

The Christian Community

MOVEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS RENEWAL

Forest Row Congregation

June, 2025

Dear friends, dear congregation,

It is a true blessing to live with the seasons and festivals of the Christian year. This rhythm is ever-evolving, ever-changing—just as we are, just as the world around us is. Each Christian festival offers its own story, its own colours, its own epistle. Each one mirrors something of the state of the earth and the human soul at that time of year.

Eastertide brings us grace and life—gifts we carry into the summer months and beyond. Nature is in full bloom, the sun stands at its peak, and the air hums with warmth and vitality. Life stirs in and around us, filling us with energy and hope. Christ has given Himself—freely and fully—so that we might be graced with life in its truest sense.

This life moves our spirits forward. It calls us to change, to question, to grow. Perhaps this is why I sometimes feel I don't have enough time—because life is flowing and I'm trying to keep pace. Maybe these are His life forces moving through me, carrying me from one task, one place, one moment to another—if only I can let Him be.

After midsummer, when the sun stands its longest in the sky, a new voice rises from the altar: the voice of John the Baptist, crying in the wilderness. Summer contains not only abundance, but also desert. The sun blazes, yet in the desert, there is little growth, little change. Water is scarce. We may feel stuck, longing for movement, for transformation.

It is in these deserted places—in loneliness, in dryness, in silence—that we can feel that our connection to life is lost. Perhaps we have drifted from our true selves, caught in too much outward activity, while our inner voice waits unheard.

And yet, from this place, John calls to us: 'Repent! Change your heart and minds!' His is not a cry of condemnation, but a call to renewal. The old life—isolated, dried out—cannot carry us forward. He invites us to bring our brokenness into the light, to let Christ's life shine on it. For he does not judge. He understands life.

'Knock, and the door will be opened. Ask, and you will receive.' We don't think of knocking when we are enjoying abundance, but when we are in need. And he is always there—waiting, ready to pour grace upon us, because he has already chosen us.

And the one whom he has chosen is a human soul—a being composed of both light and shadows, like the guests at the wedding feast that we hear of at Michaelmas. Our spirit longs to be seen, to wear a garment of grace, to stand in love. Yet it takes courage to step forward, to receive what is being offered to us.

May the brokenness of our souls and of this world not keep us from the love of God, which flows toward us in every moment. May the forces of light and life in this season plant mustard seeds of courage within us—seeds that will grow into compassion, kindness, and understanding for one another and for the earth.

May we find the strength to accept what cannot be changed—and the courage to change what can be transformed within ourselves, and in the world.

Wishing you joy in planting your mustard seeds,

Nataliia Shatna

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On 16th August from 3pm-5pm (with breaks) Tom is offering a theological seminar, **Repairing what was broken**. The New Testament contains many images of salvation, which have been developed over the centuries. We will look at some of these, with Rudolf Steiner's lecture, *The Etherisation of the Blood* as background reading. Please register your interest at tinyurl.com/CCFR-AugSem

The day workshop on the **Tourmaline**, which was postponed in April, will now take place on Saturday, 28th September. Please sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/CC-Tourmaline>

On Sunday, 14th September, 4pm-5.30pm, we will look at examples of altar pictures from other congregations of The Christian Community and hear about the criteria for an altar painting in The Christian Community.

We are hoping to restart a parent and toddler group. More details will be announced soon.

We are very excited to be able to welcome Laurie Portocarrero and Glen Williams for a staged reading of Glen's play, **Fire in the Temple**, on 14th November, 7-9pm. This extract from the publicity describes the play:

One of the most influential spiritual teachers of the 20th century joins with the archangel. Michael to confront mysterious demons in 1923 Europe, as the Nazi party is beginning to emerge. Crafted from actual events and discourse, Fire in the Temple dramatizes the last days of teacher and clairvoyant Rudolf Steiner, in a rigorously researched drama.

Some of us may remember Glen reading extracts from the play in 2023. This dramatized reading promises to be even more fascinating.

Our rich programme of concerts continues, with a piano recital on 4th July, the **Trio Taliesin** making their debut in Forest Row on 12th September, the **Stahlquartett**, Dresden on 5th October, featuring the Stahlcello (steel cello), to include new music composed for this occasion by Gregers Brinch and Nicholas Korth. More details will be available closer to the time. Meanwhile you can find out more about the fascinating Stahlquartett here: <https://www.stahlquartett.de/en/media1.html>. Later in the Autumn, we welcome back our own Julian Broughton along with Miriam Turner for their programme, **The Company of Two**, on 23rd November.

Dear parents, dear friends,

A new school year begins, and we are looking forward to embarking on a new Confirmation journey. If you have children of 13-14 years of age and want to accompany their inward and outward journey into adulthood, find out more about religion, Christianity, life and death, the Bible and explore "what makes us human" and much more. You are welcome to come to a conversation about what Confirmation is and why it is important to explore religious and spiritual questions at that age.

Please let me know if you are interested. We will begin our Confirmation lessons on Friday, 19th September, at 4 pm and hold them weekly in term time.

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