest, a church and an altar along with thee,”* and in considering the implications of this, one starts to see the mortal danger that mysticism presents to Christianity as we have inherited it. Clearly it is a threat to traditional structures and authorities, but also to long-established and valued communities and to good and honest individuals who have a need for authority or for what is called today “a strong steer”. We are all in our different ways shorn lambs for whom the wind must be tempered. Clearly mysticism is a hugely ambivalent concept and unclear goal. It is at once the highest spiritual ideal, yet perceived by organised religion as a foreign body. It is at once the ultimate purpose of religion, yet regarded as both undesirable and unattainable. It is, in the words of the eminent and authoritative Karl Barth, no more than a *“misty theology leading to schism.”*

If Rahner is right, however, then Christianity in the form passed down to us is a transitional religion, and logically the next phase will call for a new kind of grouping, a new kind of theology and a new kind of religion in which “mysticism” is not a marginal and impractical ideal but its whole point and purpose. A new wineskin is called for, as once it was for a budding Christianity, and in this situation an amorphous New Age network or spiritual supermarket are not going to answer to that need, nor is a reformed Church offering only cosmetic change. One starts to understand why St Paul listed organisational skill (*cyberneseis*) among his gifts of the Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:28). There is nothing for it but to co-opt the Holy Spirit, aware of the paradox that it is the same Spirit that moves us to call on it in the first place.

For a start, we shall need a much clearer understanding of what the word “mystic” means. Does it include nature mysticism? Is nature mysticism, in fact, the easiest entry into a more universal kind? Is mysticism another word for an empathy that widens to include all creation? Do bells and candles and incense help or hinder? How can an unclear and doubtfully attainable ideal compete with the ever-present reality of the Old Adam? It seems

like a “no contest”. Mysticism, in the broad sense of habitual God-awareness, is abnormal and unnatural, but that should count in its favour if we consider that every step that has taken us from the ape was seen and felt at the time to be unnatural. It is inevitable therefore that the next step too will seem at first unnatural and indeed it will be so. This should, however, encourage those who believe that true religion is about changing human nature.

Awakening can be enlightening and exhilarating, but the really shocking aspect comes from awakening to the fact that it will ultimately entail a death of some kind. Some part of the old familiar self must be given up and its abandonment can be as traumatic as death. On this Paul and the most reliable spiritual guides in the Christian tradition agree. It may be seen as the fruitful death of a grain of wheat, as Jesus put it, or as the death of the caterpillar on its way to becoming a butterfly, but shorn of the comforting metaphor the death of the old and familiar can hardly be anything but painful, confusing and instinctively resisted. What awaits on the other side, so to speak, is a radical change in our sense of identity, so that a genuine awakening can be recognized in the fact that after it has happened, one will give a different answer to the question: *Who am I?*

And here a second paradox arises, for, as Abbot Chapman emphasizes in his **Spiritual Letters**, when it comes to spiritual development, we are what we want to be, but at the same time we are painfully aware that we are not what we want to be. How does one cope with that kind of split identity? We are also what we know; so hidden in the simple word “awakening” is an educational programme as yet unwritten. Much can be learned from the past, for transformation – *metanoia* – was not invented yesterday, but the spiritual seeker faces new kinds of challenge today. Perhaps Rahner should have said “would-be mystic”, rather than “mystic”, for to go in one leap from being an ordinary decent, even a spiritually inclined human to a state of habitual awareness of the divine – in the cosmos, in the natural world and in our self – is beyond anyone’s unaided powers. Questions like these ramify.

Frank Parkinson

I would very much like to engage in dialogue with any members of CANA who see, or sense, future awakening in the direction to which Rahner is pointing. My email address is frank@frankparkinson.co.uk

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### **World War I: “We will remember them”**

Yes, but how? The days of first-hand accounts are over. We only have stimulated second-hand “memories”. Visiting a cascade of thousands of beautiful ceramic poppies may make us feel good in the train on the way home. But is that the remembrance the rotting corpses in the mud ask for? I have come across a notebook kept by a bereaved wife during WW1 in which she placed this poem:

#### **Jesus the Same Today**

He wept with the mourners long ago,  
Though grief was to pass away.  
He ‘groaned in Spirit’ was ‘troubled’ then,  
But oh! does He weep today?

This pain is as deep, this grief more great,  
And it does not pass away,  
As I mourn with countless mourners now,  
Does He weep with us today?

O Christ unchanged, in Thy glory now,  
Saviour, and Strength, and Stay,  
If not Thy tears I can feel thy touch  
On my aching heart today.

And though not yet at Thy gracious word  
Our sorrow shall flee away,  
Oh, show me all that Thou canst be  
To the heart that trusts today.

Perhaps this could be engraved on our war memorials in place of: “To the glory of God.” Perhaps we should leave it to God to choose what glorifies him, and step clear of our human attempt at self-justification for the killing of millions. Even the dedication “In the National Interest” might be more honest.

**Harry Underhill**

**WHAT IS IT TO BE A  
BRIDGE-BUILDER TO THE NEW?**

What is it to be a Bridge-Builder to the New?  
It is to live in the full awareness of every  
moment

As a divine droplet of potentiality  
In the ocean of eternity.

It is to see every person as carrying the  
Christ Light within them  
And every situation as an opportunity for  
releasing  
A little more of the shadows that keep  
that Light from shining.

It is to listen innerly at all times and all places  
to the next step ahead  
It is trusting each step as it reveals itself to us  
Knowing that every need will be perfectly met.

It is embracing with loving arms  
Those that appear to stand in the way of our  
purpose  
As well as those who do not seem to understand  
It is knowing that where two or three are  
gathered  
The 'I am' presence is there in the midst.

It is embracing within our being the whole  
universe  
Knowing that at one and the same time  
Each of us is nothing and each of us is  
everything.

*(no author given)*



**From the Hastings Quaker Group  
Newsletter: Harry Underhill introduced  
the topic "Living with Uncertainty":**

- 1) Change the word 'Uncertainty' into  
'Mystery', the very secret of life.  
Mystery is not a problem to solve but  
a gift to explore.
- 2) Accepting Mystery requires Confidence.
- 3) How can we gain confidence? Requires  
a lifetime of learning through Discipline  
and Technique.
- 4) The Discipline is—just keep going.
- 5) The Technique is learning to live in two  
worlds at once— the material world and  
the world of Spirit.
- 6) We are already immersed in the  
material world. The other world is  
always present but unnoticed. This is  
where we need Pauses.
- 7) Pauses are interruptions in our flow of  
thoughts, and come most easily when  
our flow of activities change— for  
example after completing the washing  
up, or between hearing the phone ring  
and answering it.
- 8) These pauses make mental space  
available to explore the world of Spirit.
- 9) That world is already 'inhabited' by  
Love, Joy, Peace, Harmony,  
Compassion, Wisdom— the fruits of the  
Spirit.
- 10) Invite them in. Then WAIT in the  
stillness of the pause— a moment, an  
hour, a week, years....and share your  
experiences with Friends.
- 11) There will be a response, often  
unexpected and perhaps long delayed.  
But nothing is ever lost.
- 12) Wait alert— Fox says: "*I sate still*". Then  
trust the response— a moment of  
convincement.
- 13) The response was always there— it is  
the Recognition that takes time to  
learn. And that takes Trust.
- 14) And when we give Trust we can receive  
Confidence.
- 15) And then we can live with Uncertainty.

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THE UNIVERSE STORY EVENT

held on 14 March 2015 at the
City of London School for Girls, Barbican, London



From left: Chris Clarke (Chair), Greg Morter, Maddy Harland, Elisabeth Sahtouris

An all-day affair organised by *GreenSpirit*, a wonderful mix of science and spirituality! It would take a more learned person than me to report fully on this day—but for more info see their website: www.greenspirit.org.uk/uni-story-event. I, Denise, will simply share the points that ‘struck home’ with me.

Greg took us through a scientific scenario from the Big Bang, Atoms, Elements, Life, Complex Life & Human Consciousness. “We are part of the underlying system—and have every connection with the source of all that is”. He used volunteers to help illustrate points.

The main speakers (above) were supplemented by short inputs from others: David Christian explained how the Book History Project was bringing the Universe Story to school children. He said: “Climate change has always existed. Now, it is driving the economy”.

Helen Moore read poems from her new book *Ecozoic* - moving, varied and inspired.

Global Generation: 2 enthusiastic teachers told us about working in their schools with the Universe Story and how the children loved it. We also sang *The Galaxy Song* which was jolly—and made a point.



Elisabeth Sahtouris an Evolution biologist, author and lecturer was deeply inspiring. I was particularly enamoured of her insistence that “Cooperation replaces competition!” and we have to not only agree but *live* it: “Whatever you want to see in the world, *do it now!*” “Don’t attack the system you don’t want—build the one you do want”.

The word “Eco” from the Greek means Household; ‘Ecology’ = the household organisation; ‘Economy’ = household management; ‘Ecosophy’ = wisdom household. Somehow this put *eco* into a context for me.

Maddy Harland, from Transformational Heresies, talked about those which we need to promote: small-scale agriculture *can* feed the world; renewable energy *is* a viable alternative to fossil fuels; natural or ‘folk’ medicine is not only effective, it is empowering”, etc. Cooperation and Gift Ecology: “the more we give away the more we receive”.

After lunching around the Barbican, the afternoon had been arranged creatively: discussion groups, an art table, browse the stalls, and the freedom to roam between them all!

Many thanks to *GreenSpirit* and all those who helped make the day run smoothly. It was much appreciated.



Meditation/Poem/Book excerpt: *'building us up'*

Living in the World

I said: I am alone.
He/she said: I am with you, always.
I said: I am not good enough.
The Spirit said: Worthy for what? We created the world and all is goodness for you and all others.

I said: I am not sure of the others.
She said: Be sure of yourself.
I said: I am inadequate.
He said: For what?
I said: To live this life adequately, to be good enough, to love enough, to be compassionate, to keep going.

The Spirit said: Live one moment at a time, knowing we are with you. Present. Ask us at any moment. Remember us. You can do enough. Enough is all you need to do, as long as you remember that to rest is also enough. At moments we are part of you and you will not notice, for we are one.

(Author unknown)

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O God, help me to believe the truth  
about myself—  
no matter how beautiful it is! Amen.

Robert Holden

May you awaken to the mystery of being here  
And enter the quiet immensity of your own presence.  
May you have joy and peace in the temple of your senses.  
May you receive great encouragement when new frontiers beckon.  
May you respond to the call of your gift and find the courage to follow its path.  
May the flame of anger free you from falsity.  
May warmth of heart keep your presence aflame and anxiety never linger about you.  
May your outer dignity mirror an inner dignity of soul.  
May you take time to celebrate the quiet miracles that seek no attention.  
May you be consoled in the secret symmetry of your soul.  
May you experience each day as a sacred gift woven around the heart of wonder.

John O'Donohue

~~~~~

One River, Many Wells

by Matthew Fox

Working with imagination is a cleansing and purifying experience.
It requires letting go because not all images are fit for a particular ritual or occasion.
It requires intuition and insight along with discernment.
It requires centring and the discipline that goes with learning.
All the arts are meant to be spiritual practices.
Indeed, we can see ourselves as the art of God.
We are the flute through which the divine breath (spirit) flows.
God is the Artist of artists as Thomas Aquinas put it.
Art is the only language we have other than silence to utter what is deepest in our souls, be it grief or ecstasy, pain or pleasure.

(from the conclusion of Chapter 11)

Sheila Ward

1923-2015

Sheila was a long time member of CANA, and contributed articles over the years. She will probably be best remembered for her pioneering work with 'Women in the Second Half of Life' and she ran many gatherings at her beautiful Centre in Shropshire, The Grange (www.thegrange.uk.com) (now run by her daughter Rose Ward-Allen). Sheila had feisty views on women and their treatment over the ages, and I remember fascinating conversations, often followed by lengthy e-mails! *Rest in Peace* Sheila—you will be missed and remembered. **Denise**

Because I Have Loved Life

by Sheila Ward

*A poem that Sheila adapted from one by
Amanda Josephine Burr (1878-1968)*

Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die
I have sent up my gladness in wings to be lost in the blue of
the sky.

I have greeted each day with a grateful Salute to the sun.
I have felt the strong pulse of the earth in warm sand
as I run.

I have climbed the steep mountain path and looked long at
a sun-sparkling sea.

Music has stirred ocean depths— being part of such joy set
me free.

I have danced barefoot on grass in the fresh morning dew,
Held sails in the wind and felt union with birds as they flew.

Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die.

Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die.
I've rejoiced in the song of the lark and the birds as they fly.
Winter fires have enchanted and warmed me with flames
leaping high.

I have gazed in darkness with wonder at the stars in a
wintry sky.

I have conjured with words, loved to write and found poetry
touching the heart.

I've found bliss in the perfume of roses and evocative thyme
played a part.

Most of all I've found love and peace in the midst of my
family and friends

And I know that my outpouring love ever more beyond
time extends.

Because I have loved life, I have no sorrow to die.

In the issue last Autumn, Connie Cannon wrote an inspiring and challenging piece entitled **Incarnation**. She wrote in a covering letter:

"Dear Editor,

I attach a piece I wrote about 3 years ago for our church magazine (didn't get much response!).....I am indebted to my reading of Teilhard de Chardin, as well as Adrian Smith, for my development of these ideas.

I have been a member of CANA for some years. I attend an Anglo Catholic Church in Exeter—St Michael & All Angels, Mount Dinham. Don MacGregor will remember it as he came to talk there a few years ago.

Good wishes and blessings,

Connie Cannon"

NB from Editor: Do remember writers welcome any comments and feedback—and sometimes an exchange of ideas.



Apologies

If you contributed to this Newsletter but don't find it here, it could be that your offering has been lost—the Editor has hunted high and low, without success....do please send it to her again. I am so sorry.

Denise

SPRING 2015

**Christians
Awakening
to new
Awareness
(CANA)**

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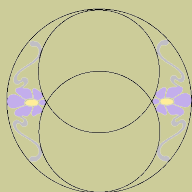
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Heather-Jane Ozanne
Martin Paine
Celia Storey
David Storey
Jane Upchurch



CHRISTIANS AWAKENING Newsletter

DIARY DATES - 2015

**July 10 (5 pm) to July 12 (2 pm) at Llansor Mill [www.llansor.org/
event/weekend 4/](http://www.llansor.org/event/weekend4/)**

Don MacGregor's sky-opening book, *Blue Sky God*, is a product of the risk he took in allowing his scientific and theological backgrounds to live in his own heart as 'both/and' rather than 'either/or'. Join Don and a group of other lively-minded people on a weekend of discovery and reflection, allowing important truths to mature and develop.

Thursday, 10 September—6.30 to 9 pm, Meditatio Centre, Islington, London—led by Rev Don MacGregor: THE LIGHT FANTASTIC, Science and Spirituality. www.wccmmeditatio.org/content/light-fantastic

**AMMERDOWN centre, nr Bath www.ammerdown.org centre@ammerdown.org
Tel: 01761 433709**

27 April to 1 May Walking the Creative Path led by Esther Aronsfeld. Each day will focus on different ways to draw closer to God with the help of a variety of creative approaches: from painting and creative writing to mask making and clay modelling. Also time to relax, reflect, and share with others. One to one spiritual accompaniment available for those who wish, together with shared worship open to people of all denominations.

10 to 12 May Landscapes of light led by Libby Dobson and Sarah Chabowska combining their special gifts as composer and musician (Libby) and poet and photographer (Sarah) to take you on a journey of discovery into God's love through the landscapes of light. Includes: Original music and song, Art work and visual images, Original Poetry, Guided reflections, Scripture, Opportunity for one-to-one sessions, Personal space/reflection, Beautiful surroundings, Times of prayer.

17 to 22 May Learning to be at Home- a retreat with a difference led by Sr Monica Butler This retreat experience is a gentle coming together of many aspects of our search for fulfilment. It is a process of self-discovery in God. The aim is to connect more deeply with our true identity, The process itself draws on the wisdom and mystical tradition of the five great world religions.

5 to 7 June Celebration the Season: Exploring our Life Journey Through the Labyrinth led by Revd Dr Sally Welch— A creative and imaginative exploration of both the path we have journeyed along and the road ahead, using the labyrinth to focus and direct our reflections. We will look at seasons not so much in relation to one particular age or stage in life, but as a metaphor for the constant growth and decay that occurs through life.

24 April and 12 June Pathways & Blessings Ammerdown Guided Quiet Days offer an opportunity to take time out from our busy lives to pray, reflect and meditate in the Christian tradition with the help of **Libby Dobson** and **Sarah Chabowska**. They invite you to travel with God on a journey of discovery.. *These days can be either attended as a day or as a series of days.*

