



# Meditation News

Newsletter of The World Community for Christian Meditation in the UK

**AUTUMN 2016**

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## The National Conference – Must All Religious People Now Be Mystics?

Randolph Stow said: "My soul is a strange country." With this sentiment the conference started. Our speaker, David Tacey, is an Australian academic and author, renowned for his work in literature, psychology and spirituality. During the conference David graced us with his own thoughts alongside those of current and historical importance. His presentation style was relaxed and touched with humour. After most sessions he allowed opportunities to ask questions and also responded whilst mingling with us during meals and coffee. The weekend itself consisted of five conference sessions, interspersed with workshops, meditations, free time and morning and evening prayers. There was an opportunity for small group discussion about what we were hearing, alongside those informal discussions we all need at such events.



David Tacey

Whilst not being able to share the majority of the content with you, let me give you a flavour of David's narrative:

- Religion, historically, has relied on tradition and authority to promote belief and support faith in God. Today these are being rejected in favour of personal experience. Religion of the future needs to recognise this and find a way to respond to those seeking spiritual depth, moving from the thinking head to the experiencing heart. Karl Rahner said "The theological problem today is the art of drawing religion out of an individual, not pumping it into him or her. The art is to help people become what they really are."
- We are becoming more spiritual because something is missing in western society today. And although many wish to sever spirituality from religion, the fact remains that it is tied up with it. Spirituality is the inward, intimate, personal connection with the sacred, and religion is the attempt to organise the spiritual impulse and provide it with a tradition, history, language and community. When religion is functioning well, the spiritual impulse is contained within it. But when religion has begun to wane or lose its effectiveness, the spiritual impulse separates from religion.

- Although much of the western world now appears to be secular, at the individual, personal level, the spiritual search continues and when not addressed can lead to, for example, addictions and mental disorders, in an attempt to fill the resultant emptiness.

• Christians have spent 2000 years trying to be perfect but have now come to accept that we are not capable of perfection. Richard Rohr wrote, "The search for a supposed perfection is the most common enemy of simple goodness. God just wants us to be humanly good, not perfect. Good people can always accept, and even love, imperfection." Spirituality today is a quest to connect us as wholes,

binding people today with all creation where the idea of wholeness cannot be confined to the human sphere or psychotherapy, but needs to be seen as the modality and quality of the universe, or the interconnectedness of all things.

- We can speak not about theism (God and man separate) or pantheism (God = universe) but of panentheism, where the universe is all in God, one 'who' is greater than the universe. Timaeus of Locris said 'God is a circle

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Contributions to the Newsletter are warmly welcomed. Please send all items to:  
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whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.'

- All of our images of God are false idols, which we need to acknowledge and move beyond. Meister Eckhart recorded 'In order to find God, you first have to lose him.' And centuries before him, St Augustine wrote in Confessions "We are talking about God. What wonder is it that you do not understand? If you do understand, then it is not God."
- Spiritual practices like meditation help us to get close to God at the centre of our being, God who seeks the unification of mind, body and spirit.

Along with these main themes, David shared the arguments of traditional religion, past and current atheists and other critical opponents to the notion of God and spirituality. Interestingly, he also spoke of the Beatles, particularly George Harrison, as contributing to the opening of the western psyche to the notions of the spirit, which I found particularly lovely.

One talk was different to the others. On Saturday evening David explored with us some of the spiritual cartoons of Michael Leunig – revolving around a cartoon character and his soul, the latter depicted as a duck! Have a look at some if you can; they are both fun and deep. Apparently the Rt. Rev Rowan Williams is a great fan.

We have already received some wonderful feedback from attendees about our speaker, the content of conference, the organisation and the new location for us – Kings Park, Northampton. One downside, sadly, was that the workshops were oversubscribed (breakout room sizes constrained the numbers) so not everyone was able to attend the workshop of their choice and this will be borne in mind for future events. Even David Tacey enjoyed himself. He wrote to the community, saying: "Thanks again for all the work you put into the conference, which was hugely appreciated. It was quite emotional leaving the conference at lunch today, with so many new friends and colleagues. ... I would love to come back again to work with WCCM in the UK. Please tell Fr Laurence that the conference went well; ... I feel a sense of family and kinship with your community. ... The whole enterprise and network is quite wonderful ..."

Roz Stockley

**WCCM in the UK Appeal 2016**

*Love reaches out to communicate, to share, to widen the realm of its own communion"*

John Main - Words Into Silence

Reaching out to others means that we need to raise funds. We think the values we share are so important and enriching that people are willing to make their resources available to help us communicate them to others. Fund raising is only a by-product of the deeper energy of love, planted and nurtured in the lives of the people with whom we are in communion.

Each year we ask our supporters to help our work by making a voluntary donation according to your means. You may have received an Appeal 2016 letter or email towards the end of September with details of how you can donate. If you responded, thank you. If you would like to support our work you can find the appeal leaflet at <https://tinyurl.com/appeal16> or you can donate online at the *Support WCCM in the UK* link on the CMUK website at [christianmeditation.org.uk](http://christianmeditation.org.uk)

We appreciate all donations, no matter how large or small, and thank you so much for supporting WCCM in the UK.



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If you would like to make a donation to support the work of WCCM in the UK please send cheques to:

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## Meditation News

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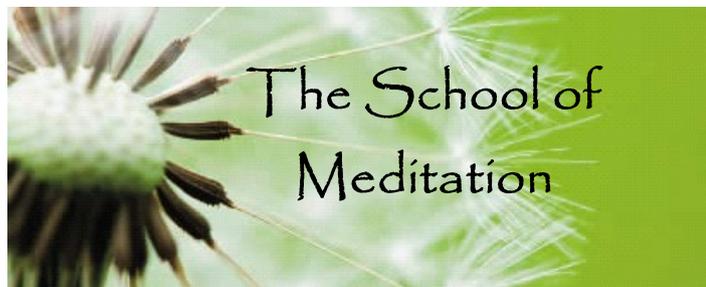
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The School of Meditation is the supporting, teaching and nurturing public face of the WCCM. Set up and led for many years by Kim Nataraja, the School's mission is to spread the seeds of the teaching of Christian meditation in the John Main tradition. The journey of learning to meditate has been seen to be in roughly six stages which move from joining a local meditation group to starting one of your own. The school web site : [www.theschoolofmeditation.org](http://www.theschoolofmeditation.org) describes these stages along with weekly teachings, an event calendar, web casts and much practical advice.

The School aims to offer at least two residential courses in the UK every year - the Essential Teaching Weekend and the 7-day School Retreat, both of which are very special and described below.

### Essential Teaching Weekend (EtW).

This course is designed to be residential as it allows time to develop friendships and a sense of community away from our day to day lives. It looks at helping you to understand your own experience of meditation in the light of the greater tradition, and presentations on the "Essential Practice", the "History of the Tradition" and the "Psychological Aspects of the Journey" are given by the weekend leader and other teachers in the community. One of the highlights of the weekend is the Saturday afternoon slot when an opportunity to consider how you would present Meditation to others is given. This is a group exercise and presentation with guidance and suggestions from the organisers and has been found to be very helpful in passing on the gift of Meditation.

The style of the weekend is relaxed and informative – there are no expectations (!) although many who attend say that they feel more connected and want to participate in the life and work of the community, or feel they now have the confidence to start a meditation group. I founded the Aylesbury meditation group after attending an EtW in 2005. It continues to this day.

### The School of Meditation Retreat

This retreat is suitable for those who have been meditating in the John Main tradition for some time, and who have ideally attended the Essential Teaching Weekend.

It offers a time of profound stillness and silence where one can integrate the experience of both sides of the spiritual journey of meditation, that of solitude in

fellowship. The week is spent in silence apart from a short daily meeting with a spiritual guide. The seven periods of meditation are interleaved with lectio divina, a daily talk from the retreat leader, contemplative walking and gentle exercise. We suggest that books are not brought to the retreat and all devices such as tablets and smart phones are given a week's holiday too. The retreat locations are chosen with care to be in attractive locations where the prospect of gentle walking will appeal. Some may remember the Haikus printed in a recent newsletter – fruits of last year's wonderful retreat.

The School Retreat this year is taking place on the 3rd to the 10th of November in the Cotswolds, (Brownhill Monastery near Stroud) and the next EtW will be in Kent (The Emmaus Centre) on the 21st-23rd April 2017.

Do get in touch if you would like more details about any of the above, at the time of writing we have one place left on the November retreat and have just started to take bookings for the April EtW (see separate announcement). All School of Meditation events are advertised in the newsletter and on the UK web site.

When could you come?

*Jacqueline Russell*  
School of Meditation Coordinator (UK)

*Editor's note: For School of Meditation Contact information see the contacts page under Special Interest Coordinators*



The World Community for Christian Meditation  
in the UK

**Essential Teaching Weekend**  
With Eileen McDade, Geoff Waterhouse  
& Graeme Watson

The Emmaus Centre

**Friday 21 - Sunday 23 April 2017**

Have you been meditating for more than a year? Do you feel you would like to grow in your understanding of your meditation practice?

Essential Teaching Weekends explore the history of meditation and help you arrive at a deeper insight into what the experience of the practice means to you personally and to see ways in which this experience can be shared with others. Presentations by teachers in the community illustrate the place of meditation in the contemplative tradition, the essential aspects of our practice and the psychological aspects of the journey.

The style of the weekend is relaxed and informative and takes place at The Emmaus Centre in West Wickham, Kent. The accommodation is in single rooms with shared bathroom facilities. Situated in lovely Kent countryside close to Bromley.

**Cost: £175.00**  
inclusive from Friday 3pm (registration) to Sunday after lunch.

**To apply email:** [jacqrussell3@gmail.com](mailto:jacqrussell3@gmail.com)  
or phone 01296 488450 (office hours only please)

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## The Real Meeting

"You'll see some bad things when you're in the West Bank" warned the Orthodox Rabbi, and indeed I have'. Thus began my e-mail to author and cultural commentator Yossi Halevi, an orthodox Jew living in Jerusalem. I then went on to list some of these "bad things" : 'the Israeli soldiers pointing guns at young children outside Palestinian schools, the violence perpetrated by some of the seven hundred thousand Israeli settlers that now live in the West Bank, the night time arrests of Palestinian children, the demolition of Palestinian homes and businesses. In Khirbet Tana just over the hill from us, the EU funded school has been flattened. Last week we were in Za'tera where Israeli forces had just demolished a Belgian funded playground. I just don't understand the relentless demolitions. Amongst all the injustices experienced by communities in the Holy Land this destruction seems particularly dark.'

'Alex', came Yossi's reply, 'I am delighted we've met. And meditated. The real meeting. As for what you've seen and what you've sent me -- I'm going to prefer silence for now'. And indeed we had meditated together. After verbally sharing something of the contemplative traditions of his faith and mine, Judaism and Christianity, we ended our time together sharing the silence. 'The real meeting' as Yossi described it.

Another time Yossi Halevi had written this to me: "The Palestinian-Israeli problem is one of the most morally complex problems I know. I've been actively involved in trying to understand this conflict -- as a journalist, a reconciliation activist -- for decades. And I still don't understand it." Here is a man, a writer and a lecturer, who has dedicated a good portion of his life to reconciliation within the arena of the written and spoken word and has come to understand that something more is needed to truly meet 'the other' whoever they may be, the enemy, the opponent, the acquaintance, even the friend. 'The real meeting' is what he and I had experienced in our time of shared silence.

Some context. I returned this summer from 3 months working as a human rights monitor with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). The programme is coordinated by the World Council of Churches and was founded in 2002 in response to a request from the local Heads of Churches

in Jerusalem. EAPPI's vision is a future in which the occupation of Palestine has ended and both Palestinians and Israelis enjoy a just peace with freedom and security based on international law. My role as an Ecumenical Accompanier was "to witness life under occupation, to engage with local Palestinian and Israelis pursuing a just peace, and to change the international community's involvement in the conflict urging them to act against injustice in the region."

The reality of life in Israel/Palestine is of two deeply polarized communities. The language is of "us" and "them", of "the enemy". For so many Jewish Israelis, Palestinians are either cheap labour allowed into Israel via an elaborate security system of barriers, turnstiles, permits and checkpoints, or terrorists to be assiduously kept out. For a majority of Palestinians in the West Bank, Israelis are synonymous with "The Occupation", the system that controls their daily life through permits, roadblocks, arrests, detention without trial, house demolitions and the threat of death. Again and



Ahmad Dawabsheh. Photo EAPPI/Alex Holmes

again I thought of Kipling's refrain "East is East, West is West, and never the twain shall meet".

But then they did, in Tel Aviv on May 10th. The event, The Alternative Memorial Day Ceremony organized by two groups who work for non-violence and reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis, Combatants for Peace and the Parents' Circle - Families Forum. All over Israel, Jewish Israelis gather for 'Yom Hazikaron, the Day of Memory for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and the Victims of Terrorism'. Only at this one event in Tel Aviv are Palestinians represented. The most powerful moment of the ceremony came with the embrace of two young men, Palestinian Arab Aramin, and Israeli Yigal Elhanan. An Israeli, Eli Jacobs, with whom I was later in contact, wrote "These young men could easily be on opposite ends of rifles, missiles or roadside bombs. They each spoke, they each told of a sister killed in violent acts. And then they embraced and all the difficult questions were irrelevant." This embrace was proof that when people can put aside their difference and recognize, at heart, a shared humanity, then peace is possible. I left Tel Aviv that evening filled with a sense of possibility and hope.

*continued on page 5*

**The Real Meeting** *continued from page 4*

There had been no manifestation, no mention even, of silence at this ceremony in Tel Aviv, yet it seemed to me that in this embrace of former enemies we had witnessed 'the real meeting'. What had brought these representatives of the two communities, Palestinian and Jewish Israeli, together was not a shared silence but a shared suffering. All those who spoke at the ceremony, Israeli and Palestinian, had had one or more members of their family killed in the conflict. Is it, I've since wondered, that silence and suffering share something profound in common: they both have the potential to bring about an equality of heart, that elemental requirement for 'the real meeting'?

Suffering can be so painful, so incomprehensible. Yet its darkness holds one truly life-enhancing potential, the gift of empathy. It is only when we have suffered that we can truly begin to understand the suffering of others. Suffering has the capacity to fashion an equality of heart, a state of being that breaks through and beyond all those seemingly intractable differences that divide us.

As does silence. Silence within the practice of contemplative prayer draws us into a darkened zone. It requires a dying to "me, me, me", the relinquishing of the ego's illusory mind-game that "I" am in control. Entering our inner world can be a sobering business. Confronted by our darker intentions and our far from perfect past, the truth we discover is that we are no better a human than any other. Or worse, for that matter! The silence of contemplative prayer, like suffering, forges an equality of heart, opening the door to that "real meeting".

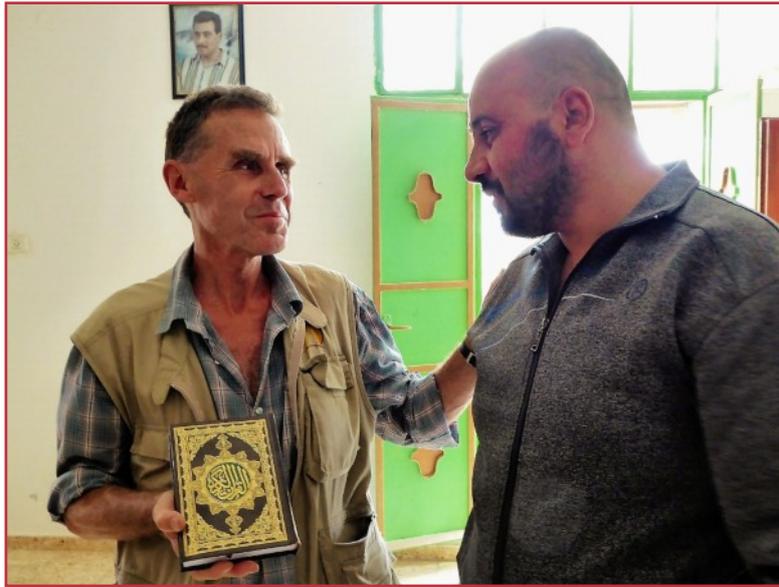
Is this, I wonder, what occurred near Duma on a dark night? In July 2015, extremist Jewish settlers set fire to a house in the Palestinian village of Duma in the West Bank, which resulted in the deaths of three people, eighteen month old Ali Dawabsheh and his mother and father, Riham and Saad. The sole survivor was four year old Ahmad. I was visiting Duma with my fellow Ecumenical Accompaniers when news reached us that little Ahmad was on a brief visit home from the Israeli hospital where he was still being treated. His face and scalp marbled by scar tissue, an area of his head still missing hair, Ahmad sat on his grandfather's knee. His alarmed expression broke suddenly into a smile as he looked up and saw helium balloons rising skywards. Ahmad was on another home visit when we were in

Duma in May. He had just returned from Mecca. His uncle Nasser brought him, still sleeping, from his bed and laid him in the lap of Ghassan, our driver and translator. Through Ghassan, we spoke to Nasser, we drank coffee, and before parting, Nasser said he wanted to give me something. He left the room, reappeared and presented me with a copy of the Qur'an. Inside, a hand written inscription asks for the Alfateha to be read "for the souls of Ali, Saad and Reham Dawabsheh." The Alfateha is the first Surah (chapter) of the Qur'an and it is read at each of the five daily occasions of Moslem prayer. It is only 7 lines, and twice in these opening lines, God is described as al-Rahman and al-Rahim: God who is both mercy itself and the One who continuously pours forth mercy on all

creation. Some days later I heard this story about Nasser: Five days after the fatal fire in Duma, he was driving home in the dark and passed a car that had broken down. He stopped to see if he could help. In the car was a Jewish family from a nearby Israeli West Bank settlement. Nasser spoke to them, told them who he was and described how as a result of the arson attack on his village by Israeli settlers his nephew was dead and brother and sister-

in-law were both critically ill. They said they were very sorry for what had happened. They explained that they had a puncture and that their spare wheel was damaged beyond use. "I'll lend you my spare wheel on the condition you return it to me" said Nasser. They agreed. Nasser helped them change the wheel. A few days later, his wheel was returned. Mercy, a quality so beloved in the Qur'an, is the compassion shown toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm. The compassionate generosity shown by Nasser to his "enemies" was surely an act of mercy. Was it a moment of "real meeting"? I like to think so!

*Alex Holmes*



Presented with a copy of the Qur'an. Photo EAPPI/J. Parkin

*Editor's note: Alex Holmes, former Regional Coordinator for Scotland, worked for three months earlier this year as a human rights monitor with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs) provide a protective presence to vulnerable Palestinian communities in the West Bank. For more information about their work visit [www.eappi.org](http://www.eappi.org)*

## Book Review

### Living with the Mind of Christ: Mindfulness in Christian Spirituality

Stefan G. Reynolds, Darton, Longman & Todd, August 2016. £12.99

This is an important book for the contemporary world, especially for us who follow the path of Christian Meditation. Since the 1990s there has been a widespread growth in the practice of Mindfulness Meditation techniques, especially in connection with Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, and Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction, adopted in clinics, hospitals, schools, prisons, and indeed in everyday living. But do these have any connection with contemplative prayer in the Christian tradition?

The roots of current meditation techniques lie in centuries-old Buddhist teaching and practice, but in their current form they do not assume any religious character or beliefs. They are essentially pragmatic in method and universal in aim. This is why they have such widespread traction. Their appeal is especially strong in countries like ours in which religious practice is regarded by some as divisive, or even as pathological or retrograde. Yet of course it is right here in our secular and relatively affluent West in which so many people suffer from morbid anxiety, low morale, lack of self-esteem and so on, often because they lack any solid foundations for looking out beyond their own immediate needs. The challenge for us who practise Christian Meditation is to take every opportunity of helping others to realize that what may begin as a quest for mental and physical health can become in the author's own words "a journey into the reality of self-giving love." Indeed this is precisely the journey which so many present Christian meditators have themselves taken. As needy ourselves, we wish to help others find the treasure we have found.

The author, Stefan Reynolds, well known here in the UK as a teacher of the Christian Mystical tradition, and leader of retreats within the WCCM, has been deeply committed to the practice of Christian Meditation for over 20 years, and has also experienced Hindu and Buddhist meditation practices. He is superbly well qualified to show how the Christian Mystics, far from being an obscure minority movement within Christianity, have been at the dynamic centre of Christian renewal and revitalization of a living faith. As has been often remarked, Christian renewal more often comes from the edges and the boundaries of organized religion than from the centre.

Stefan Reynolds' knowledge is wide and deep. His writing is fluid and engaging, and he covers a huge field. Personally, I found his chapters on the Desert Fathers and Mothers of the 4th and 5th centuries, on Augustine and the connections between him and the 20th century Hindu sage Ramana Maharshi, to be especially illuminating. And for the first time I really began to

grasp the essential simplicity and appeal of the 13th century Dominican spiritual giant, Meister Eckhart.

"God is near to us but we are far from him. God is in, we are out. God is at home, we are abroad."

Electrifying stuff!

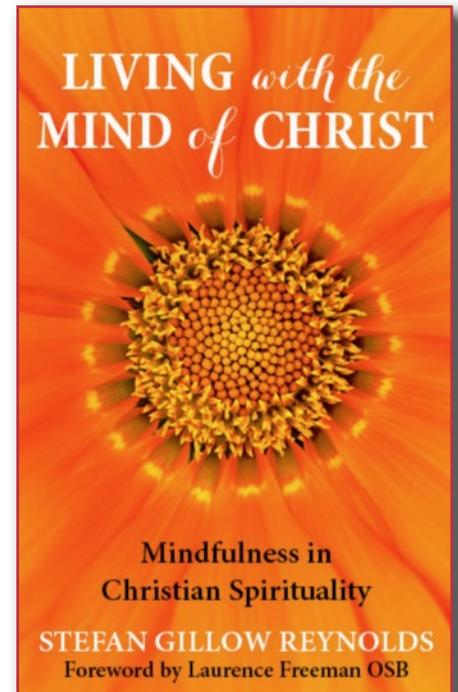
And again I warmed to Stefan's empathetic understanding of Julian of Norwich, in the story of her amazing visions of

Christ's Passion, especially his description of the 'medley cloth', a cloth made of wools of all colours, symbolizing all the different feelings and experiences we have in life. And I was surprised to find how much I learned from the example and teaching of St Therese of Lisieux. Falling asleep during her meditation was not a problem to her. "I don't grieve over that," she remarked. "Little children please their parents as much while they sleep as when they are awake." She took seriously Jesus' saying: "Unless you become like a child you cannot enter the Kingdom."

And of course there is much, much more. This is a book to give, or to lend, to anyone who has dipped into secular meditation practices, or indeed into Eastern meditation traditions, and may be asking themselves: "Where do I go from here?" And it is a book to be given to priests or ministers, who may have a little knowledge of the Christian mystics, but who would, indeed should, welcome a wider and deeper understanding. As Karl Rahner, probably the greatest theologian of the 20th century, observed: "The Christian of the future will be a mystic or (s)he will not exist at all."

Graeme Watson

*Living with the Mind of Christ*, ISBN 978-0-232-53250-0, is available from Good News Books, direct from the publishers [www.dltbooks.com](http://www.dltbooks.com) or through the distributors Norwich Books and Music orders@norwichbooksandmusic.co.uk 01603 785925.



## Meditating with Children – Sharing the Gift



As reported in the Meditatio review of the "Hope for the Future" seminar held in London in June, meditation gives children the opportunity to experience a life-enhancing and life-giving vision that develops their self-esteem and compassion for others. Imagine our delight then when earlier this year we

were invited to introduce this gift to children from all schools in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff. The Director of RE for the Archdiocese had read about our work and wants all 44 primary schools and 11 secondary schools in the Archdiocese to introduce meditation to their students.

As a result in May we presented to Heads from all schools at their Head Teacher conference, and in June held two training days for primary school RE Coordinators and then Heads of Department and Chaplains from the secondary schools. The training days were very well received and all participants were positive about introducing meditation to their schools when the new school year begins. We will maintain contact with the Archdiocese and schools and will work with the schools on an individual basis to assist on implementation as required. I wish to thank Roz Stockley and Janet Robbins who worked hard on the presentation material for the

schools and who delivered the well-received training days.

As a follow-up to the "Hope for the Future" seminar in June, Roz and I then attended a workshop day at the International Coordinators conference led by Cathy Day and Ernie Christie from Australia, who developed the original teaching material and programme and introduced meditation to all schools in the Catholic diocese of Townsville in Queensland. Sixty-three representatives from forty-three countries attended the conference in Hastings and this gave the international community a rare opportunity to work together to share and develop thinking on the future of meditation with children.

The aim of the day was to focus on the question "How do we make Christian Meditation with children work in a sustainable way, taking into account our diverse cultures and contexts?" A number of issues and opportunities were identified, considered and discussed ending in a final voting process to determine issues of greatest priority. The key priorities to be given further consideration are:-

- Introducing Christian Meditation in Secular Schools
- Christian Meditation for Young Adults
- How to develop appropriate forms of Research
- Meditation for children in marginalised groups and rural areas
- Developing common resources for use in schools

The output from the sessions has been taken away for further review and a full report will be produced in due course. It was heartening to hear the enthusiasm for meditation with children from all communities and there was a good dialogue between coordinators and many ideas exchanged and shared. It is hoped that these initial relationships between countries will continue to develop.

Sue Purkis  
ukmeditationwithchildren@wccm.org

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## New coordinator for Mental Health and Meditation

*'Lighten our darkness we beseech thee Oh Lord.' - 'these words take on a deeper significance when one is afraid sitting in darkness.'* (Terry Waite)



I am Sally Walters and I am introducing myself as the UK's new coordinator for mental health and meditation. I practise Christian meditation and belong to a group in North Somerset. I am married to John and we have four adult children and, to date, five grandchildren. I have found the teaching associated with Christian Meditation personally life-

changing alongside life's journey. I am a senior accredited counsellor/psychotherapist with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. I have worked with clients, both individuals and couples with psychological issues for 25 years in GP surgeries and private practice. I have managed a counselling service with a Christian ethos and been chair of an ethics committee for reproductive treatment. I am currently self-employed in my work; I receive some referrals from GPs, a part of my work is with clergy, theological students and their family members. I run a meditation group within a surgery and lead a WCCM group. I also undertake some spiritual direction. But however many experiences I have, I certainly recognise a healthy human powerlessness in life's challenge and the need to surrender myself to God.

I thought it may be beneficial to draw together some of my thoughts about mental health and highlight the need for resource and support for those with mental health difficulties. Indeed you might suffer yourself and there will inevitably be others, too, who belong to our meditation groups. Research suggests that the practice of meditation contributes to positive mental health. As we may know, a Christian meditation group can offer a positive experience of unity in the bond of the Holy Spirit, hopefully with a non-judgemental and loving atmosphere and to which people feel a sense of belonging. In the rhythm of practice, meditation enables self care and opens the hearts of those who meditate to the supernatural love of Christ. We all need to guard our mental wellbeing, however healthy we think we are.

A major part of my role will be in being available for anyone who needs guidance and support concerning mental health sufferers in meditation groups or to talk about issues that might arise, connected to the group experience.

One in four people in the UK will suffer from mental illness each year. Amongst other conditions, this may include depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive

disorder, panic disorder, post traumatic shock, eating disorders, personality disorder, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

There are many factors that contribute to mental illness: Difficult life experiences, general poor health, family history, genetic vulnerabilities or a lack of support or resource.

Our mental health will certainly affect the way we think, feel and act.

It is as I write this that I have been reading about Terry Waite CBE, the Archbishop of Canterbury's private envoy in 1987 who was taken hostage in Beirut and spent five years in captivity; most of this time he was in solitary confinement. He writes, 'to be in strict solitary confinement for many years can be both depressing and a debilitating experience'.

Terry Waite questioned whether he would fall apart as he experienced his body deteriorating mentally and spiritually. In his desperation, he bravely and amazingly recognised that the bleak and dark place could hold opportunity. We wouldn't be surprised at his wrestle! He describes struggling with his own spiritual journey or 'interior pathway' to discover a greater inner harmony. He recognised this could have been a dangerous journey as he faced the dark side of his personality, not knowing if he would become free, either physically or mentally. I can only assume he must have experienced sheer terror in this uncertainty.

Hopefully, we will not find ourselves in such extreme solitude, and yet, there are many of us that go through intense isolation with fear and hopelessness who suffer from mental health difficulties. Life can be immensely challenging. We only have to watch the news to know horror happens, and the shock of the unpredictable happens in personal lives too.

Father Laurence shared with us in the July issue of *Meditatio*, that 'the Spirit of Love reminds us on a daily basis that to be healthy we must be whole and that as we grow through healing to wholeness we begin to touch the edge of holiness.' He ends by saying, 'without the Spirit we cannot be sane'.

How then can we anchor ourselves in our inevitable human weakness that might knock our stability in life? Life is fragile. Henry Nouwen writes about the path of power, 'In our spiritual journey, there is a paradox; our very weakness is His (Christ's) power'. Indeed this is confirmed in 2 Corinthians ch12.v9. My example of drawing attention to Terry Waite's ordeal is that he found resource in his experience of solitary confinement. Although I would not attempt to compare directly Terry's experience to that of someone else's dark depression, in

*continued on page 9*

**Mental Health and Meditation** *continued from page 8*

his desperate need to survive he recited words over and over again that he had learnt from the Book of Common Prayer. In times of darkness and agony, this practice inspired him at a deep level. He used the words as a focus for his sanity - you could say these words were his mantra. Our suggested mantra in the practice of Christian Meditation, 'Maranatha', can become a place of safety, a 'home' of salvation and a saving refuge to return to in the starkness of fear and human wandering. There are thousands of people across the world in this way seeking the mind of Christ.

We are all made up with a mixture of weaknesses. In my work experience, self criticism and concern of what others think, create a major anxiety for individuals and can be destructive and prevent fulfilment. As we then face our own darkness, rejections and imbalance we will have opportunity to befriend the parts of ourselves that cause us difficulty. We learn to let go with kindness to ourselves in the discipline of Christian Meditation with the assurance that the grace of God keeps our hearts and minds in the love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please contact me, Sally Walters 01275 792056 and leave a message, should you have need to discuss difficulties that are relevant to meditation and mental illness. My intention is to personally contact regional representatives, (in time!)

*Sally Walters*

*Coordinator for Mental Health and Meditation*

## Meditation Companions



**Do you have questions about your meditation practice?  
Or about your spiritual life generally?**

**Meditation Companions are experienced WCCM meditators who are there for you to talk to immediately.**

**Contact Sarah Kirkup  
017683 41258  
sarahkirkup140@btinternet.com**

## Limitless Now

*And You, all Nameless Nothingness*

*With me, part of I Am*

*We grace this image around us*

*In timeless, endless, space.*

*Our end is our beginning*

*A continuous, but present, now.*

*But when I try to separate*

*My mind, my body, from You*

*'Tis death that soon awaits me*

*No longer ageless, timeless, infinite.*

*And when death comes,*

*As indeed it will when days are numbered*

*Joy - separation is just illusion*

*Revealing transcendence, wonder and love*

*I Am, you Limitless Now.*

Bob Morley, October 2015

(inspired by Rilke)

## Community News: Adrian Cave

When the UK office moved earlier this year to a space in the Lido Centre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, Fr Robin Burgess reminded us of a rather happy connection between this building and the work of a local mediator, Adrian Cave who



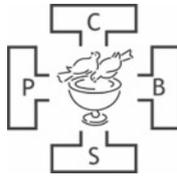
died in 2012. He had a successful career as an architect and this included pioneering the design and provision of disabled access to public buildings. Indeed he was awarded an OBE for his contribution in the transformation of a defunct cinema near his home into Ealing Community



Resource Centre (The Lido Centre.) An obituary written by a friend which gives fuller details of his life and achievements can be found at the following link <http://tinyurl.com/jn44hdr>

*Editor.*

## Monastics in the World WCCM Oblate Community



The basic element of the Oblate Community, is the "cell". This word has a long monastic tradition referring originally to the monks cave or room. With us it is used to describe presence not only physical space. The cell meets with regularity, to meditate, to share the Word, to consider their ways of sharing in the work of the wider community and where time allows share a meal together. All on the oblate path and enquirers are very welcome.

**UK Oblate Coordinator:** Eileen Dutt  
eduttobl@btinternet.com or 07721 574767

### WCCM Oblate cell meetings.

**Annual UK Oblate Gathering 2016. Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 November 10:30 - 16:00. Leader:** Father Laurence **Venue:** Monastery of Christ our Saviour, Turvey, Bedfordshire MK43 8DH  
Saturday will be led by the "Cell" which meets in Crowthorne, the theme for the day is: "Encountering the Divine". On Sunday there will be a talk by Fr Laurence, Meditation and Mass. The week-end is open to all meditators. Suggested donations are: £15 per person for either Saturday or Sunday only or; £25 per person for both days. Please bring food for a shared table for the day/days you are attending. It is necessary to book as places are limited, even if you do not require accommodation, and we are asking for a deposit of £10 to confirm your booking. Please send a text message with "Oblate Weekend" to 07792 083942 and you will be given details of where to send your deposit.

**Contact:** Angela Gregson on email: rydal2814@yahoo.co.uk tel: 01706 563 024

**Quarterly Oblate Community Day. Saturday 28 January 10:30 - 16:30. Venue:** 10 Cloudesley Square, London N1 0HT. **Saturdays 22 April & 29 July 10:30 - 16:30. Venue:** The Meditatio Centre, St Marks, Myddelton Sq, London EC1R 1XX **Contact:** Gilly Withers gilly@withers.org or on 07896 742047

**North London:** Meets monthly at Christ the King Church, Cockfosters 19:00-21:15 **Contact:** Rita McKenna on 0208 449 5013 for dates.

**Oxfordshire:** Meeting on **Mondays 10 October and 12 December 14:00 - 16:00. Contact:** Julia Bee at julia@life-encounter.com 07929618004 for details.

**Cambridge:** **Contact:** Julia Burdett at juliaburdett@hotmail.co.uk or 07722 074939 for details.

**Berkshire:** Meeting on **Wednesdays 28 December and 25 January 2017 14:00 - 16:00. Venue:** Holy Ghost Church Parish Rooms, 51 New Wokingham Road, Crowthorne RG45 6JG. **Contact:** Angela Greenwood for details of time at angelagreenwood@hotmail.com 01344 774254.

**Northern Cell (Leeds):** Meetings on **Saturdays 12 November and 14 January 2017 10:30 for 11:00-15:15. Contact:** Angela Gregson for details of venue and dates at rydal2814@yahoo.co.uk or on 01706 563024.

## Events

Please check the Christian Meditation UK website for changes or additional events:  
[//tinyurl.com/cmuk-event](http://tinyurl.com/cmuk-event)

### National

**School of Meditation Events** (see page 3):

**Contact:** Jacqueline Russell jacrussell3@gmail.com 01296 488450 (office hours only please)

**Thursday 3 to Thursday 10 November. School of Meditation Retreat.**

**Leaders:** Stefan Reynolds with Terry Doyle **Venue:** Brownhill Monastery, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 8AL **Cost** per person £475.00 inclusive. Limited bursaries available, please enquire.

**Friday 21 to Sunday 21 April 2017. School of Meditation Essential Teaching**

**Weekend. Leaders:** Eileen McDade, Geoff Waterhouse & Graeme Watson **Venue:** Emmaus Centre, West Wickham, Kent, **Cost:** £175.00 inclusive. Accommodation in single rooms with shared bathroom facilities.

### Southeast England

**Saturday 7 January 2017 10:30-15:30. Living with the Mystics: Dom John**

**Chapman OSB. Speaker:** Robin Burgess **Venue:** St Nicolas' Church, Guildford GU2 4AW **Contact:** Ray or Vicky Lamb 01252 705064 or St Nicolas' Parish Office: parishoffice@saintnics.com 01483 564526 **Cost:** £10 suggested donation Bring your own lunch - tea and coffee provided

### Northeast England

**Saturday 15 October 10:30-15:00. Christianity and Korean Spirituality.**

**Speaker:** Kirsteen Kim **Venue:** The Chapel, Leeds Trinity University, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5HD. **Contact:** Sue Purkis 07702 692117 suepurkis@hotmail.co.uk or Sue Giuntoni 07761 564089 giuntoni@btinternet.com **Cost:** £5 Drinks provided, please bring your own lunch

**Wednesday 26 October. Embodied Contemplatives - Christian Meditation and Tai Chi Day. Venue:** Minsteracres Retreat Centre, Minsteracres, Consett DH8 9RT <http://www.minsteracres.org> **Contact:** 01434 673248

**Friday 28 October to Sunday 30 October Embodied Contemplatives -**

**Christian Meditation Silent Retreat. Venue:** Ampleforth Abbey, near York YO62 4EN <http://www.ampleforth.org.uk> **Contact:** pastoral@ampleforth.org.uk or Hospitality & Pastoral 01439 766486

### Northwest England

**Friday 14 October to Sunday 16 October. Obedient to Love** - looking at the links between the prayer of St Anthony of Egypt, the Desert Mothers and Fathers and our meditation practice today. **Leaders:** Cameron Butland with Terry Doyle **Venue:** At the Briery Retreat Centre, Ilkley **Contact:** 01204 811050 lesley.easterman@btinternet.com

**Tuesday 1 November 10:00 for 10:30 - 15:30. Living with the Mystics:**

**Ephrem the Syrian. Leader:** Sue Havens **Venue:** Keswick Friends' Meeting House (tbc) **Contact:** Bob Morley 016974 72644 rgm1@live.co.uk **Cost:** £5.00 Drinks provided, please bring your own lunch

**Friday 4 to Sunday 6 November. Boarbank Retreat. Leader:** Revd Dr Nicholas

Buxton. **Venue:** Boarbank Hall, Allithwaite, Grange over Sands, Cumbria LA11 7NH **Booking:** Richard 01946 862990 cmcwcmm@fastmail.fm **Cost:** £130 (Concession rate £100) (residential)

### Southwest England

**Tuesday, 8 November 19:15-21:00 The Power of Contemplative Prayer.**

**Leader:** Cynthia Bourgeault. **Venue:** St. James Priory, Whitson Street, Bristol BS1 3NZ. **Contact:** bristol@christianmeditation.org.uk or Roger Layet on 01275 463727. **Cost:** £10 (suggested donation)

**Monday 28 November 2016. Quiet Day: Giving thanks - seeing all things**

**with the eye of the heart. Leader:** Beth Parfitt. **Venue:** Abbey House, Chilwell Street, Glastonbury BA6 8DH **Details and to book:** John Roberts, 01458 832704, john.wilcott@gmail.com **Cost:** £25 to include coffee, lunch, tea and cakes.

## Events

### London

**First Saturday of the Month (5 Nov, 3 Dec) 14:00-16:00. Quiet**

**Afternoon for those on the 12 Step Program. Venue:** please contact mike@east-west.org.uk

**Last Saturday of the Month (29 October, 26 Nov, 31 Dec, 28 Jan 2017, etc.) 14:00-16:00. Addiction and Grace Meditation Group. Venue:** Kairos Centre, Mount Angelus Road, Roehampton, London, SW15 4JA.

**Contact:** Michael O'Halloran michael.ohalloran@psmsg.org.uk 020 8788 4188 or May Nicol MayMBNicol@aol.com 07768 310666

**Friday 18 – Sunday 20 November. Addiction & Grace weekend retreat.**

**Venue:** Kairos Centre, Mount Angelus Road, Roehampton, London, SW15 4JA. **Contact:** Michael O'Halloran michael.ohalloran@psmsg.org.uk 020 8788 4188

**Wednesday 17- Saturday 20 May 2017 Addiction & Grace Silent retreat**

**Contributor:** Liz Watson **Venue:** Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, Reading RG7 5TQ.

**Meditatio House** 10 Cloudesley Square, London N1 0HT Tel: 020 78378567 meditationnews@gmail.com www.wccm.org/content/wccm-centres

#### Regular events:

Daily Meditation: at 7:00 (Saturday and Sunday 8:00); 12:00 and 18:00  
Mondays: 18:00: Essential Teaching - open to all but especially useful for newcomers

**The Meditatio Centre** St Marks, Myddelton Square, London EC1R 1XX

Tel: 020 7278 2070 meditatio@wccm.org www.meditatiocentre.london.org

#### Regular events:

Weekday 13.00–13.30: Meditation – All welcome  
Mondays 19:00–19:30: Meditation  
Mondays 19:30–21:00: Yoga. Cost: £14 drop in; £72 for block of 6 classes; £8 concessions Contact: Lucy 07904 166123 lucybarnes@btinternet.com  
Wednesdays 10:00–12:00: Yoga and Rolf Movement Class  
Fridays 10:00 – 11:30 Yoga and Meditation

**Spiritual Growth Course: Wednesdays 12 & 19 October; 2, 9, 16 & 23**

**November 18:30–21:00. Finding the Way: A course on spiritual growth. Leader:** Liz Watson. **Contact:** lizmeditates@gmail.com. **Cost:** £15 per evening or £75 for whole course paid in advance (concessions available). Light refreshments provided.

#### Special events:

**Saturday 8 October 11:00-16:00. London group leaders' meeting:**

**A Growing Community** - Bring your joint leaders and potential group leaders to this day. **Leader:** Liz Watson. **Cost:** Suggested donation no more than £5 as a contribution to lunch.

**Saturday 15 October 10:30–16:30. The Stillness of Well Water: A Poetry Workshop. Leader:** Helen Overell. **Cost:** £25 Concessions £15 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

**Saturday 22 October 10:30–16:30. "Glory be to God for dappled things". Leader:** Graeme Watson. **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

**Saturday 29 October 10:30– 16:30. Happy Those Who Mourn: Loss, Lamentations and Laughter. Leader:** Julie Leger Dunstan. **Cost:** £30 Concessions: £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

**Saturday 12 November 1:00–17:30. Movement and Meditation - Workshop. Facilitators** Lucy Barnes & Wojtek Karczmarzy. **Cost:** £20 Concessions £15

**Saturday 19 November 10:30– 16:30. The Spirit of the Margins. Leaders:** Chris Bemrose and Mike Mullins. **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

#### Special events (continued):

**Saturday 26 November 11:00-16:00. Towards Advent** – Exploring Advent contemplatively through poetry and hymns - Bring your favourite poem or hymn. We shall be reflecting on Advent and Christmas through our favourite poetry and hymns. **Leaders:** Rev Graeme Watson and Eileen McDade. **Cost:** Suggested donation £10 which includes lunch.

**Saturday 3 December 10:30– 16:30. Unwrapping the Hidden Gift. Leader:** Daniel O'Leary. **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

**Saturday 10 December 10:30– 16:30. Urban Retreat Day. Facilitators:** Giovanni Felicioni and team. **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

**Saturday 17 December 10:30–4:30. Preparing for Christmas. Leader:** Laurence Freeman OSB. **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

#### Westminster Cathedral

Daily Meditation: 12.30–13:00 Monday to Friday. In the chapel in St Paul's Bookshop. All welcome.

First Wednesday Quiet Days: 12:00–16:30: The first Wednesday of each month is a retreat day held in the Hinsley Room in Morpeth Terrace, next to Westminster Cathedral.

5 October: Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires

2 November: Love your enemies

7 December: God is with us

**Silence in the City** See www.silenceinthecity.org.uk for the programme, or contact info@silenceinthecity.org.uk. 020 7231 6278 or 020 7252 2453.

Unless stated otherwise all talks are at: Westminster Cathedral Hall, London SW1P 1QH. Pre-booking is necessary. **Contact:** info@silenceinthecity.org.uk; www.silenceinthecity.org.uk

**Thursday 3 November 19:00-21:00** (Refreshments from 18:30).

**Centering Prayer and the Road to Non-Dual Awakening. Speaker:** Rev Dr Cynthia Bourgeault **Cost:** suggested donation £10.

**Saturday 5 November 10:30-16:30. Christian Non-Duality - Seriously? Speaker:** Rev Dr Cynthia Bourgeault **Venue:** Greencoat Place SW1P 1RD **Cost for the day:** £25 (Refreshments will be provided but please bring a packed lunch) – This event is fully booked.

## Keeping In Touch

If you would like to ...

- Receive Meditation News by email or post
- Receive the monthly events bulletin by email
- Find out about meditation groups in your local area
- Find out about the Lone Meditator Network

Visit: [www.christianmeditation.org.uk](http://www.christianmeditation.org.uk)

Email: [uk@wccm.org](mailto:uk@wccm.org)

Or contact:

**WCCM UK Office**

**Lido Centre, 63 Mattock Lane, London, W13 9LA**

**Tel: 020 8280 2283**

## Contacts

### Action Group

**Administration:** Roisin Williamson—020 8280 2283 ukadmin@wccm.org.uk

**Communications:** Margaret Comerford—07732 743442  
margaret.comerford@btinternet.com

**Events:** Jacqueline Russell—07812 152684 jacqrussell3@gmail.com

**Meditating With Children:** Sue Purkis—01535 632171 / 07702 692117  
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**Outreach:** Eileen McDade—emcdade@talktalk.net

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Julie Roberts—01458 832704 julie.ann.roberts@icloud.com

### National

**Chair of The Christian Meditation Trust (UK):** Andrew Cresswell—  
01597 823868 andrewcresswell62@yahoo.co.uk

**UK Friends Coordinator:** Vacancy - contact uk@wccm.org.uk

**Newsletter Editor:** Margaret Comerford—uknewsletter@wccm.org

**Website:** Andy Goddard—cmukwebsite@gmail.com

**Goodnews Books:** John Roberts—01458 832704 john@tscltd.biz

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ukmeditationwithchildren@wccm.org

**Clergy:** Fr Robin Burgess—020 8998 4710 rmeburgess@aol.com

**Learning Disabilities:** Carolina Ghiuzan—07749 975368  
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**Lone Meditators:** Pam Winters—020 7278 2070 pam@wccm.org

**Meditation Companions:** Sarah Kirkup—017683 41258  
sarahkirkup140@btinternet.com

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**Oblates:** Eileen Dutt—07721 574767 eduttobl@btinternet.com

**Palliative and Long-term Care:** Linda Bentick—01743 243132  
bentickbelinda@hotmail.com

**Prisons:** Geoff Waterhouse—ukprisons@wccm.org

**School of Meditation:** Jacqueline Russell—07812 152684 jacqrussell3@gmail.com

**Young Meditators:** Maciej Zurawski—07717 772614 youngadults@wccm.org

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Sandwell and Dudley:** Rose Lynch and Michael Hackett—01902 790653  
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Margaret Jarvis 01743 240401—westmids@christianmeditation.org.uk

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#### London

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**London (South—none of Kent or Surrey):** Geoff Waterhouse—020 8392 9917  
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