



Newsletter

April-May 2026

Poetry in Motion

As we move through April and May, the grounds of St Benedict's Centre seem to mirror the spirit of Easter itself. The days become lighter and longer, the gardens grow bright with colour, and the early morning birdsong floods the landscape with a chorus of praise. These things almost take on the form of poetry, calling us to a deeper attentiveness to God's presence.

Talking of poetry, I was recently directed towards some wonderful reflections from a young American cancer survivor, whose experiences had led him to explore poetry for the first time in his life. Here are a couple of rich insights of his, both of which bear deep reflection:

A poet sees beyond creation to the image of the creator, and pulls back the veil for the rest of us.

Poetry teaches you to see like the poet, so you can live poetically. And that's what prayer does – over time it teaches you to see like God, so that you can live like God.

Poetry is a connecting theme within two of our quiet days in April and May – Nicola Slee’s reflections on ‘Sabbath’ and Mark Oakley’s reflections on ‘Astounding Love’.

As we journey through these spring months, may the St Benedict’s Centre continue to be a place where hearts are renewed, faith is strengthened, and the quiet joy of Easter accompanies all who pass through its doors.

Rt Revd Adrian Newman
Chair of Trustees



Events in April and May

The Sabbath – A Quiet Day

Saturday 18th April, 9.30 for 10am-3pm



Prof Nicola Slee, theologian and author, will help us to reflect on Sabbath as a basic principle by which to live, extendable from one day in seven to longer and shorter units of time.

Drawing on scripture, poetry and the work of theologians, we will be invited to enter into the spirit of Sabbath rest and to recognise how the rhythm of sabbath is built into the very creation.

Cost: £25 including refreshments but please bring your own lunch.

To book:

Scan the QR code or email

bookings@stbenedictscentre.org



<https://stbenedictscentre.org/?events=the-sabbath-a-quiet-day>

Astounded by Love – Quiet Day **Saturday 2nd May, 9.30 for 10am-3pm**



Postponed from the 31st January, the Very Rev'd Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark, will lead this day.

The poetry of Donne, Herbert and responses from other poets will remind us, in the words and silence of the day, that poetry is the native language of faith.

Cost: £25 including refreshments, but please bring your own lunch.

To book:

Scan the QR code or email

bookings@stbenedictscentre.org



<https://stbenedictscentre.org/?events=quiet-day-astounded-by-love>

Prayer Festival

Saturday 30th May, 9.30 for 10am-4pm



Prayer lies at the heart of the church and our lives. We can develop a spiritual rhythm by regularly taking the time to pray, but the way in which it works best for each person will change and evolve, depending on our stage in life and our circumstances.

Our workshop leaders will help you to explore and experience some different ways of praying.

**Suggested donation
£10-£20.**

Refreshments will be available throughout the day from 9.30am, but please bring a packed lunch and your own mug for the day.

This event is organised by the Spirituality Network (Rochester Diocese). To book: please scan the QR code or use the link below. For information email

susanne.carlsson@rochester.anglican.org



<https://tickets.myiknowchurch.co.uk/gb/MzAxLTkwNA/t>

Further ahead: Events in June and July

13th June: Letting Go and Letting Be: Eckhart and the Spiritual Life's Work, with Canon Dr Earl Collins.

6th July: Labyrinth Quiet Day, with Dr Martin Garsed.

18th July: Quiet Day – Encountering the divine in the works of mercy, social and climate justice, with Rev Dr Jonathan Arnold.

Enquiries and bookings via our website:
<https://stbenedictscentre.org/> where you can also
check all event information and updates.

Alternatively contact us via email:
bookings@stbenedictscentre.org

General event information

Our events tend to start at 10am, with coffee available from 9:30am, and normally finish by 3-3.30pm to ensure everyone has the full benefit of the day's programme. 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, we ask for payment in advance. If you need to cancel, your payment will be refunded in full if cancellation is seven days or more before the event; if cancellation is within the seven-day period you will instead receive a voucher to be used for another one of our events.

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 individual quiet day rooms offer the space to rest, reflect or work in solitude at the Centre.

You can book a room for £18 (full day) or £12 (half day).

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

Your booking can be changed or cancelled at short notice, if need be, at no cost.

We offer gift vouchers for individual quiet days – the perfect gift for someone in ministry.

Visit our website to find out everything about the Centre: <https://stbenedictscentre.org>, where you can also book your room online.

Alternatively, book your day of rest and retreat or purchase a voucher by emailing us: bookings@stbenedictscentre.org

We look forward to welcoming you at St Benedict's!