



*St Luke's in the City*

150 years - 2009

# **Celebrating at the Crossroads**

## **Pentecost 27**

16 November 2008

### **Christian Meditation**

#### **Background**

I attended the New Zealand Community for Christian Meditation Essential Teachings Workshop in Wellington, from 3-5 October 2008. I had received financial support from the diocesan Lay Ministry Training Fund to meet the course registration fee and from the vestry of St. Luke's to meet the costs of travel.

I undertook this training so that I could be better prepared for my role in leading the weekly Christian Meditation group which meets weekly on Wednesday evenings at St. Luke's in the City. The group started in August 2007 and has continued since. We have run two series of Introduction to Christian Meditation sessions during that time.

#### **The Workshop**

The Essential Teachings Workshop was held at the Home of Compassion, Island Bay, Wellington and was run by two World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) facilitators: Ruth Fowler (from Australia) and Ross Miller (NZ). There were nine participants, from various parts of New Zealand, who were all experienced meditators with current responsibilities for leading Christian meditation groups.

Regular periods of prayer and meditation were built into the programme, which ran from Friday afternoon until Sunday lunch-time.

The programme allowed us to share with each other our personal journeys and how we had arrived at this point in our meditation experience. This was very interesting and encouraging for all of us.

There were sessions on the essential teachings of Christian meditation based on the contemplative tradition of the Desert Mothers and Fathers, John Cassian, the Cloud of Unknowing and John Main OSB.

In small groups, we presented our prepared talks, designed to introduce Christian meditation to a Christian audience new to meditation. We also had sessions on presentation skills using a DVD produced by WCCM in Ireland, and the psychology of meditation, using a DVD from America featuring Sr. Eileen O'Hea.

There were question and answer sessions and discussion groups on how best to pass on the teaching of meditation.

#### **The Future**

The workshop has been a very worthwhile experience for me and has given me many new ideas and a greater level of confidence in my ability to lead a weekly Christian

meditation group. All participants received a substantial resource book of materials for future use in presenting an Introductory Seminar to Christian Meditation.

There is some consideration being given by WCCM to setting up a training team in New Zealand to further promote Christian meditation and I have indicated that I would be willing to participate in such a team.

I would like to convey my sincere and grateful thanks to the Diocese and to the vestry of St. Luke's for their generous support in enabling me to attend this Workshop.

Ian Lothian