



THE FRIENDS OF MORLEY NEWSLETTER

August 2008

A Letter from the Warden - August 2008

Last week Catherine and I were on holiday on Holy Island. As I type this on my PC, my laptop is sitting on the next desk giving a slideshow of all the photographs that I took - which is in itself rather appropriate as we are right in the middle of our annual Painting & Photography Holiday! Holy Island, or Lindisfarne as it used to be known, is an amazing place. There are only 160 people permanently living there, although this number is increased greatly by tourists and pilgrims whenever the causeway isn't under several feet of water. The effect of the sea on the road reminded me of what our driveway here used to look like before we had it resurfaced in May!

The Island is not just special because of its isolation, but also due to the centuries of prayer and Christian witness that have taken place there since Aidan and Cuthbert arrived 1300 years ago. And that's another similarity with Morley - it may not go back quite so far, but I repeatedly hear visitors comment on the special atmosphere that they sense here as soon as they come through the entrance. It's something that's hard to explain but it can only be due to all the prayers that have been offered up by the many thousands of people who have come through the door both during its time as a Rectory and, more recently, as a Retreat House.

Another feature of Holy Island is the proliferation of churches and retreats that are still based there. At a time when many church buildings are being declared redundant and even some of our larger retreat houses are closing down, it's good to be reminded that people still have a spiritual hunger that can be satisfied by places like Morley and over 200 other centres that the Retreat Association list in this year's programme.

So as we begin to prepare ourselves for the wide variety of events that will take place here throughout the autumn, we thank God for all his provision and we thank you all for your support in so many ways. Hopefully we will see a number of you at the events which are advertised elsewhere in this newsletter.

Jeff Witts

A Day for the Friends of Morley - Monday 15 September 2008

There is still time to book a place for this event, the last occasion when Nicholas will be with us (see inside).

The day will commence with coffee at 10.00 am and conclude with tea and cakes at about 4.30 pm. The day will include some quiet space but will also provide an opportunity for Friends to meet each other and to pray together. The cost for the day will be £20 per person.

Some Friends may like to come to the Quiet Day that will be led by the Revd Katie Tupling on the day after, Tuesday 16 September. We would be glad to offer you Dinner, Bed and Breakfast on the Monday evening. Should you wish to stay for both events we will charge a special rate of £65 per person.

Similarly, if any Friends would like to come and stay on the Sunday evening prior to the Friends' Day, please contact us as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements (details on back page).

Canon Nicholas Henshall, Chair of The Friends

As some of you will already know, Nicholas has been appointed Vicar of Christ Church, High Harrogate in the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds, and will be leaving the area at the end of September. He now writes:

Dear Friends,

In the prologue of John's Gospel, we normally read that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." In fact the Greek says something more like "he pitched his tent among us". In the Old Testament the Israelites live in tents as they journey to freedom, and so does God. Human beings long for order and institution, but the journey of faith is better described as a pilgrimage with tents, and the church more as a movement than an institution.

Living as tent-dwellers can feel quite insecure - we don't always know where we are going to camp, the airbed is uncomfortable, and sometimes the rain gets in at night. It all feels very provisional, and often we long for a bit more order, the comfortable bed, and a roof over our heads. But Jesus' call to us - a call he lives out in the Gospels in a way quite impossible to miss - is a call that says living this way is the only way to live. It is messy and provisional. But that's his way.

I am writing these words as much to myself as to anyone else! I am living through a time of great personal upheaval. We have just moved house from Derby to Harrogate (so that the children can start at their new school in September), but I don't actually finish at the Cathedral until 25 September (a special celebration at 7.30 pm at the Cathedral, to which all are welcome). I am of course at Morley on Monday, 15 September to lead my last day for the Friends; and my last show on BBC Radio Derby is on 21 September.

In the middle of all this I am reflecting a lot on the whole business of stability and where we find it. And of course I am aware that so much of what I leave behind in Derby is in a state of flux; and that of course includes the life and ministry of Morley.

What I have found - slightly to my surprise, but also my relief - is that in the turmoil of change and the instability of living in two places at once, it is the most basic disciplines that have actually re-surfaced. On the train between Harrogate and Derby, or in the glove compartment of the car as I drive up and down the M1, it is my simple, pocket-sized daily prayer book that has turned out to be my constant companion. And in a lay by in the early morning, or sitting half distracted in coach F on the 10.25 am from Leeds, it is the half forgotten disciplines of reflective silence that have reminded me who I am and what I am for.

As I move on, I want to say a big thank you to the Friends of Morley. In the work that we have done together over the last few years I have learnt a great deal from you about what happens when a group is recalled to its primary purpose, and I have become clearer and clearer that it is our quiet role as a dispersed praying community that is the most crucial stability we need. It may be that those involved in the life of a retreat centre cannot physically live in tents; but in the journey of the heart it is the only place to live.

Nicholas

The Friends' of Morley Chair Appeal

The AGM agreed that the Friends would attempt to raise the funds to purchase 40 new chairs for Portway (the Long Room), as the ones presently there are becoming uncomfortable to sit on. Each chair will cost about £75 and we have sufficient funds to go ahead and buy 20 chairs now. We have included a separate flyer inviting contributions towards the remainder.

Christmas Meals at Morley

Last year the House Staff successfully introduced Christmas meals which filled empty space before Christmas and helped to maintain a healthy income for the House.

This year we are advertising on our website already and include a flyer about the meals. Friends have been a great help in publicising events and we would be glad if you could display the flyer for us (if you would like more, please let us know - we would be delighted to send them to you). If *you* would like to bring a group of family or friends we would love to see you!

.....and Looking ahead to House Events in 2009

18th -22nd May: CARM Calligraphy & Prayer Retreat - £200
Peter Walker & The Revd Canon Norman Howes

15th -18th June: Icons - £160
Lionel Wilde

26th -28th June: Licensed to Chill - £105
Liz Babbs

For further information, or to book a place on any of these events, please contact
The Warden (details overleaf).

DON'T FORGET

Friends' Autumn Gardening Day
Saturday 25 October, 10.00 am onwards

A chance to help tidy up the gardens before the winter.
Please bring a packed lunch - drinks will be provided.

Prayer Focus

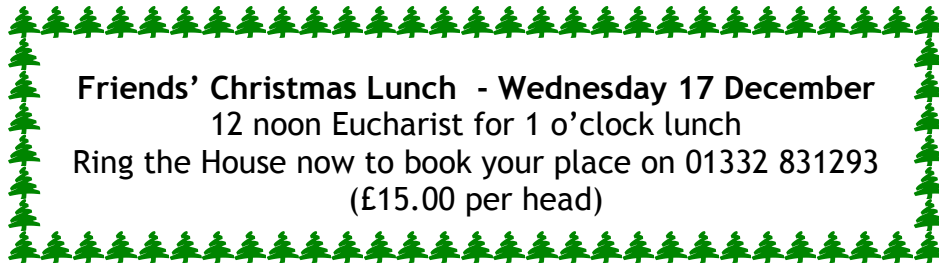
Give thanks for:

- All the Staff at Morley especially the Housekeeping Assistants.
- The fellowship of the Friends of Morley.
- The provision of the resurfacing of the drive.

Please pray for:

- The Staff and Trustees as they work together.
- Nicholas and his family as they move to Harrogate.
- The Friends' Committee as they seek a new Chairman.
- Forthcoming events and especially the Christmas Meals and House Party.

Forthcoming Events at Morley 2008



Autumn Quiet Garden Day - Thursday 2 October
with Pat Gower, Chaplain at Morley.

Bring your own lunch - there is no charge for this day. The House will provide drinks throughout the day.

Ignatian Guided Retreat - Monday 17 - Friday 21 November
with Nan Mumford & Team

Advent Quiet Day - Tuesday 2 December
with The Rt Revd Alastair Redfern, Bishop of Derby.

Christmas House Party - Tuesday 23 - Saturday 27 December
with Morley House Staff

For further information, or to book a place on any of the above events, please telephone The Warden on 01332 831293 (or visit our website www.morleyretreat.co.uk)

A copy of the AGM Minutes is enclosed for your information

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Subscriptions were due in January (£7.00 for individuals and £15 for parishes)
Please make cheques payable to **THE FRIENDS OF MORLEY** and send to the Treasurer at the address below.

Morley Retreat and Conference House, Church Lane, Morley, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 6DE.
Tel: 01332 831293 Email: morleyretreat@btconnect.com www.morleyretreat.co.uk