

The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal

Hollywood Congregation

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Newsletter for the week of Sunday 21st February.

Dear friends,

We continue our journey together during these strange and uncertain times.

I realised the other day that we are one of the very few churches on the island of Ireland where services are celebrated with a congregation present.

In the South all churches were closed after Christmas by the government, in the North nearly all churches are closed through a voluntary agreement with all the major denominations.

I am certainly very glad that we can continue to meet in Hollywood nearly twice a week though I am aware that there are also a good many of you who do not yet feel able to join us and instead join us in spirit.

In Mourne Grange we are again having regular fortnightly services but we will not yet move back to the chapel but continue having the service in Dawn Hall for the time being.

In Clanabogan vaccinations are not yet completed so they will wait with having services until the present lockdown is over. Glenraig is a care home and has to abide by stricter rules than the other communities so they also cannot have services yet. And Ballybay is under severe restrictions from the Irish government so there also all plans are on hold.

Because of all these uncertainties it is not going to be possible to make a program for Passiontide and Easter. Instead I will continue to update our program from week to week and publish it in this newsletter.

Last week I shared with you a letter from the chair of our council of management about the finances of The Christian Community in the UK.

This week I am including our own budget for 2021 which Richard Cooper has prepared.

As you can see we have done well last year, we have not suffered financially during the pandemic because regular donations from individuals and Camphill communities have continued at similar levels and some of you have even increased your contribution. Thank you very much to everyone for your ongoing support!

The shortfall in income from collections, donations, fundraising and special services has been more than made up by the Covid support grant for the self-employed for which I qualified.

This will mean that we will be able to increase our contribution to the general fund this year to help support those congregations who have suffered a greater loss of income.

Also we will be able to pay for painting our house which will start when we have the first spell of good weather and will cost £7500.-.

Ben van Lieshout

Hollywood

For Sunday services, please ring (02890424254), text (07974960570) or email (benvl@onetel.com) to book a place as we can only seat 11-13 people.

February

Thursday 18 th February	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
Thursday 25 th February	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00

Mourne Grange (in Dawn Hall !)

Sunday 21 st February	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.15
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This is the budget for 2021

The Christian Community in Ireland (North)

<u>Budget for 2021</u>	2021	2020	2019	2018
Income	£	£ actual	£ actual	£ actual
Donations pledged	6000.00	8940.00	5780.00	5062.00
Gift aid refund	2700.00	2707.38	2794.16	1400.86
Camphill Donations	15920.00	15920.00	15920.00	17365.00
Donations	2500.00	2195.00	3930.00	4170.62
Collections	1100.00	1101.50	1458.50	979.50
Special Services	1200.00	600.00	1300.00	1442.00
Fundraising	1600.00	327.00	1598.00	1829.92
Bank Interest	25.00	26.66	15.44	59.69
Other	300.00	200.00	670.00	300.00
	31345.00	32017.54	33466.10	32609.59
Expenditure	£	£	£	£
Priest's Living	13800.00	8765.00	13800.00	13800.00
Rates, ground rent	520.00	473.36	513.74	397.84
Insurance	1650.00	1625.41	1573.85	1509.28
Repairs and renewals	200.00	532.79	1221.72	55.00
Electricity	850.00	795.74	841.38	665.83
Gas	1300.00	1200.00	1330.00	1276.00
Water	550.00	542.96	548.90	536.94
Telephone	700.00	695.11	592.47	652.54
Office/ admin.	330.00	451.01	324.76	312.74
General Fund contributions	5960.00	5260.00	5500.00	6000.00
Priests' Retirement Fund	2070.00	2070.00	2070.00	2070.00
Travel expenses	800.00	216.49	1076.37	636.02
Vehicle	2700.00	1570.19	2616.79	4207.26
Vehicle replacement fund (or actual)	1000.00	1000.00	3170.00	1000.00
Vestry	100.00	120.00	134.34	0.00
Bank charges	40.00	34.17	38.20	33.59
Miscellaneous	200.00	202.88	216.63	522.07
	32770.00	25555.11	35569.15	33675.11
Camphill Contributions				
Glencraig	4950.00	4950.00	4950.00	4950.00
Mournegrange	5660.00	5660.00	5660.00	5660.00
Clanabogan	4410.00	4410.00	4410.00	4410.00
Loch Arthur	0.00	0.00	0.00	1445.00
Ballybay	900.00	900.00	900.00	900.00
	15920.00	15920.00	15920.00	17365.00

The gospel reading for Sunday 21 February is Matthew 4:1-11



William Blake, the three temptations

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the loneliness of the desert to experience the tempting power of the adversary.

After fasting forty days and nights, He felt for the first time hunger for earthly nourishment. Then the tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, let these stones become bread through the power of your word."

Jesus answered, "It is written, 'The human being shall not live on bread alone; he lives by the creative power of every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the parapet of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Again a third time, the devil took him to a very elevated place, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. "All this I will give to you," he said, "If you will bow down and worship *me as your Lord.*"

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship God your Lord who guides you and serve him only.'"

Then the adversary left him, and he beheld again the angels as they came to bring him nourishment.

A homily on Matthew 4: 1-11



The tree lives and develops in three zones. It is rooted in the earth, nourished by the soil. It weaves and works in air and light; it blossoms and fruits in the warmth of the sun. In overcoming the three temptations, Christ, the divine human being, clears the three basic areas in which our living souls develop. He reminds us to root ourselves, nourished ‘in the creative power that comes from the mouth of God.’

That is, we are to recognize that we are not fed and sustained by the material nature of bread, but rather by the living power of the universe that God places in the grain. While rooted in God’s creative power, we are to weave in the light and air of the divine world and its lawful order, within the ‘ordering of space, the course of time’. To make one’s ego supreme, to impose one’s own wishes and desires on the world, to test the divine order, is to be like leaves trying to fly—such leaves, separated from the tree, are in fact already dead. And we are to blossom in the warmth of divine love, not in the heat of overbearing pride.

For it is the wise guidance of God that brings us to our full glory and fruitfulness, not our own seeming mastery over the world.

Rooting our souls in God, working and weaving in His light, blossoming in His warmth, we will gradually develop into what God intends us to be—fully *and* divinely human. Overcoming the basic standard temptations, the temptations of materialism and egotistical pride, our true humanity will blossom.

We were created in God’s image. Through Christ’s strength of overcoming, we will weave and work His purpose, in His daylight.

Through Christ we will blossom into God’s likeness.