

THE FRIENDS OF JULIAN OF NORWICH



Christmas Newsletter 2018

Message from the Chair, Shirley Buxton

Dear Friends & Companions,

'Faith is our light in darkness and our light is God the everlasting day.'

As the days here in the northern hemisphere shorten, the notion of light pouring into our lives is so poignant. The season of Advent invites us to step back from the pressures of commercial Christmas and ponder on the true message of God coming to earth in human form. It is our chance to focus on the light that the Christ child brings into our troubled world.

For those of you in the southern hemisphere, you will be experiencing 'the everlasting day', as you enjoy the long hours of summer. I shall be in Australia during December and wonder how this will extend and enrich my understanding of the Advent season. Julian's words not only span the centuries but reach around the whole world. It is remarkable how Julian's message is spreading and awakening a desire for a deeper relationship with God in so many people. As Friends and Companions of Julian, we aim not

only to deepen our own faith but to share Julian's Revelations of Divine Love with others.

As I wish you all a Christmas filled with Joy, Love and Peace, I leave you with another quote from Julian's Revelations of Divine Love:

'He is our true Peace.'



MANY THANKS!

We are grateful to all those who gave their time to the running of the Friends of Julian this year, particularly the Trustees and Volunteers.

We welcome three new Trustees: Fred Thompson, one of our Companions; Hilary Wakeman founder of the Julian Meetings, who has recently moved back to Norwich; and Sally-Anne Lomas, who directed the BBC4 documentary 'The Lost Manuscript: Julian of Norwich' and presented a captivating Annual Julian Lecture this year.

Following on from a very imaginative paper outlining a vision of the Julian site presented by Fr. Brendan and Presvytera Sharon Pelphrey; Howard Green (FJN secretary), Sally-Anne Lomas and Canon Peter Doll have been invited to meet with the Trustees of All Hallows to consider some exciting possibilities for the future development of the Julian Shrine, the Julian Centre and All Hallows House. Read more in the article, 'New Visions' and contact us with your thoughts and ideas.

A number of new volunteers have joined the team, each bringing special gifts and skills. The re-ordering of the Julian Library is reaching a point where we will have room to acquire more of the many books published on Julian that are not on our shelves. We look forward to extending the space for the Reference section so it is easier to access our unique collection of books and papers relating to Julian. There are also many others working to further knowledge of the Lady Julian and her 'Revelations of Divine Love', throughout world. We offer a huge thank you to all who contribute in so many different ways.

Finally, two wonderful Priests.

We are very grateful for a generous gift: Canon Michael McLean, who died earlier this year, has left the Friends of Julian a legacy of over £63,500. The Trustees are mindful that this should be used in a way that is a fitting tribute to a Priest whose vision and love of Julian and the church has contributed so much to setting up the Friends and the Julian Centre. Currently it is set aside in an investment account.



We are sad that Fr. Christopher Wood, Rector of St Julian's Church is leaving Norwich at the end of January. Fr. Christopher has embraced the Shrine with enthusiasm and empathy and given all who enter a warm welcome and delivered entertaining and informative talks on Julian. He has also welcomed all denominations to worship in this house of God. We give him our heartfelt thanks and best wishes for his onward journey to pastures new.

Shirley Buxton - Chair



NEW VISIONS

Change is in the air; not just falling leaves and the turn of the season as the days shorten into winter but change in the form of exciting new opportunities.

With Sister Pamela's departure and the uncertainty over the future of the All Hallows House there is much discussion afoot about the future purpose of the buildings on the Julian pilgrimage site.

There is a desire to update both the Julian Centre and All Hallows House to create a Julian Pilgrim Site that adequately reflects and responds to the growing interest in Julian's writing. Father Brendan and Presvytera Sharon Pelphrey have outlined a vision for a future Julian Pilgrim site which might include/combine a welcome and information centre including audio visual displays about Julian; a café and book store and library; a spiritual retreat centre; an education/research/study/publishing centre; and a spiritual counselling centre.

Canon Andy Bryant, chair of the Community of All Hallows Trust is bringing together a group of people representing a wide spectrum of interest in Julian, including Christians from many denominations, academics, writers and historians to discuss a new vision for Julian's shrine in the 21st century. The Friends will be active participants in this process and with this in mind the Trustees are having a brainstorming day to explore what is the unique contribution that the Friends can make to this opportunity. There is broad agreement from the Trustees that we are ready and welcome for change and open for discussion of new ways of collaborating with others to do justice to Julian's historical and spiritual importance on the King Street site.

If anyone has ideas or experiences of using the Julian Centre which they would like to contribute to the discussion - please email the Trustees at admin@juliancentre.org

Sally-Anne Lomas - Trustee



SOLITUDE & PILGRIMAGE RETREAT - MY REFLECTIONS

By Glenis Lucas

The retreat, on 12th and 13th October 2018, took place in the sacred space of St Julian's Church in Norwich, and was facilitated by the Rt Revd Stephen Platten, Dean of Norwich 1995-2003.

Stephen gave four addresses over the two day retreat - themes from the book of Margery Kempe, from Lynn, and the Divine Revelations of Love by Julian of Norwich. Medieval contemporaries, he talked of their very different lives, personalities; their pilgrimage and spirituality.

40 to 50 participants keenly listened to Stephen's addresses, interspersed with readings and silences, with hospitality at the Julian Centre. We were blessed with glorious late summer sun, enabling us to have quiet time in the Julian garden.

There was time for thoughtful contribution, fruitful discussion and insights from both books. We explored our solitude and our shared pilgrimage; our prayerfulness and contemplation; our need for

assurance, enfolded in God's love as we journey.

Margery's and Julian's faith and hope through their enlightenment, and the very real revelations speak to us vividly today. They draw us outward and onward with a deepening in-dwelling in Christ - drawing us to openness and oneness.

I am far, I am near,

I am here, I am now.

This he knows, this I know

© Glenis Lucas

A booklet of Stephen Platten's talks will be available soon.



COMMENTS FROM ATTENDEES

“I think everyone there would take something different away with them. For myself I came away thinking about how we as individuals and as churches treat people who are ‘different’. Margery, in spite of her strange unconventional behaviour, which might even have been as a result of a mental condition, was listened to by many church leaders. Would we be as welcoming now?”

“Our thanks go to Revd. Platten for leading us in his talks, answering our questions and enabling us to discuss a variety of topics. Also thanks to the volunteers who kept us supplied throughout the time with refreshments.”

Pauline W.

“This was my first ‘Retreat’ at St. Julian’s Church and as I am not a Christian, it is still novel to me to share an event with Christians, Vicars, Fathers, former Deans and ‘people of the cloth’ in general! I found Stephen Platten approachable and easy to listen to. I enjoyed learning more about Margery and Julian and it was interesting to hear other’s views on both of these incredible women in the discussion sessions. A highlight for me was Sheila Tolley’s Julian reading which she conveyed with such understanding and spiritual insight that I was quite moved.”

Jo W.

A SPECIAL MESSAGE If you’ve received this newsletter by post and you would be happy to receive an email copy in future, please send your email address to us at admin@juliancentre.org. This would make our communication with you so much easier, and save valuable funds. Thank you.

The FACE of JESUS is always
looking at us:
Sorrowfully when we suffer
compassionately when we sin
Glad & merry partially now
& fully in heaven



THE JULIAN BOOK CLUB

The Julian Book Club lovingly meets in The Julian Centre each month, led by Howard Green, Secretary of the Friends of Julian, to discuss Julian's Revelations of Divine Love. Julian received sixteen showings or visions, and we study one vision each month.

As a group of people from all walks of life, we read during the preceding month and discuss what Julian's writings mean to us personally; how the content of the writings affect our every-day living. Do we merely dip into the writings and perhaps read a sentence now and again, or does Julian speak to us through her visionary words on a much deeper level? Her writings seem to be 'timeless' and, as pilgrims on our journeys, speak to us as clearly now

If you wish to run your own Julian Book Club, we will be happy to ask our designer to print you up some professional-looking flyers free of charge for you to publicise it.

A FLOWING INSPIRATION

Hot on the heels of the first meeting of Howard's Book Club, we received delivery of two new Julian books. First, a lovely new book from Sr. Elizabeth Ruth Obbard, richly illustrated - and secondly, a new book from Veronica Mary Rolf in IVP's 'Explorer's Guide' series.

as when they were written centuries ago.

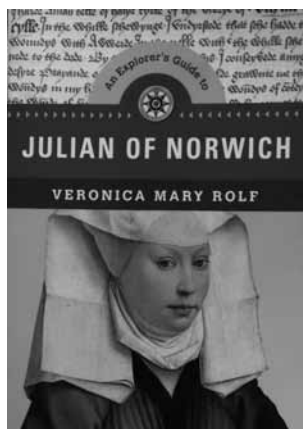
If you live locally and would like to learn more of this truly beautiful, spiritual mystic, who reaches out to us all through her unique spiritual awakening and love of God, then please join us at our meetings which take place on the first Friday of the month: from 3.20pm to 4.50pm. Refreshments are available.

For further information, please Google 'julian centre book club' or ring the Julian Centre on 01603 767380, or simply pop in next to St Julian's Church off Rouen Road, NR1 1QT.

You will be welcomed - as always - with a hot drink, biscuits, and a smile!

Sheila Tolley, CJN

Veronica Mary Rolf is a former actress, scholar, playwright, lecturer on Theology and Christian Mysticism, among many other accomplishments. Having taught many courses on Julian she is keen for others to do so too, hence this volume. With its dramatic cover it took my eye, so I began to read – and couldn't put it down! She is an excellent communicator and takes the reader along with her on a romp through Julian's times, before exploring the Revelations one by one. Each includes a substantial quotation from Julian's text, then Veronica Mary's overview of it. 'Julian Gems' are highlighted. Her style is lively and engaging and it is an excellent accompaniment to Howard's chosen translation.



Sr. Elizabeth's book '*A Revelation of Love*' is also an excellent accompaniment, but in a different way. Sr. Elizabeth is an enclosed Carmelite Sister, well known through her beautifully illustrated writings on the mystics in the New City 'For Everyone' series, this present volume being the latest. Sr. Elizabeth uses a translation of the Paris Manuscript by Josef Pischlar MHM, which she has edited and rewritten at his request, his first language is not English. She has arranged the text in 'Showings', rather than chapters. This work is richly illustrated with Sr. Elizabeth's beautiful 'Roundels' – simplicity, in black and white, which seem to distil key points of the Showings into visual 'aides memoires', encouraging the reader to pause, reflect and absorb the meaning.



SR ELIZABETH OBBARD'S GIFT

The Julian Centre has also received a very special gift from Sr. Elizabeth; a book hand written and hand illustrated in colour (see main image opposite), which distils the text into a short passage, then concentrates it further into one simple drawing. This beautiful book is kept, securely, in the Reference section of the Julian Centre Library but is available for inspection on request. (So do visit and 'taste and see'.)

It was her two lovely books and the thought that doodling is a good way of note taking in lectures, or even in a Book Club discussion, which led to a few of us from the Book Club meeting to explore the text with crayons, paint, pastels etc. in a silent prayerful atmosphere. So we have met from 10am to 12noon on alternate Fridays, ending with a simple, voluntary sharing of what Julian's text has revealed to each of us, followed by the Grace. Our next meeting on 7th December will include a soup lunch, as it is on a Book Club day. *A Volunteer.*



PASS IT ON! WHY NOT!

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY, HOWARD GREEN

Dear Friends,

Have you been enthused by anything you've encountered recently about Julian? If so, do let us know! A few words of appreciation; a wee article a few score words long, maybe; even a longer appreciation of something you've found really worthwhile. It could be a book, an article, a podcast, a TV programme, a website posting. We often hear of such things verbally in the Julian Centre, but it seems a pity that other Friends don't hear much of what people have enjoyed.

Do please send us whatever you want, however you want it, and we promise to get it out there for the benefit of the other 700 Friends of Julian worldwide!

Touching opportunities opened up by eBay, of all things

Who would have thought that selling books and gift items from the Julian Centre via eBay would open up a precious line of communication with people all over the world? We have a wonderful volunteer, Stephanie, who has been tutoring us into making our stock more widely available by using eBay (and we're planning to add Amazon shortly). One of the key

things about online selling is that everyone has the right to comment on their experience. We are extremely proud of our unblemished feedback which has been achieved solely through the assiduous carefulness of volunteers in a.) providing an excellent service and b.) in working their socks off to resolve things quickly when they go wrong, as they inevitably do once in a while. The lovely thing is that, in amongst all the back and forth communication, we are encountering some extremely touching and sometimes quite personal opportunities for communicating with Friends – and potential Friends. These interchanges make all the staring at screens and tapping away on laptops worthwhile!

'Thank you for posting my order so quickly. I am delighted and have already decided on a place in my Icon Corner where Julian will feel at home. I was so pleased to also buy a postcard of the cell which brought back vivid memories of a visit there. Thank you for making what might have been a routine purchase so enjoyably personal.' Kim

SPREAD THE WORD...

...WE'RE 26TH ON TRIP ADVISOR'S NORWICH ATTRACTIONS!

TripAdvisor is the world's largest travel review site, and helps millions of visitors plan their perfect trip.

Visitors to the Julian Shrine frequently tell us how helpful it was to read comments from previous visitors when planning their own visit.

Having positive and favourable recommendations on TripAdvisor is a brilliant (and free) way of spreading the word about Julian, particularly to visitors who have little or no prior knowledge about Julian.

TripAdvisor lists in order of popularity over 100 things to do and see in Norwich. Thanks to the very positive '5 Star Reviews' from recent visitors, the Julian Cell and the Julian Centre are the 26th most popular visitor

destination in Norwich. This is an impressive achievement for a small Centre which is run entirely by volunteers and wouldn't it be wonderful to see Julian even higher up the Norwich TripAdvisor charts as it will boost Julian's profile locally and internationally!

To submit a review simply search Google for 'TripAdvisor Julian of Norwich'.

Thank you and we hope to see you again soon here in Norwich.

Please note that the TripAdvisor listing, which is St Julian's Shrine, refers of course to the Shrine within St Julian's Church.

Volunteer, Stuart Tinkler

CIRCLE DANCE AT THE JULIAN CENTRE

3.15pm on Wednesdays – a flurry of activity – chairs piled over there – can you help me move this table? Thanks. I'm sure I brought my shoes...a pile of autumn leaves in the centre...people gather around, link hands...now, light the candle and...hush...music fills the room and the dance begins.

In the break, refreshed by fruit juice and biscuits, someone asks "What does Circle Dance mean to you?" Some of the reactions were:

- Life giving • Dancing together • My heart is lifted
- Circle dance means music, movement, harmony, joy and friendship
- My moving meditation to beautiful music from our wonderful world
- Circle Dance allows me to be myself. I am accepted as me by all my friends there

One of us was moved to compose a Circle Dance Haiku:

Dancing together

Transported by the music

My heart is lifted

We dance on a while longer ending by sending out the light from the candle to those in need. Hugs for all before we go. See you next time.

For further information please phone 01603 664913 evenings or 01603 767380 Wednesday 10.30am – 2.00pm. Circle Dance 3.15pm to 5.30pm Wednesdays.

JULIAN FAR-FLUNG FRIENDS

There are Friends of Julian all over the world and 14 of them are the only ones in their particular countries. Sheila Upjohn, a Foundation Member who lives in Australia, (pictured below giving a presentation in Sydney) wonders if scattered Friends might be linked by forming a contemplative prayer group in their own area.

If individual Friends, in any country, were to consider starting a group close to home to meet for contemplative prayer, it would affirm our global link. Do contact us for help with resource material: admin@juliancentre.org

We are well aware of a long-established grouping in many countries known as the Julian Meetings. They meet 'in silence with God' but don't necessarily take inspiration from *The Revelations of Divine Love*. Here we are sometimes asked if we are affiliated. No, but we have a good relationship and are happy to pass on information. Their website is www.thejulianmeetings.net

There are various other groups as well that meet regularly in St Julian's Church, then they come into the Julian Centre for tea and coffee.



'WE RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF YOUR DATA...'

How many of those emails did you get, I wonder, earlier this year? We've addressed the legal requirements of adhering to the Data Protection Act 2018 (which incorporated all the elements of Europe's GDPR) in our circumstances and you can read our simple Privacy Notice by visiting juliancentre.org/community-downloads/. Or you can ask us to send you one if you'd prefer.

The most important thing we think you will want to know is that, if people have asked to be a Friend of Julian, we don't feel that we need to then secure their consent to hold their data. We're processing your data under the legal heading 'legitimate interest'. We will, of course, invite people in every email to unsubscribe if they wish and remind you of the same in our newsletters once in a while.

If you have any questions or concerns, do feel free to contact our Secretary via the Julian Centre or at howard_green@btinternet.com.

A COMPANION'S REFLECTION

By Fred Thomson, CJN and Trustee

Julian and her book 'Revelations of Divine Love' have been a large part of my life since I first discovered her in my late thirties. I became a Friend in 2004 and a Companion a while later in 2012.



Reading 'Revelations' for the first time was compelling. Julian's insights and descriptions of God's all embracing and impenetrable love for us - His wayward and rebellious children - is astounding. Reflecting on her insights and thoughts increased my love of quiet, reflective prayer.

My decision to become a Companion seemed therefore, a natural progression for me and what a blessing and a joy it has been. This is especially so when I consider our fellowship with Julian and with each other around the world. An important aspect of being a Companion, for me, is that we are a prayerful presence

in the now of our times and in our particular geographical place; being witnesses to Christ and living in the spirit of Julian, as we are praying for our fellow human beings and for the needs of our local situations and the world.

We welcomed three new Companions at the Julian Festival this year - now twenty-eight and there are some others exploring whether they will also become Companions. If you feel you would like to apply please find out more from our website and consider whether you wish to contact the Julian Centre to take it further.

JOIN OUR TEAM...

Do you know someone, or would you, like to join our team of Volunteers? Some volunteers come in once a month, or help on those very busy days, while others come in once or twice a week or to do specific tasks. We all fit into roles that suit us best. Whether you enjoy greeting people or burying yourself in the computer there is a place for you. And then there is the outreach... you don't have to be resident in Norwich to become part of the team! We have invaluable help from Bournemouth to Australia!



JULIAN FESTIVAL 2019

The Julian Festival will be back for 2019 as a three day event on Thursday 9th, Friday 10th and Saturday 11th May – several events are being planned and more details will be advised in our 2019 Easter Newsletter. The Annual Lecture will take place on Saturday 11th May and be given by Revd. Bruce Batstone CJN.

The Julian Centre can supply a list of places to stay in and around Norwich for those wishing to come for the three days. Please contact us at The Julian Centre, St Julian's Alley, Rouen Road, Norwich, NR1 1QT
Tel: 01603 767380 Email: admin@juliancentre.org

HELP US SAVE VALUABLE FUNDS!

If you've received this newsletter by post but you would be happy to have an email copy in future please send us your email address: admin@juliancentre.org. The more people that we can contact by email the more funds we can save.
Thank you.



THE JULIAN CENTRE CHRISTMAS CLOSING

The Julian Centre will be closing for the whole of the week beginning 24th December (Christmas Eve) but opening on Friday 28th December only, and reopening in the New Year on Wednesday 2nd January 2019. St. Julian's Church should be open as usual.

**To every Member from the Trustees
and Volunteers:**

**A blessed and happy
Christmas**



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