



# Friends

The Newsletter for Friends  
of the Lay Community of Saint Benedict

April 2024

The first step of humility is to cherish at all times the sense of awe with which we should ever turn to God.

RB7

In this issue:

Summer Gathering

Vacancy

Message from Adam

Reflection 1

Reflection 2

Easter Gallery

June Gathering

Teenage Week

Young Adult Week

Diary



## Summer Gathering 2024 an **Invitation...**

The Summer Gathering is the highlight of August for our household and one of the best opportunities for our whole community to come together. We extend a warm invitation to all friends of the LCSB to join us, especially families and young adults.

Worth Abbey is a wonderful part of our history and heritage and I know for many of us, time at Worth is always time well spent. We are delighted that again the monastic community are generously welcoming us to share time with them.

As you may know, the theme of the SG changes every year and this year we are looking at "Living Holy Communion". One of the things which drew me to the Lay Community was its intergenerational fellowship and openness. We hope to do more than just learn about this, but actually live it through the weekend and beyond!

We are finalising the details on the timetable, but what we are trying to do is nudge away from the format we have had previously, notably on the Saturday. We are planning something which is open and accessible the whole day to people of all ages for members, friends, seekers and anyone else connected to our community. I hope it is something you feel able to come to and to invite others to and we want to make it as easy as possible for you to invite old and new friends and family to the Saturday.

We are also fortunate to be hosting a ceilidh late afternoon on the Saturday leading into the BBQ. Geoff Thompson's presence will be sorely missed, but I know the best tribute to him would be to come together and celebrate the community and friends that we are. Application forms will soon be available and we will send a link to you when they are ready.

*Jim Willetts - Summer Gathering Team*

[lcsb.uk/summer-gathering](https://www.lcsb.uk/summer-gathering)



**The Summer Gathering**

**Join The Lay Community of St. Benedict, as we experience Holy Communion with God and each other**

Held in the beautiful grounds of Worth Abbey, our Summer Gathering is a time of prayer, laughter, reflection, community and celebration.

Open to all ages. Saturday will be specially dedicated to young adults and families.

**Cost:** TBA  
**Dates:** 23rd - 26th August 2024

**Become a member!**  
Go to [www.lcsb.uk/contact](https://www.lcsb.uk/contact)



THE  
LAY COMMUNITY  
OF SAINT BENEDICT

## Finance and Events Secretary

The Lay Community of St Benedict (LCSB), a community of Lay Benedictines which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021, plans to recruit a faith-filled person, a Christian, who will be part of the Community in an administrative and community role.

7.5 hours/week plus additional for the months of Easter and Summer Gathering - approx 60 days/year - £5971/year

Full details on [lcsb.uk/vacancy](https://lcsb.uk/vacancy)

Closing date for applications Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

Interviews (on Zoom) evening of Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**[Click for details and how to apply](https://lcsb.uk/vacancy)**

## To see the face of Christ in those in need. A reflection on Charlie Bennett's Good Friday talk.

A dear priest friend of ours, Mgr Barry Wymes, who was the main celebrant of the Cefn Lea Triduum for us in 2009, was responsible for organising a visit of Mother Teresa to England in 1974. When she was here, Fr Barry asked her what we could do for the people in Calcutta, and she responded by inviting him to do things locally, to deal with the loneliness and the spiritual vacuum which exists in our own culture.



The motto of the St Vincent de Paul Society ("SVP") is "To see the face of Christ in those in need." This was the call to action from the inspirational keynote Easter talk by Charlie Bennett, Youth Coordinator for the SVP in the UK.

Christianity transforms society, not through a set of rules but from a commandment of Jesus to love one another by listening to his voice, and forming in this way an everlasting covenant. Charlie described the mystery of the Eucharist in a beautiful way:

"I am encouraging you to be close to me in a way you don't understand."  
We become a synergistic force of love. A mingling of two people.

We pass on this love to others by fulfilling the essential command of Jesus,

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13: 34-35

In the Q&A session after the talk, Barbara referred to the loneliness which exists in our communities. There are many examples: the bereaved, those living by themselves, those who feel they do not belong or who are excluded from society; those who feel rejected by church teaching; the post-covid generation who feel anxious and socially unsure; those released from prison; and, those suffering mental health conditions.

How can we as community make our love creative so that the words of St Vincent de Paul "Love is creative even unto infinity" become a reality?

I felt inspired after listening to Charlie's talk:

- By not plodding along, and feeling we are doing enough, but loving beyond our limits
- By being a light to people through the love in our community which becomes like the friendship of the four refugee friends from Eritrea he met in Calais and spoke about so movingly  
"Loneliness is one of the great sources of deprivation. Community is the way forward. Be more inclusive, open and loving."
- By seeing what need there is locally to bring the light of Christ, and work with others

We can be a light for his people. An Olympic torch. A light on a hill.

Adam Simon

## New Light and New Life at Easter

Last week, I was blessed with the chance to join the rest of the community for our Easter celebration at Cefn Lea. As some of you reading may know, this was my first experience of Easter with the community, and something I had been looking forward to for a long time.

In all honesty, it's difficult to know what to expect of something that you've never experienced before. I had never really spent Easter outside of ordinary parish life, going to Mass either with friends or family, and so spending it with a community in a retreat-style setting was something new to me. But I was certainly excited to experience more of the community in person, and to see the different generations come together: the teens, the young adults, the families and the regional groups.

So much of our time together in the LCSB is spent online, and it's always a beautiful thing when we get to be with one another in person. Even Scripture reminds us of this - in 3 John 1:14, St John tells the recipient of his letter that he's looking forward to speaking face-to-face, since it's always better to do that than through pen and ink - or through a laptop screen.

The theme of this Easter was "A Light For His People", as communicated wonderfully by Aidan Hughes and elaborated on beautifully by our speaker, Charlie Bennett. And this idea of light is a big one for us in our faith - after all, it's the first thing God creates in Genesis, it's how Jesus is referred to multiple times, and it's a common theme throughout Scripture. But why is this so significant, and how was this idea significant for me during the Easter celebration?

Light illuminates, and helps us to see, or to see more clearly. That's obvious. But I think sometimes in our lives we don't see things fully - we see "through a glass, darkly" as Paul says. In my experience of being with the community, I've met many people, had wonderful conversations, and got to know St Benedict more, not just in an intellectual way but in a lived way, through the community.

However, it's not until Easter that I was able to see the full picture, to see the community as it really is - people of different generations, faith backgrounds and walks of life, joined together in a mutual love for community, Benedict, and - most importantly - for Christ. In every conversation, every workshop, every meal time, prayer time, party and packing session, new light has been shed for me - not only on what the Lay Community is, but on who we are.

You can learn about something from a distance, but until you experience it firsthand, your understanding of it is always going to be limited. I think that's what Easter has been for me: God inviting me into a new and deeper appreciation of the community, through experiencing it in person.

May God continue to strengthen our community as we return to our lives, our jobs, studies and so on, and may we let the light that we have seen and felt at Easter be continually aflame, never to go out.



**Jerome Beards**

**Discipleship & Digital Coordinator**

# Easter Gallery

Mar 28 - Apr 12





WORTH ABBEY  
PILGRIMS

## JUNE GATHERING

*A social and spiritual day with Worth Abbey Pilgrims*

**The Abbot and Community invite you to Worth Abbey  
from 11.00am – 4.30pm on Saturday 1st June**

- Celebrate the beauty that is Worth
- Share monastic prayer in the Abbey Church
- Enjoy a guided walk through our woods and fields
  - Visit St Bruno's Retreat Centre
  - Activities for children
- Families welcome, bring your own picnic or buy refreshments onsite
  - Parking available

For more details on our events visit  
[worthabbeypilgrims.com](http://worthabbeypilgrims.com), or email [pilgrims@worth.org.uk](mailto:pilgrims@worth.org.uk)  
or telephone 01342 710370

Admission free; please register your attendance  
at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/worthabbey>

*A Place of Beauty and Joy*



THE LAY COMMUNITY OF ST BENEDICT  
PRESENTS

# SUMMER CAMP 2024 “LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL”

Let your faith soar!  
An exciting and unique new Summer event  
for young people in School Years 7-11

**August 20-24, 2024**  
**at Worth Abbey, West Sussex**

Inspiring talks // Uplifting prayer // Fun activities  
Space to just be // Opportunities to put faith into action  
and more...



**COSTS: £145 before 1st May**  
**£160 1st May onwards**

[Click to download pdf flyer](#)





A WEEK AT

Worth

**Tuesday - Friday**  
**20th-23rd August**  
Leading into the LCSB  
Summer Gathering  
Cost: TBA

Join the monks of Worth  
Abbey for a week of  
prayer, work and  
community life!

The week (with a dedicated  
young adults space) will include  
daily prayer, helping the monks  
with work in the garden, and an  
experience of community life!

Organised by The Lay Community of St Benedict  
To become a member, please go to  
[www.lcsb.uk/contact](http://www.lcsb.uk/contact)

## Upcoming events

**Worth Abbey June Gathering**  
**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June**

**Teenage Week**  
**Worth Abbey**  
**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August**

**Young Adult Week**  
**Worth Abbey**  
**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> - Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

**Summer Gathering and AGM**  
**Worth Abbey**  
**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> - Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August**  
**Booking soon**

Visit  
[lcsb.uk](http://lcsb.uk)



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Please send future items for Friends to:  
[laybenedictines@gmail.com](mailto:laybenedictines@gmail.com)

[www.lcsb.uk](http://www.lcsb.uk)

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