



St Benedict's Centre Newsletter

March 2024

Welcome to the March newsletter for the St Benedict's Centre. As we continue our journey through Lent, this is traditionally a period of self-reflection and a renewed commitment to deepen our spiritual life.

It's a good time for resolving to devote some time to prayer, either as part of a retreat or quiet day, so please do have a look at our programme for the remainder of Lent. We will be updating this and extending it into the Summer and beyond over the coming weeks, so keep an eye out for further opportunities to visit the Centre as the year unfolds – our website will have all the up-to-date information.

In February we welcomed two new members of staff, who will be working alongside Chichi: Evelyn Chambers, who is also an artist, has been appointed as our Housekeeper; Melanie Bailey, who is an LLM, as interim Centre Coordinator.

Melanie is a qualified chartered management accountant who has worked for many years, mostly in the property sector. She is married with two grown-up children. In Melanie's own words:



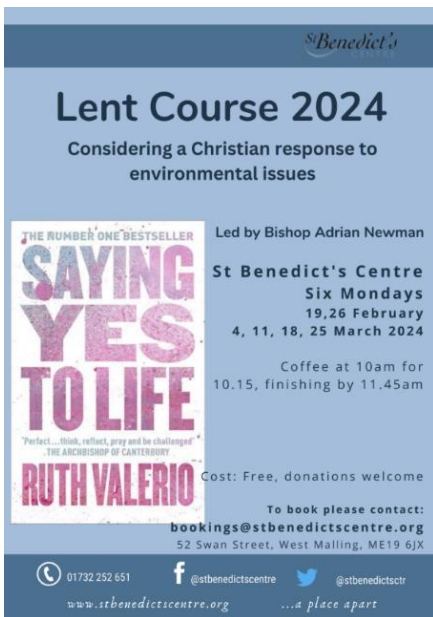
Around eighteen months ago I felt that God was leading me to make space in my life for him to use me in different ways. I took a part-time job with the Diocese and with a deep, trembling breath gave up my full-time, high pressure job. In the space created God has led me into a deeper prayer life, has reignited my creative side and I've joined in with Holiday Club and Messy Church at my church. I've recently led a series of mid-week reflective services during advent.

Most of my LLM training was at St Benedict's Centre, and I have attended quiet days and used the study rooms too. I love the place and I'm looking forward to working with the trustees, staff and volunteers to develop and strengthen the work here. I'm keeping my job at the Diocese so I'll be back to full-time hours with the two roles combined, but I believe it is where God wants me to be – using the space he has made.

We are delighted to welcome both Evelyn and Melanie to the team at St Benedict's and look forward to getting to know them as they settle into their new roles. Their presence and contribution to the life and work of the Centre will be a blessing, and much appreciated.

Forthcoming events at the Centre

Lent course 2024 (Continued) Monday mornings, 4th – 25th March 10 for 10.15am - 11.45am



The poster for the Lent Course 2024 features a blue background with white and pink text. At the top right is the St Benedict's logo. The main title 'Lent Course 2024' is in large white letters, followed by the subtitle 'Considering a Christian response to environmental issues'. A central image shows the book cover for 'Saying Yes to Life' by Ruth Valerio, which is labeled 'THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER'. To the right of the book cover, it says 'Led by Bishop Adrian Newman' and 'St Benedict's Centre Six Mondays 19, 26 February 4, 11, 18, 25 March 2024'. Below that, it notes 'Coffee at 10am for 10.15, finishing by 11.45am'. At the bottom, it states 'Cost: Free, donations welcome' and 'To book please contact: bookings@stbenedictscentre.org 52 Swan Street, West Malling, ME19 6JX'. Social media icons for phone, Facebook, and Twitter are at the bottom left, with contact details: '01732 252 651', '@stbenedictscentre', and '@stbenedictscr'. The website 'www.stbenedictscentre.org' and the tagline '...a place apart' are at the bottom right.


Our Lent Course continues this month, for anyone who wants to think more deeply about a Christian response to environmental issues.

Led by Bishop Adrian Newman, Acting Chair of St Benedict's Centre, the sessions are based on Ruth Valerio's stunning 2020 Lent Book '*Saying Yes to Life*'.

The course is being run on a donations-only basis. To book please email bookings@stbenedictscentre.org.

Please book by emailing
bookings@stbenedictscentre.org

St Benedict and the Signs of Humility Tuesday 19th March, 9.30 for 10am till 3pm



St Benedict's

St Benedict Day

The Signs of Humility

led by Sister Mary John

at St Benedict's Centre
Tuesday 19th March 2024
9.30 for 10am till 3pm

Cost £25
Please bring lunch with you
hot drinks and biscuits will be provided

To book please contact:
bookings@stbenedictscentre.org
52 Swan Street, West Malling, ME19 6JX

01732 252 651 @stbenedictscentre @stbenedictsctr
www.stbenedictscentre.org ...a place apart

Sr Mary John will lead a day on Benedictine humility, to help us understand what it truly means and to discover how we can inhabit an attitude of humility that is life-giving and rich.

Cost £25.00 (pay on the day) which includes hot drinks, please bring your own lunch.

Please book by emailing

bookings@stbenedictscentre.org

An Introduction to Christian Meditation **Saturday 23 March, 9.30 for 10am till 3pm**

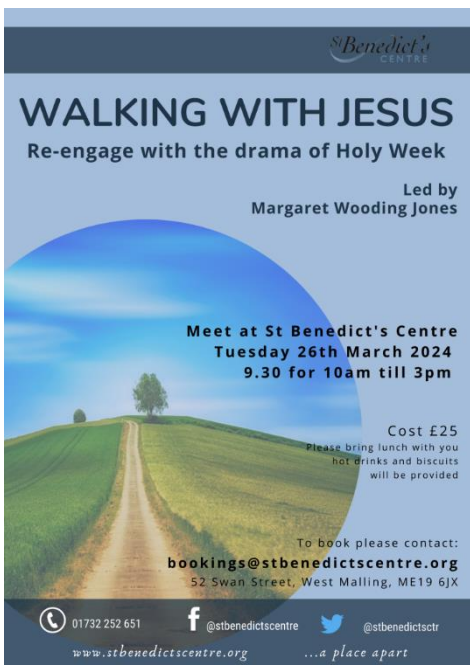
Jesus tells us to become simple, to become childlike. Meditation is a way of rediscovering our innate, childlike sense of wonder. When we meditate, we go beyond desire, beyond possessiveness, beyond self-importance, beyond all sources of guilt and complexity.

The Revd Mark Ball will introduce the tradition and practice of Christian Meditation as taught by John Main and the World Community for Christian Meditation (wccm.org).

We will trace the biblical, patristic, and mystical roots of the tradition. There will be an exploration of the place of meditation in other faith traditions. We will learn the simple discipline of meditating with a gently repeating prayer word and spend some time in quiet meditation together. The day will be one of informal and interactive engagement

This is a Rochester Diocese Spirituality Network event held at St Benedict's. *Suggested donation: £15-£25. To book please email: susannecarlssons@hotmail.co.uk*

Walking with Jesus in Holy Week **Tuesday 26th March, 9.30 for 10am till 3pm**



St Benedict's
CENTRE

WALKING WITH JESUS

Re-engage with the drama of Holy Week

Led by
Margaret Wooding Jones

Meet at St Benedict's Centre
Tuesday 26th March 2024
9.30 for 10am till 3pm

Cost £25
Please bring lunch with you
hot drinks and biscuits
will be provided

To book please contact:
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In Holy Week Jesus journeys towards the torment of Good Friday and the emptiness of Easter Eve.

During this walk, led by Margaret Wooding Jones, participants will re-engage with some of the drama of Holy Week.

Cost £25.00 (pay on the day) which includes hot drinks, please bring your own lunch.

To book: bookings@stbenedictcentre.org

General event information

Most events start at 10am, with coffee available from 9:30am, and normally finish by 3pm to ensure everyone has the full benefit of the day's programme. However, participants are very welcome to stay beyond this time to enjoy the Centre's beautiful grounds, quiet spaces, and a quiet room (if available) for further reflection.

Coffee, tea and biscuits are always included, but you need to bring your own lunch.

Need to cancel your booking?

When you book a place at one of our events or a room for the day, payment is on the day of attendance or by invoice, sent out to you afterwards.

If you can no longer attend, we do appreciate you letting us know as soon as possible. There is no cancellation fee.

Event cancellations

While we are always reluctant to cancel an event at short notice, we may have to do so in case of illness, bad weather conditions or low take-up. You will be contacted as soon as circumstances require us to cancel an event.

Day Guests



Our 10 quiet study rooms offer the space to rest and reflect in solitude at the Centre.

You can book one of these rooms for £15 per

day.

This includes hot drinks, the use of the beautiful grounds and the opportunity for private prayer in the pilgrim chapel, and of joining the Sisters in their offices.

Your booking can be changed or cancelled at short notice if need be, there is no cancellation fee.

Did you know we offer gift vouchers for individual quiet days – the perfect gift for someone in ministry.

To book your day of rest and retreat, or to purchase a voucher contact:
bookings@stbenedictscentre.org