

## What is contemplative prayer?

Contemplative prayer has been described as listening for God; opening ourselves to God; waiting silently upon God. Other descriptions are meditation, contemplation, centring prayer or 'the prayer of quiet'. In contemplative prayer we seek to be aware of the presence of God and to remain silently and attentively in that presence, completely open to God.

It is not just that words are unnecessary, but that they may even get in the way. Prayer involves listening as well as speaking, but so often we do all the talking and God doesn't get a chance to talk with us! Simply 'being with God' like this is a very natural way of praying. It may be the only way we can pray when we're tired or ill. Some children pray in this way quite instinctively. So did the old man who explained why he sat in church for hours: 'I look at Him, He looks at me'.

## Why belong to a Julian Meeting?

If we feel we need to learn how to be still with God, we might start with ways that have helped other people. Belonging to a group of people who meet regularly to pray in silence can both help and encourage us. We do not feel isolated. Prayerful silence is helped when two or three are together, and this complements our daily personal prayer. If we are having problems with our praying, sharing them can help us to grow through them. A Julian Meeting can provide these opportunities.

Today there are on-line and 'distanced' Julian Meetings, which could be alternative to, or an addition to, a physical Julian Meeting.

## Contacting the Julian Meetings

Our website [www.thejulianmeetings.net](http://www.thejulianmeetings.net) has lots of information, so do have a look at what it offers. Scan this QR code for quick access. All our publications can be bought on our website



To find the location of your nearest Julian Meeting: go to the Meetings List page of our website or e-mail [meetingsinfo@thejulianmeetings.net](mailto:meetingsinfo@thejulianmeetings.net) or use the attached form.

**The Julian Meetings magazine**, published 3 times a year, has news of JM, items on prayer and related subjects, book reviews, poems and quotations. To join the magazine mailing list please follow the directions on our website or use the form opposite.

**Donations.** We try to keep things simple, but it does cost us money to print magazines, run a website and database, and pay volunteer's expenses. We would be very grateful if you could support our work with a donation of what-ever you feel appropriate. You can use this QR code, or visit our website donations page or send a cheque to the address opposite.



### Supporters of the Julian Meetings include:

Anglican:	Rowan Williams
Baptist:	Margaret Jarman
Church of Scotland:	Ken Lawson
Methodist:	Yvonne Walker
Roman Catholic:	Ralph Heskett
United Reformed:	Mike Playdon

<b>I would like the items ticked:</b>	<b>Price:</b>	<b>Name:</b> .....
information about my nearest Julian Meeting(s)	Free	Address: .....
a copy of the current issue of the JM Magazine	£3.00	.....
to join the Magazine mailing list	Free	.....
a leaflet on Contemplative Prayer + bookmark	£1.00	Postcode: .....
Some Basics of Contemplative Prayer	£2.00	Tel: .....
a list of other Julian Meetings publications	Free	e-mail: .....

Please make cheques payable to The Julian Meetings. If you are only ordering Free items please include a stamped self-addressed envelope, unless you are making a donation to JM.

**Please send this form to:** The Julian Meetings, 263 Park Lodge Lane, Wakefield WF1 4HY



# Waiting on GOD in the Silence

**Julian Meetings are groups of people who meet regularly in order to grow in the practice of contemplative prayer in the Christian tradition**

## **Julian Meetings**

A Julian Meeting is usually 6-15 people of various denominations, both lay people and clergy. They meet regularly in a house, church or chapel. A brief reading, or piece of music, leads into about 30 minutes of silent contemplative prayer. This may be followed by a time for tea or coffee and conversation.

Julian Meetings do vary. Our main guidelines are that: each meeting is centred on contemplative prayer in the Christian tradition; it welcomes people of all denominations; it welcomes those seeking a place for silent prayer.

We teach no specific method, but our 'Basics of Contemplative Prayer' booklet gives some guidelines. We encourage people to seek what is right for them; to discover how they can integrate contemplation into their daily prayer life and how personal and group contemplative prayer can enrich each other.

Those who attend Julian Meetings often take a full part in the life of their own church, but some have no formal church links. Local and regional quiet days or retreats, and occasional national gatherings, enable wider sharing between people from several Meetings.

## **How the Julian Meetings (JM) began**

Contemplative prayer has been part of Christianity from the beginning. Jesus spent whole nights alone in prayer. The Desert Fathers and our own Celtic hermits sought places to be alone with God. But for some centuries the Christian churches neglected this most basic form of prayer; it became usual only in monastic communities.

In the 1960s and 1970s, with the great interest in eastern forms of mysticism and meditation, many people realised that the Church had not taught people about its own tradition of contemplative prayer.

In 1973 a letter in English church papers of various denominations led to people in eleven areas setting up contemplative prayer groups. These grew into the network we have today.

## **JM today**

JM keeps bureaucracy to a minimum but some jobs must be done: respond to enquiries; produce and send out the JM Magazine and literature; run the website and social media accounts; keep in touch with Meetings; organise national events; manage JM finances. These jobs are done by the JM Council members, volunteers working from home across the country. JM has no offices nor paid staff.

To cover costs we invite those who support our work, or join our magazine mailing list, to make a donation. Use this QR code, visit our website or send us a cheque.



## **Why Julian?**

The movement was named after Julian of Norwich, a fourteenth century mystic. Her inspired writings are sometimes used at meetings but JM is in no way a Julian cult, nor are we associated with other organisations bearing her name.

The purpose of JM is defined as 'fostering the practice and teaching of contemplative prayer within the Christian tradition', and this accords with Julian's precept that the highest form of prayer consists in simply waiting on God.