



Ammerdown

HOSPITALITY • PEACE • RECONCILIATION

May, 2020

Dear Friends

We hope this finds you well! We are all missing Ammerdown and the folks who come through our doors, the conversations and the stories that we share. As one of our course leaders said, despite all the virtual contact at our disposal, you can't replace 'the lived experience in the room.'

Once again, as we write, it is a time of feast days in a number of our faiths.

Wesak is the biggest of the Buddhist Festivals, when the birth, enlightenment and final passing of their founder Gautama Buddha is remembered.

Our Baha'i friends mark the anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb in 1844. The Báb was the fore-runner of Bahá'u'lláh, their Persian religious leader, who founded the Bahá'í Faith - which advocates universal peace and unity among all races, nations and religions.

Eid Mubarak! – to our Muslim friends, as they celebrate the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. This is usually celebrated with family gatherings and making gifts to the poor.

Seven weeks after the Passover, our Jewish friends celebrate the Festival of Shavout when God gave the Torah to his people at Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago.

And in the Christian faith, we celebrate Pentecost, the birth of the church, when the disciples of Jesus first proclaimed the Gospel after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Themes of lockdown resonate in all of these festivals: enlightenment; peace and unity for all people; the poor and our response; the truth of our scriptures for this time; and the definition of our good news.

The disciples of Jesus had been in lockdown from the time of Jesus's death until Pentecost. After Jesus's death, we hear of the disciples staying behind closed doors, plagued by fear, unbelief and doubt. Into this dark place Jesus comes – 'Peace be with you' – and the bread is broken - so that hearts are strangely warmed and their next step is made clear. After weeks of being on their own, in one place, the disciples go out into the busy streets of Jerusalem and, receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, proclaim the gospel to all people.

As lockdown begins to ease, we want to shout the good news of Ammerdown – that this is a place where all are welcome, where you will find the warmth of our hospitality, the peace of our beautiful grounds, a safe place to explore spirituality and creativity, discover good disagreement and the opportunity to celebrate diversity. Hospitality, Peace and Reconciliation.

In June, we welcome you to engage with the virtual experience of Ammerdown.

- **On Friday 5 June**, we have our first weekly online **Ammerdown Morning Prayers**, accessed through this [link](#) which will go live on Friday at 9am (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJoHqJeeCqv7Ziu-ESYvtyi8bRk9RTP9r>). Join us in prayer, each Friday morning at 9am. Our Morning Prayer liturgy is available on request.
- **Our first Ammerdown Zoom** takes place on **Saturday 6th June** with Alison Murdoch: **Awakening a Wise and Gentle Heart: An Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism**, 10-11.45am.
- **Refugee Week 15-21 June takes the theme 'Imagine'**. Ammerdown is holding two events. Watch in your own time, **the film 'For Sama'** <https://movingworlds.info/for-sama> *FOR SAMA* is both an intimate and epic journey into the female experience of war. A love letter from a young mother to her daughter, the film tells the story of Waad al-Kateab's life through five years of the uprising in Aleppo, Syria. Join us for a Zoom discussion about the film on **Tuesday 16th June, 7-8pm**.
- On **Saturday 20th June, 10-11am**, **Meet a Refugee and hear their refugee story**, through Zoom. This conversation is organised through **Na Takallam** (We Speak – in Arabic) and is sponsored by **Ben and Jerry's** ice cream.

And we continue to **offer a home to rough sleepers** during lockdown, working with **Mendip District Council**.

In July, we hope to open our doors for the first time. One of our Ammerdown courses will go ahead as planned, with safe distancing and heightened cleanliness in place, following the government's guidelines.

Just Passing Through with Sue Brayne, Friday 10 to Sunday 12 July. Explore the impact Covid-19 is having on our relationship with life and death. Confronting our fear of death and accepting our physical mortality, Sue believes, helps us develop a much more conscious way of living. This empowers us to build connection and communion within ourselves, with our community and with the wider world. Sue's latest book *Living Fully, Dying Consciously* is now available on Amazon.

Annette Bolton's course: Embroidered Felt Needle Roll has been postponed to **14-17 December, 2020**. Just four places remaining!

**Email: christine.clinch@ammerdown.org
to book your place for the courses and events above.**

It's good to be back in touch and we look forward to connecting with you again over the weeks to come. We will bring you more news of our activities at the end of June.

with all good wishes to you from Ammerdown

Christine and Debbie

Christine Clinch, Education and Spiritual Manager, and Debbie Tutchell, Finance Manager