

THE AMMERDOWN TIMES

Summer 2023

Dear Friends

How wonderful to welcome you to the Summer Edition of our newly named newsletter – Ammerdown Times! The sun is shining and Ammerdown is really looking its best with all the lush, green growth, flowers bursting forth, a cacophony of beautiful bird song and guests relaxing in the garden! The last few months have provided us with opportunities to celebrate Ammerdown and what we set out to be. Beginning with the Peace Pole Ceremony, we gathered together to pray the prayer 'Let Peace Prevail on Earth'. Then the



visit of the Lord Lieutenant, Mohammed Saddiq, helped us to reflect on our work and what we might do to better connect with others.



On 1 June, we open our Art Exhibition: Spirit of Art in Peace and Reconciliation, welcoming 14 local artists who will exhibit their work: painting, collage and 3D work, as well as digital art and music, taking our core values as their inspiration. Our grateful thanks to Viv Meadows, an Ammerdown volunteer, who birthed the idea and has curated the exhibition. Join us for cheese and wine and a chance to meet some of the artists, 7-9pm on 1 June. Alternatively, come along during the specific opening hours.

Of course, there is more to come with our 50th Anniversary Weekend bookings now open, followed by our Interfaith Weekend for the Youth. Please do encourage the young people you know to join us. In November, our 70s Night with a live band will be sure to provide a great evening of fun!

We're smartening up the Centre too, not least of all the newly painted Dining Room and the new chairs in the TV Room. We would still like to replace the chairs in the conference rooms and would ask you to consider a birthday gift to Ammerdown to help us replace them.

Thank you to everyone who completed our Ammerdown Courses Survey. We really wanted to know what you are enjoying now and what you would like to see as part of the programme. Wildlife Gardening for Kids; David Shepherd Boy, Musician, Beloved, Parent and Man of God; Mpho Tutu van Furth's visit; two more guided walks in the Ammerdown grounds; and Hospitality and Sanctuary for All have all been inspired by the survey. There is still much more to come! Watch this space!

Over the last few weeks, you may have seen some new faces among the Ammerdown Team. We are delighted to welcome Summer back to the Kitchen Team, along with Duncan who takes on the role of Senior Sous Chef. Roxy also joins us in the Admin Team, working particularly with our external groups. It's great to have their enthusiasm and energy on board!





You will have received an email about Recruiting Trustees for the Ammerdown Centre. We would ask you to help us identify people who will help us to fulfil our Mission and Vision as we move into the next fifty years!

We look forward to welcoming you back to Ammerdown soon and continuing the celebration of this special place.

Warmest wishes and peace to you
Christine Debbie
Lead Manager *Deputy Lead Manager*

Our Peace Pole Unveiled

The Fiftieth Anniversary celebrations began with the unveiling of our 'Peace Pole'. The Peace Pole Ceremony included music from the harpist Vicki Burke and songs of peace, sung by the aptly named Dove Peace Choir. There were also readings from friends from different faith communities and Ammerdown Staff. The people of the Ukraine were also remembered. Guests joined in by reciting the words on the peace pole 'May Peace Prevail on Earth' in different languages, including Arabic, Japanese, Spanish and Hebrew.

The Peace Pole, nestled in our Peace Garden, was unveiled by one of the Centre's longest standing trustees, Bill Thomson. The Peace Pole, made from recycled wood by Father Michael, formerly of Downside Abbey, carries the words 'May Peace Prevail On Earth' in English, Sanskrit, Hebrew and Arabic and will soon have a plaque with the words in braille. The rainbow that wraps around the top of the Peace Pole represents hope and inclusion. The ceremony was brought to an end with the planting of sunflower seeds, the lighting of candles in the Chapel and Ammerdown's delicious homemade cake and tea.

The first peace pole was unveiled in 1955 in Japan by a philosopher, teacher and peace campaigner named Goi Masahisa. Today, there are 250,000 peace poles in 180 countries around the world. They are in parks and gardens; in schools and places of worship; on mountain tops and even at the Magnetic North Pole.

Every peace pole reminds us of the oneness of humanity and our common wish to live in a peace-filled world ... a world without war ... a world where all people are able to think, speak and act in a spirit of mutual respect, love and harmony. The Ammerdown Peace Pole now stands in our garden, surrounded by beautiful flowers.



There are more events planned to mark our 50th Anniversary including the Art Exhibition Spirit of Art in Peace and Reconciliation; The Anniversary Weekend, 1-3 September; The Interfaith Weekend for Young People, 8-10 September; and the 70s Night with a live band on 4th November.





Lord Lieutenant of Somerset visits Ammerdown

On Thursday 23rd March, 2023, the Ammerdown Centre, in its 50th Anniversary year, was delighted to welcome the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, Mr Mohammed Saddiq.

Mr Saddiq was welcomed to the Centre by the Chair of Trustees, Rev Dr Stuart Burgess. They were then joined by the Lead Manager, Christine Clinch and Deputy Manager, Debbie Tutchell for a tour of the Centre.

During the tour Mr Saddiq heard about how Ammerdown was set up fifty years ago as a Centre for peace and reconciliation, welcoming people of all faiths and none, and continuing to welcome people of difference. Mr Saddiq met Ammerdown partners from the

RUH Chaplaincy; the Bath Interfaith Group; the Ukraine refugee community, and a course facilitator from the Oxford University Centre for Religion and Culture and heard about the Centre's work in social justice, interfaith, the environment, diversity and inclusion. The visit finished with a delicious homemade meal from the Ammerdown kitchen.

Thinking About Trees at Ammerdown

Trees are vital to our human existence but their habitat is declining in the UK. Although our total tree coverage is gradually increasing, our woodland wildlife is decreasing. Carbon offset schemes are a popular way for people to counteract their emissions by paying for trees to be planted. Unfortunately, it's not that straightforward. Many offset schemes are monocultures; they use only one species of tree and they are often planted densely, blocking out light for the understory and forest floor. This leads to the creation of 'green deserts' devoid of biodiversity, with little benefit to the planet.

At Ammerdown, beautiful trees surround us. However, we are aiming to extend our wooded area and provide more habitat for our worlds declining woodland birds, insects, mammals and fungi. We have designated a space (near to Benedicte's tree) where guests and friends of Ammerdown can donate trees, and make a valuable contribution to improve our local ecosystem. The effect will not be immediate, but, with time, our expansion will have lasting impacts.

We have already planted five Silver Birches and two Cherry Trees. We are now seeking Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Bird Cherry, Crab Apple, Elder, Hazel and Rowan trees. These are all native species and great for wildlife. We are excited to see how this new space develops and the improvements we can make to wildlife. If you would like to donate a tree, speak to Olly or Christine.

Olly Jones



Chaplain's Corner

When I'm not lighting candles, leading morning prayers or spending time with Ammerdown guests, you will probably find me preparing for our next Zoom course. This is an important part of our programme and, I believe, is especially valued by people who want to stay in touch but don't have the time, the mobility or the opportunity to travel to The Ammerdown Centre. With this in mind, please allow me to report back on two recent Zoom events.

Zoom Lent Course 2023

As chaplain, it was my pleasure to plan and lead Ammerdown's weekly online Lent course this year. My aim was to curate a sequence of Bible studies where everyone – whether a committed Christian,

new to the faith or not a Christian, but curious about Christian belief and spirituality – would feel welcome. 14 people signed up for the morning sessions, with a further 25 enrolling for the evening option. This series of six guided spiritual reflections allowed us to 'walk' together on a virtual pilgrimage as we prepared for Easter. Each session focused on one (or two) of the 'I am' sayings of Jesus.

'I Am the Bread of Life' (John 6:35); 'I Am the Light of the World' (John 8:12); 'I Am the Gate of the Sheepfold' (John 10:7); 'I Am the Good Shepherd' (John 10:11); 'I Am the True Vine' (John 15:1); 'I Am the Way, Truth, and Life' (John 14:6); and 'I Am the Resurrection and the Life' (John 11:25). For all involved, these Bible studies aimed to provide a spiritual detox. We were each invited to step back from everyday busyness and activity, and look afresh at the unique claims of Jesus, and the implications they have for those who follow his teachings today.

Zoom Preparing for Pentecost Course 2023

Ammerdown's online 'Preparing for Pentecost' course was offered over four weeks, to talk about what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit. The role of the Holy Spirit in creation (Genesis 1–2; Job 12, 26, 32–34; Psalms 33, 104, 139); The role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individuals in the Old Testament (Genesis 41; Exodus 31; Numbers 27; Judges 3, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15; 1 Samuel 10, 16); The role of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament prophesy about the Messiah, and in the lives of individuals in the New Testament before Jesus' ministry (Isaiah 11, 42, 61; Luke 1–2); and The Gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2). The course ended with these questions: What does Peter mean by 'Repent and be baptised ... Save yourselves from this corrupt generation'? How did the first Christians live? What examples does Luke (author of Acts) give to demonstrate their priorities in terms of their time, property and money?

Future Zooms – your suggestions are welcome!

We are considering adding more online events to the Ammerdown programme. Your suggestions are welcome!

By Rupert Kaye





Hospitality, Peace and Reconciliation Roses
 To mark our 50th anniversary at Ammerdown we have planted three new roses representing peace, hospitality and reconciliation, Ammerdown's Core Values. All of these roses are single, meaning the flower heads are open, allowing insects to access the nectar and pollen in the centre. If you're thinking of getting some roses, consider looking for a variety with single flowers. The range of colours and growing habits are just as exciting as the more traditional varieties, and will be covered in bees during the summer.



Refugee Week – 19-25 June 2023

The Ammerdown Centre is seeking to become a Centre of Sanctuary, a named place where asylum seekers and refugees are made to feel welcome; holding a safe space where people can come and share their stories.

Laura Deacon, Social Justice Initiator
 socialjustice@ammerdown.org

The week begins on Tuesday 20th June with a Zoom –

Don't forget Jamal!

Tuesday 20 June

2pm - 3pm

Donations for Jamal

Email admin@ammerdown.org for the zoom details.



Refugee Picnic Sunday 25th June. We welcome refugees for activities and a picnic at Ammerdown. Later in the afternoon, we invite you to join us at the Centre to hear the beautiful music of Sinnobar.



Sinnobar in the Ammerdown Garden.

Sunday 25th June

3pm - 5pm

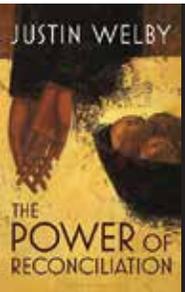
Adults - £10 includes afternoon tea

Children 6-12 years - £5

Children 5 years and under - free

Book before if you can but please do come along!

All proceeds to support the displaced people of Turkey and Syria, following the earthquakes.



Book Review by Lord Hylton

"The Power of Reconciliation" By Archbishop Justin Welby
 Published Bloomsbury Continuum 2023

This book is rooted in practical experience of violent conflicts, institutional problems and disagreements; also of pastoral knowledge of family and interpersonal clashes. It explains why reconciliation is so difficult to achieve and how its processes can be so long drawn out. The theoretical side is illustrated by case studies and personal memories. Both elements are linked to the Gospel and Biblical accounts of the Incarnation.

This is the third book by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It will interest all who search for local and global peace, and also for truth and justice.

Lord Hylton
 April 2023

Spirit of Art

in Peace and Reconciliation



Exhibiting work from

- Suzanne Woodward • Lizbeth Spurgeon •
- Jane Eaton • Vivien Meadows • Tracey Quinn •
- Ingrid Gammage • Jane Sheppard • Paul Fine •
- Jo Waterworth • Lorna Thomas • Nicola Clark •
- Simone Woolerton • Lilith Piper •

Opening of the
Art Exhibition
with the Artists

Thursday 1 June

7pm - 9pm

Entrance with
Cheese and Wine - £5

music by Vicki Burke

Opening times

2-4 June

12-15 June

8-13 July

10:30am-12:30pm

2:00pm - 6:00pm

(14-15 July - Closed)

16 July

2pm-9pm

Ammerdown Cream Teas Sundays

2 July

13, 20, 27 August

2pm-5pm



No need to book!





The 100 club is a monthly draw where you pay a minimum donation of £12 for the year, to be assigned a number. Each month one number is drawn and the winner receives £50 of the money. The rest is donated to the Ammerdown charity. A cheque is posted to the winner and their name is featured in the Quarterly Newsletter. Please contact the Centre for information on joining.

D. Fleming - March 2023
M. Forest - April 2023
J. Wilson - May 2023

Ammerdown Christmas Family Fun Day 2023

Face Painting • Tombola • Bouncy Castle • Craft Stalls • Competitions • Mulled Wine

Saturday 2nd December 12pm - 4pm

**The Ammerdown Centre
Ammerdown Park,
BA3 5SW
01761 433709**

Email tina.patterson@ammerdown.org for information on having a stall.

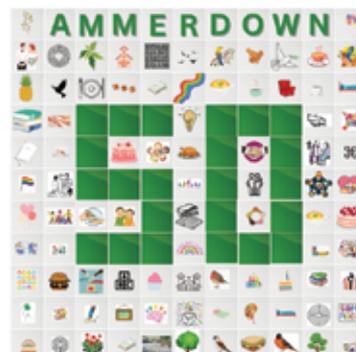
Would you like to paint a ceramic tile that will be on display at Ammerdown for years to come?

For our 50th Anniversary this year we are doing a communal project with staff, guests, volunteers, trustees course leaders & anyone who holds Ammerdown in their hearts.

We are asking you to paint a plain tile with the things that mean the most to you about Ammerdown or Peace, Hospitality and Reconciliation. You could write something like a poem if you're not very arty! When we have all of the tiles finished they will be put up on the wall to make a huge joint piece of art to celebrate our special birthday.

If you would like to be part of this project when you next visit the Centre, please go to the Admin Office where you will be provided with a plain tile, an idea/instructions sheet, paint and a brush. When you have finished your tile please return it to the office (along with any remaining paint) where we will keep it safe until it goes up on the wall.

There are a limited number of tiles and it is first come first served so do contact us if you wish to participate.



A Memory of Ammerdown...

Memories from Sr Tessa Hughes

In the 1970'S Hon Raymond Hylton had inherited the Ammerdown House; he wanted to find a new use for the property. He consulted with various local people and subsequently the Ammerdown Centre was born. The vision was to create an Ecumenical Centre where all faiths and none had a space to pray, reflect, work together and relax. The Roman Catholic Congregation of Our Lady of Sion was approached and asked if they were able to provide a community that would be a praying presence behind the venture. In 1972, the stable block began to be converted into a Conference Centre with 40 bedrooms and facilities. Sr Katherine Christopher went to live on the site to liaise with the Architects and builders - a local company, Ken Biggs Contractors. Rev Ralph Russell and Mr John Todd were local people that supported this venture very enthusiastically.

March 1973 was when the members of the new community arrived: Sr Katherine, Sr Tessa, Sr Marina, Sr Marion and Sr Teresa Gribbin. The left-hand gatehouse had been converted for our use, and a priest from Downside Abbey came several times a week to celebrate Eucharist with us. We each had a role in the Centre alongside the Director Andrew Aldrich, a Methodist minister. He moved into Peace Cottage with his family. Sr Katherine was the Assitant Director, Sr Tessa took on the Catering. It was a totally new adventure - nobody knew whether it would flourish! So we set up our daily routine - we met for prayer at 8.15 each morning, anyone who was staying in the Centre was welcome to join. This proved to attract many of the residents, and opened up conversations that were often very deep. At the beginning the Chapel was situated in the lower dovecote, then moved to its present location, formerly the wood store!

As the Centre grew and developed we welcomed several volunteers. Kate and Bernard O'Shaughnessy were the first pair and ended up marrying!! We were also in touch with the local community in the villages around. "Open Days" for Ammerdown Gardens became a regular feature, as did the Cream Teas and cake offered by the community and staff of the Centre! I can remember our first Christmas House Party, in 1973, 45 people sat down for the Christmas feast! They arrived on the 23rd December and left on the 27th December: it was quite something to cater for them all that time!

Before long, there was an established pattern of courses, Monday- Friday, and weekends. As Friday was the change-over day, we provided a Ploughmans Lunch- including a pint from the Bar, so that Sybil and I could clean the kitchen!!



The Ammerdown Centre
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BA3 5SW

www.ammerdown.org
admin@ammerdown.org
01761 433709