



Quiet Garden Movement

sharing outdoor space for wellbeing and the inner journey

Welcome to Fulligrove House Quiet Garden

Quiet Morning 9th December, 2024

“The light of the world”

Jesus said, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest” (Mark 6:31)

This is a Quiet Morning, not a Silent Retreat. It is an opportunity to listen for the natural and normal sounds of everyday that you might otherwise miss in the busyness of modern life.

It provides you with a space to simply ‘be’ – to leave the worries of the day to one side and replace them with a stillness within, opening yourself to what God may have to say to you through His word and the natural world.

Preparation – remember this is a gift to you – and to God “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!”

Turn mobile phone off for the duration. Ideally, have a Bible and notebook/pen.

Outline

10.30am Settling down/refreshments/introduction

10.40am Worship

10.50am Quiet session

11.30am Review

11.40 2nd Quiet session

12.20pm Review

12.30pm End

1] Settling down

Turn off your mobile phone.

Relax and hand over your concerns to God – perhaps light a candle.

Breathe slowly and deeply – perhaps say on breathing in ‘Lord Jesus Christ’ and breathing out ‘have mercy on me’ or “I receive your love, I love you Lord”.

Relax each part of your body from your head to your toes.

2] Worship

This centres on Scripture.

Our theme for the day is **“The light of the world”**

Prayer of preparation

Holy Spirit of God, gentle as the dove, bring your stillness to this moment. You are the tender breath of God, with gifts of wisdom and discernment. Speak to us in the quiet.

Reveal to us your Word in the Scriptures and in the natural world. Lead us through this journey, as we offer this day to you and all that we are. Transform our hearts and minds through your encircling love and power. May we sense your presence with us in a new way. Come, Holy Spirit. Amen.

John 8 v 12 (New International Version)

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, **“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”**

Advent is a time of year when we think a lot about light. This verse gives us plenty to ponder about Jesus being light, how He is light for all the world, about following him, never walking in darkness and what it means to have the light of life.

The contrast between darkness and light is so stark – and one small light in a huge dark place can make such a difference. Light is also about honesty – revealing truth (not hiding in dark shadows). Is it too scientific to think that we might also consider that light is made up of all colours – equally contributing to the whole?

First quiet session

Let us wander round the garden and find a place to sit. Be still in God’s presence and be open to Him speaking to us.

4] Review

Review your feelings and emotions, your responses to the reading and your experiences in the ‘quiet place.’ Make a note of these for future reference. Is God changing you in any way?

5) Second quiet session

Matthew 5 v 14-16 (New International Version)

¹⁴ "You are the **light of the world**. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Jesus is the light of the world but He is saying that if we follow Him, by His Spirit His light is in us for the world. The world needs this light and by it God is glorified.

6) Final review

Give thanks to God for all that you have heard Him say to you from this Quiet Morning. Make a note again of any way you think He would like you to change – or be changed. Prepare to take back some of the issues you handed over at the beginning of this day and notice how they have been transformed by your handing them over.

7] End

Be kind to yourself as you gently re-enter the busyness of the world. Don't rush back in to all the jobs that might be awaiting you!

Senses Exercises for use in your Quiet Morning

Sight

Owl / Hawk Eyes – explore your vision

Firstly, explore how wide you can make your vision, like an owl. Soften your gaze and hold your arms in front of you with your fingers wiggling. Gradually open your arms out, wiggling your fingers until you can no longer see your moving fingers. Experiment and see how wide your vision can be.

Secondly, sharpen your vision, like a hawk. Focus on the detail of something nearby, examining as much detail as you can.

Sound

Counting sounds - explore the sounds around you. Start with your hands in fists in front of you. Close your eyes, and count each different sound you hear (ending up with your hands opened up, having counted ten sounds).

Deer ears – experiment with your hearing by mimicking how a deer moves its ears. Cup your hands behind your ears with your palms facing in front of you. Notice the difference it makes to how you hear sounds in front of you. Now cup your hands in front of your ears (with your palms facing behind you) and notice how you hear sounds behind you.

Fox feet – experiment walking silently. Bend the knees a little, relax the body, and gently step forward with one foot, toes first. If, as you begin to set your foot down it seems like you might make a noise, lift the foot and place it somewhere else. Once that foot rests quietly on the floor, shift your weight onto that foot, and repeat with the other foot. Experiment with putting the foot down heel first, and both inner and outer sides of the sole first.

Look up and not at your feet – this frees up your dominant sense of sight so you can tune into everything around you and not just your feet.

Smell

Silent smell – pick (or run your fingers gently up and down) a leaf or stalk of some fresh herbs or plants with a strong smell (rosemary, mint, chives). Hold each plant in turn with your eyes closed and spend two minutes exploring the smell. Hold it near your nose and then far away.

Touch

Silent touch – experiment by picking up an object in your hands and with your eyes closed, silently explore the object with just your hands. Explore the sensations of holding it up to your face, touching it with your cheek and perhaps your lips. Does your sense of touch change with your eyes closed? Is there a temperature difference? How does it feel differently touched to your cheek?