



## URC General Assembly

If anyone would like to go to the United Reformed Church General Assembly in Edinburgh 10-13 July please let Dick or Janet Gray know, and we shall put forward your name. They are particularly looking for people under 26 or from ethnic minorities. Deadline is 14<sup>th</sup> February.

## Contact information

The Partnership office is open on Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30am-11:30am and on Friday from 1:30 pm until 3:30 pm. The office number is 01793 874221. The office e-mail is:

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**For items for the next edition of Partnership news please send them to the office or to Dick Gray no later than 20<sup>th</sup> February.**

The editor's e-mail address is [dick643@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dick643@yahoo.co.uk)

The Partnership web site is <http://www.wswinlyd.org.uk>

# In Partnership February 2008



## "SPIRITUAL DIRECTION."

Last September I embarked upon a one or two year Course to train as a 'Spiritual Director.' Some have said to me that they thought Spiritual Direction was only for clergy, nuns or monks! I want to correct this idea and inspire you that everyone can benefit from 'Spiritual Direction', just as anyone can from counselling! Both a deeply evangelical activity as well as catholic, it's all about 'connecting' better with God!

Supposing you had a Spiritual Director, what could you expect? He or she might offer to listen to your experiences and work with you in the following ways:

- Help you to recognise and pay closer attention to God's different ways of communicating with you, including through the Bible;
- Offering encouragement, so you might deepen your relationship with Jesus.
- Offer you guidance in finding the most meaningful ways to respond to God;
- Assist in your gradual discovery of a new freedom to live out the consequences of this spiritual movement in faith, love and trust.

Perhaps you can see that this kind of progress is what every Christian can aspire to – moving beyond the basics of discipleship. I visualise the whole of our life as a journey of spiritual discovery, growing a deeper friendship with God. I regard this way of living our lives as fundamental to our whole approach to being a Christian. An essential purpose of the church is to help people in worship, teaching & fellowship to gradually make progress in gaining spiritual depth.

I have enjoyed the blessing of a Spiritual Director for the last 15 years, with three different Guides or Mentors. They have been like 'Soul Friends', or Spiritual Companions to me. David, Aidan and Anne have inspired me in the good times as well through the

**FEBRUARY 22 – 24 By desert paths:**

**Lenten retreat weekend. - A silent weekend that explores Lenten themes through the Divine Office and the practice of Lectio Divina.**

**(Contact: Sr. Judith Tel: 01234 88143 [turveyabbey.org.uk](http://turveyabbey.org.uk))**

**Spring Harvest** accommodation available for all 6 Weeks of the Main Event 2008 at Butlin's Skegness and Minehead in March and April.

### **The Passion**

BBC's drama series, in Holy Week 2008.  
Watch out for it!

### **The Natural World - Celebration and Christian Concern.**

**Wednesday 20 February 2008**, at 5.30 pm in the University of Bath in Swindon, Marlowe Avenue.  
Mary Colwell is the spring 2008 **Swindon Lecture** speaker. A free public lecture, organised jointly by the Swindon churches and the university. Details from Rosemary Power,

The speaker is a producer at the BBC's Natural History Unit and has spent 20 years making wildlife television and radio programmes and also documentaries for BBC Radio 4. She is adviser to the Bishop of Clifton, who is the Catholic Church's Bishop for Environmental Justice.

## AGORA

Have you heard of Agora? Probably not, but if you are interested in a theological approach to how we live today, it might be of interest to you. AGORA aims to create new opportunities for people to engage with the issues of the day

Topics from their recent newsletter included:

- **Chooseday is launched in Bristol**
- **A Journey to a New Kind of Life' – story-based, lifestyle/ environmental course now available**
- **New website offering creation theology on topical environmental concerns invites your input.**
- **New Christian/environmental network formed in Bristol area**

If you would like to know more, visit their website at [www.agoraspace.org](http://www.agoraspace.org)

### News from the Diocese of Bristol

Bristol Diocese has appointed a new Diocesan Director of Education - Jackie Waters-Dewhurst. Her role includes Church Schools in the Diocese.

rough waters. Without their loving support I might have had severe problems along the way!!!

Although training is very useful, I think many of us can offer spiritual guidance to our fellow Christians in many more informal ways.

How can we do this? Here are a few tips, which maybe could be used sensitively, selectively, without getting too 'heavy':

- Ask your friends about their 'walk with the Lord'. How are things going?
- Share together how your prayer life is going. Offer to pray for fellow Christians in your church, to get to experience Jesus more deeply.
- Discuss the essential issues of 'Spirituality', such as the meaning of life's events or where God might be found in the broader events of world affairs.

The Lent Course "**Soul Spark**" will help us deepen our prayer & spiritual life.

If you want to pursue the possibility of Spiritual Direction for your own journey with the Spirit, or to learn some skills to help others, do get in touch! **Stephen Skinner**.

### Partnership Goals

Whilst these have not formally been agreed yet, it seems a good idea to share them with you so that you can prayerfully consider them, and if necessary comment on them to your church leaders or ECC representatives.

The proposals are:

- PRAYER and SPIRITUALITY
  - Develop and extend prayer commitment throughout the Partnership and Local Churches
- EQUIP AND ENCOURAGE
  - Support, develop and affirm Church members in their contribution to Church life
- EMERGE
  - Start-up the Partnership's new youth work with Ncounter

## SOUL SPARK THE PARTNERSHIP LENT COURSE



### Thursdays in Lent 7:30pm at Toothill.

For this coming Lent, the Partnership will be studying “SOUL SPARK”, a short course exploring prayer and spiritual growth. The course is one of the Grove Spirituality series by Nick Helm, the Bishop of Sheffield’s spiritual adviser. It has its own website [www.course.soulspark.org.uk](http://www.course.soulspark.org.uk).

### Programme for the course

- 7<sup>th</sup> Feb      Approaching Spirituality  
Clarify what spirituality is; Become aware of God’s love for us revealed in Scripture; Receive guidance on how to explore spirituality
- 14<sup>th</sup> Feb      Getting to know God better/faith journeys  
Connecting personal experience with images of faith journeys; Know God’s invitation flowing through personal experiences; Affirm God’s presence and action in all experiences
- 21<sup>st</sup> Feb      Who am I?  
Become more aware of own identity as beloved by God; Seek the treasure of God present within; Affirm that inner desires and longings are important in this search

## Other Local Events

### Women’s’ World Day of Prayer

Friday March 7<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm at St Peter’s RC Church, Carronbridge Road SN5 7ES. This year the service has been prepared by the women of Guyana and the theme is “**God’s wisdom provides new understanding**”. The speaker is Clare-Marie Burchall and all are welcome. There is disabled access and ample parking.

### WEBA Imagine series

#### Understanding and Managing Change

Gorse Hill 5<sup>th</sup> February 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm

We want to explore this together: reflecting on what changes might be required, coming to a deeper understanding about change and how it affects people differently, and consider how we as leaders can lead our people through the process of change in a way that recognises their value and input within the local church family.

### All Saints Day of Prayer Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Lent is a time for Christians to focus more fully on God and perhaps a time of giving up something so we can learn again how important he is in our lives.

A special time of focus at All Saints will be a full day of prayer on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The day will start at sunrise (6.30am) and then be divided into hour long sessions when we can pray for one another and for our world. You are invited to join us for part of an hour, an hour or even longer. You might also like to lead a session in a style of praying that helps you most.

More information will follow from the Prayer & Pastoral Care Team at All Saints.

## Partnership wide services & events

### Sunday February 10<sup>th</sup>, 6.30 pm at Shaw Church Youth Service with the New Collective Band

It will be along the lines of service last summer with everyone invited:

- An opportunity to meet & hear the music and testimony of the members of the **newly re-formed** collective band.
- A chance to worship together in a lively & spirit-filled manner.
- Hear about the new partnership we've now agreed with "emerge" to:
  - Develop our youth outreach in the secondary age range, including at our local secondary schools such as "Greendown" and 'Cafe Base West'.
- Pray in small groups for god's blessing upon our work with young people in the lord's name.

### Partnership Quiz Night

7 30 pm Saturday March 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 at Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall

Everyone is warmly invited to our Partnership Quiz hosted by All Saints. Quiz questions are as usual, from easy to harder questions, on a variety of subjects suiting all - TV, sport, gardening, music, cooking, historical, geographical, biblical and general knowledge - brain teasers, with answers always on the tip of some one's tongue ! Your team may win a prize.

If you come on your own there will be plenty of teams glad of your brain power. We will form into teams on the night. Coffee/tea and nibbles are served.

Voluntary donations are invited please, for our refurbishment funds for Maggie's Cottage - so we can have our own loo and meeting room.

We look forward to welcoming YOU and your friends.

28<sup>th</sup> Feb Who is God to me?

Connect experiences with the nature of the movement of grace; Be aware how images of God have affected faith journeys; Be more discerning in recognising images of God that influence our lives

6<sup>th</sup> March Called to become

Find that the many facets of ourselves (Especially those we are uncomfortable with) are welcomed by the love of God; Become aware of how to discern God in inner responses to experiences

13<sup>th</sup> March Where am I going?—Journeying on...

Reflect on faith journey and where it might be leading; Become more aware of our 'dreams' for life and the invitation from God that may be in them; Identify ways to sustain future spiritual life

## New ALPHA Course

Wednesday's during school term 9:30am until 11:30am @ Heather Benn's 17 Diammer Close, Hook mainly intended for young mums, but open to anyone.

## Safe to grow training

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 8:00pm Holy Trinity Shaw  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February 9:30am Holy Trinity Shaw

## DEANERY SYNOD

We are seeking nominations from Lay Members around the Partnership for the Deanery Synod. Our Partnership can elect up to 4 Representatives (term of 3 years). It gives us a good voice on matters which affect us, e.g. on what we pay to the Diocese each year. You also get an inside track on developments and new plans for growth. Please consider who can help represent us? Nomination forms with AGM agendas.

## Church Services in the Partnership

### All Saints, Lydiard Millicent

Date	Time	Form
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	Morning Service
10 <sup>th</sup> February	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	Communion Prayer Book
17 <sup>th</sup> February	8:00am	Communion
	10:30am	All age worship
24 <sup>th</sup> February	8:00am	Communion Prayer Book
	10:30am	Communion
	6:30pm	Evening Worship

**Morning prayers Monday to Saturday at 9:00am.**

### St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze

Date	Time	Form
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	10:00am	Morning service
	6:30pm	Partnership Communion
<b>6<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>7:30pm</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday Service</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00am	Communion
	6:30pm	Evening service Prayer Book
17 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00am	Family Service
	6:30pm	Communion Prayer Book
24 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00am	Communion
	<b>3:00pm</b>	<b>AGM</b>

### Partnership Communion

**3<sup>rd</sup> February 6:30pm at St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze**

### Ash Wednesday Service

**6<sup>th</sup> February 7:30pm at St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze**

## Church Services in the Partnership

### Toothill

Date	Time	Form
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	10:45am	Communion
10 <sup>th</sup> February	10:45am	Family Service
17 <sup>th</sup> February	10:45am	Communion and AGM
24 <sup>th</sup> February	10:45am	Morning Service

### Holy Trinity Shaw

Date	Time	Form
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	10:30am	Communion
10 <sup>th</sup> February	10:30am	Communion
17 <sup>th</sup> February	10:30am	Family Service
24 <sup>th</sup> February	10:30am	Morning Service followed by AGM

### Westlea

Date	Time	Form
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	10:00am	Communion
10 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00am	Family service
17 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00am	Morning Worship
24 <sup>th</sup> February	10:00am	Swap service

### Holy Week meditations

17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> March 12:30pm at Toothill