

CANA NEWSLETTER

AWAKENING TO UNIVERSAL SPIRITUALITY
Evolving with Christianity

AUTUMN 2019

CANA is a network of people responding to the new impulse of Spirit at this time.

Many of us recognise its resonance with the teachings of Jesus as a way of transformation.

Our hope is to rediscover and re-imagine a path leading towards a more universal spirituality that can operate with respect for all living creatures and all faiths, a path of love and service for the betterment of all.

This is not just about the transformation of the individual, but the global shift of humanity to a higher way of being and of love that Jesus termed 'the realm of God'.

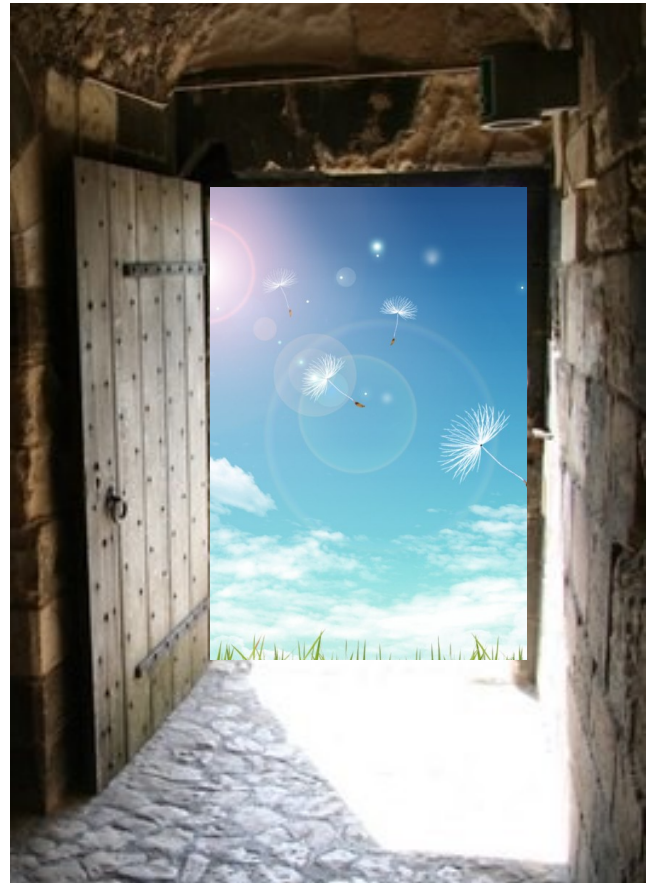
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EDITORIAL

In this issue we ponder the evidence for the continuation of consciousness after death. Don MacGregor searches for Biblical clues on this subject; Mary Jo Radcliffe tells how her thinking has changed over the years; I take a brief look at the teachings of other faith traditions; Jane Upchurch shares what she has learned from reading about near-death experiences; Celia Storey relates a personal experience and Gillian Pasches-Bell writes about the ancient tradition of Céili Dé.

We welcome feedback from readers of this newsletter; please share your thoughts and experiences in the form of letters to the editor, articles for the next issue, or by posting on our website forum. Details of how to get in touch are on page 12.

Judy Hanmer



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Disclaimer: In Cana we welcome a multiplicity of views so the views expressed in these pages may not reflect those of the members of the Core Group.

THE BIBLE AND CONTINUITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Does the Bible say anything much about our consciousness continuing after death? Well, yes and no! We can pick out various scenarios and texts to ponder on. Putting aside the issues of whether all are 'saved' or not and what resurrection of the body means, there are references to specific people whose consciousness still seems to be around.



The one that stands out for me is the story of the transfiguration, in which both Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus on the mountain. It is there in all three synoptic gospels (Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36). It is a similar scene to that which many people have had, where someone who has passed on reappears – except with Moses and Elijah there was a bit more of a time gap since they died! Peter, James and John suddenly see them and recognise that Jesus is in conversation with them. If we take this as written, there's no knowing how they recognised them, and they died hundreds of years before the event. Yet

somehow, the consciousness of Moses and Elijah was recognised by Peter. And this was all included in the biblical accounts in three of the gospels accepted by the Church.

St Paul gives us numerous clues that consciousness continues. In 2 Corinthians 5:1–10 he speaks at length about the groaning of the body in this life and how he would rather be at home with God.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

(2 Corinthians 5:1)

Essentially, he is saying that when our physical body ceases, we, that is, our consciousnesses, still go on. Paul even talks about what seems like a near-death experience. Some say it was what happened at his conversion on the road to Damascus, but it could equally have been an NDE, as he underwent all sorts of life-threatening happenings during his travels.

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows—was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat.

(2 Corinthians 12:2–4)

These are all concepts that are used in funerals up and down the land, to give comfort to those who have lost loved ones. One of the passages used most often is another by Paul:

For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the

saying that is written will be fulfilled: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

(1 Corinthians 15:53-55)

Here, I do not think Paul is saying our actual physical cells and sinews are what continue, but he is recognising that something passes on, something that is not the physical body, which is perishable. The essence of 'body', that is our consciousness, continues in a recognisable and imperishable way – and when we realise that, the sting of death is removed.

For me, this all touches in on the issue of rebirth or reincarnation as well. One of the major scriptural arguments for reincarnation centres around the Elijah-John the Baptist debate. This stems from the Old Testament book of Malachi, looking ahead to the last days

See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. (Malachi 4:5)

These verses were taken by Matthew, Mark and Luke and woven into the story of John the Baptist and who Jesus was said to be. How was the prophet Elijah to be sent? In Luke, the angel Gabriel speaks to John's father:

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah. (Luke 1:17)

'In the spirit and power of Elijah' sounds like a perfectly reasonable description of reincarnation, the same consciousness that inhabited the body of Elijah being sent to another incarnation in John.

According to Matthew, Jesus spoke clearly to identify John with Elijah:

And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear. (Matthew 11:14,15)

This enigmatic saying makes the thought of reincarnation spring immediately to mind.

Jesus could easily be meaning, "For those who understand about these things, John the Baptist was also an incarnation of the consciousness of Elijah." John the Baptist himself clearly did not see it this way, as evidenced by his denial of being Elijah in John 1:21. However, all this shows is that John was unaware himself, as virtually all of us are, of any previous incarnations.

This line of thinking can also be seen in Matthew 16:13-14, 17:9-13, and Luke 9:7-9. Jewish leaders and people of the time were asking the question "Who are you – are you Elijah come back to us?", and this would seem to imply a belief in reincarnation and the continuity of soul consciousness. This is not surprising, as Israel was a cosmopolitan place, a through route by land from Egypt to Babylon, Persia, India, Greece, and Rome and had been exposed for hundreds of years to various Eastern faiths, Egyptian mystery schools and elements of Jewish mysticism.

I have only scratched the surface here, but in summary, although the Bible doesn't talk in terms of consciousness, we can see that there are many clues there to indicate that our consciousness continues after we have left our earthly bodies – and if it continues, then in some cases it seems to be able to come back for a short visit. None of this is proof but it does counter anyone who says, "the Bible doesn't say that!" Going further down the rabbit-hole, I would add that my belief is that there is only one consciousness and we are all part of it. We are all individualised drops within the ocean of consciousness that is called God in Christianity and many other faiths.

Don MacGregor

Editor's Note: Rev Don MacGregor has written a CANA Booklet entitled *Christian Reincarnation?* It is available to download free from the resources page of our website.

LIFE AFTER DEATH – AN UNFINISHED JOURNEY

Having just turned 80, it feels a good time to be thinking about Life after death. It is a journey I am travelling, so what I say now may not be what I think in a time ahead!

The start of my journey was a very traditional Roman Catholic one and as a Nun for 25 years it was quite clear what happened after death. If you had lived a good life you would go straight to Heaven and your Spirit would live happily ever after. You were told that you would, in some way, be united with your loved ones. This is a very reassuring and comforting Doctrine. If you had not lived such a good life you would go to Purgatory to be purified of your sins and become ready for Heaven.

After I left the Convent and set up *Coping with Change* everything in my life went under scrutiny, nothing was taken for granted; in the area of my Hereditary Faith the Institution had died, I then searched for meaning and gradually moved towards a Cosmic Spirituality which has a width and depth and opened my mind, heart and soul to a very different understanding – that journey continues.

So, with regard to life after death, where was I? I began reading accounts of people who had medically died and then come back to life. All the accounts were remarkably similar, the person went through a dark tunnel, met a bright and immensely attractive light as if of love. Was that absolute love God? The following is a quote from a Doctor, Healer and lover of Science from *Proof of Heaven* by Dr Eben Alexander, who medically died and returned. "My world here on earth, where I was a Doctor, Fa-

ther and a Husband. And that world out there – a world so vast that as you journeyed in it you could lose the very sense of earthly self and become a pure part of the cosmos, the God-soaked and love filled darkness" He woke a changed man, certain of the infinite reach of the soul, certain of life beyond death. This suggests to me that in the life after death our consciousness unites with our Cosmic Consciousness and lives on in that way? Is our destiny to attain the Consciousness of God and is that the same as the Cosmic Consciousness? What would that mean to us now as we live out our lives on this earth? What kind of preparations do I need to be making now as I move towards the latter years? What exploration do I need to

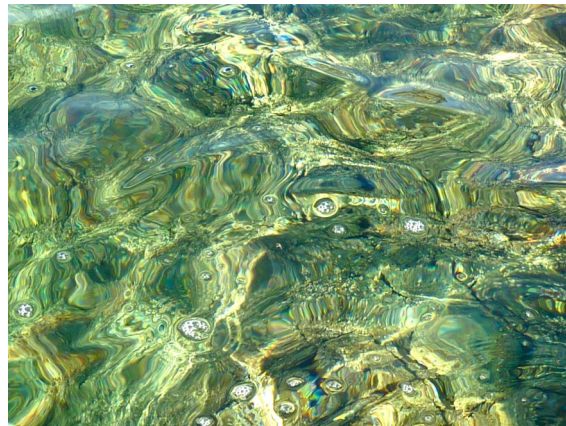
make into my own consciousness to bring it more in line with the Cosmic Consciousness?

These are very personal thoughts and where my understanding has reached so far, but there is something greater to understand which is hard to put into words. My gut feeling, my intuition, is suggest-

ing that this would bring each individuals consciousness in communion with the greater consciousness, this would make sense of that deep inner yearning.

I would like to end with a quote from *Blue Sky God* by Don MacGregor"Aligning ourselves with this deep well of compassionate consciousness has the potential to tip us into a different way of being, a new path for humanity, one of deep compassion and harmony". So I continue to endeavour to bring my mind, heart and soul into this place in the sincere hope that it will enable me to live in deeper conscious awareness.

Mary Jo Radcliffe
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"The hint half guessed, the gift half understood,
is incarnation" T.S.Eliot *Four Quartets*

A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE?

A long time ago, when I was in my early thirties, the death of a close friend and the very vivid experience of her presence a few days after her death led to a lifelong search for understanding on this subject. Because this experience seemed to be so much outside the faith tradition in which I grew up I didn't feel able to share it with anyone until, a few years later, I discovered Raymond Moody's book *Life After Life* which showed, via a collection of what came to be called 'Near-Death Experiences (NDEs)' that the experience of the continuation of consciousness after death was not an unusual phenomenon, although it is rarely mentioned in our churches.

In the years that followed I read more accounts of NDEs and discovered the Alistair Hardy Trust which encourages people to share such experiences and records them. So far most of the accounts I had read came from people with a Christian background, but reading *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* introduced me to the Buddhist idea of the Bardo state, a state through which the soul passes after death, which in some ways seemed similar to the experience of people who described what happened to them in NDEs.

In a recent edition of the BBC radio programme *Something Understood* Adbdul-Rehman Malik described his search for meaning after the death of a close friend. In his Muslim tradition, he said, there exists a similar stage called the Barzakh, a place of transition from the living to the everlasting; a place where the soul receives the support and prayer of angels 'whose faces shine like the sun'. This is a place positioned between heaven and hell, and it can be experienced as a place of rejoicing or a place of agitation and loss.

This is only a very quick canter through some ideas about what happens after death, but there is a great deal of literature on the subject,

some of which is listed on page ? and other suggestions can be found on our website.

Judy Hanmer

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Raymond Moody: *Life After Life*

Soygal Rinproche: *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (With a foreword by the Dalai Lama)

The Alister Hardy Trust and Religious

Experience Research Centre. The University of Wales Trinity St David, Lampeter, SA48 7ED

WE DO NOT DIE

I have always believed in life beyond this one, in 'heaven'. It was a theoretical concept that gave hope but no substance. It became more real as I experienced living in the presence of God here and now, and has been fleshed out by reading or listening to accounts of people who have had near death experiences (NDE's). I am not in a hurry to go, but I am looking forward to it. I am sharing some of the things that have helped or interested me which I have gleaned from others' stories. This is just my understanding, and is not a comprehensive review. Do follow up these accounts and others yourselves, I will give references at the end.

The next world is not the same as this one, but when we try to imagine or describe it we can only use words and concepts that work here. Whatever we say cannot fully communicate that other reality. As Paul said, 'For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face' (1 Cor 13.12). There is no top or bottom, it is a place of vibration not of matter and yet things can be perceived as if physical. There are different regions with portals between so one description does not cover all, and those who go have not had the same experience. But this is some of what it is like.

It is more real than here, as if this is the dream and that is the substance. There is often an experience of light and of music. And it is immediate. Seeing and hearing are not

separate, you can hear the beauty and see the joy, the music, as if you become part of it while remaining distinct. Any thought is immediately known although perception is beyond words. And so the unconditional love that envelops and fills everything is known and felt in a way we can never experience here. This is why so many do not want to return. Love can be seen as the basis of everything, there and here.

Not all who go and experience this love and acceptance are believers, and those who are return with their beliefs changed and expanded. Dr Eben Alexander was brought up as a Christian but through his work as a scientist and neurosurgeon came to believe that our

consciousness was a product of the brain and therefore could not survive death. Not only was his consciousness present and aware throughout his NDE, the outer regions of his brain that are believed to give rise to consciousness were completely

destroyed by meningitis, so showing him that consciousness is primary. In his NDE he experienced the message (not in words, but the powerful sense of it going through him like a wind) 'You are deeply loved and cherished forever. You will be taken care of. You have absolutely nothing to fear.'

Some are frightened when they arrive as it is so different and often unexpected. Many are met by loved ones or pets, or by religious figures who reassure them. Some meet angels which Eben Alexander saw as shining orbs of light. A lot go through some form of life review which happens in a blink although covering everything. It is not so much seen as

experienced, and not only does the person re-experience their own feelings, they also experience the feelings of those they have affected including those they have hurt. Some interpret this pain as the judgement seen in references from the Bible. We experience what we have done directly and so in a sense we judge ourselves.

Jeff Olsen was shown that there is no judgment, just love, and things that we perceive as wrong are perfect for our soul's growth. There are no mistakes. 'Look how much we love you. Honour your divinity. Honour your choices. Your will is my will and I will honour your choice.' His perception was that the

teachings of main stream Christianity can undermine this by dependence on a saviour outside ourselves, and by the threat of hell so God's love doesn't feel unconditional. When things happen that he finds difficult he looks for the divinity in the people involved and asks

himself 'Why did I create this?', and 'What am I to learn from it?'.

Some do have a hellish experience. As it is all vibration people are attracted to the region where they resonate. PMH Atwater who has researched over 5,000 NDE's has found that this does not seem to correspond with their lifestyle or beliefs. It may reflect something in the person's deepest self and seems to address the growth of their soul and what they had yet to learn as it transformed their lives when they returned. But it is not a permanent state. There are heavenly beings present to encourage understanding and growth and to minister love so that as it is received people



can change and so move on. (For those of you aware of the bible's use of eternal, the Greek word is *aionios* and my understanding is that it means according to God and God's timetable, not everlasting).

Almost everyone experienced God, Deity or Source as an all-powerful presence or sense whatever their previous religious beliefs or lack of them, although these did influence their terminology. This was an experience of universal spirituality. Some children saw God as a kindly father or grandfather type but adults usually perceived God as a brilliant sphere of light. Eben Alexander experienced God as an infinite, dazzling inky-black core filled with the sound 'Om' (at the time he was unaware that this is a sacred sound in some religions). He felt a bit like a foetus in a womb, nourished by and part of this Being, or state of being, yet at the same time distinct and miniscule in comparison. Again the communication was without and beyond words but the voice was personal and possessed the qualities we possess although in greater measure. It knew him deeply.

What of us passes over? It is our consciousness or pure essence, and love. Anita Moorjani says that we lose all the layers and labels we have developed, our gender, culture, race, religion and beliefs. We are not these things, we are greater than them: 'You do not realise how powerful you are'. She didn't feel as if she had physically gone anywhere but as if she had expanded and had awakened, and she had unlimited perception. Time was not linear, she could see past, present and future together and her life intricately woven into what she had known so far. There was a huge sense of liberation, feeling more alive than ever before, knowing things she did not before, and engulfed by love, joy, ecstasy and awe.

She realised that she was a magnificent, beautiful being of the Universe, and was loved

just because she existed, as are we all.

Beyond that, she could see that we and all things in the universe and beyond are connected, everything is alive and infused with consciousness. Everything belongs to an infinite Whole and we are all facets of that unity and have an effect on the collective Whole. We have lived and will continue to live before and beyond our time on this earth.

As well as learning about life beyond this world, there was realisation about life and our purpose here. It wasn't complex, and did not vary between individuals. We should and could live our lives here fully and fearlessly. But our overriding purpose here is to love. All were changed by their experience although it took a while to integrate. There was a loss of fear, more intuitive gifts and sometimes physiological changes as well as more spiritual and scientific understanding. Some like Jeff Olsen could communicate at a deeper level with people on both sides.

If heaven is so real, and we have come from there, how come we forget? Part of the answer seems to be that in order to live our lives fully here we need to be grounded in this reality. But knowledge of these experiences can help us to live life here with the perspective of heaven, to choose to love, and to not fear death but to know that it leads us home.

Jane Upchurch

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References

Dr Eben Alexander : *Proof of Heaven*

Dr Eben Alexander : *The Map of Heaven*

P.M.H. Atwater: *We live forever*

Anita Moorjani: *Dying to be Me*

Anita Moorjani: *What if this is Heaven?*

Jeff Olsen: *I Knew their Hearts*

Jeff Olsen: *Beyond Mile Marker 80*

[All of these authors have given talks which you can follow on YouTube.]

DEATH: FACILITATING THE TRANSFER OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Death is a great and inevitable transition. Classical spiritual traditions teach concepts and strategies for approaching and passing through it. The grief of personal loss is, of course, terrible. Nevertheless, from this classical spiritual perspective, death is a great adventure. How different would our lives and our society be if we understood and lived harmoniously with it as a befriended companion...

When someone dies, their consciousness lifts off from their physical body. The job of any helper is to support that consciousness as it travels through the confusing and polluted energy fields of human culture across into the Clear Light.

We could get into a long discussion here about what we mean by consciousness and what we mean by Clear Light. Different spiritual traditions have different elaborations, mythologies and descriptions, but I don't think the differences matter. Essentially they all state the same.

The person's identity/personality/soul/essence separates from the physical vehicle. This consciousness then has to find its way through the turmoil of humanity's energies across into the universal fields of clear energy. This turmoil is, for example, known as Purgatory in the Christian tradition or the Bardo state in Tibetan Buddhism.

Once in the Clear Light the soul then continues with its next stage of growth. The Clear Light is a dimension and space of loving, wise and benevolent energy and consciousness. It could be called heaven or paradise.

Question: Can they be helped across?
Yes, of course they can. You can do it yourself, if you feel strong and have a calling to do so. You can do the whole practice for them and

gently but firmly sense them making the transition. It is always best in these situations to send out a strong telepathic message asking for help. There are other souls and consciousnesses, sometimes called angels, who will come and help.

(This extract comes, with William Bloom's permission, from his newsletter on how to help people who are dying: <https://wiliambloom.com/2017/01/24/death-facilitating-the-transfer-of-consciousness/>)

RESCUE

For around a year a group of about six of us would meet each week in Chichester Cathedral where we meditated for an hour in St Clement's Chapel. The cathedral was felt by many to have unwelcoming vibes and our group thought it appropriate to choose this place for our weekly meditation together. We had no particular idea what our task might be. We were surprised to find that, despite the continuous stream of visitors who went through the cathedral, we were never disturbed despite the beautiful Collins altar frontal that was in that chapel.

However, there was one particular occasion, near the end of the year, when I clearly saw in my closed eyes a group of pilgrims dressed simply in sack cloth and lead by a couple wearing very fine robes; the man wore purple velvet and the lady was dressed in silk and had a high headdress of the Medieval period. Instinctively I knew they were trapped on the earth plain and gently encouraged them to follow the light that shone down as a shaft.

The tomb of St Richard brought many pilgrims to the city before it was sacked during the dissolution of the monasteries. Could it be that discarnate spirits were still searching for his help in leaving this earth plane?

Celia Storey

EARTHED AND TRANSFORMATIVE –

an ancient tradition with contemporary relevance

I'm a Londoner. But there came a time when my London home seemed to cage me in, and I felt the urge, the push, the imperative – to fly north, to Scotland, to the Findhorn community. I needed to breathe the clean air, to look about me and see the big sky and the place where land meets sea, to be among people who had a wider view than the one I had so far found. So, I gave up my job with my employer of over twenty years. I sold my little flat. I went. And thereby hangs a tale. But the strand of the tale I am going to pick up here is how I found the Céile Dé, an ancient tradition that is a mix of Christ-path and Druidry.

I say 'Christ-path', because I learned that the impulse that led some Celtic druids to develop a new Way was not in response to the mission of St Augustine and the Pauline Christianity he brought to these islands, but to another impulse that emerged from the Christ-centred shift that came out of Palestine two millennia ago. When Augustine arrived, tradition has it, news of Christ had already found its way up through north Africa and Spain to arrive at our western fringes. Nothing was formalised; nothing written down. But there must have been a sense of a new awakening – an awakening held within the framework of what was already known and found to be of value. In Céile Dé, I found a tradition with a world view that in part seems to go back to Indo-European roots, having important elements in common with the Dharmic religions that came out of India. I found ideas and prayer positions that put me in mind of Islam. And at the same time, I learned how the Céili Dé honour the Book of Nature and the changing seasons of the British Isles with the cycle of festivals and practices and use these to foster 'the birth of Christ in the heart'.

At that time, impelled by a restlessness, a quest for something yet unseen, I had done six years of academic theology as a mature student, and

trained as an interfaith minister. Through this process I had developed my ability to work with theological ideas within both a narrow and a broad frame. And what I found here, in this new, old tradition, satisfied my soul.

A central part of the tradition is a meditation or contemplation practice that, in essence, follows the same discipline as that described in *The Cloud of Unknowing* and is used in Centering Prayer. With the Céili Dé, this discipline is set in a simple but powerful Gaelic liturgy of movement and chant, using objects that represent the elements. The other central practice that I found is that of faithful and non-judgemental self-witnessing. I experience the combination of these as tools for loosening identification with the small self of the personality and drawing closer to identification with the transcendent mystery in each of us that is God.

And the birth of Christ in the heart? We celebrate this in particular at the winter solstice, and also, perhaps, with the paradisaal resurrection of Bealtaine that follows close after the grief of Good Friday. But what is it to live the life of Christ? The main picture given in the Céile Dé tradition is that of the King of Elements, the one who has looked at all the warring tendencies that battle in the human breast and seen clearly: the woman or man who has arrived at the point of balance in which she or he can draw on each element as it is truly needed, in a world that is grounded and not greedy; compassionate and at the same time, keenly realistic.

In Céile Dé I have found the vision of a world in which practicality and poetry are held in balance, dancing around the mystical core of No-Thingness, from which all things come. And I have found tools for living that vision here and now.

To learn more about Céile Dé, you can visit:
www.ceilede.co.uk

Gillian Paschkes-Bell

BOOKS SOON TO BE PUBLISHED

AWAKENING TO A NEW REALITY: CONSCIOUS CONVERSATIONS ACROSS THE HORIZON OF DEATH

This is a book in the last stages of publication which I hope will bring people a greater certainty of the continuity of consciousness after leaving this earth plane. How belief in the afterlife for all, not just for those who follow a particular religious path can help make the world a better place and maybe diminish the zeal for killing others. At the same time we are awakening to the new reality of helping to bring 'thy kingdom come on earth' now as we shift towards realising that we are all one. An e-mail will be circulated with details of this book once it is available.

Janice Dolley

THE SEABORNE BY A.G. RIVETT

A novel of Celtic quantum time that asks us to consider the ways in which we are all born strangers, seaborne foundlings, living between worlds. A parable for our particularly torn times.

Damian Walford Davies

A new novel due out this autumn explores spirituality and society through the medium of fantasy. A man from our own time falls into a parallel world. A G Rivett – known to CANA friends as Andrew – is the author of *The Seaborne* and has himself been on an inner journey that took him from his Anglican priesthood to the ancient Celtic tradition of the Céile Dé. (See my article elsewhere in this Newsletter.) I am married to Andrew and have collaborated with him on the editing stages of the novel. Here's a couple of tasters:

'Two worlds have a claim on you – but you can live in only one. Choose, she said to him. Choose now, or never. Choose either world: they are both good, they are both bad. Only choose.'

'The vision faded. The sun disappeared. The cold fog once more enwrapped her. But no more did it confine her. Rather, she wore it as a cloak, and as she slowly walked back to the town, so it came with her, streaming from her shoulders.'

The *Seaborne* starts with a man running away from failure. But the impulse that begins as running away must morph into running towards, and the place where central character, John Finlay, finds himself begins to ask of him big questions. Like how much of who you thought you were can you bring to a radically new situation? How much must change if you are going to survive? And who are you, really, behind those shifting personas? A further challenge faced by John Finlay is how to live in the present with the memory of failure and the betrayals that may be tied up in it. These are timeless questions. But behind them lie others that relate particularly to our own day. What if, as a society, we had to make do with less? With much less? How much is the quality of our lives bound up with comfort and ease? And, in our world where, ever since the Reformation, science has led and spirituality has followed, what are our guiding stars? How can we hold the balance between science and spirituality, between rationality and intuition, between men and women, between humankind and the other beings with whom we share our planet?

This is a tale of action and contemplation, of the individual and of community. Oh, and by the way, it's a love story, too.

Look out for *The Seaborne* in November. And why not by-pass Amazon and buy straight from the publisher at www.wordcatcher.com.

Gillian Paschkes-Bell

CHRISTIANITY EXPANDING INTO UNIVERSAL SPIRITUALITY

Don MacGregor has written the first of a series of short books which seek to chart a path from traditional views of the Christian faith to a more universal framework. The aim is for them to be useful for group study and discussion, so the brief chapters will have suggestions for discussion and further study at the end of each. The first book in the series is currently with the publishers and will be available early in 2020. It covers the need for change within Christianity, the global shift happening in many areas of thought, the evolving scientific world-view, and the need to incorporate ecological imperatives. It concludes with a look at some of the key areas in which Christian theology needs to expand its framework. More news and an excerpt in the next newsletter!

BOOK REVIEW

THE LOST MESSAGE OF PAUL

A suitable heading for an excellent book on what Paul meant to say, but generations of translators and theologians have hidden by getting it wrong. It is written by Steve Chalke and only out this summer. As a slow reader, I have taken long reading it, not because it is in any way difficult to read but because it deserves thorough assimilation. Get it and you will have, hopefully, confirmation of all the challenges you have wanted to make.

Steve takes his time explaining where and how people have got it wrong because you need to understand why St Paul wrote like that; particularly to an audience of Jews and gentiles in the Roman Empire. He takes 300 pages, but they are easy to read with a good typeface and a space between paragraphs that allows you to write a note, there or in the margin.

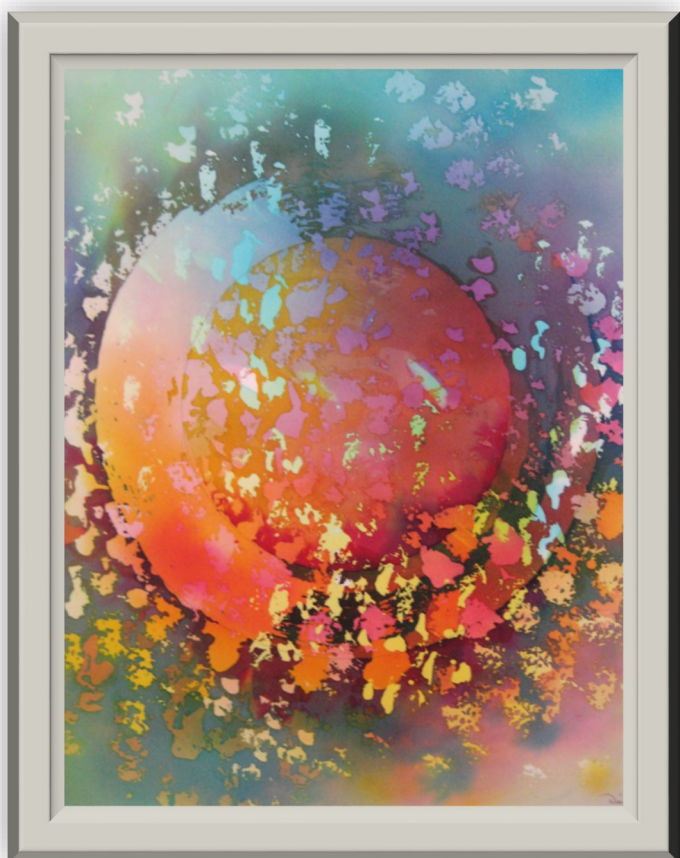
David Storey

EVENT IN 2020

ONENESS FROM THE MYSTICS TO THE SCIENTISTS

Don MacGregor is giving the talks at this retreat at Sheldon Retreat Centre, 5pm Monday 6th July to 10am Friday 10th July 2020
See <https://www.sheldon.uk.com/visit/events/210> for details - Sheldon Centre, Sheldon Lane, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7YT 01647 - 252752

Many thanks to Celia Storey for looking after the layout of this newsletter, and to Bill Upchurch for distributing it. Also thanks to all those who have contributed articles for this edition. Ed.



Picture by Nina O'Connell - *Emergent Light 2*

Autumn
2019

**TOWARDS
UNIVERSAL
SPIRITUALITY
Journeying with
Christianity**

Copy for next
Newsletter to:
admin@cana.org.uk
by mid February

**CANA
Core Group**

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Janice Dolley
Clare Freeman
Judy Hanmer
Don MacGregor
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CANA NEWSLETTER

8th November Home by Another Route: Reimagining Today's Church led by Paul Bradbury in Salisbury. Email info@sarum.ac.uk
Tel 01722 424800, 19 The Close, Salisbury, SP1 2EE

9th November A contemplative day in Cornwall, based on the teachings of Fr. Richard Rohr from his book 'The Universal Christ'. Epiphany House, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 3DR - 01872 272249
info@epiphanyhouse.co.uk

11-15 November *Celtic Adventure*, led by David Cole in Lindisfarne.
www.aidanandhilda.org.uk

15-17 November in Oxford *The Vast Solitude in which God will make himself heard*. Exploring St Teresa's interior Castle. Carmelite Priory in Oxford, Chilswell, Boars Hill, Oxford, OX1 5HB, phone: 01865 735133 or 01865 730183

15-17 November in North East Wales - *Liquid Faith: The Spirituality of Water* led by Professor Emeritus Ian Bradley. Gladstone's Library, Church Lane, Hawarden, Flintshire CH5 3DF - 01244 532350
www.enquiries@gladlib.org

16-17 November *Poetry for Faith*, workshop with Margaret Silf at Tibbermore, Perth PH1 1PY - 01738 583238

22-24 November *Signs of Hope: A Green Weekend* led by Brian Davis and Kevin Durrant at Launde Abbey, East Norton, Leicestershire, LE7 9XB 01572 717254 info@launde.org.uk

29th November - 1st December Advent Retreat near Bath - *Reflections on the beauty, challenges and pain of all life and of our own in particular*. The Ammerdown Centre, Ammerdown Park, Radstock, Somerset, BA3 5SW Tel: 01761 433709
centre@ammerdown.org

Saturday 30th November at Colet House, 151 Talgarth Road, London W14 9DA - *Evolving Consciousness: Spiritual Experience in a Secular Age*. email: info@scimednet.org - Conference Administrator, Scientific and Medical Network, 81 Larcom Street, Walworth, SE17 1NJ

12 December *Waiting for the light through the lens of Celtic Wisdom* with Ali Newell - St Bede's Pastoral Centre, 21 Blossom Street, York YO24 1AQ - 01904 464 900