

WESTERN CHAN FELLOWSHIP

Retreat Programme 2008 and Newsletter 18

The Western Chan Fellowship offers retreats providing training in Zen insight and fresh ways of being. The Maenllwyd retreat centre has been providing disciplined Zen, Tibetan and Chan (Chinese Zen) retreats for over 30 years. Participants need not be Buddhist, and indeed probably the majority are not.



The programme of retreats with the Western Chan Fellowship provides a progressive series of events designed to deepen self-understanding and insight into the Buddhist path. Serious practitioners, and this includes beginners, are invited to take advantage of these rare opportunities for practice and self-discovery in an atmosphere of warmth and the cultivation of kindness.

Western Zen Retreats and Shorter Chan Retreats are open to beginners and adepts alike. Mahamudra and full Chan (Koan and Silent Illumination) retreats are open to those who have already attended a Western Zen Retreat or have relevant prior retreat experience elsewhere (details required on application). *Prior to booking please read the retreat descriptions on pages 2 and 3, and also the description of the facilities at Maenllwyd Retreat Centre on page 10, to ensure that you understand the nature of each event.*

These retreats are serious and quite demanding. Participants gain important insights into their lives and into the Buddhist path and many return for further retreats. Some indeed make these retreats their main practice. The atmosphere is caring and supportive and interviews (opportunities to speak to the teacher) are always available. You are welcome to enquire further when considering whether a retreat is right for you.

Retreats may be led by John Crook, PhD. DSc *Chuan-deng Jing-di*, Simon Child *Chuan-fa Jing-hong*, Hilary Richards, Jake Lyne, or Ken Jones. Both John Crook and Simon Child are Dharma heirs of Chan Master Sheng-yen of the Institute of Chung-Hwa Buddhist Culture, Taipei and New York, and are fully authorised teachers in the lineages of Linji and Caodong Chan. Hilary Richards and Jake Lyne are long-term practitioners with Dr John Crook and Master Sheng-yen. Hilary is a past Chair of the Western Chan Fellowship and Jake is a trustee. Ken Jones is a long term practitioner well known both for his writings and for the retreats and workshops which he leads at various venues.

Retreat Descriptions

Western Zen Retreat

A simple monastic regime enables the mind to face the major paradox - Who am I? - in creative mutual questioning. People work in turns with each member of the group in exploring this fundamental Koan. The intensive focus drives each into a self-presentation that is difficult to experience in other ways. The outcome may be a profound sense of the unity of self and possibly a direct insight into the 'ground of being', in traditional Zen considered to be a glimpse of Enlightenment. Whether or not such an insight happens, participants share a rich experience in new self-knowledge and understanding others. Open equally to beginners and established trainees. *Leaders: Simon Child, Hilary Richards.*

Five Day Chan Retreat

The five-day Chan Retreat is similar in format to the full Silent Illumination Retreat, based on the teachings of Master Sheng-yen, and the teachings of the Western Chan Fellowship. It is suitable for beginners, and for experienced practitioners who are unable to commit to the full seven days. There will be an emphasis on Silent Illumination practice, though you may prefer to work with the breath. Practice will be supported through meditation instruction, mindfulness in daily activity, community in silence, Dharma talks and personal interviews, together with all of the other features of a Maenllwyd Retreat. *Leader: Jake Lyne*

Five Day Chan Retreat in Devon

This retreat will be held at The Golden Buddha Retreat Centre on the Southern edge of Dartmoor. It will follow the same format as the Five Day Chan Retreat at the Maenllwyd (see description above). The Retreat centre, near the site of an ancient hermitage, is next to a small Dartmoor river. Bedding is provided in comfortable individual or shared rooms. Pete Lowry, Zen vegetarian cook, and South Devon Chan Group Leader will be cooking. Please book through the Membership Secretary using the normal WCF application form. *Retreat Leader: Jake Lyne*

Silent Illumination Chan Retreat

This traditional week-long retreat will allow the time and space for serious practitioners to learn, practice and cultivate the method of Silent Illumination. Simple yet difficult, within this space you may encounter an opening that allows you to come to rest and find freedom, peace and lucidity. This is not a place to opt out but enables effective engagement with daily life. Facilitated in a kindly and supportive manner we will present the teaching and methods of Master Sheng-yen, through practice, talks and individual interviews. The format will be that of a full Chan retreat, rising early, a rigorous schedule of meditation and exercise, with work periods for food preparation and keeping the Maenllwyd (Grey Mountain) log fires glowing. In the still heart of Wales, join us for this intensive Seven Day Chan Retreat. *Leader: Simon Child.*

Hua-tou Retreat

Seeking an awakening through direct realisation in a few days of Chan retreat requires an intensive focus to provoke a breaking out of conventional minding. The Hua-tou is a brief statement or question, usually the punch line of a Koan story, used for sustained investigation. The task of the retreat master is to help the participant generate intense 'doubt' and s/he may make use of any compassionate means to achieve this. This retreat will be strict, highly focussed and demanding. Only those with an appropriate determination are advised to attend. It is a challenge. Open to those with at least WZR and Full Chan 7 retreat experience. *Leaders: John Crook and Simon Child.*

Koan Retreat

This retreat focuses on traditional koans as a means of training. This retreat is designed for Westerners based in the writings of Linji, Hsu-yun, Hakuin, and Dogen, and incorporates both Chinese and Japanese approaches in a fresh format. Previous experience of either a Western Zen Retreat or Chan retreat is required. *Leaders: Simon Child, John Crook.*

Mahamudra on the Tantric Path

An opportunity for practitioners to deepen their insight through an introduction to a profound Tibetan meditation system that originated in India during the richest period of Mahayana evolution. Preliminary exercises create the motivation for receiving an empowerment to practice methods evoking compassion and wisdom with humility and self-understanding. The retreat provides the first steps in "becoming a Buddha in one lifetime" through the mental yogas of the Mahamudra meditation system. *Leader: John Crook.*

The Liberative Path of Emotional Awareness:

“A Bit of Skill You Can Carry Around With You” – Dogen

On this retreat we will work with emotional awareness and transformation as a fundamental Chan life practice. In an atmosphere of openness and trust we shall enter deeply into whatever may be discomfiting in our lives. Suitable for both beginners and old timers, and of particular interest to WCF group leaders. *Leader: Ken Jones*

Chan Convivium

What would it be like to live together in a Chan monastery outside intensive retreat? This longer retreat explores one format that seems suitable for lay practitioners wanting such a taste of the monastic life. This experiment is built around the experience of a small group who came briefly to the Maenllwyd in 2006 for an impromptu retreat after weather thwarted plans to visit Skokholm Island. We shall follow the regime of our normal silent retreats with obligatory sittings, sermons, and services morning and evening and certain other functions. Otherwise, during the morning and the afternoon a time keeper will conduct sitting sessions in the Chan hall but these will be voluntary and practitioners may choose their activity from a range of alternatives: walking, working, yoga/tai-chi, reading in the library, private meditation, sleeping, but without absenting themselves from the Maenllwyd hill. These voluntary events will remain silent. The group as a whole may undertake one or two expeditions depending on weather. Large Chan monasteries in China offer such a range of activities and monks tend to specialise either in manual work, learned study or meditation. Here we have a chance to sample these options within a monastic style commune. John will be the Retreat Master and give a variety of talks on aspects of the Dharma-seeking life. During this retreats talks will focus on the presentation of Dharma rather more than on methods, with which participants should be familiar. The retreat is open only to experienced practitioners (at least four Maenllwyd retreats) capable of relatively independent practice with few interviews. *Leader: John Crook.*

Leaders Training Retreat

A retreat for group leaders in the WCF providing instruction through practice and discussion on how to teach meditation and run small Dharma groups. *By invitation only.*

Retreats

The following events are scheduled during 2007-2008

Unless otherwise stated, these events are held at Maenllwyd Retreat Centre in Mid-Wales

2008			
January 19 th – 24 th	* <i>Western Zen Retreat</i> *	Simon Child	£210
January 24 th – 27 th	<i>Leaders Retreat by Invitation only</i>		£90
March 1 st – 2 nd	<i>Conference and AGM in Bristol</i>	<i>Booking details - Contact John Chettoe in Bristol: bookings@bristolchan.co.uk</i>	
March 25 th – 30 th	* <i>Five Day Chan Retreat</i> *	Jake Lyne	£210
April 19 th – 27 th	<i>Chan Convivium</i>	John Crook	£345
May 31 st – June 6 th	* <i>The Liberative Path of Emotional Awareness</i> *	Ken Jones	£250
June 21 st – 28 th	<i>Hua-tou Retreat</i>	John Crook	£295
July 5 th – 10 th	* <i>Western Zen Retreat</i> *	Simon Child	£210
September (dates to be advised later via website)	<i>Silent Illumination</i>	Simon Child	£295
October 3 rd – 8 th	* <i>Five Day Chan Retreat</i> * <i>This retreat is to be held in Devon, see description</i>	Jake Lyne	£210
October 18 th – 25 th	<i>Koan Retreat</i>	John Crook	£295
November 15 th – 22 nd	<i>Mahamudra Retreat</i>	John Crook	£295
December 6 th – 11 th	* <i>Western Zen Retreat</i> *	Hilary Richards	£210

- * indicates suitable for beginners *
- **Bursaries (Concessions) of 50% discount are available on advance application for most retreats for students and low-waged applicants**
- This programme is subject to changes, cancellations, and additions. Updates will be posted on our website at www.WesternChanFellowship.org
- Retreats usually start about 7pm on the first evening. Full-length retreats finish after breakfast on the last day, shorter retreats either mid-morning or after lunch.
- Full details and directions are sent on booking.
- Please read the description of the Maenllwyd Retreat Centre on the page 10.

Other Forthcoming UK Events of Interest

These events are not organised by the WCF but may be of interest to you.

Silent Illumination at Gaia House, February 2008: John Crook and Simon Child will lead a Silent Illumination week at Gaia House: February 2nd – 9th. Details: www.gaiahouse.co.uk, Tel 01626 333613.

Local Group Retreats: some other local groups hold day/longer retreats – for details check the groups page on the WCF website.

York Chan Group Day Retreats The York group will be holding day retreats on Sunday 4th November and Sunday 2nd of December. The details are on the website. We start 9.30 for 10.00 and finish at 4.30, bring lunch to share. The retreats are free but we collect donations for the York Group and for York Cemetery who kindly allow us to use the beautiful cemetery grounds for walks. There is a possibility of overnight accommodation for anyone travelling to York from other groups.

Events outside UK

These events are not organised by the WCF but may be of interest to you.

Europe: Simon Child will lead a retreat in Poland in May 2008 – contact Chan Union in Poland for details (see contacts). There may also be retreats in other European countries such as Norway, Germany, Hungary.

New York, USA: In 2008 the following retreats are planned in New York. Booking details will be announced in due course at www.dharmadrumretreat.org

- March 15th – 22nd John Crook and Simon Child will lead a Koan Retreat.
- October 17th – 22nd Simon Child and Hilary Richards will lead a Western Zen Retreat.

Himalayan Retreat: John Crook is co-ordinating a group to visit a retreat centre in the Himalayas in mid-September – early Oct 2008. The retreat centre is run by Mary Kingsley of Lazarus Retreats (www.lazarushimalayanretreats.com) and John hopes to have a large enough party of WCF practitioners to have sole occupancy of the venue. The trip includes a week in silent retreat (in a different format to a WCF retreat) and visits to nearby monastery. Contact John for full details.

Western Chan Fellowship Malas

For those who are friends or members of the Western Chan Fellowship there are now available a limited number of specially made malas. They have been designed with the twelve aspirational prayers in mind – see www.swindonchan.org for explanations of the practice and a picture of one of the malas.

This initiative is one of the results of the committee's thinking about how to strengthen and build Sangha. A mala is a traditional 'body support' and is worn or kept by Buddhists throughout the world as a reminder of the triple gem. Symbolically, we are beads on a string of fellowship.

They consist of rosewood beads from a sustainable source, 12 jade spacer beads and a jade guru bead and they have a green tassel. Garuda Trading – www.garudatrading.co.uk - have organised the manufacture. We think they were made for us in Myanmar.

The cost price plus postage and packing will come to UKP 7.00 (more for outside the UK). Send a cheque to: WCF Membership Secretary, c/o 9 Church Lane, Elsworth, Cambridge, CB23 4HU

Please answer the following questions in a covering note along with your cheque:

- How many malas would you like?
- Would you like to make a donation to the WCF (£5, £10, £20, other amount)?

If you are a UK taxpayer you can increase the value of your donation by 28% simply by including the following phrase. You are not required to notify the tax office and you will pay no more tax by doing this. *"I am a UK tax payer and I would like to Gift Aid my donation."*

Enclose cheque made payable to 'Western Chan Fellowship' and your name and address.

Western Chan Fellowship Subscription Synchronisation

For ease of administration the membership secretary is adjusting all subscription renewals to fall due on the same date – 31st December. Hence your next renewal may be for either more or less than 12months. It will be rounded down to the nearest quarter-year, i.e. whenever your renewal date falls in a calendar quarter you will get a free extension to the end of that quarter and then invoiced from then to 31/12. Any questions, please contact the membership secretary.

Notes from the NBO

Sally Masheder

31st August 2007

By the time this reaches you in print, we shall have held our one-day conference entitled "EcoDharma - the Way It Is". Speakers included Mike Masheder, Elaine Brook and Akuppa. Recordings will be available on our web site www.nbo.org.uk in due course.

The Government continues to seek the views of the Faith Communities and we have been invited to send speakers to a meeting at the Cabinet Office in order to provide background knowledge on Buddhism to a lunchtime meeting of staff members. In London, the NBO is actively involved in establishing contacts between Buddhists who speak on the various Standing Committees on Religious Education which advise the different local authorities with regard to the design and delivery of the religious education syllabus. Up until now, people have worked in isolation, but we hope that making contact and exchanging views will be mutually supportive for all concerned.

Unfortunately, almost any activity, no matter how well intentioned and Dharmic it may be, will attract critics. The person who launched an attack at the NBO last year, on the grounds that we have among our membership organisations such as the FWBO, the NKT and Soka Gakkai International-UK, has become vocal again. It seems to us that the only way to counter such allegations is to be entirely open and so an updated account of this rather sad saga can also be found on our web site.

We are hoping to have a Regional Meeting in Yorkshire next January but the plans for that are not yet clear. Our AGM in 2008 will be held in London on the 5th of April. Our speakers then will continue our exploration of "Speaking with a Buddhist Voice". This made for a very good meeting last year but we were not able to give it the time that the topic warranted, so we shall continue our inquiry it on this occasion.

Another important date will be a conference entitled "The British Buddhist Landscape" to be held jointly with the Institute of Oriental Philosophy at Taplow Court in Berkshire on June 27th (evening), 28th and 29th 2008. We plan to take stock of the development and spread of Buddhism in the UK with sessions devoted to the academic study of Buddhism, views from the ethnic minority Buddhists, the representation of Buddhism to public bodies, the influence of Buddhism in psychotherapy, in the arts and lots more. It will be possible to attend part of the conference but I think that the programme will be sufficiently interesting that many people will want to attend all of it. Make a note of it in your diary!

Summer Camp Report

John Senior

Those who braved the British summer weather and holiday traffic to join the Fellows' summer camping week, held on The Lizard, Cornwall, were not to be disappointed.

On 11th August we gathered for an evening meal at Gear Mill, Sophie Temple Muir's wonderful tranquil home at the head of one of the creeks of Helford River, before retiring to camp at nearby Gear Farm, where one intrepid camper stayed the whole week, braving two overnight storms.

Highlights of the week were:

the naming ceremony for Sophie's two year old son Tashi Angel, which commenced with the raising of H. H. The Karmapa's Dream Vision Flag and later involved much asperging, the talk by John Crook to the campers and the local Group on 'Body, Speech and Mind Supports',

John's blessing, also with generous asperging, of Hughie Carroll's beautifully executed carving of the Green Tara mantra on a slab of local serpentine.

Other notable activities were:

an impromptu gathering of the greatest number of present and past members of the Swindon Group to have ever sat outside Swindon,

Hughie's guitar playing on the final evening, inspiring Sophie's six year old son Yeshe to take up the instrument: their closing duet showed much promise.

In between, time was found by various Fellows to explore the surrounding woodland, have lunch in Penzance, swim at local beaches and coves, visit mainland England's southern-most and western-most points, walk round an ancient stone circle, and take advantage of the skills of Sophie's local garage mechanic.

Despite which, we left feeling there was much more to explore ... on future camps?

WCF Charitable Notes

The WCF is a registered charity and as such it both receives donations and offers grants. The principal form of grants is the offering of bursaries (concessionary rates) to enable students and low/un-waged to attend our retreats. Donations are also used for other purposes such as to purchase relevant equipment such as meditation cushions, to support the development of local groups, to support our publishing and other activities in spreading the Dharma, to support some other Buddhist organisations, and so on. In the future we may embark on larger-scale projects which will require more substantial funding.

If you would like to support the WCF there are several options available. You may make direct payments to our Treasurer (by cheque or by using the bank details specified below for standing orders), or use one of the listed options

MAKING A LEGACY TO THE WESTERN CHAN FELLOWSHIP IN YOUR WILL:

If you are considering leaving a legacy to the Western Chan Fellowship in your Will please contact Treasurer Jake Lyne, 13 Belle Vue Terrace, York, YO10 5AZ, to complete a legacy pledge form. Alternatively log on to the WCF website and complete a form online. The pledge form is not legally binding, but will help us plan for the future of the WCF.

GIVE AS YOU EARN: The WCF is registered under the payroll-giving scheme. If your employer operates this scheme then you may now make use of it to make regular tax-efficient donations to the Western Chan Fellowship. The reference number that you need to quote is Western Ch'an Fellowship 000435969. Details of this scheme can be found at www.giveasyouearn.org

STANDING ORDER: If you wish to make a donation by standing order, please use the following bank details. The payment reference should include your name and the purpose of the donation/payment, e.g. JaneSmith:Donation or JohnBrown:Oct2007RetreatDeposit.

Cooperative Bank, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

Sort code: 089299, account: 65264205, a/c name: Western Chan Fellowship

For foreign transfers: IBAN: GB77CPBK08929965264205 (NB it is a zero after the letter K), SWIFT: CPBKGB22

ONLINE DONATION: <http://tinyurl.com/33oxle>

CHARITY CARDS: The WCF is registered with the Charities Aid Foundation CharityCard Scheme, and so any of you who hold CharityCards and wish to make donations in that way for tax efficiency are welcome to do so. See www.charitycard.org Tel 01732 520 050. Please remember that these cannot be used for retreat fees or for subscriptions, but only for donations to either our general funds or to one of our specific funds (we have property, publishing, equipment, and bursary funds).

GIFT AID: If you are a UK taxpayer, Gift Aid offers a simple way to increase the value of your donation by allowing the WCF to reclaim the tax on your donation. We take your donation (which is money you've already paid tax on), and we reclaim tax you have paid already at the basic rate of 22%. In practice, this means that if you give £100 to the WCF, that gift is worth £128.20 to WCF.

If you wish to be registered with us for Gift Aid please write a signed letter to the Treasurer, giving your full name and address and stating: "I am a UK taxpayer, please register me for Gift Aid".

(If you are a higher rate taxpayer, you also benefit because you can claim the difference between the higher rate of tax at 40% and the basic rate of tax at 22% on the total value of your donation. You make this claim on your self-assessment tax return.)

About the Western Chan Fellowship

The Western Chan Fellowship was formed in 1997 and registered as a charity in 1998. It was based on a network of local groups which formed following the first teaching visit to the UK in 1989 of the Venerable Chan Master Dr Sheng-yen. Chan Master Sheng-yen is the Abbot of two monasteries in Taiwan and head of the Institutes of Chung Hwa Buddhist Culture in Taiwan and New York.

Master Sheng-yen has visited the UK four times and has passed on to us a view of the Dharma (teaching) based on his experience in both the main lineages of Chan - Linji (Rinzai) and Caodong (Soto). He is a second-generation teacher in the lineage of the Great Master Hsu-yun who did so much to restore Chan to China in the early years of the 20th century. Master Sheng-yen has also trained in Japan following the tradition of Harada Roshi, from whom several lineages of American Zen are currently descended. In Japan he also received a doctorate in Buddhist studies and is today a much-respected scholar. In attempting to transmit the wisdom of Master Sheng-yen, we have a tradition on which we can rely. John Crook received Dharma transmission from Master Sheng-yen in 1993, as did Simon Child in 2000, and thus both are fully authorised teachers in the same lineages.

The Western Chan Fellowship retreats are supported by a number of local groups which hold periodic meetings for meditation practice. Our evening meetings are linked to both informal local day-retreats led by the local group meditation instructors, and to more disciplined and intensive residential retreats held at Maenllwyd. An introductory retreat – the Western Zen Retreat – is recommended before participation in a full Chan retreat.

Local Groups

AFFILIATED GROUPS

Cambridge David Brown 07766 686 345

Glastonbury Ned Reiter 01458 833663

Manchester Simon Child 0161 761 1945

Mid-Wales John Senior 0781 346 2880

South Devon, Pete Lowry, 01364 643560

Swindon Hugh Carroll 01793 436799

Bristol Sally Masheder 0117 924 8819

Cardiff Rob Stratton 029 20 229 376

Lizard Sophie Muir 01326 221651

Medway Towns Stuart McLeod 01634 571659

Nottingham Hilary Richards, 0115 924 2075

Stroud Alec Lawless 01453 873877

York Jannie Mead, Jake Lyne 01904 628536

Guildford Roger Taylor 01483 202422

ASSOCIATED GROUPS

London Kitty D'Costa

London@westernchanfellowship.org

Newcastle Emlyn Eric Johns 01559 370875

Newbury Susan Millington 07958 574524

Portsmouth George Marsh 023 9235 7783

OVERSEAS

Oslo: Hridaya Group

Bryn Risnes + 47 9756 3317

Warsaw: Chan Union in Poland

Pawel Rosciszewski +48 22 736 22 52

LOCAL CONTACTS

Aberystwyth, Ken Jones, 01970 880603, aberystwyth@westernchanfellowship.org

Edinburgh, Frank Tait, 01721 721146, edinburgh@westernchanfellowship.org

Contacts for New Chan Forum and the Western Chan Fellowship

WCF Secretary: Simon Child, 24 Woodgate Ave, Bury, LANCS, BL9 7RU.

Tel: 0161 761 1945, Secretary@WesternChanFellowship.org

Membership Secretary, NCF Subscriptions (£10.50 per three issues), *Retreat Bookings*

Hugh Carroll, c/o 9 Church Lane, Elsworth, Cambridge, CB23 4HU, Retreats@WesternChanFellowship.org

Chair of the WCF: Eddy Street, 19 Velindre, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF10 2TE,

Tel: 029 2069 1146, Chair@WesternChanFellowship.org

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Editor@WesternChanFellowship.org

WCF Treasurer: Jake Lyne, 13 Belle Vue Terrace, York, YO10 5AZ,

Treasurer@WesternChanFellowship.org

Maenllwyd Retreat Centre

Maenllwyd is an old farm building, several hundred years old in parts, in a remote valley in mid-Wales. Modernisation extends only to the provision of mains water. There is no electricity, and no telephone, and no reception for mobile phones. Heat and light come from candles, lamps, fires, and gas or paraffin stoves. No one passes by except occasional local sheep farmers with their flocks. It provides an ideal environment for intensive meditation practice, which is the main emphasis of our retreats. The centre is not open to casual visitors, only for pre-booked residential retreats.



The meditation hall (Chan Hall) is kept clean and dry and warm. It is a converted barn which enjoys the benefit of a modern wood-burning stove that both keeps the hall warm and fuels the hot showers. It also boasts modern, eco-friendly, composting toilets.

Sleeping accommodation is best described as basic. The nearest equivalent is a sleeping barn as used by the YHA. Think 'tent with stone walls' and you will have the idea. Several people of the same sex sleep in close proximity, each with their own futon. Typically this will be in the eaves of one of the main buildings with the roof beams visible above. Such areas are naturally draughty and dusty and may have been visited by local wildlife such as field-mice. Heating in these areas is minimal and this requires you to have adequate warm sleeping-bags and blankets along with warm night-clothing. Autumn, Winter, and Spring can all be surprisingly cold in these Welsh hills.

The yard is a traditional farmyard, complete with a spring that turns the yard to mud in wet weather. Wellingtons or boots are advised for this area and for walks on the hillside.

Vegetarian food is cooked for us by an imaginative Zen cook, using fresh and largely organic supplies, and bread and cakes are made on the premises. Special diets can be catered for if the cook is advised in advance.

Unfortunately Maenllwyd is not suitable for wheelchair access and several other disabilities. We are preparing a disability access statement which will be published on the website when it is completed. In the meantime if you have any disability please enquire of the membership secretary before making your retreat booking, so as to check whether or not we shall be able to accommodate you.

Solitary Retreats

www.westernchanfellowship.org/solitary-retreats.html describes several opportunities.

Retreat Booking Arrangements

Important Information on Booking a Retreat Place:

1. Before booking be sure to understand the nature of the event: read the retreat descriptions, read the description of Maenllwyd Retreat Centre, and you may also find it helpful to read more of the information (e.g. retreat reports submitted by past retreat participants) on our website at www.westernchanfellowship.org

2. THE RETREAT BOOKING ADDRESS HAS CHANGED AGAIN!!

Bookings must be sent to Hugh Carroll. Please use the new booking form (on the back page of this newsletter, and at www.westernchanfellowship.org/retreat-booking.html) and send it to the new bookings address.

3. Retreat fees must now be paid in full by six weeks before the retreat starts

If you book more than six weeks ahead then you may secure your place with either full payment or a deposit of £80 (£150/\$200/€200 if applying from outside the UK).

If you book within six weeks of the start of the retreat then you must pay in full at the time of booking.

If your balance payment is not received by six weeks before the start of the retreat then your deposit may be forfeit and your place transferred to someone else on the waiting list.

If after booking you find you cannot attend and give at least six weeks notice of cancellation then both your deposit and any balance/full payment will be refunded in full.

If you cancel within six weeks of the retreat, or do not turn up for the retreat, then your fees are forfeited. If we are able to refill your place from the waiting list then your balance will be refunded and only the deposit is forfeited.

These payment arrangements are to minimise wastage of places, given the limited capacity of our retreats. It is a shame when our retreats have waiting lists and we have to turn people away, only to find that we have late cancellations or 'no-shows' and those turned away could have been accepted if we had sufficient notice of non-attenders. Please give good notice if you are unable to attend.

Bursaries (Concessions) for Low or No-Waged Applicants and Students

The WCF is a registered charity and has received donations to a bursary fund to help non-waged or low income persons and students to attend WCF retreats. There are a limited number of bursary places per retreat. Financial support will vary according to the applicant's needs, but typically a discount of 50% of the retreat fee is available. If you would like to apply for bursary-funded support to attend a WCF retreat please write to the membership secretary giving details of your requirements.

Bursaries must be applied for in writing in advance of the retreat, either prior to or at the time of booking.

Please contact the treasurer if you wish to donate to the bursary fund or to other WCF projects. The WCF is a registered charity and is registered with the Inland Revenue for Gift Aid and for Payroll Giving, so if you are a tax-payer your donation can be accepted by these tax-efficient methods. www.westernchanfellowship.org/donations.html

Data Protection Notice – Please Read

The WCF maintains a computer database of our contacts, which is used for keeping you informed of Western Chan Fellowship activities, e.g. for mailings such as this one, and for notifying local group leaders of possible contacts in their vicinity.

Please notify the Membership Secretary if you do not wish your details to be kept on a computer database or if you do not want to receive any further mailings.

Retreat Booking Form

NEW ADDRESS

To:Retreat Bookings
c/o 9 Church Lane,
Elsworth,
Cambridge,
CB23 4HU

The WCF maintains a computer database of our contacts, which is used for keeping you informed of Western Chan Fellowship activities and for notifying local group leaders of possible contacts in their vicinity. Please tick if you do not wish your details to be kept on a computer database or if you do not want to receive any further mailings.

I would like to book a place on the following retreat: Date of application:

Retreat Name		Start Date		End Date	
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My personal details are as follows [PLEASE PRINT]:

Name		Home/Contact phone no.	
Address		Mobile phone no.	
		Fax	
		Email address:	
		Sex:	M / F
		Date of Birth:	
Post Code			

Please indicate how you will be travelling to the retreat. If you tick the “Able to give a lift” box, then your contact details will be given to those people who need a lift. If you do not want your details to be given out in this way, then please tick “Need a lift” and ignore the contact list you receive. The contact list will be sent out with the final information letter about 1 month before the retreat. The origin of retreat attendees is random and no guarantee can be made that a lift will be available even if you request one.

Able to give a lift
 Need a lift

Previous retreat experience:
Special dietary requirements:
Any other requirements:

To book a retreat, complete the form and send with a deposit to the Western Chan Fellowship Membership Secretary at the address above. Applications without a deposit will not be accepted

- For UK applicants the deposit is £80 (£50 if applying for a bursary), or double this if applying for two or three weeks of a two or three-week retreat. For applicants from outside the UK the deposit is €200 or \$200 (or £150), or double this if applying for two or three weeks of a two or three-week retreat.
- **Payment of the balance is required by 6 weeks before the start of the retreat, or else your place may be given to someone else.**
- **If you do not turn up for the retreat, then your fees are forfeited. If you cancel within six weeks of the retreat, and we are unable to refill your place from the waiting list, then your fees are forfeited.** If we are able to refill the place from the waiting list then your fees will be refunded in full. In exceptional circumstances at our discretion we may give refunds outside these terms. If you have holiday insurance and cancel for medical reasons you may be able to claim on your insurance.

Please make UK Sterling cheques payable to the ‘Western Chan Fellowship’.

In order to minimise bank charges for both parties, overseas applicants could send their deposit and balance as a bank note[s] for any of the above amounts. This will be converted at the prevailing exchange rate on the day of receipt. Any risk of loss of currency in the post is your risk. Alternatively you could contact the Treasurer and arrange to make a payment by bank transfer.