



# The Fourth Bridge

Walk with us on our journey Lord, and touch each moment with your presence, so that whatever we do or say, think, or strive for, we may do it with patience; trusting your timing rather than our own. Amen

Palanca from The Glasgow Reunion Group #67



November

2020

Cursillo



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## LAY DIRECTOR SALLY MAIR

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Dear Friends,

So here we are in Autumn, the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. I'm not sure if it is because of all of the extra time we've had to work in the garden, but this harvest time has been extremely fruitful for us. It just shows what a bit of extra time and effort can do. I'm sure there is a message for us there!

I'm writing this not long after our AGM which was a new experience for us all as it was held via Zoom. It was good to see so many friends there and no masks required! Over the past few months I've tried to drop in to as many of the Zoom Ultreyas which I can, no matter where in the country they are being hosted and I would urge you to do the same if you can.

Details can be obtained on the website, our Facebook page or by contacting either me or the local Ultreya rep.

One thing which has been very clear at all of the Ultreyas is that Cursillistas have not been idle. It lifts my heart to hear how people are using their rule of life and their Cursillo method of prayer/piety, study and action to make a difference often even without leaving their homes.

People constantly amaze me by their creativity and faithfulness. My own reunion group has managed to maintain our fortnightly meeting throughout and that has become an essential part of my new routine. If you haven't tried it, do. I know that other people are using other online platforms and some using group phone-calls as well. We are nothing if not innovative and open to try new things... surprisingly they seem to work in many cases.

This magazine comes to you from our new editor Margaret McMeekin of Dalkeith, Margaret was on weekend 67. Our website is being taken on by Caroline Delaney of Dumbarton, weekend 66.

This is the way Cursillo is meant to be, a growing, evolving and dynamic movement with leadership being taken on by new members all the time. I am so grateful to them and to others who have offered to help.

Not all tasks come with titles and specific roles though and lots of work is done in the background by people who have said, Can I help? I could do... such people are also essential and if you think that there is something which you could do, either a specific task or a longer term project then please do contact one of the Secretariat or if you are shy, speak to somebody you know and ask them to make the suggestion. All help is very much appreciated.

I'm not going to mention that word yet, but Advent is only a month away, a time of waiting and anticipation, we are getting good at that. All of us do-ers are having to learn to go with flow and not be in control and it is hard at times.

I harken back though to a piece of palanca I received way back in 1989, it was a picture of a man being swallowed headfirst by a large fish and it said:

Relax, God is in control or to put it another way, let go and let God!

Perhaps we all need to remember that at times.

I hope to see you all very soon on Zoom if not in person.

ULTREYA

Sally



## **SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR ELECT**



**From Kenny..** I have been asked to make a contribution as the Spiritual Director of Cursillo Scotland, (elect!), as I cannot jump the gun before Disclosure is done and dusted. This may take some time, and so it is in anticipation, I guess, that the current post holder has allowed me to share something for this edition.

I am living in a place of anticipation rather than reality, and sometimes that can be wearisome, but often exciting too. Anticipation can be exciting for us. It can make us tingle. We anticipate holidays for a far longer time than we actually spend away, and it's a delicious feeling! As a child, I remember anticipating Santa's visit with much activity, hope, and awe! We anticipate birthdays and maybe plan the party many weeks before the event, and our wedding day with much more anticipation than we can verbalise!

Anticipation is very much a part of our lives as human beings, and it was something the disciples themselves experienced with Our Lord. Every dawn, anticipating the day ahead and what it may bring in His presence. I think the most poignant moment was the time after the Ascension when Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come, but not just yet. I call this period the 'waiting time'. Days of emptiness lived out in anticipation of what might happen. Days of doubt, days of hope, days when delightful anticipation tingled down their very spines.

Of course during the period covered by this Fourth Bridge, the Church will experience the Season of Anticipation or Advent as we traditionally call it. Perhaps the world began Christmas in September, and current advertising would suggest that, but Christians use the Advent time not just in a state of anticipation but in a state of preparation and renewal. This darkness before the dawn has inspired many a poem and musical masterpiece. It is a waiting time for us all, when the Infant Jesus and Incarnation will be celebrated with angel voices and weary shepherds, along with political leaders from other nations. What a delightful season, with little glimpses of the Kingdom shining through, but not yet! The waiting time when we prepare ourselves to meet the Lord, incarnate flesh, one of us, one with us. We are glad if we prepared properly.

Of course the whole world is in the midst of great anticipation at the present time. We anticipate a time when this dreaded virus will recede to a point when we no longer have to lock ourselves away, wear masks covering our smile, and we are able to hug all those we love. Oh, how we anticipate those days, and the waiting time goes on and on. Some days we tingle at the prospect, some days we just cling to hope and are tempted to despair.

In this particular time I believe that Cursillistas have a prominent role to play. We are an Easter people and alleluia is our song! We are a people that generate hope, serve and bring healing to the broken-hearted, and continue to be the lifeblood of our local congregations. We are a people of intense prayer, studying the ways of Jesus.

I know of many congregations that would be lost or struggling were it not for the time and effort of Cursillistas. That heartens me greatly, because it emphasises that Cursillo works and makes my own spine tingle with anticipation of a ministry of encouragement for you all. We bring laughter and joy, we bring rolled-up sleeves and a willingness to mirror the life of the Incarnate One. We bring the world to Jesus in our hearts with fervent prayer.

Are we special people?

Yes, we are, and are called to be so during this elongated waiting time!

Ultreya!

Kenny



### No newspaper

I was visiting my son and daughter-in-law last night and asked if I could borrow a newspaper.

"This is the 21st century, dad," he said. "We don't waste money on newspapers. Here, you can borrow my iPhone."

*I can tell you, that fly never knew what hit it!*



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## FROM DUNCAN

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In the part of Scotland where I live they have introduced 20mph speed limits in every town and village, I think it's to decrease the amount of pollution given off by vehicles as well as safety of pedestrians and other road users.

It is notable however noticeable that not everyone copes well with it, as they come racing up behind desperately looking for an opportunity to overtake and go at the pace they want. There are times when we are not very good at adapting to change but I am really pleased by all the changes that are taking place in Cursillo.

I love the way we have adapted, using modern technology to continue to connect together in our Ultreyas and nationally, and I commend the changes that have been made to the list of office bearers which you will see on the inside front cover.

Can I ask you to be supportive of Margaret McMeekin who has taken over as the 4<sup>th</sup> Bridge editor, if she contacts you for a wee piece for an issue, please make it a priority or even better why not surprise her and send material on to her for future issues.

Yours as ever, Duncan

### Thank you Duncan

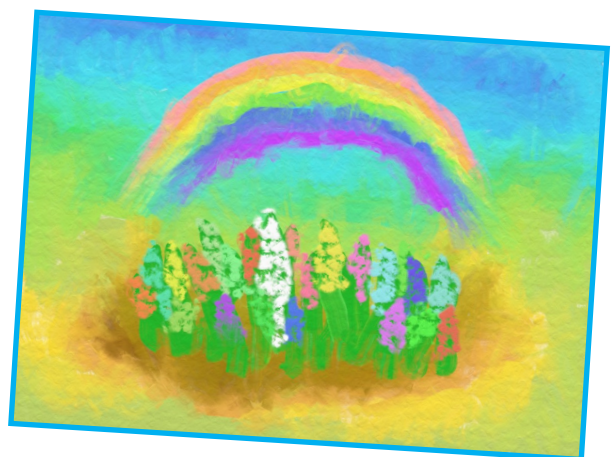
I just want to say thank you to Duncan for making the handover of the magazine so easy for me. Duncan has sourced nearly all the material for this issue and all I have had to do is present it. You created a sound plan for me to follow Duncan and for that I am extremely grateful.

May you have many happy tomorrows knowing that you brought your chapter to a successful end and I now take the helm to steer us onward on our Fourth days!

May God bless you for all your hard work and dedication.

Ultreya

Margaret



## The Handover to Margaret



It was pouring with rain on the first day of the school summer holidays 2020. Our holiday had been cancelled and my daughter was totally exhausted from home schooling my gorgeous, absolutely perfectly behaved, quiet grandsons aged 7, 5 and then 2!

We organised an ice cream creation activity in my kitchen. We made such a mess but had lots of fun after being so serious for so long.

The original version of Mary Poppins is my all time favourite film. So I frequently share quotes with my grandsons , they know granny would have just loved to have been like Mary Poppins. Practically perfect in everyway!

Well after our ice cream experience that wet afternoon, I was heard to say:

*'that was a tea party on the ceiling moment' ,*

when love and laughter are suddenly released into such joy that our spirits are instantly lifted and unity is felt so strongly.

On returning from my Cursillo #67 weekend, Cheryl Prior shared her reflections of her own experience of Cursillo # 24,

*'I couldn't stop smiling Margaret, it went on for days and days!'*

That sense of excitement of the children and pilgrims singing De Colores; and the love and peace of knowing Jesus ... is what I hope to bring in my role of editor of the Fourth Bridge magazine.

From Margaret...

I love collaborative working and look forward to becoming a partner with Caroline in the Communications Team. If you aren't already on Facebook try to find ways to join in, as there are daily words of encouragement posted.

Perhaps contact Caroline and she will direct you as to how to go about it.

In a future issue, I might tell you a bit more about myself, but meanwhile just enjoy the articles in the magazine and perhaps reflect using the image on the back page as directed by David Dalglish in his article on Meditation.



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## FROM CAROLINE DELANEY

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### Communications: Website and Facebook

I'm Caroline Delaney, originally a Galway girl and now living near Bonnie Loch Lomond. I moved here for love nearly four years ago. I was a participant at Cursillo 66 and a palanca go for at 67. I attend St. Augustine's Dumbarton with a wonderful church family. We have recently got a new priest, after a tough year and a half of being sheep sans shepherd.

My interests include holistic and I am starting a business offering massage, online

nutrition advice and life coaching, while working part time as a Support

Worker for learning disabilities. I speak German, Gaelic, a bit of Mandarin Chinese and of course I am learning Scots!

Utreya everyone.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Report from Duncan

Well it was an AGM with a difference, the rains came down and the floods rose ..... weather wise it was awful and I doubt many of us would have wanted to travel to a meeting but thanks to the wonders of modern technology the meeting was conducted via the Zoom platform with 29 attending and apologies were received from 12 people.



Sally Mair led us through the ins and outs of a zoom meeting and it felt a wee bit like being back at school as you had to put your hand up if you wanted to speak

although to be fair that was because we had been muted. At the end

however we said the Grace together unmuted, which gave you a bit of an idea what God must hear all the time listening to our prayers.



The meeting itself ran pretty smoothly with Sally's gentle hand on the tiller. The paperwork had been circulated electronically beforehand which helped the meeting flow along.

The treasurer, David Dalglish reported our current financial position saying that we had a deficit of nearly £2,000 with our year end balance of just over £11,000. David spent a bit of time going over the figures to the satisfaction of the meeting as there were no questions at the end of his presentation.

The other reports by Sally Mair: Lay Director, Duncan McCosh: Spiritual Director and reporting for the Secretary and Communications portfolio, were all taken as read.

Caroline Waddon: BACC Rep hasn't managed a meeting yet due to the restrictions of Covid 19 but is looking forward to getting to know folks in the wider Cursillo community.

All the Ultreyas gave detailed reports of their meetings over the last wee while with zoom being an integral part of people getting together to talk about the Cursillo Method and its value in their daily lives.



After the last couple of years where a number of positions remained vacant it was nice to see that these are all filled.

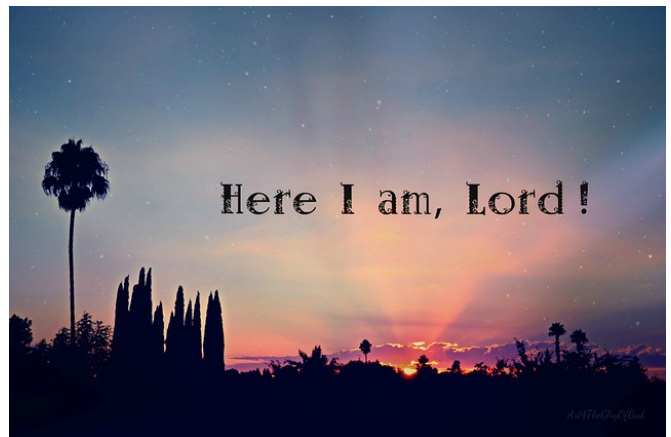
Appointments: Lay Director: Sally Mair  
Spiritual Director: Rev Kenny Macaulay (SD designate)  
Treasurer: Revd David Dalglish  
Secretary: Duncan McCosh  
BACC Rep: Caroline Waddon  
4th Day Convenor: Morag O'Neill  
The above named operate as the Secretariat

Palanca Rep: Wendy Wilkie  
Resources: Mike Coates  
Registrar : Karen Ellis  
Communications:  
4th Bridge - Margaret McMeekin  
Website & Facebook - Caroline Delaney  
Database Coordinator - This was filled subsequent to the agm by Mike Whitton

**AOCB:**

It was noted that Cursillo No 68 was planned for May 2021 with Ruth McGrath as Lay Rector and Cat Outram as Observing Lay Rector.

At this time we have no plan B if the Weekend is not allowed to go ahead because of pandemic restrictions. There was some discussion regarding using technology which will be taken up by those planning the Weekend in conjunction with the Secretariat.



**BACC** - Trevor King has come to the end of his term of office as BACC President and Beth Roberts (Chester Cursillo) will be taking on the role from the November BACC AGM.

The meeting closed Zoom singing along with the Scottish Youth Choir performance 'Here I am Lord' and the Blessing and Grace led by Revd Kenny Macaulay.

Please contact Duncan McCosh if you would like a copy of the minutes from the meeting.

## Contact Details

**Keep our records up to date:** Please notify Sally Mair if you change your address or any other contact details.



“Be still and know that I am God,” Psalm 46:10

## Christian Meditation

*David Dalglish recently gave this talk at a Borders Ulteya*

I wonder if you are like me, always fidgeting and needing to get on with something, unable to relax unless immersed in a good book?

Depending on how you interpret “be still,” we are told there is anything up to 25 plus times we are told by God to be still. So, what does he mean when he says, “be still?” What he is saying to us is to stop what we are doing and listen to Him. Seek his guidance and wisdom and to rid our surroundings of anything that will prevent God’s voice from coming through to you.

So, given what I have said, what do think my chances are of being still with God?

I first started to think about meditation when I started to get incredibly stressed at work and also where I had a real sense of drift not only in my career but more importantly in my journey with God. Where was I going and what did God want for me and how was I to serve him?

I didn’t seem to be able to connect with him and my prayers were becoming a sort of shopping list, in other words they were one way – from me to God and nothing was coming from Him, in other words I wasn’t listening.

I knew a little about meditation but what I did know was based on the Eastern Religions such a Buddhism and Hinduism it was just something that Christians did not do – chanting a mantra was next to blasphemy!

I started to think and read about the Desert Fathers and came across a book by Sandy Ryrie – “The Desert Movement,” who incidentally was one of my predecessors at St John’s in Jedburgh. Here were men and women who devoted their lives to meditation and prayer. My journey to meditation started after I finished the book.

“Be still and know that I am God,” Psalm 46:10 is firmly imprinted on the candle I use while praying. So, how has this meditation journey helped me in my journey with God and through life in general?

A very old definition of prayer described it as “the raising of the heart and mind to God.” What is the “mind,” and what is the “heart”? The mind is what thinks – it questions, it plans, worries and fantasises – all the things I was doing before. The heart is what knows – it loves. The mind is the organ of knowledge, the heart, the organ of love.

I don’t know about you, most of my training in prayer, however, is limited to the mind. When we are taught as children to say our prayers, to ask God what we and others need, hence the shopping list! Probably the most important half of prayer is the prayer of the heart where we are not thinking of God or talking to him or asking for anything, we are simply being with God who is with us in the Holy Spirit whom Jesus has given us. The Holy Spirit is the love, the relationship of love that flows between Father and Son. It is this Spirit that Jesus has breathed into every human heart. Meditation, then, is the prayer of the heart uniting us with the human consciousness of Jesus in the Spirit.

Contemplative prayer is total openness to and oneness with the prayer of Jesus. Contemplation is being silent, still, and simple. The prayer of the heart, contemplative prayer, meditation, is essentially the payer of faith. In silence we accept that God knows our needs and this knowledge is the love which creates and will eventually complete us.

The three essential elements of contemplation are:

**Silence      Stillness      Simple**

## **Silence**

We need silence for the good of our mental and physical health but most importantly for our spiritual health. But the real silence is interior, it means being at one with our own centre.

## **Stillness**

Similarly, stillness has an interior and exterior dimension. In praying in meditation, we need to come to physical and interior stillness and there is no doubt that to come to a stillness of the mind is the great challenge of prayer.

## **Simple**

We are told that we must become like children and surely to do so is to keep it simple. There is nothing complex about prayer, about meditation. We try to make God complex whereas in fact God is simple – love is simple, meditation is simple. Being simple means being ourselves. It means passing beyond self-consciousness, self-analysis and self-rejection. Meditation is a universal spiritual practice which guides us into this state of prayer, into the prayer of Christ. It brings us to silence, to stillness and simplicity by a means that is itself silent, still and simple.

The means is the repetition of a single sacred word faithfully and lovingly during the time of meditation. Today, we call that word a mantra. This is a very ancient way of prayer which has been recovered by the Benedictine monk John Main.

John Main gets me back to where I started with the teachings of the first Christian monks, the Desert Fathers, especially John Cassian. As a mantra I often use “The Jesus Prayer,” or many people use the ancient Aramaic phrase *maranatha*. It means “Come Lord,” or “Lord Come.”

Say it loudly and clearly, without haste and in four syllables:

**MA-RA-NA-THA.**

Father Laurence Freeman, Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation gives us four rules to help us persevere in Christian Meditation:

**Don't have any demands or expectations**

**Don't evaluate your meditation**

**Integrate it into your daily life with morning and evening practice**

**Live by its consequences, day by day**

Meditation is not just the preserve of Eastern Religions, it is an ancient Christian way of attaining inner peace and listening to God in silence and with complete attention, to hear what he has to say to us.

Further information you may find useful:

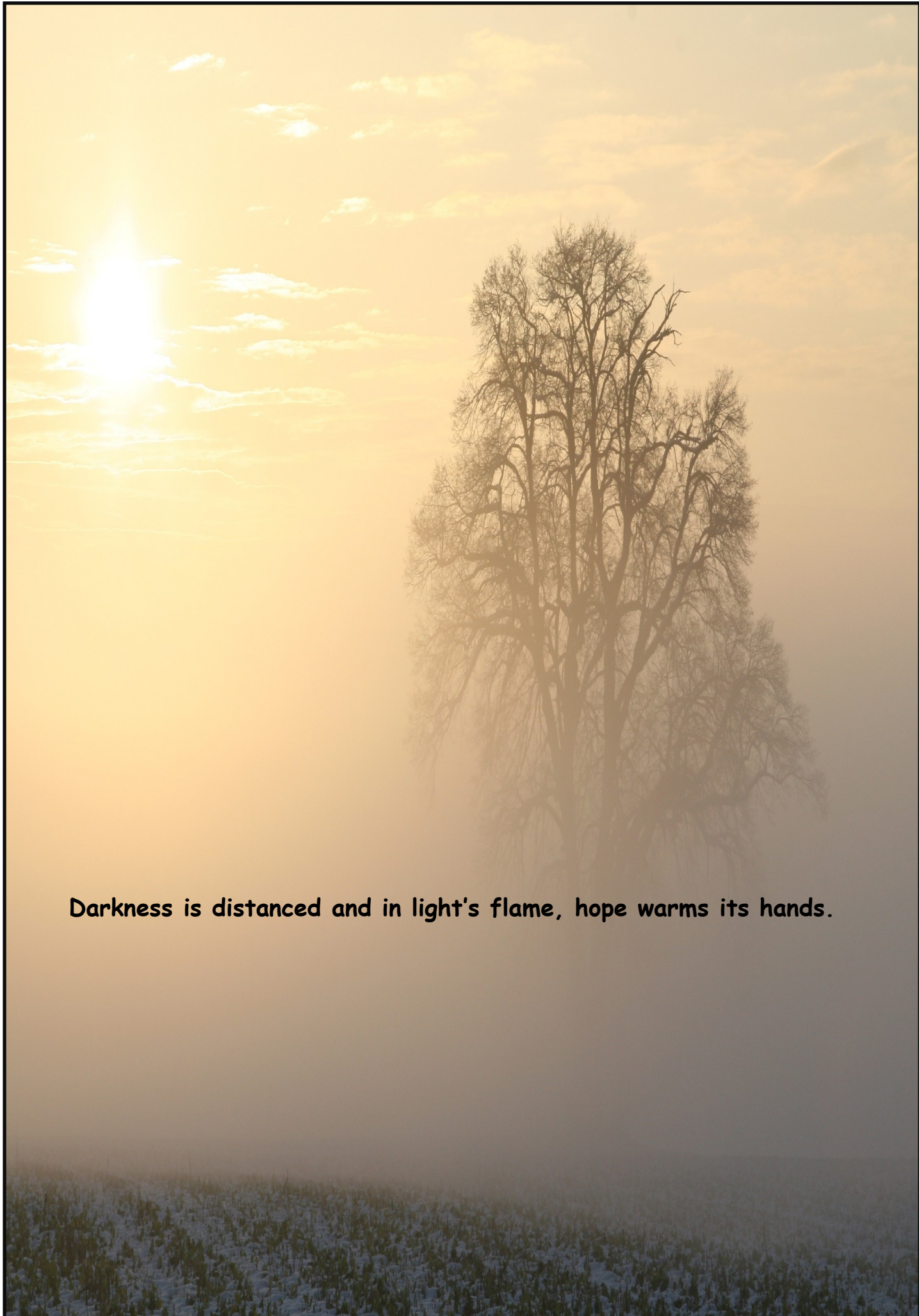
*Website for the World Community for Christian Meditation – [www.wccm.org](http://www.wccm.org)*

*Alexander Ryrie – “The Desert Movement” – Canterbury Press -ISBN 978-1-84825-094-9*

*Laurence Freeman – “The Selfless Self” – Canterbury Press – ISBN 978-1-85311-983-5*

*John Main – “Christian Meditation”- Medio Media – ISBN 0-9666943-0-4*

*Paul T Harris – “The Heart of Silence” -Darton+Longman+Todd – ISBN 0-232-52361*



**Darkness is distanced and in light's flame, hope warms its hands.**