

Continuing The Journey



Continuing the journey conference is an open temporary community, creatively exploring continuity and tension between the world and church, nature and grace, psychology and theology.

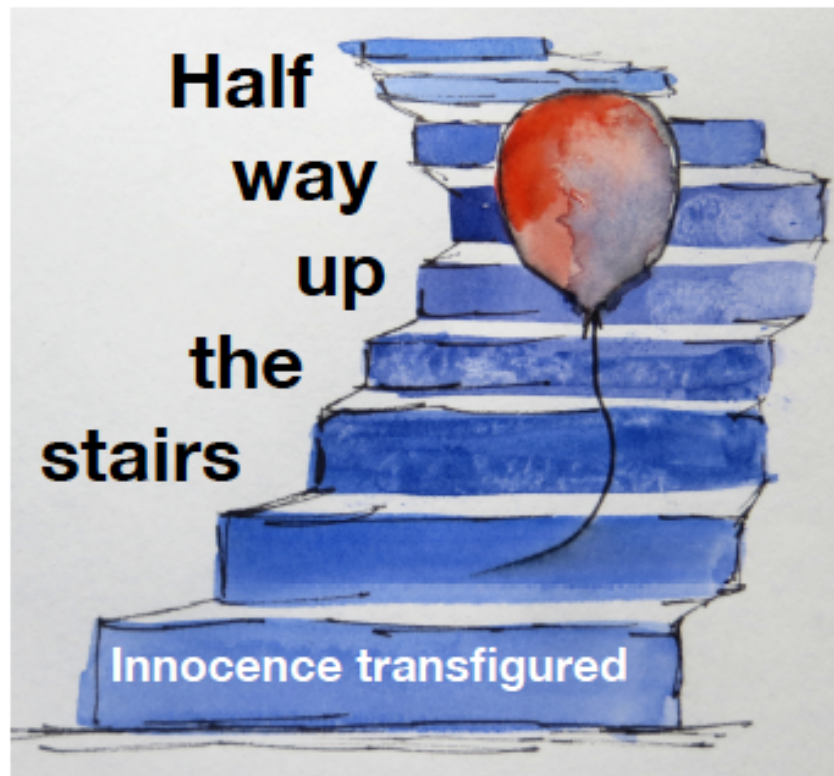
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2018!

Dear

As a child, I grew up in a large former manse which had a rather splendid set of wooden stairs. I discovered that, if at night I crept part way down, the steps were long enough for me to lie, apparently hidden, and listen to the 'adult' conversations below. I have no memories of what I very innocently heard or how that impacted me, but as a psychotherapist now, all too aware of the stories I have the privilege of hearing, I'm acutely aware of the potential to end up carrying a weight which, if not recognised, may turn into a very physical stress.

As the planning group discussed your feedback at our recent day away, we recognised what therapists might call vicarious trauma, which can affect all those in positions of care, and how in past generations and in

some cultures there might have been or be rituals that help us process and move on from certain experiences. We wondered too about the innocence of childhood that is lost so easily. Out of these discussions came our next conference title, which we now have the pleasure of introducing you to:



Halfway up.... or possibly halfway down. Either way it's the halfway stair that is not quite like any other. It's a place to pause and reflect, to take stock and to breathe. In all the ups and downs of life, and the work we do, we are acquainted with sorrow and joy, with pain and goodness, with turbulence as well as calm. There is much that would throw us off balance, and it is those issues which we want to consider at this conference, taking time to gaze at the shadows and the light from a place of rest.

It's an image that also speaks of childhood, and so we will consider as well whether the simplicity, the wonder and the joy of that stage of life are necessarily lost to us for ever. Or do the holy fool and the playful self offer us a way to maintain our sanity in the face of situations and stories that might often feel hard work and heavy going? Can innocence be transfigured and recaptured for an adult world?

Kim Gooding, Chair of Planning Group

Introducing Jane Franklin, a new member of the planning group.

Participating in the Continuing the Journey conferences is a rich, rewarding and refreshing experience. Coming from a non counselling background with experience in massage, team building and church pastoral situations I have found the inspiring talks, the supportive small groups and the variety of workshops useful for both my 'professional' activities and my personal spiritual life. The combination of CPD and Retreat works well for those who want thought provoking input for their work and a time for refreshing their spiritual batteries.



Having received so much from the conferences I felt it right to offer whatever expertise I might have to the Planning Group last summer. The Planning Group is a friendly and relaxing group to be a member of which takes time to get to know and to support each other whilst also managing to have wide ranging discussions on the future of the conference and the content of the next conference. Time is taken to explore themes and ideas, taking note of the feedback from the previous conference, and listening to each other as particular aspects of a theme emerge. Once the title and theme is decided the practical work starts to invite speakers, workshop leaders etc to take part. Negotiation with Swanwick is on going and also the need to get publicity about conference out into the wider world. This can not be done by the Planning Group alone so please do your bit to tell others about the Continuing the Journey Conference and pass this newsletter on!



Jane Franklin, Spiritual Director, the Coordinator of the Listening Service at St. Andrews, Holborn Circus, London and a Retreat Leader.

Jane's neighbour's cat has a very interesting staircase to climb up!

Tina Lamb reflects on the house at our 2016 Rummaging for Reality conference.

Rummaging for Reality in The House was a very big experience for me and really stands out in my memories of the last conference. Such a surprise! The rather uninspiring chapel was transformed. We entered an open house: a central corridor with rooms opening off on each side, distinct spaces but no walls! The sheet we were given suggested the blurb of the agent who was selling this place. But there was no hard sell. It was all free. Were the different rooms all different bits of our lives? Were they different facets of our personalities? Were they parts of our journey with God? Anything was possible.

So much thought and prayer and care had gone into planning and furnishing this house. We could have had it available for much longer as there was such a wealth of stuff on offer. It felt a very private time, so it was good later to have communion there, Home Communion, and share the space and the meal there as a gathered family.

The Estate Agent's brochure gave us some pointers and there was a verse of scripture too that could help us focus our enjoyment of each room, but I suspect that everyone found different things, surprising things, as we picked up something to browse in the study, found a long lost toy in the playroom or rummaged through past treasures in the attic.



It's so often in the unexpected, the unplanned that God gets through to me. The big surprise for me was among the coats in the wardrobe. Why did I go straight to the bedroom? I suspect that Carla Grosch Millar would nod knowingly and hint that

there was some embodied knowledge for me to unearth! I seem to remember that over the clothes hanging on the rail there was an invitation to step through them into a new Narnia land. That's certainly what attracted me but the new and the surprise for me was not the arrival but in staying in the journey there, wedged in the dark between two fur coats..... I'm still exploring that.

Thank you for all the generous imagination, loving inspiration and hard work that went into the House. Thank you for creating and offering such a wealth of possibilities, for new gifts, new discoveries and new doors to open. Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Seeking new skills on the planning group....

We are looking for someone to join the planning group who enjoys technology, blogging, facebooking, tweeting and other such delights. If you have such skills and would like to join the team then please do get in touch, we would love to hear from you! Contact: admin@continuingthejourney.com



Amber and
Luna are clearly
enjoying
sitting halfway
up the stairs...

So could you, if
you join us at
our next
conference!
Look out for the
early bird
booking
opportunity...

**Continuing the Journey will be happening on
21st-25th May 2018**

Put the date in your diary!

**Watch out for our next newsletter where we will
be introducing our speakers for 2018**
