

Pipeline

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EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY

A Song of Peace, Love not Silenced

*"Earth's crammed with heaven, and every
common bush afire with God"*

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Roger Schutz was 12 when he saw his Protestant pastor father go into a Catholic church to pray.

"It didn't seem that unusual" he said "I am sure my father was always a mystic at heart"

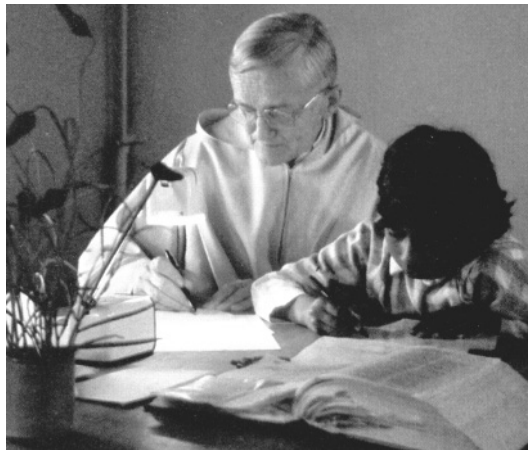
While attending secondary school in a nearby Swiss Town, Roger's parents lodged with him a Catholic rather than a Protestant family because the Catholic family needed the rent more.

Roger Schulz's maternal grandmother was the wife of a Protestant Pastor but often attended Catholic Mass and even received Holy Communion. The boy said he was conscious of the divisions between Protestants and Catholics, but was encouraged by his parents and grandparents to look beyond them. That simple and powerful notion became a vision. He studied theology and in 1940, at the age of 25, bicycled across wartime France to the village of Taize.

There an old woman told him that the villagers were poor and lonely so the young man decided to live with them. Here Roger toiled alone working on the farm, praying and offering a welcome to all who came in need of help, especially Jewish refugees, and then, after the war, Germans from war prisons. He prayed alone in his room or in nearby woods, not wanting to pressure non-Christian guests.

Roger said he wanted to build bridges and prayed God would send him brothers. The first, another Protestant, arrived in 1949. Others followed. The first Catholic priest arrived a few years later, then others from Orthodox churches. Roger, later known as Brother Roger, eventually became leader of a special community of about 100 brothers.

The spiritual leader died a couple of weeks ago, aged 90, as a result of an attack by a deranged woman wielding a knife. Brother Roger kept a low profile, he rarely gave interviews and refused to allow any cult to grow around him.



What was once a dream became a reality-the world had its first truly ecumenical community that embraced Christians of all denominations. In an era characterized by religious strife, the Taize community has become a place where spiritual barriers collapse in the face of the simple meditative worship, music and community life.

It never marketed itself, but the Taize spirit spread worldwide. Sometimes, 5000 people a week, mostly young, would visit the brothers to chant, pray or simply meditate among candles. It was always a simple community of Christians committed to spiritual sharing. Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant hold common Christian beliefs and conduct services with no liturgy and no priest leading them. Brother Roger said his community was dedicated to the simple notion of listening to God. He said anyone who visited Taize was involved in a Pilgrimage of Trust.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. Ecc: 4:12

All his life, he devoted himself to reconciling the different Christian Churches.

"We are searching together, not wanting to be spiritual masters," he said. God never imposes. We want to love and listen. We want simplicity.

At the funeral of Pope John Paul II, Brother Roger, a Protestant, took the Eucharist from the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. This caused a worldwide stir: some even saw it a sign of a closer approach between the different denominations.

Brother Roger liked the word pilgrim. A pilgrim, he said, was someone who didn't have all the answers, but who set out on a spiritual journey because of his or her faith. He advised his followers to greet each new dawn like a beginning of a new life.

"Whoever advances towards God goes from one beginning to another," he said.

"Christ does not only wait for us in light, in peace, in joy. He is also present in the distress of those who grope along to find a way out. "There can be moments when things look dark. But such obscurity is not pitch-darkness. It is not the dead of night. The light of Christ still penetrates it."

In a recent public letter, he observed how we must "love life on earth, and at the same time long for a beyond, for a life that will never end."

Brother Roger knew that Christianity began with love not doctrine. It is strange that this much-loved man met his death in such a violent way. But death could never silence his song of reconciliation, beauty and peace.

**Story by Bryan Patterson,
Sun Herald, Sunday, 28th August 2005.**

From Jenny Johnston, Ecumenical and Interfaith Issues Contact

In The Economist, on August 27th. It said, "Brother Roger offered, to anyone who wanted it, a way to the spirit of the risen Christ through light, music and silence." It spoke of "Listening, rather than preaching, as the essence of Taizé". We thank God for Brother Roger's vision of reconciliation, forgiveness and his

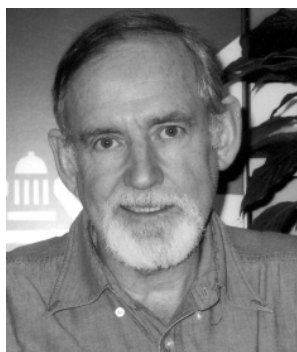
broad ecumenism. My own experience of Taizé, for a week in 1996, was that I was given a little glimpse of the Kingdom of God which continues to be a source of inspiration for me. May young people continue to be inspired as they experience prayer, worship and work together in Taize.

Leader's Letter - Neil Holm

One of my favourite Bible verses comes from Matthew 11 where Jesus speaks tenderly to the people: "Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace" (v. 29 The Message). This issue of Pipeline focuses on empowering people through working in community. This verse from Matthew may give us an insight into the ways working in community empowers people.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2004) defines empower in terms of investing with power, equipping or supplying with an ability, or enabling. It then supplies the following usage note:

"Although it is a contemporary buzzword, the word empower is not new, having arisen in the



mid-17th century with the legalistic meaning "to invest with authority, authorize." Shortly thereafter it began to be used with an infinitive in a more general way meaning "to enable or permit." Both of these uses survive today but have been overpowered by the word's use in politics and pop psychology. Its modern use originated in the civil rights movement, which sought political empowerment for its followers."

"The word was then taken up by the women's movement, and its appeal has not flagged. Since people of all political persuasions have a need for a word that makes their constituents feel that they are or are about to become more in control of their destinies, empower has been adopted by conservatives as well as social reformers. It has

even migrated out of the political arena into other fields.”

“The Usage Panel has some misgivings about this recent broadening of usage. For the Panelists, the acceptability of the verb empower depends on the context. Eighty percent approve of the example We want to empower ordinary citizens. But in contexts that are not political the Panel is markedly less enthusiastic.”

The key phrase here seems to be making people “feel that they are or are about to become more in control of their destinies.” Now, as so often happens, when we look at Jesus’ teachings we find an inversion.

More traditional interpretations of v. 29 refer to taking on Jesus’ yoke – being harnessed with him like a beast of burden. This doesn’t sound too much like being in control of our destinies.

So what are our destinies?

How can we reconcile taking on the yoke with learning the unforced rhythms of grace?

A basic meaning of destiny has to do with our lot in life or our ultimate destination in life. Are we asking can community help people to be more in control of their lot in life or how can community help people to be more in control of their ultimate destination in life?

If so, is the Christian answer something like “we help people become more in control of their lot in life by encouraging them to get out in the paddock tied up with Jesus ploughing the ground”?

I would say “yes and no”. Yes, because one of the paradoxes of the Christian Way is that we become free when we submit our lives to Jesus. We take control of our lot in life by getting it in rhythm with Jesus, by walking with him, working with him, learning his ways by watching him, and doing what he does.

We become empowered, our lives take on their greatest meaning, when we are walking with, working with, and watching him. And what did he do? He left the pleasure palaces of heaven to walk in our world, to get dirty and sweaty as he ploughed the ground of our lives in ways that allowed new life to burst forth.

Being empowered is not about “living well” before God and then living “happily ever after”.

Being empowered is not being “happy” as we normally understand it. We are not empowered for a life of comfort and convenience (Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*, Eerdmans, 2005 p. 341). We are empowered to struggle in this world as Christ struggled. Ploughing the paddock with him is a life of suffering and sacrifice because his was a life of suffering and sacrifice.

In a few tightly written pages in *The Wound of Knowledge*, (Darton Longman & Todd, 1979, pp. 4-13) Rowan Williams lays out the New Testament Foundations of his view of spirituality. He stresses the importance of the crucified and risen Christ. His resurrection is the means of the of the Spirit’s presence in our lives.

Drawing on 2 Corinthians 5 and Philippians 3, Williams argues that the Spirit’s work is to make the believer like Christ, and by being like Christ means living through certain kinds of human experience . . . of the daily affliction, the daily rejection, the daily dying by which the Spirit works, transforming us ‘from one degree of glory to another’” (p. 7). This transformation is our empowerment.

So this is the “yes” – our empowerment lies with entering the life of suffering and sacrifice. But there is also the “no” – we do not enter the life of suffering and sacrifice in an attitude of acceptance and passivity. If we have an attitude of acceptance and passivity to pain, we become hardened and dehumanised.

“The Christian meets pain in acceptance and hope; he or she confronts it, identifies with those experiencing it, and then struggles though it to grow into new human-ness, more capable of both pain and love In suffering, the believer’s self-protection and isolation are broken: the heart is broken so as to make space for others, for compassion” (Williams, p.10- 11).

In these terms we become more in control of our own destinies – we willingly enter our lot in life – we engage the pain and suffering, both our own and that of others, and through it, transformed by the Spirit of the Risen Christ, we grow and we empower others to grow with us, into new human-ness.

This is the hope behind our efforts at empowerment.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY

Fiona Cockington

Since our move to Adelaide 5 years ago, God has placed me in two communities where I have worked in a biblical model with Christ as the head under the leadership of people who are listening to the guidance of God, following and trusting God and encouraging people to use their gifts.

One, a concert party, was a time of healing for me after years of grief and loss. I was allowed to be a child again for a while. The other was the World Wide Kairos Ecumenical Prison Ministry Community and more recently a branch, the Kairos Outside Community, a ministry in support of women who have loved ones in incarceration. Now it is my turn to be entrusted with leadership of this Community in SA. I have learned to face my fears of failure and rejection and trust God for the wisdom and strength for the task. My pattern needed to change to allow me to more fully exercise my God given gifts in leadership. My behaviour pattern caused me to bend myself out of shape to be special to others and maintain intimacy in relationships.

I had to learn to trust in God's grace. Scriptures like Ephesians 2: 8-10 and Ephesians 3:14-18 have been important to me. Learning to sit with these verses and trust that I am the object of God's divine love and that I do not have to earn it, or compare myself with others. I do not always have to be approved of by others. I began trusting and walking in the work that God had prepared beforehand for me to do, giving up the things that I was doing for my own ego. I have learned to walk humbly alongside others in the journey, receiving the love and support that God has so amazingly provided for me. We are learning to be Christ to each other. "Listen, Listen Love, Love" is the motto of the Kairos Ministry.

During our last Kairos Outside Weekend Short course in June, I had the job of facilitating the talks. We have twelve talks in total where team share their story with the guests and cover topics of Choices, Forgiveness of Self and Others, Dealing with Anger, the Church, Persevering through Christian Community and Relationships. I was just so grateful to the women, many of whom were past guests, who shared their stories, they were so brave. I could see their self esteem rise as they experienced the love and acceptance of the community and knew that they were helping others by sharing their story.

The guests said that they had never experienced such love and lack of judgment. They felt accepted and understood, as they said, for the first time in their lives.

We have a number of Chapel services throughout the weekend. The most moving was a spontaneous time of sharing by the guests where they told a bit about their loved ones, before having a time of prayer and laying a photo of their loved ones before the Cross. One mother said that she was letting go of her son for the first time in her life, surrendering Him to Jesus care. Many of the team were led to lay their loved ones down in God's keeping also.

The ministry is growing slowly in South Australia. We have had 22 guests since it started eighteen months ago. We meet bimonthly and have between 20 and 40 people attending reunions. We now have four small groups established. SWAP groups where women meet to **S**hare their journey with God, **W**itness to God's work in their lives, are **A**ccountable to each other and **P**ray for each other. We are currently preparing for KO #4 in December.



The leaders of Kairos Outside singing to guests

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY

Buffy Bennett

Hi! I'm Buffy, a 7 year old honey-blond dog.



Walking around my neighbourhood, I meet newly-arrived refugees living in temporary accommodation. Sad faces turn to delight. I introduce my parents, Val & Norm, and animated conversations take place.



A Sudanese family of 7 (see family photo) fled from armed conflict via a Cairo refugee camp to Port Adelaide. They have become great friends and always ask. "How's Buffy?" they are completing Naturalization papers and have sponsored 2 more Sudanese families.

Message written from the family in the photo. "Thank God for all your help to my family, Merry Christmas to all community of Church. Happy Christmas for all family in the Church. We ask

God to give the Peace on the World in the New Year". Thanks God.

A Young mum and her 4 youngsters escaped on foot across Liberia to a Guinea refugee-camp. The Dad was killed by militia, so the family had to fend for themselves in dangerous conditions until Australia said "Yes". I love them, too. Later, I met an Afghani refugee family and, last month, an Iranian refugee living nearby. Our Church community, Port Adelaide Uniting, who had already received families from Moluccas and Eritrea, rallied to support all four families/ individuals, making 6 nationalities who have joined us.

After the euphoria and stress of a new country, and sensing the peace and freedom of Adelaide, the first year is difficult as refugees adapt to setting up home, the traumas of leaving people behind, visa conditions, new culture, language/idiom, business & money systems, bureaucracies, education/employment, transport etc.

In a loving community of Christians the above refugees are managing, with faith and perseverance, to develop a sense of empowerment that lifts self-esteem, helps them make life choices and gives them a growing sense of independence.

The Spiritual, relational and emotional benefits are two-way. It is an enormous privilege for us to be befriended by these new families and share their cultural richness.

In my street, I became friends with a wonderful family of Muslims from Kurdistan who had fled from Saddam's regime. Val and Norm were invited to be their sponsors at their Naturalization ceremony on 28th February this year.

What a joy!



HOLY GROUND

Liturgies and Worship Resources for an Engaged Spirituality

This exciting new resource book has just been produced by Neil Paynter and Helen Boothroyd. It includes a handful of prayers by Jonathon Inkpin and Peter Millar.

This book presents liturgies and worship resources on a range of subjects and concerns – globalisation, food, water, HIV/AIDS, the environment, interfaith dialogue, the arms trade, prisoners of conscience, 20th-century martyrs, homelessness, racism, gender, living in community, youth, children, ageing – written by Iona Community members, associates and friends; by folk engaged in the life of the world. It is a collection for anyone searching for worship material that reflects the world we live in. Neil Paynter is the editor/author of This Is the Day: Readings and Meditations from the Iona Community, Lent & Easter Readings from Iona, and Blessed Be Our Table. Helen Boothroyd is based at Stilllicidia, a Christian House of Welcome in North Cumbria. Both Helen and Neil are former members of the Iona Community's resident group on the isle of Iona. For more information access the web page on www.ionabooks.com/bookshop/moreinfo.asp?ID=298



SEEDS OF PEACE

A New peace and reconciliation Resource

Prepared for the Decade to Overcome Violence - now available

Cost \$5 available from NCCA and Sate Ecumenical bodies.

This book contains 28 varied stories of Australians actively working for Peace and Reconciliation. From the work of Brendan McKeague and the spirituality of non-violence; to Donna Mulhearn's witness for peace in Iraq; to the struggle of the Kungkas (a group of Aboriginal female elders in south Australia) to stave off a nuclear waste dump on their land with clowning for peace, the Journey of Promise, and many other things in-between! Plus

study and prayer/worship materials for each DOV in Australia 'circle of peace'.

Seeds of Peace has been put together by Jonathon Inkpin with the assistance of fellow Wellspring member Margaret Allen. Some individual files are available on down load at www.ncca.org.au/special_projects/dov/seeds_of_peace/sop_files

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY

Christa Megaw

Last week, our Blackwood Hills Circle of Friends (a secular group) celebrated its second birthday. During this time, it is amazing what has happened. Here is a quick rundown:

- Visiting and corresponding with many detainees in Baxter Detention Centre and forming friendships with them.
- Upon their release, we have been able to help them to settle into the community.
- Lobbying politicians and DIMIA, including deputations to our local MP.
- Adapting and delivering many computers for use by detainees and refugees in the community.
- Significant money raising and donations for refugee support.
- Providing driving lessons for a number of refugees and donation of several cars.
- Advertising our group and taking part in events such as the local Christmas Pageant.
- Endless collection, storage and distribution of furniture and household goods for use by refugees.

Editors note: (This all started because Christa and Phil Megaw and four friends felt passionately about the plight of the refugees in detention at Baxter and got together and started to visit them and started talking about their plight to the Community.)

People in our local area, both from the churches and those not associated with any church, have



come together to fight injustice and to provide hope and friendship for people who have fled their homeland.

Wellspring members John and Fiona, have helped an Afghani family settle into Adelaide. This is ecumenism, mission and multi-faith issues being worked out at the grass

roots level.

It is wonderful to see how many "God incidences" constantly occur. An example is the phone call that I received as I was writing this, asking whether we had any wardrobes for an Afghani family. Lynona Hawkins, a Wellspring friend, had been saying to me yesterday that we now had five wardrobes in our Shed and she didn't know what we were going to do with them all! (This is a blessed, well supplied furniture shed)

We have around 100 members, many of whom have given generously of their time, energy, possessions and money. And at times, many of us have felt overwhelmed, angry, ashamed, distressed, and very tired. Yet by giving, we have received far more than we could have imagined a couple of years ago. Our lives have become richer through befriending people from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Syria. We have learnt a great deal about other cultures, our government and society and ourselves.

We go on into our third year, somehow knowing that God will show us the way.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY

Jean Stirling (Deacon)

Nearly three years ago cell groups were formed in Wellspring, South Australia. The group I belong to didn't like the name "cell". One member suggested we should call ourselves "FISH" meaning Fellowship in Someone's Home. So F.I.S.H. it has been ever since then.



Often the experiences on our journey of faith are shared, now that we have come to know and trust one another. Another member and I teamed up to travel to the Wellspring gatherings in Alice Springs and Canberra. I would probably have missed those wonderful

experiences had I not come to know people well in the smaller group.

We have often met in someone's home/unit for a shared meal, usually on Saturday lunch when it's convenient for both workers and retired people. But there have been other ways we have enjoyed each others company such as a walk on the local beach, attending "Quest for the Spirit" an art exhibition at the Adelaide College of Divinity, visiting "Warriparinga" the Living Kurna Cultural Centre or the old Colbrook site where aboriginal children were looked after now the "Fountain of Tears Memorial Garden". Recently we attended the Adelaide Festival of Ideas.

Now that we have been together for this time, with some joining us or leaving us from time to time, for me the strength of F.I.S.H. is the freedom to meet with people who have a wide variety of interests and passions and share an open-ness to discuss and listen to each others point of view.

Being ecumenical, bringing different perspectives, is heartening as we have opportunity to encourage each other in all our diversity.

While we enjoy each others company and friendship, an important aspect of these smaller groups is an opportunity, following each occasion, to sit with a cup of tea/coffee and discuss our feelings and thoughts on what we have observed.

The F.I.S.H. group for me is a great support to my spiritual journey as I feel the company of others on the same journey strengthens and encourages me and I hope I may do a little of that for my fellow F.I.S.H group members.

NEWS FROM CAMPFIRE IN THE HEART

The residential Community of Campfire in the Heart, Alice Springs, includes the Woods family (Sue and David, Clare, Beth and Joy) Giorgina Nou, Assina Thompson, Joy Jaensch and Josh Moyle.



The Woods family

Each person brings their own special gift to campfire. We come together and pray each morning and enjoy regular meals and catch ups through the week. The communal aspects of our life are exciting, nourishing and fruitful.

Activities at campfire are many and varied. Welcoming visitors, preparing meals, praying, gardening, community gatherings, children and adults travelling to other places, bush walks, campfire reflections. Each day is diverse, bringing joy, beauty, sadness, challenge and at times, absolute wonder. We often pray with St.

Paul in writing to the Ephesians "Glory be to God whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we could ask or imagine."

David journeyed with Edge Journeys from 10th to 29th July

skirting the Simpson Desert, sleeping in sand hills not far from old Andado Station watching the full moon rise over Kata Juta and traversing the Gardiner Range on return along the Mereenie Loop Road.

David is planning to work with Edge Journeys next year. If you are interested in either a traveling retreat, or a bush retreat in one place, next July/August please let David Know.

For more information visit the Web site: www.campfireintheheart.com.au or phone (08) 8952 6607.

DANCING WITH GOD

When I meditated on the word **Guidance** I kept seeing “dance” at the end of the word.

I remember reading that doing God’s will is a lot like dancing.

When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn’t flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky.

When one person realizes that, and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music.

One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back

or by pressing Lightly in one direction or another.

It’s as if two become one body, moving beautifully.

The dance takes surrender, willingness, and attentiveness from one person

and gentle guidance and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word Guidance.

When I saw “G: I thought of God, followed by “u” and “i”. “God, “u” and “i” dance.”

God, you, and I dance.

As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life.

Once again, I became willing to let God lead.

My prayer for you today is that God’s blessings and mercies be upon you on this day and everyday.

May you abide in God as God abides in you. Dance together with God, trusting God to lead

and to guide you through each season of your life.

And I Hope You Dance!!!!

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