

In gathering together as community we would consider it the 'norm' to expect:

- our journey together to reflect our rootedness in the way of Christ and our continuity with those who have walked this way before us.
- the use of resources from the biblical and contemplative traditions and the invitation to encounter God through sacrament, symbol and service.
- to learn by invitation rather than instruction.
- space for stillness, silence and contemplative practice.
- freedom to explore, question and wrestle with tough issues.
- opportunities to engage our creative imagination.
- use of the body in prayer and the celebration of God's presence with all of our senses.
- meeting together outdoors when opportunity presents, so as to encounter God's presence in the natural world.
- that the profundity of this journey is most certainly also a cause for joyful celebration ... (expect to have fun!).

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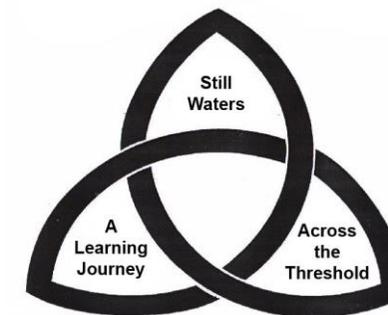
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Vision and Values

Contemplative Fire seeks to live the mystery of life in Christ by invitation into the spacious stillness of **Contemplative** prayer and by transforming encounter with the **Fire** of God's Spirit, which equips us for compassionate living.

Travelling Light: Dwelling Deep, our Rhythm of Life, embraces a threefold pattern of 'Being, Knowing and Doing'; or 'Prayer, Study and Action' as symbolised by the Celtic trefoil. This flows from a Trinitarian understanding of the nature of God and is explored through reflection on Scripture.



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Vision and Call

The vision and call of Contemplative Fire is revealed in the phrase 'Creating a Community of Christ at the Edge'.

Our movement towards community reflects the value that we place on a shared journey, on building relationships within which faith can be explored and deepened. These relationships are characterised by a profound respect for, and honouring of, one another and are explored more fully in the 'norms' set out below.

We are a 'Community of Christ' because we believe that the risen Christ calls us to journey with him into an ever deepening awareness of what he called 'the Kingdom of God'. It is a call into a relationship of love with God, the whole of humanity and with the created order. Jesus' call requires us to 'travel light' in simplicity of lifestyle and to 'dwell deep' in the presence of God.

We talk of 'the edge' because we value and respect such a place as holding potential for transformation. Edges can be geographical but can also be theological, social, ecclesiastical, cultural, spiritual ... To live at 'the edge' is to risk encounter with the unknown beyond the threshold, but is also to recognise that God often beckons us to move beyond self-imposed limitations.

Equipping and Sending

The call of God has both an inward and an outward dynamic. In hearing this call Contemplative Fire seeks to enable those who walk with us to discern and respond to its implications for our lives, both as individuals and as a community. This is provided for through our gatherings in small and large groups; through training, retreats and pilgrimages; and through exploration of the challenge presented by the call to compassionate action.

Silence and solitude become precursors to loving and self-giving service. We are drawn to cross new thresholds of mission, culture and our own experience in order to encounter Christ in a new paradigm.

Norms and Values

In our life as a community we are invited to rediscover a deep sense of wonder in approaching the mystery of God and the mysterious dimension of the 'other' in each and every person. Therefore:

In our relationships with one another we would consider it the 'norm' to expect:

- deep and respectful listening.
- acceptance of difference.
- inclusion of all.

In our speaking we would consider it the 'norm' to expect:

- personal authenticity while being sensitive to the needs of others.
- owning our statements without presuming on the position of others ('I think/I feel', rather than, 'we think/we feel').
- a language of open questioning (I wonder ...?).
- a language which, in reference to God, recognises a depth of mystery and unknowing.
- a generosity of spirit and willingness to learn, in recognition that our language may be unintentionally hurtful to others, and that we also have the capacity to be unintentionally hurt.