



## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

It is encouraging that the work has continued to grow here at Soul Marks, with many workshops becoming regular features in the diary, particularly the Lent and Advent Art and Prayer days at Leith School of Art and Lochiehead. The Rev Carrie Upton has written about the importance of Soul Marks' involvement in the Sick Kids Memorial Service, a partnership in its 4<sup>th</sup> year.

The work at Cranhill Parish Church came to an end at Easter, after much fruitful work over the last 6 months. We hope to feature this in the next newsletter and give news of the continuing partnership with the Church of Scotland Priority Area Commission.

A wonderfully colourful symbol emerged after a day of working with the Methodist Church to produce a tapestry representing the weaving together and amalgamating of the 11 congregations and circuits around Edinburgh, Lothian and Forth areas. This will continue to be worked on through the year by all the

congregations.

The beginning of Lent saw the culmination of much work by many people for the 'Retreat in the City' with Jean Vanier [the founder of L'Arche and Faith and Light]. Having been involved in the planning for over a year, Carol latterly took on the co-ordination of the worship, the creation of the worship spaces and the leading of a workshop.

The international communities of L'Arche and Faith and Light contributed by posting back to Carol dove templates that had been coloured and decorated with names and images. These were suspended in the main worship space to create a spectacular visual message of peace and love from around the world.

Celia is proving invaluable in helping Carol with the growing amount of administration needed to keep up with the work. We are very pleased to welcome to our Board of Trustees Alan Kimmit, who brings a wealth of experience.

### Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh: Memorial Service

On the last Sunday in November each year families and friends gather for The Royal Hospital for Sick Children's Memorial Service. It is open to anyone who has experienced bereavement through the death of a child and is attended by children and adults from a variety of faith backgrounds.

Last November was the fourth year in a row I have asked Carol to work with me. Carol and I meet over the summer months to plan the content and design of the service. We create a sacred space and a liturgy that invite people to participate in whatever ways feel right for them. Activities, words and music are written and selected to be open, inclusive and accessible to everyone.

Carol's contribution to the Memorial Services is invaluable. She brings a seemingly endless supply of workable ideas that help people express their

sorrows and hopes. We have made paper boats and set them sailing down a magnificent river; we have decorated stars and suspended them to glitter in candle light; and at the most recent service we made lilies and placed them on a desert of sorrow to symbolise the gentle flowering of hope in despair.

Grief is a personal journey and some families find it helpful to return to the service each year while others come only once. After each Memorial Service people often tell me how important it is to have a time and space to remember their children. They also say that being with other families reminds them they are not alone in their grieving. It is not only Carol's artistic gifts that help to make the Memorial Service so meaningful, but also her skills as a sensitive liturgist and pastor.

*Carrie Upton, Chaplain*



## A Place to Meet by the Well

How to ensure that our conference became a place of meeting and of transformation?

During 2005 and 2006, we at Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales, had been encouraging our member-denominations to address urgent questions of ministry and collaboration, at local and at national levels, and in conversation with one another. The culmination of this process of discussion was to be a conference of denomination leaders, clergy and laypeople, held in the town of Carmarthen, in south Wales, in the autumn of 2006.

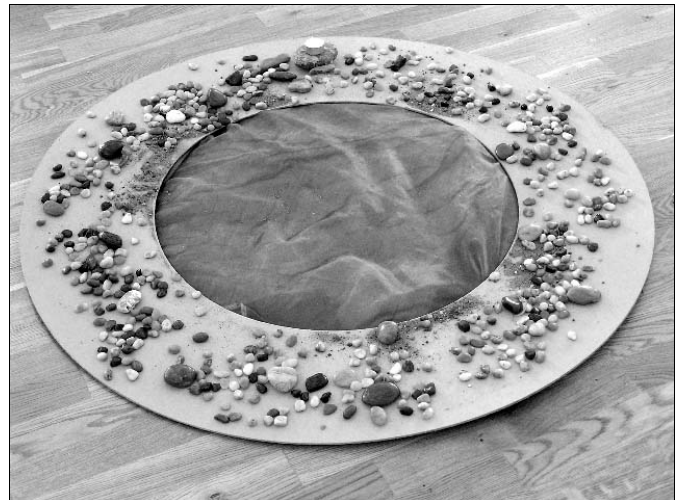
It's probably fair to say that most people weren't thrilled at the thought of "another conference", and so our task was to ensure that, while providing space for serious discussion, our conference also sought to provide something hopeful and new.

We had a vague sense that the way forward was to engage seriously with the implications of spiritual ecumenism, and to ensure that those who gathered at Carmarthen, with their differing traditions and expectations, were allowed space to share their stories, drink deeply and be renewed, all in an atmosphere which took worship and prayer seriously.

We soon discovered that realising this vision was no easy task. But, inspired by Soul Mark's work at previous events and guided by Carol's advice, we began to make our vision clear. We zoomed in on a story from the Gospels, selecting Jesus's encounter with the Samaritan woman in John 4. Our conference then also had its title, "By the Well". Soon, it also had its narrative – a move from spiritual dryness, failure and self-examination on the first day, through an encounter with wellsprings of living water on the second day, to the replenished and refreshed farewells on the third day. Then, through Carol's designs, we also had a visual scheme to support our ideas – we would pepper the conference centre with representations of wells, large and small, which changed over the course of the conference, and the whole event would be marked by a striking movement from arid yellows and greys on the first day, to fresh blues and silvers on the second, to verdant golds and greens on the last.

And, with Carol's guidance and vital input, we pulled it off. Getting people to talk openly, be still, and engage with things that reach beyond structures is not an easy task. It takes careful preparation and even a little courage. Here in Wales, I hope it's set the pattern for a different sort of ecumenical engagement over the next few years.

*Siôn Rhys Evans*



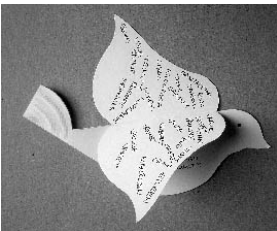
*Cytûn: Churches Together in Wales*

Cytûn challenges and enables Christians in Wales to deepen their relationship with God and with each other – witnessing, worshipping, working, praying together, in the name of Christ.

## A Retreat In The City: Jean Vanier

The moment I entered the meeting room at the Jean Vanier retreat I was amazed to see hundreds of paper doves hanging beautifully from the ceiling! It was a wonderful focal point and gave a sense that something very special was going to happen during this Retreat time. Each dove was carefully tied on a string and was linked to the other doves moving gently in the air as people passed underneath. Each one was unique - either carefully cut out with painted designs, or more simply coloured with pens and characteristic of having been "worked on" by many hands.

The doves became a talking point - "Whose idea was it to make the doves"? "Where did they come from"? "How symbolic to use the dove as a sign of Peace"! Each conversation became an opportunity to share about Faith and Light and L'Arche and our world-wide diversity.

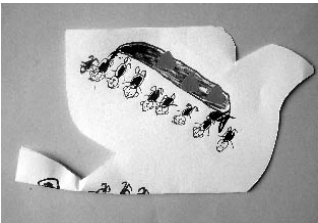


Carol told the story of how she had asked the F.L. and L'Arche communities to..... "send a paper dove as a sign of peace" and on that very morning as we began the Retreat she had



discovered another package from the postman - this time enclosing a Dove from Faith and Light in SERBIA!

THANK YOU Carol.



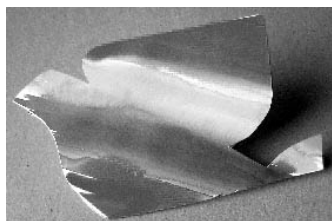
The Evening Worship began. It was nearly the end of the first day, and I was feeling tired. I needed quiet reflection, I wanted silence.....and then



Carol stood up and asked us to make flowers. At first I was hesitant - I'm not usually very good at these kind of activities. However her introduction captivated me.



At each stage she gently showed us that from two small pieces of paper we could make something beautiful together. As we

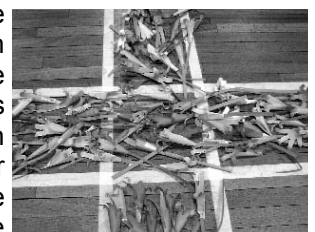


worked by tracing our hand on the piece of paper and cutting it out we saw we had made a flower! We also created a community, helping each other out, sharing the scissors and tape, asking the stranger next to me if she could help me. From the crowd Lizzie appeared and began very quietly marking out a cross with tape. We were enthralled! What next? Carol continued to carry us through the workshop and as we sang together we walked in procession and laid our beautiful flowers on the Cross. So many people from around the UK and beyond, so many people from different faith traditions united by placing our flowers on the Cross. PEACE I GIVE YOU!

*Ceeli Horsburgh, Faith and Light*

I was recently a retreatant on the Jean Vanier 2007 Retreat held at the Gillis Centre. The theme was Transformation and this was so vividly demonstrated through the art work facilitated by Souls Marks and Carol.

We were asked to draw round our hands. Simple, you may think, but it is a meditation itself just being asked to focus on your own hands for a few minutes. I was struck by how my own hands have changed over the years and in particular the marks left by my wedding ring. We continued with the craft work and wrapped our hand cut outs round a green stem and then saw how they turned immediately into beautiful flowers. Sometime before a rather large, stark cross was outlined on the floor with simple masking tape, effective in its reminder of the Christian unity of all those on the retreat. Perhaps many of us were reminded of our own Good Friday moments in our lives, some we may still be living. One by one we were invited to place our flower within the cross outline. Within minutes this rather bare cross was itself





transformed into a resurrection image of spring foliage and colour. The sheer numbers of flowers placed were massed into an abundance which was visibly moving people as they placed their own offering. Some were still being helped to complete their flower and no one was left out. The silence at the beginning was breaking with gasps of wonder as our own individual efforts combined together to make something wonderful. It was an exciting moment and looking back it was a wonder we didn't break out clapping, the momentum of hope was so evident. We all contributed something seemingly small but when put together, we created something so moving, it felt like a gift of grace. And that describes the art work and, for me, the retreat. Many thanks, Carol.

*Bernadette Campbell*

## DIARY UPDATE

### 2007

- 27/01/07 Methodist Circuit Workshop day
- 28/01/07 Methodist Service - Edinburgh
- 01/02/07 Worship Group meeting – J V Retreat
- 05/02/07 Cranhill Lent Planning evening
- 09/02/07 Worship Group meeting – J V Retreat
- 10/02/07 St Andrew & St George's  
Art & Worship workshop
- 17/02/07 Cranhill Lent workshop
- 23/02/07 Worship Group meeting – J V Retreat
- 25/02/07 Cranhill Lent Service
- 02-04/03/07 Jean Vanier Retreat,  
Gillis Centre Edinburgh
- 10/03/07 Lent Art and Prayer/ Leith School of Art
- 12/03/07 Art and Prayer Day. Lochiehead – Lent
- 17/03/07 Art and Prayer workshop,  
St. Thomas, Corstorphine
- 19/03/07 Cranhill Easter Planning evening
- 24/03/07 Art and Prayer workshop,  
St. Thomas, Corstorphine
- 25/03/07 'Holy City' Wild Geese Glasgow
- 26/03/07 Cranhill Easter Planning evening
- 31/03/07 Cranhill Easter workshop
- 01/04/07 Cranhill Palm Sunday Service
- 27/04/07 Anne Wilson @ Forthview
- 04/05/07 Anne Wilson @ Forthview
- 11/05/07 Anne Wilson @ Forthview
- 14/05/07 St Thomas's workshop
- 18/05/07 Anne Wilson @ Forthview
- 18-20/05/07 Perth Festival – Jacqueline Bean
- 25/05/07 Anne Wilson @ Forthview
- 02/06/07 Making Sense. LSA with Steve Butler
- 09/06/07 Leith Festival Project - Ian Gilmour
- 18-19/06/07 Ladybrook Mansfield
- 1-5/10/07 Ladybrook Church Mansfield  
Schools Project
- 3-4/11/07 Creative Weekend.  
St. Devenicks. Aberdeenshire.
- 25/11/07 Sick Kids Hospital Memorial Service

### 2008

- 18/03/08 Edinburgh University Chaplaincy

## NEWSFLASH

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