

The Christian Community in Forest Row

Programme for March- June 2024



Hartfield Road / School Lane Forest Row RH18 5DZ tinyurl.com/CCFR-Home

Dear Christian Community,

Going through Passiontide and Easter, we are able to touch into the oldest Mysteries of the world, which go back many thousands years before Jesus Christ incarnated on Earth. These ancient Mysteries were filled with a wisdom that does not have its roots in the earthly, physical world, but in the spiritual, where all the knowledge exists before it is grasped and interpreted by human comprehension and thought. But these Mysteries took place in the earthly world and they are the origin of life on earth - the “breath of God”, which carries eternal life into the physical and beyond it.

What the initiates had to go through if they were to gain the wisdom of the new life and how to cultivate it on Earth, whether in the Egyptian or Greek mysteries, was to go through death. They had to be brought to the very point of death through exercises, so that their physical body would slow down, would come to a still point with all its desires and wishes, would come to the point of death, so that they could connect with something that has nothing to do with the physical, but is of a spiritual nature. Preparation for this required inner and outer exercises and the willingness to sacrifice some of their earthly existence in order to gain spiritual knowledge. It was not always easy to foresee whether the initiate would withstand the trials of initiation, but if they did, they would be able to connect only with their higher being, their eternal self, that lives through the lifetimes. Additionally, they learned to recognise the forces behind it, that make the soul live and strengthen it eternally. They would carry this knowledge with them out into the world, where they could teach others to be able to see and recognise the forces of eternal life on earth.

Jesus Christ went through a process of preparation, similar to what happened in the ancient mysteries. This preparation happened during his early life, up to the age of 33 years, when he taught, performed signs and healed human beings. Going through the open mystery of his death on the cross, he prepared the ground for humanity to tread a new mystery-path, the path of

gaining eternal life through him, so that our souls may live after death.

Our task is to get to know him through the cycle of the year, accompany him through Passiontide and death and rediscover him at Easter as the living and creative force that fills our hearts.

“Were not our hearts burning within us, as he spoke with us on the way?”

In the Easter story of the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), two of Christ’s disciples did not recognise Resurrected One as he was walking with them on the way to Emmaus until he broke the bread and gave it to them. Only then did they realise who he was. It took that long, until their hearts opened! They walked together, had a conversation but only through him sharing the bread with them - through communion - their heart, the organ of inner cognition, was able to grasp him and his presence. Christ wants to share his communion with us; he does not keep anything to himself, because it is only through sharing that we can take part on his love and life and multiply it.

At Whitsun a new community is founded, a community of people who can unite themselves around him, no longer bound by nationalities, borders, languages and blood relations. They are open, accepting and bring about a new culture, based on a new mystery: the mystery of life and love, which streams forth into the world through communities who unite themselves for the higher purpose - around him. He is capable of uniting people, through him our eyes and hearts open, if we choose to walk the path with him.

May he strengthen us with his courage to live and work on the earth, since it is our task to re-enliven and bring meaning to it through Him.

Nataliia Shatna

Please note that the church is closed on Mondays, and in term-time, Forward Education have exclusive use of the community spaces.

Absences:

UK Synod in Stourbridge: 4-8 March.

International synod in Stuttgart: 27-31 May.

Nataliia will be on a trip to Auschwitz, 13-16 March and on Confirmation Retreat in London 2-4 April

Tom will be at the International Lenkers' Conference near Munich, 3-6 June

Selina Horn is currently on leave.

Picture: Ninetta Sombart, "He is not here, He has risen".

The Christian Community in Forest Row has a website which includes an online diary, where any new events will be listed. You can find this by using this shortened link: tinyurl.com/CCFR-Home

We also send out a weekly Update by email. This contains news about events and a contemplation on the gospel of the week or the festival. You can sign up for this by sending us an email at tccinfr@gmail.com.

The Christian Community exists through the generous donations of its members and friends. If you would like to make a one-off donation or a standing order, our account details are below. If you are a UK taxpayer, please ask us for a Gift Aid form or download one here:

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