

Ecumenical networks

A 'network' is a recognisable grouping of people, often geographically separated, who share an activity or interest and who benefit from contact with one another. An ecumenical network typically begins when people who have met at a conference, on a training course or while on retreat exchange addresses and telephone numbers so that they can stay in touch. Alternatively, a group of people with a common interest may agree to form a network to promote this interest more widely.

Networks vary in numbers, nature and purpose, depending on their origins. Usually they start informally; they may remain informal, but to encourage easier networking with growing numbers many later become organised, agreeing a formal structure and appointing a management group.

Who are they?

The networks listed here are Christian groupings in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, involved in some way with retreats and spiritual support. They are ecumenical in that although their origin might be within a particular denomination, they are open to people from other denominations and traditions.

These networks provide contact, activity, support and in some cases training for their members. Most arrange meetings and many provide a newsletter or some other form of regular communication. Some networks cover a whole country, some a particular region, while other are intended for a local area only.

What do they do?

Many people around who are engaged in retreat work and spiritual support feel isolated. They may wish to make contact with others for a number of reasons. For example, they may be seeking spiritual accompaniment or supervision for themselves, they may want to work with others to initiate activities in their locality; they may want to continue to learn, or to be kept informed; they may want to meet others with shared interests. They may be unaware of the number of networks that exist, some of which may even be close to where they live. This leaflet is for people such as these; and perhaps it will lead to meetings between people in a given locality, and in time new networks may emerge.

Which networks are included in this list?

The Retreat Association is itself a network, as are its member groups. The definition above includes many different 'structures'. As well as organisations specifically set up to provide links between people, the list includes national organisations, groups that organise regular training courses, groups that provide a specific service, prayer groups, and supervision groups.

List of networks

Below are listed some of the known ecumenical networks around the country, with a few words about each network's nature and purpose.

The list is not exhaustive and networks are developing all the time. Readers are invited to inform the Retreat Association of other networks that fulfil the criteria given above: these will be added to future editions of this leaflet.

Bristol Spirituality Network: An informal network promoting Open Door Retreats, Weeks /Months of Guided Prayer etc. Contact: Rachel Newton, 3 College Road, Westbury on Trym, Bristol BS9 3EJ

Christian Life Community (CLC): National Ignatian Lay Organisation for groups. Contact: CLC, Mount St Jesuit Centre, 114 Mount Street London W1K 3AH email info@clcew.org.uk Website www.clcew.org.uk

Epiphany Group: An ecumenical network of men and women across Scotland who have trained in and practise Ignatian Spirituality. Contact: Co-ordinator Elizabeth South Tel: 0131 346 1338 email e_w_south@yahoo.co.uk

Inspir Sheffield: An ecumenical group for those interested in exploring Ignatian Spirituality. Offer Weeks of Accompanied Prayer, Ignatian Prayer evenings, Shoestring Retreats and training in listening Contact: Muriel Roberts, 20 Clifford Road, Sheffield S11 9AQ Tel: 0114 2551473. www.inspirsheffield.org.uk

Julian Meetings: are silent contemplative prayer groups which offer the opportunity to explore praying silently in the way that is natural for each individual. Contact: JM Co-ordinator: Deidre Morris, 263 Park Lodge Lane, Wakefield W. Yorkshire WF1 4HY Website www.julianmeetings.org

Living Spirituality Network: A network for those exploring the meaning of spirituality both in and beyond the traditional churches. Contact Win Kennedy, The Well at Willen, Newport Rd, Willen, Milton Keynes MK15 9AA Tel: 01908 200675

Llysfasi Spirituality Workshop: a national network for people who have completed one or more Llysfasi spirituality workshops. Contact: Isabel Gregory, email: Co-ordinator@llysfasi-spirituality-workshop.org.uk

Manresa Link: a network of people in Contact: with Manresa House in Birmingham. Contact: Margaret Weston, 2 Serpentine Rd, Selly Park, B29 7HU Tel:- 0121 471 1566 Email: manresalink@hotmail.com web manresalink.org.uk

Mirfield Ignatian Group a small group that meets for support and sharing of experience. Contact: Dr Harold Roberts, 20 Clifford Road, Brimcliffe, Sheffield S11 9AQ Tel: 0114 255 1473 or Sr Elizabeth O'Brien, Marie Auxiliatrice, 6 Dryclough Road, Crossland Moor, Huddersfield HD4 5HU Tel 01484 654283.

Salford Prayer Guides Team: for people engaged in providing weeks of guided prayer in the greater Manchester area. Contact: Mary Nono, 0161 980 6776.

Southern Ignatian Network (SigN): for people in the South of England. Contact Christine Risebero, 4 Oval Road, Camden Town, London NW1 7EB

Southwest Spiritual Directors' Network: for people engaged in Spiritual Direction in the Southwest of England. Contact: The Community of St Francis, Compton Durville Manor House, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5ES Tel 01460 240473.

SPIDIR: is an informal network of people practising or interested in the ministry of Spiritual Direction. Chair: Rev Lyndon van der Pump. Contact: Membership Secretary: Val Brewer email: tedvalbrewer@btinternet.com

SPIDIR -East Midlands: a loosely organised network to promote Christian Spirituality and to facilitate Spiritual Direction. Contact: Rev Lynda Randall, The Rectory, 55 Church Street, Byfield, Daventry NN11 6XN Tel 01327 260204

SPIDIR – Oxon, Bucks, Berks: resources and supports those involved in Spiritual Direction with local supervision groups, reflection and training. Contact: the Revd Barbara Doubtfire, 6 Meadow Walk, Woodstock OX20 1NR Tel 01993 812095

Spiritual Exercises Network: a national network for people to promote the Spiritual Exercises. Contact: Margaret Sheldon, 4 James Bradford Almshouses, Butler's Green Road, Hayward's Heath, Sussex RH16 4BD

York Spiritual Directors' Group: a small group in York to provide support and promote Ignatian spirituality. Contact: John McGlinchey, 1st Floor, Champley's Mews, Market Place, Pickering, North Yorkshire YO18 7AE Tel 01751 472320.



The Retreat Association comprises these Christian retreat groups:

- Affiliates of the Retreat Association
- Association for Promoting Retreats (APR mainly Anglican)
- Baptist Union Retreat Group (BURG)
- Catholic Network for Retreats & Spirituality (CNRS)
- Methodist Retreat & Spirituality Network (MRSN)
- United Reformed Church Silence & Retreat Network (URCS&RN)

The Retreat Association aims to foster the growth of the spiritual life by the practice of retreats. For information contact:



The Retreat Association

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