



LCSB FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

March 2025

CONTENTS

The Joy of the Divine Office	2	Tribute to Martin Hollins	9
An Appeal	3	Chris Knollys RIP	10
Upcoming Events	4	100 th Council Meeting	11
Why is the appeal for the Lay Community important?	5	Summer Gathering Review	12-13
Digital Prayer in the LCSB	6	Autumn Talks Review	14
Blogs and Podcasts	7	Creative Prayer Retreat	15
Centering Prayer	8	Worth Abbey	16-17
		LCSB Vacancies	18

The Joy of the Divine Office



It has been some time since we wrote, and this comes with all our greetings for the holy season of Lent and Easter.

When Covid struck 5 years ago, we took a very conscious decision in the Lay Community of St Benedict to place our online vespers at 6pm. Whilst everyone was switching on the news to see what the latest developments were, we were saying the Office of the Day. This had a really beneficial effect on us all - it lifted our anxiety and placed our concerns in a higher perspective of faith and trust. We continue to pray online at this time, this is the "still point of the turning world" which TS Eliot spoke about.

How I wish that everyone could experience this stillness! It is an incredible gift of an ancient Judaeo-Christian practice of reciting the psalms and other prayers on a daily basis. And with the wonders of technology, we make this accessible to people wherever they are in the world. We have people who join us from Alaska, Oklahoma and Tokyo - it appears that the joy of shared prayer trumps the time zone difference.

As we start Lent, maybe this is the moment to try or renew this form of prayer. There are many ways to do it - finding other like-minded souls in our parish, going to a nearby monastery, or for the brave, doing it by yourself with the three volumes of the Divine Office, Universalis (a wonderful app costing a lifetime fee of £10) or the format from other traditions such as the Book of Common Prayer.

We are not the only ones possessed of the desire to share the beauty of the Divine Office. I recently heard Martin Zochanski, creator of Universalis, explaining at the Word on Fire Conference in London how he had created the app and he answered that he was drunk! There was a ripple of laughter. "I was drunk with the spirit after the Easter vigil at Downside," he clarified. In this spirit-filled state he decided to purchase the three volumes of the Divine Office. A week later, still inspired by the Spirit, he asked "why can't everyone else have access to the Office?" Thus was born Universalis.

Dr Rowan Williams is another. He took part in a recent podcast "The Sacred" where he articulated the same hope for "a steady anchorage in habit, language, worshipping":

"If I wanted to see a reform of Christianity, I'd want to see a somewhat retrograde reform which gave more weight to practice, helping people to be silent before God, helping people to listen and attend, to look contemplatively, and, if you like, to go deeper, because I think the hunger for that is palpable."

So in Lent, our invitation is to celebrate the gift of the daily prayer of the psalms, and of course anyone is welcome to join us by emailing enquirers@lcsb.uk.

Much has happened since our last newsletter, and I hope that this gives you a good insight into the life of the Lay Community of St Benedict. There is also an important appeal for funds which is the first time we have turned to our Friends. We are also advertising two job vacancies in the Community which you can see on page 17.

Please also note in this edition some exciting events coming up - notably Easter at Cefn Lea 17-20 April (with two Cross walks), St Benedict Week 5-13 July and the Summer Gathering at Worth Abbey 22-25 August. And be sure that you are always welcome to join us at our events or in our daily online prayer and regular formation.

Best wishes

Adam Simon
Leader

An Appeal

We include in this newsletter an appeal to those among you who may be moved to support the work of the LCSB. This is the first such appeal to friends of the LCSB.

Our mission centres on nurturing people's spiritual growth founded in the Gospel and the Rule of St Benedict. We aim to ensure that young people and families can participate in transformative events like our Teen and Young Adult Weekends, as well as our Easter and Summer Gatherings, regardless of their financial circumstances. Financial contributions also sustain the dedicated individuals who serve our community.

In this newsletter you will see the text spoken at our recent EGM by Matt O'Donoghue, one of our young members, explaining why this appeal is important. I think he captures it beautifully.

This year has seen a significant increase in our youth outreach, with more youth days spent in fellowship and learning. This growth is a testament to the thriving spirit of our community and will continue as we establish regular Teen and Young Adult Weekends and other spiritual retreats.

Our mission is sustained entirely through the grace of God and the generosity of our members and friends.



Young adult Cross Walk

We can illustrate the impact of your gift with some examples: a monthly donation of £10 would subsidise the attendance of two teens at a life-changing weekend retreat at Worth Abbey. A monthly gift of £20 would empower our dedicated youth workers to continue their outreach to teens, young adults, and families, bringing, we hope, the light of Christ into their lives. Any amount you can offer, no matter how small, will be received with profound gratitude.

If you feel moved to contribute to this work, we invite you to fill in the [pledge form](#) (click on link here) which also contains the gift aid declaration and the following bank details:

Lay Community of St. Benedict Sort Code:
40-52-40 Account Number: 00011133

If you have any inquiries, please contact us at fundraising@lcsb.uk.

You can also find this information on our website: www.lcsb.uk/donations.

We deeply value the spiritual support you provide through your prayers. Whether through financial giving or prayerful intercession, your contribution is a blessing to our community. Thank you for being a friend of the LCSB family. We hope we will see you at our online and physical events, and we invite you to enjoy the richness of the blogs (www.lcsb.uk/blog) and podcasts (www.lcsb.uk/podcasts) which have grown into a broad corpus of sharing of Benedictine insights.

With very best wishes

Adam Simon
Leader

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friends are welcome to join us in any of these events. Please contact comms@lcsb.uk if you have any questions.

LENT

This Lent, in the Lay Community, we are being encouraged to put down deep roots of hope by connecting with God who is always with us. We will be doing this in several different ways, and especially using the resources from The Church of England's Lent theme for 2025 'Living Hope' as our guide.

For more information www.lcsb.uk/lent-2025



CROSSWALK - YOUNG ADULT

At Easter there will be a Young Adult Cross walk - if you have never done this, it is a wonderful opportunity to connect with other young people, with nature and above all with God. It is a time of going beyond, building community and deep friendship. To find out more, this is the link www.lcsb.uk/youngadultcrosswalk



CROSSWALK

In this Jubilee Year of Hope when pilgrimage is being encouraged for us all, why not join us on a walking pilgrimage to our Easter Retreat at Cefn Lea? It is a wonderful opportunity to experience community and spend quiet time whilst enjoying beautiful countryside as we carry a cross towards Cefn Lea.

www.lcsb.uk/crosswalk-shrewsbury-to-cefn-lea



LCSB EASTER - 17-20 APRIL

Join us as we invite the new life of Christ in our community - we look forward to welcoming you!

The celebrants are Fr Peter Andrews, a Catholic priest (Diocese of Arundel & Brighton), and Canon Colin Gough, an Anglican priest (Diocese of Newcastle)

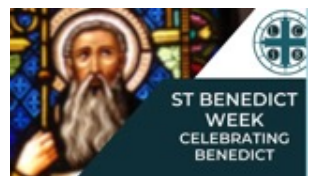
www.lcsb.uk/easter



ST BENEDICT WEEK - 5-13 JULY

For the third year we are celebrating St Benedict Week with talks, podcasts, blogs, prayer and invitations to join with each other and join with your local Benedictine community. This year we are very delighted and honoured that the Abbot Primate Jeremias Schröder is our keynote speaker, and will make his address on 12th July (more details to follow)

www.lcsb.uk/st-benedictweek



SUMMER GATHERING

We extend a warm invitation to all friends of the LCSB to join us, especially families and young adults. We are delighted that again the monastic community are generously welcoming us to share time with them. This year the theme of our gatherings "Pilgrims in Hope."

www.lcsb.uk/summer-gathering



Why is the appeal for the Lay Community of St. Benedict important?

The Lay Community of St. Benedict may not have a physical place to call home.

But it's a deeply rooted spiritual home for all of us that are involved.

Guided by the Rule of St. Benedict, we live out values of prayer, hospitality and service. And what makes this community so special is its ability to transcend physical spaces creating a shared sense of belonging whether we gather in person or online.

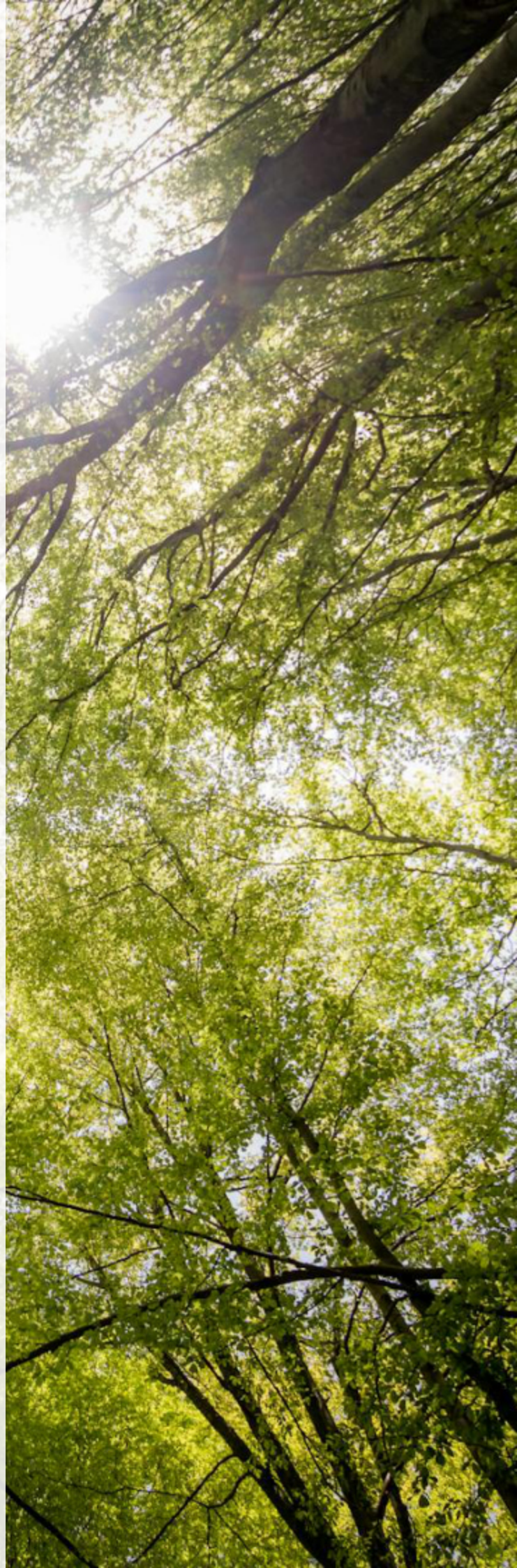
In the last few years, younger members of the community have stepped into leadership roles and the sustainability of the community becomes ever more important. We want to share our community with others. And continue to grow in our own faith. We seek to be further nourished by the word of God which sustains us spiritually and equips us to serve with faith, humility and love.

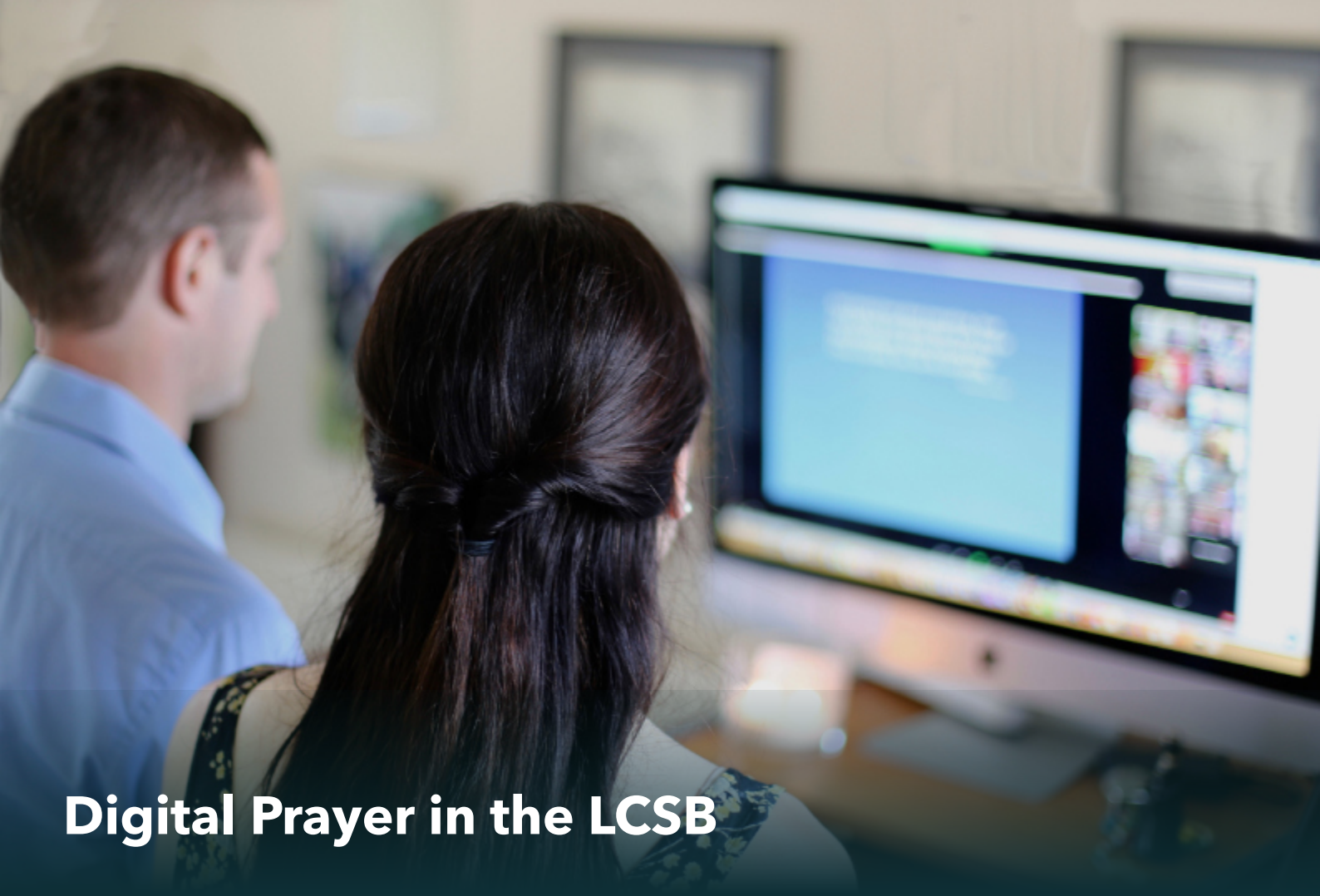
The spiritual sustenance will ensure that our community thrives and provides a source of hope and renewal for current and future generations.

In a world that often feels fragmented and isolating, this community is one of stability and connection. It is a place where we encourage one another and support each other's spiritual growth and live out our faith in the places that we live.

By tending to the spiritual and communal sustainability of the Lay Community, we offer something profound to the wider world, a reminder that true community is built on shared purpose, deep care and the love of God.

Matt O'Donoghue





Digital Prayer in the LCSB

*We are in the process of writing an article about the LCSB and **Carmela Hinckley** wrote this beautiful witness which we share here.*

My first experience of the LCSB community was a morning prayer. I was immediately welcomed, and asked to share in the reading and response of the psalms. Having never experienced anything like it, I was quite 'bowled over' - it seemed wonderful. Here was a community, gathered daily from all parts of the UK and often beyond, for whom a daily rhythm of prayer and meeting was integral to life lived in faith. The fact that this was online seemed particularly unique. This was lockdown time, and three years on (I think! Time goes fast) I am a part of this community. There is a simplicity to it. It complements the sacramental life and local community I experience at parish level whilst giving me a sense of the universality of the church. Here are people from such varied backgrounds and faith journeys with whom I not only pray but share our faith journey. 'Our' because that sense of a larger, wider community that is the church - dare I say, the body of Christ - is now part of my daily thinking. An example - experiencing the synodal process at community level, the group participation, feeling that each voice was heard and included, is one of the most fulfilling

experiences in my faith journey. And this is where I begin to feel the church of the future begins, both local and global. The Lay Community slips easily into local groups where members meet to pray and reflect and just be together - and it's all gathered back into our wider community where the online experience overcomes limitations of distance and time; and we're enriched by a wide and varied programme throughout the liturgical year. Prayer is at the heart of it, and the invitation to come as you are, be part of this journey.

PODCASTS / BLOGS

Would you like to share your thoughts on St Benedict? Do you have a love of writing? Would you like to share your thoughts in a spoken, relaxed, interview format?

We're looking for members to contribute to our blogs and podcasts.

Blogs are written reflective pieces in which one of our members reflects on an area of Benedictine spirituality, often relating it to their own experiences. These can be on any topic that relates to this, although we have two ongoing blog series with more specific themes, and one which recurs once a year:

Our **Caring For Creation** series deals with the importance of stewardship and caring for our planet, and how Benedict ties into this.

Our **Ora et Labora** series focuses on the Benedictine charism of prayer and work, and how this plays out in our lives.

Our **St Benedict Week** series appears in July and has focused in the last two years on the relevance of St Benedict today.

Podcasts are audio recordings in which I interview different people, some within the community and some outside of it, on topics relating to faith, Benedict, and the interviewee's areas of interest. These are all done in-person.

Here's a little summary of what we've had going on over the past couple of months:



Blogs

Peace in Public

Katie Livesey gives her thoughts on finding God in the midst of the world, and on opportunities for finding peace and joy when things can seem chaotic.

The Lord's Presence In His Creation

As part of our Caring For Creation blog series, Carmela Hinckley reflects not only on caring for our planet, but on seeing it as part of our relationship with God and with others.

A Beautiful Balance

As part of our Ora et Labora blog series, Alain Anderton reflects on the benefits of a work-prayer balance in life, and how The Lay Community of St Benedict has provided this for him.

Podcasts

Series 6 Episode 1: Gerard Norton

In this episode, Jerome speaks to Gerard Norton, a long-time member of The Lay Community of St Benedict, about his faith and experiences with the community.

All our blogs can be read at www.lcsb.uk/blog, and our podcasts can be found at www.lcsb.uk/podcasts.

If you'd like to contribute a blog post or be interviewed for a podcast, please email me at lcsbdigitalevangelist@gmail.com for more information.

Jerome Beards



Centering Prayer

When you settle down for some time in silent prayer, do you often find yourself distracted by worries and preoccupations, projects you are working on, a sudden itch, thoughts about lunch, or even the spiritual profundity of what you are experiencing?

The good news is this is all perfectly normal! It's just what our brains are designed to do. Sometimes, it's helpful to imagine these preoccupations as like the flakes in a snow globe gradually floating down towards the bottom of the globe as you settle into a time of quietness. Another metaphor is to imagine the river of life running through you. Deep down in the river, the water is calm and slow, but the surface is cluttered with turmoil and debris. You could imagine your distracting thoughts as a part of that debris and turmoil on the surface, and just gently let that part of the river be carried away by the current. The practice of Centering Prayer is a way to encourage this process of returning again and again, with gentleness and patience, to the depth of the self where we can just rest in the Divine Presence.

Father Thomas Keating, a key pioneer of this method of contemplative prayer, calls it entering into our inner room, symbolising the innermost self, beyond the senses and beyond thinking. This is the place of encounter with God as Abba, Father, who invites us into intimate communion with Him, (Matthew 6:6).

Do join us for an hour on **Wednesday afternoons** as we continue with our sessions devised by Contemplative Outreach, an international, interdenominational community committed to the daily practice of Centering Prayer. These provide support, more background, and the time needed to help us to establish a personal Centering Prayer practice. Once we have completed these introductory sessions, we will continue as a group to support our practice of this form of prayer.

The format includes an opening prayer, scripture or spiritual reading, or an excerpt from Fr. Thomas Keating's book *Open Mind, Open Heart* and/or the viewing of a video from the *Spiritual Journey* series. This is then followed by a 20-minute Centering Prayer period. There is then time for faith sharing of experiences and concerns arising from the practice.

It would be lovely if you could join us, even if you cannot attend every week.

Clare Morgan and Helen Healy

Martin Hollins

1944-2025

As a community, we were so sad to hear the news that Martin had died on 12th January. We were comforted in the knowledge that it was peaceful and that he was surrounded by the love of his family, singing his favourite hymns. I cannot remember a time when Martin was not a guiding presence in the Lay Community along with Sheila, and throughout the course of many years, Kathryn, Nigel, Emily, and Abigail. This is a personal tribute to Martin and in the next edition of Listen we will have a full appreciation of his life and achievements and of his many significant contributions to the story of the LCSB.



Martin on the day of Nigel's 50th Birthday

Martin was always gracious, witty, welcoming, kind and a wonderful person to talk to. If I think about the last 5 years while I have been leader, he was ever supportive with a wise and a kind word and, as we grow as a community, I realise what a gift that is. It reminded me of the monastery - when you spoke to the elder monks, you felt that they were full of understanding and compassion. Martin had reached that moment we all aspire to as lay Benedictines, with the end of life so beautifully described in the Prologue to the Rule - "dilatato corde" "with heart overflowing with the inexpressible sweetness of love". Nowhere was this more in evidence than Tuesday nights when right up to the end Martin used to read in Vespers. Emily approached me a year ago and said that her dad still loved saying the prayers, and we decided that it would be lovely for him to do the closing prayer. He poured his heart into it. We who witnessed this knew at what personal cost this was, but love and determination drove him on. The first Tuesday without him was an especially poignant moment.

Inspired by the Shakespeare quote, that "nothing in his life became him like the leaving it" I reflect on the last year. He knew perfectly well what the diagnosis was, and also the prognosis. He was a scientist. At Fr Stephen Ortiger's funeral in February, which was for Martin and all of us the first time to see certain old friends, Martin was telling

people in an open and uncomplicated way that he was suffering from Motor Neurone Disease. It is one of the most challenging diseases and Martin was fearless and trusting, an example of courage and faith in the face of adversity.

Then there was Lourdes in July.



Ezekiel & Joseph, Michael & Liz Hartley, with Sheila & Martin, just after the Anointing of the Sick

Sheila and Martin had never been to Lourdes before and Martin entered into the experience with confidence, grace and humility. Everyone loved him in their group. One of my highlights of this year's pilgrimage was going to visit them in their room and seeing the pleasure they were having in each other's company and enjoying breakfast in bed (served by multiple LCSB members who were working in the catering team). Every moment is precious, and according to Sheila, what Martin most appreciated was the kindness and friendship of everyone on the pilgrimage.

Lastly there was visiting Martin at home at the end of November. I did not know it would be our last visit. I went with Catherine, my daughter, who has also grown up knowing and loving Martin and all the Hollins family. We spent time together while Madeleine slept peacefully in her pram. Talking was a struggle for Martin, but he still engaged us in a passionate discourse, which we understood with help from Sheila. Our last memory is of Sheila and Martin having a gentle stroll arm in arm in their garden. Once again, dear Martin, reaching the end of his earthly journey, was full of what I can only call a heavenly peace.

So, dear Martin, leading where one day we hope to join you, we thank you for all the love and joy you brought to us all, and we pray for your eternal rest and for Sheila and all the family as they grieve your loss.



Chris Knollys

1931 - 2024

Chris and Kate Knollys were amongst the oldest serving members of the Lay Community of St Benedict (previously known as the Worth Abbey Lay Community). Sadly, Kate died in 2008, and so Chris was a widower for 16 years before his own death at the age of 92 on 2 October 2024.

Christopher Francis Knollys was born on 17 November 1931 at the family home in Elstree, in Hertfordshire. He was the oldest of four boys, Geoffrey (who survives him), John RIP (Fr Bonaventure, monk of Ampleforth) and Richard RIP. Their parents were Frederick and Margaret. All four boys were educated at Ampleforth.

After school, Chris travelled to Africa to do some teaching in Uganda and then moved back to Hertfordshire and then London where he worked for Camden Council as a personnel officer and then the NHS as director of personnel in Berkshire until retirement, having settled in Reading where he and Kate raised a family.

He variously served as a part time soldier in the Honourable Artillery Company, completed an MA in theology at Heythrop in the early 2000s, was a school governor and later clerk to governors at Blessed Hugh Farringdon Catholic School in Reading.

He was on the board of the Reading YMCA, volunteered at the local hospice and at the Royal Berkshire Hospital and was involved in several ecumenical and interfaith groups, with Kate in Teams of Our Lady, was in the parish Justice and Faith group, a meditation group and a Greek group exploring the gospels.

He assisted on several Jumbulance trips to Lourdes. As well as being a trained glider pilot, he did several voyages with the Jubilee Sailing Trust. Chris shared these interests with Paul (and later) Hazel Hanson who he met or introduced to Worth and were members of the Lay Community.

Chris enjoyed running and completed a number of half marathons into his 70's. Chris was very interested in politics and belonged successively to the Conservatives, Lib Dems and Labour parties. He campaigned and marched in anti-war, pro EU and climate change rallies.

Gaynor Lloyd (LCSB Seeker) writes: We were fortunate to live in the same parish in Reading (English Martyrs) for 50 years. I would use two words to describe Chris - faithfulness and commitment. Kate and Chris played an active part in the Lay Community of St Benedict all their married lives. But they were also very involved in and committed to the parish community and its activities, and especially to the Teams of Our Lady. Their faith meant action and involvement but in the quiet and gentle way which characterised Kate and Chris.

Chris's (and Kate's) involvement in the Lay Community went back to its earliest days. Fr Aidan remembers coming down to Worth from London in 1972, when Kate was one of the first residents. Chris was on the very first Council in September 1974, along with Peter Gilbert, Ian McGloin, Paul Nunn and Mary Taylor (Ring) with Fr Andrew and Rosemary Albert. Chris continued to serve on various committees over the years and also was involved with his family in the 'Northern' Group in Wolverhampton. Alain recalls that Chris proposed to Kate on a LC holiday in Scotland, possibly on a canal boat or on Iona. Chris was an enthusiastic Cross walker and continued walking well into his 70's.

Erik Pearse recalls first meeting Chris in Edinburgh before setting out on the Scottish Cross, a tough weeklong cross-country trek from Fort William to Iona, via Mull. Chris was 75 and it was his last Scottish Cross and Erik's first. Erik writes: He (Chris) was a great listener, very humble and always charitable, with a nice sense of humour, showing great wisdom in what he said, though he never tried to take over any conversations, always softly spoken. He was a most likeable man, who did much, in his own quiet way, to make the world a better place.

And a last word to Gaynor: Chris was a modest and humble man of great faith. It was a privilege to be his friend. I suspect this is the sentiment of many.

Chris is survived by a son, Mark, and daughters, Claire and Miriam, daughter in law, Samantha, and grandsons, Robert and William.

Fr Chris Dobson



100th Council Meeting

Whose birthday is it in the photo? (This is a trick question.) YES - it was Sharon's! She is holding the cake and she and John were down from Liverpool to have a birthday treat weekend in London. You'll be happy to hear, though, that the birthday treat was not attending Council. The candles and cake were not to celebrate Sharon's special day, much though we love her, but the fact that it was the 100th LCSB Council Meeting.

Our community, a mere half century old, feels like a newborn in comparison to the life of the church and community who hosted us. St Katherine Cree in the heart of the city of London has been standing on the same patch of ground since 1280, serving the residents and workers of the neighbourhood around Leadenhall Street.

Josh Harris, the vicar and a friend, generously offered the use of his beautiful church when I asked him for advice about where we might meet in London. Aidan our most far-flung Council member had said that London was easy for him - even though I'm not sure which bit of getting a 5am train from Newcastle to London on a Saturday morning is easy! Josh and his team could not have done more to make us feel at home. They spring-cleaned their vestry to make room for our meeting, showed us round their beautiful 13th century church and garden and shared their lunch with us.

It was Laurence's last meeting and we were able to thank him for 5 years of generous, unsung service for the LCSB looking after our accounts.

As always, there was a lot to get through and we had some great discussion as we made our way through the agenda. The minutes will be available to look at on the website but by way of summary - here are some key take-aways:

A big thank you to **Emily Willetts** stepping down as our **Safeguarding lead**. She has done so much for our community, notably facilitating our membership of 31:8 to help with our safeguarding, delivering an excellent training to the whole community at this summer's AGM, and refreshing our safeguarding policy. Katherine McDevitt (currently Deputy Safeguarding Lead) takes over with immediate effect. Our thanks to them both.

Pip and Sharon are meeting regularly to continue the work of updating **LCSB data protections** and **secure on-line working protocols and practice**.

The autumn had seen **several successful gatherings**: a great retreat at Stanbrook Abbey for the young adults, happy regional meetings of the Northern, Southern and Wessex and Wales Group, and a beautiful Creative Prayer weekend at Worth Abbey. Special thanks are due to **Emily Hollins** for her commitment and generosity. The community is like a wonderful kaleidoscope of holy activity - give it a shake and you'll see another group of members meeting somewhere else. We all gain from these encounters - even if we are not there in person.

Easter and the Summer Gathering are two rich and important moments in the LCSB calendar. Mary Stocker and her team are already hard at work, analysing figures, responses and finances from last year as they plan for the AGM next August and Aidan and his team are busy planning Easter. You will have seen the email from Sharon this week.

Adam talked about the **Development Plan** - look out for more news about our EGM (Extraordinary General Meeting) in February 2025.



Personal Reflections on the LCSB Summer Gathering

The Summer Gathering was a wonderful multi-generational community celebration "Living Holy Communion."

Adam in his welcome talked about the book "Eat, pray and love" by Elizabeth Gilbert (also a film with Julia Roberts) which for him was what living Holy Communion was about - a mixture of eating, praying and loving together as a community. There was a lot of eating, not only in the refectory, in the barbeque and in tea breaks but we also had Holy Communion in the Abbey Church.

We were warmly welcomed by Abbot Mark and the support of the Monastery seems as strong now as it has ever been, evident not only in making the accommodation available but also through the liturgy, inviting us to join their choir on Sunday and offering the "Booking a Monk" opportunity.

There were plenty of opportunities for prayer in the holy space of the Abbey Church, joining their Office and the beautiful Taizé worship on Saturday evening.

For Jim Willetts, our Master of Ceremonies for the weekend, living Holy Communion is how we as a community can spend time living and working together. Jim has recently taken up bee keeping, so we learnt how bees collaborate closely together in the hive to make honey, and this idea was taken up in some of the workshops run by Smoking Apples Puppetry and Theatre. This group provides creative experiences through puppetry and workshops to help young people and others think about creation in a positive way. Hattie and Molly demonstrated Billie and Buzz and ran creative workshops making model bees and bird feeders. Other creative workshops included photography, creative writing and music giving us the opportunity to work together, renew old friendships and make new ones.

As last year, we had the opportunity for Holy Service with the monks and parish finding us work in the Quiet Garden, monastic estate and parish office garden. We also had time to enjoy ourselves - around the bar in St Mary's, a fantastic BBQ on Saturday night, (with fond memories of our dear Geoff Thompson who always made it look so effortless), entertainment in the review on Sunday night by some very talented members, not forgetting the joyful song by the teens and of course a ceilidh!

The Promise ceremony on Sunday afternoon was a highlight. Anna Emmott became a member after about 20 years of attending LCSB gatherings, as well as Mark Kenny, and Linda Charman in person, while LaVon Shapland beamed in from Oklahoma and Robert Mackay had to delay his Promise as he was travelling back to Scotland and instead made his Promise during Vespers online later in the week.

The AGM on Bank holiday Monday gave us a very clear update on the many LCSB activities, as well as the mandatory safeguarding training delivered by Emily Willetts our Safeguarding Officer and Katharine McDevitt her deputy. A highlight for us was the LCSB Mass in the Unity room following the AGM celebrated by Canon. David Parmiter with Rev Helen O'Sullivan giving an insightful homily and distributing non-Catholic Communion.

We came away very grateful for the way the Lay Community has developed great shoots in many directions over the years, and spiritually uplifted...and I never had time to find out about pickle ball! As the psalm in the creative music group exclaimed "How good and blessed it is when God's people live in unity!" Ps 133

Chris and Angela Walker

Summer Gathering Photos



Jim Willetts and Smoking Apple Puppetry



Make a bee workshop



The BBQ at St Mary's



Marvellous ceilidh band



Lining up for the ceilidh



The LCSB Autumn Talks 2024

One of the things which I find so attractive about the LCSB is its Ecumenical stance and its openness to exploring faith in all its aspects.

The two recent Autumn talks by Janet Lees and Graham Adams invited us to reflect upon very different challenges. In her enthusiastic and inimitable way, Janet outlined her recent pilgrimage from Lands End to John O’Groats. She invited us also to explore the current resurgence in interest in Pilgrimage, and it’s different shapes and meanings. Janet tells us that any walk can be a pilgrimage. It does not have to be official or organised and can be easily adapted to one’s own physical limitations or timescale, and with or without company. Janet enjoyed the intermittent company of people who joined her for short parts of the trip. Janet, who could be described as an activist and a contemplative, undertook the journey on the brink of retirement as she felt burnt out and “running on empty”. It was a time of recharging, refuelling and remaking. The walk was also a reconnection with nature and her book describes the variety of habitats she encountered and the reflections on climate change which they inspired - ‘I Spy for grown ups’. Janet found again a rhythm in her life which was transformational for her and invited us to look at ways that pilgrimage could heighten our awareness of God and the world around us.

Graham’s talk could not have been more different. Following on from his book ‘Holy Anarchy’ he invited us to reflect on the idea of God as child. He pointed out that most of the ways in which we describe God are metaphors but of adulthood, and control - omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience - and even maybe have colonial overtones. We want to know that God is present, he acts, and controls the universe and the future. A child metaphor is subversive. A child is small, vulnerable, powerless, and overlooked, but also curious, creative and playful. Perhaps God’s agency is more like the butterfly than the hurricane. A childlike God could be present in the smallest spaces, and be attentive to places of pain, trauma and abuse. Graham suggested that Black theology, Disability and Queer theology might provide insights here where perspective is very different and focuses on those who are overlooked. In fact a ‘World turned upside down’ like the Gospel message itself.

There is so much to reflect on here.

Both speakers have published books recently and invite us to explore these themes more deeply. Many thanks for your insights and challenges.

Janet Lees: Come Wind Come Weather - Wild Goose publications

Graham Adams: God the Child - SCM Press

Gaynor Lloyd

Recent Event:

CREATIVE PRAYER RETREAT



On the weekend 8-10th November I had a great opportunity to attend a retreat at Worth Abbey. I stayed in St Bruno's with other retreatants, most of whom I didn't know at the beginning of the retreat. It was led by Emily Hollins and focused on the use of our senses in prayer. It included movement as a way of praying, using our whole bodies, and times of silent reflection on the gifts we have received from others and what gifts God has given us.

We went on a reflective walk to the quiet garden and spent time there, speaking to God in the midst of nature. One of the highlights of the weekend was a time of 'Visio Divina' (using pictures to see what God might be saying to each of us). I was amazed and inspired to discover what I and others had experienced by spending 20 minutes using one picture. I was moved at how God spoke to me and others. We also had an hour to have tea and cakes with the monks of Worth Abbey, which was a special time for us to learn about their life here and generally chat to them.

I would recommend a retreat like this to everyone, as God never disappoints when we set time aside to spend with him. Also, I must mention the delicious food, the hospitality of Debbie who served us all weekend, and the comfortable rooms. It was well worth it. I'd definitely like to do it again. We also built a lovely sense of community together and made some new friends.

Therese Teevan





MONASTIC INTERNSHIPS

Worth Abbey, a Benedictine monastery in Sussex, is inviting applications from men between the age of eighteen and thirty-five for a limited number of monastic internships

Experience a two-month stay alongside our monastery, with full board and lodging. Participate in the daily life of the monks, including their prayer and work. Immerse yourself in reading and embrace the wisdom of the monastic tradition



"At the end of the experience I have grown closer to God and know Jesus is the foundation of my life. It has been the happiest and most serene two months of my life."

James, Abbey Intern, December 2024

For further information please visit worthabbey.net/interns or email Fr Luke at interns@worth.org.uk or phone 01342-710370

Are you called to be a Forerunner?



The Forerunner Youth Ministry team is an established community of young adults at Worth School, empowered to provide vibrant and engaging youth ministry in Catholic schools through ongoing ministry training and spiritual formation. Since 2015 we have been bringing fresh models of youth ministry to our pupils and staff by providing opportunities to seek and encounter God.



We believe that our Mission flows most effectively from our Community life where we pray together and experience life together and from our personal and team Formation. We also provide a salary, accommodation (with no bills) and food.

If you are interested in joining us, we would love to hear from you at:

forerunners.worth.org.uk

COMMUNITY - FORMATION - MISSION



Head of Communications

Hours: 11.25 hours per week, flexible hours, will include weekend working

Salary: £7,897.50 pro rata to hours worked

The LCSB, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021 (www.lcsb.uk), wishes to recruit a Christian, who will be part of the community in a communications role. The Head of Communications will be welcomed in our Benedictine charism into a role which will be critical in the LCSB's ability to build our presence in the world as a lay-led, ecumenical, inclusive and inter-generational community.

The job duties will include building a plan for all modes of communication, producing publications and leaflets, coordinating social media and digital outreach, ensuring compliance with Data Protection laws, and communicating with those interested in the LCSB (enquirers, visitors, etc..).

The successful applicant must have excellent communication and influencing skills. Being a resilient self-starter with initiative is essential, as is knowledge of social media. Being able to execute a communications plan, working with a variety of people is critical. Knowledge of the LCSB and its ethos and/or the Benedictine charism together with experience of using social media is preferred but not essential as training will be given.

For more details and to discuss the role, please contact Adam Simon by email at leader@lcsb.uk

To apply for the role please send a CV, motivation letter and two references, including one from your current line manager of at least 2 years (if applicable) to anneheslop@lcsb.uk

Closing Date 21st March 2025

Families Support

Hours: Hours-based contract for an external consultant

Fees: £13.50 per hour

The LCSB, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021 (www.lcsb.uk), is looking for a Christian who will support our Families Ministry.

The job duties will include building communications/resources, participating in large whole community events (Easter and at the Summer Gathering of the Community in August) and working with the Families leadership group to create activities and a support/prayer network for families. The programme of support to families will be in furtherance of the mission of the LCSB to educate young people in the Christian faith in a way which takes into account the ecumenical nature of the LCSB and its Catholic roots.

The successful applicant must have excellent communication skills and experience of liaising with a variety of groups, working with young people, as well as good influencing skills. Knowledge of the LCSB and its ethos and/or the Benedictine charism together with experience of using social media is preferred but not essential.

For more details and to discuss the role, please contact Helen Nolan at lcsb@hellenolan.co.uk.

To apply for the role please send a CV, motivation letter and two references to anne.carroll5@yahoo.co.uk.

Closing Date 21 March 2025