

## Content of the Conference – an overview

Many who are our guides on the spiritual journey, who chart the way through silence and retreat towards the mystery of God, have shown an immense capacity for courage. They have so often been those who have revolutionized the church, challenged injustice, given faith fresh meaning, and dared to cross boundaries in the search for a new way of being. Their vision has offered hope and wisdom across the divided landscapes of our world.

Think of the courage shown by some of those who have inspired us... Dorothy Day, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Teresa of Avila, Thomas Merton, Julian of Norwich, John Wesley, Hildegard of Bingen, Meister Eckhart. We can go on adding to the list!

Our 2022 Retreat Conference invites us to discover what it might mean to live with their courage in our own context. How might our experience of prayer and retreat lead us across the divisions that mark churches and society? In what ways will our encounter with God lead to renewed reconciliation amidst the pain of our own lives and those around us? Where will we find the courage to light a candle of hope in the darkness? Join us as we explore together!

### The Conference will offer us:

1. An **introduction to the theme of our conference** by Patron of the Retreat Association, Graham Sparkes
2. **Main speakers** who will take up our theme and develop it in different ways. Jane Shaw, Professor of the History of Religion at Oxford University, will explore how courage is reflected in the lives of the Mystics. Pádraig Ó Tuama, poet and theologian, will explore the theme of reconciliation and the Bible. Ched Myers is an activist theologian who will explore the political and social implications of the Gospel writings
3. **Workshops** that broaden our engagement with the theme
4. Times for **worship, prayer and reflection**, both in small groups that enable us to listen to the voice of God in each other and in the spaces between, and as one community led by Emily Walker, experienced liturgist and musician
5. **Space for poetry and creativity**, including poetry with Rachel Mann and Pádraig Ó Tuama and creativity with artist Carol Marples.

*The Retreat Association Conference brings together in one experience those interested and involved in retreats and spirituality. It is fully ecumenical, and open to all who are engaged in the spiritual journey. Come and join us!*

### The Retreat Association

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Charity number: 1150792



**Online Conference**  
**27–27 June 2022**

## **Living with Courage: Clasping hands across a divided landscape**

**Draft Programme**

**ALL APECTS OF THE PROGRAMME TAKE PLACE ONLINE**

**Monday 27 June**

10.00	Welcome
<b>10.15-10.30</b>	<b>Gathering worship led by Emily Walker</b>
<b>10.30-11.45</b>	<b>Introducing the conference theme – Graham Sparkes</b>
11.45-12.15	Coffee break
<b>12.15-12.45</b>	<b>Listening groups</b>
12.45-14.30	Lunch break
<b>14.30-15.45</b>	<b>Workshops</b>
15.45-16.15	Tea break
<b>16.15-17.30</b>	<b>Courage through the life of the Mystics – Jane Shaw</b>
17.30-20.00	Supper break
<b>20.00-21.00</b>	<b>Poetry with Rachel Mann</b>
21.00-21.30	Evening break
<b>21.30-21.45</b>	<b>Night prayers</b>

**Tuesday 28 June**

<b>8.00-8.30</b>	<b>Morning worship options</b>
8.30-9.30	Breakfast break
<b>9.30-9.45</b>	<b>Collective worship</b>
<b>9.45-11.00</b>	<b>Reconciliation &amp; the Bible – Pádraig Ó Tuama</b>
11.00-11.30	Coffee break
<b>11.30-12.00</b>	<b>Listening groups</b>
12.00-14.00	Lunch break

**Tuesday 28 June** continued

<b>14.00-15.15</b>	<b>Workshops</b>
15.15-16.15	Tea break
<b>16.15-17.30</b>	<b>The Gospel Writings – Ched Myers</b>
17.30-20.00	Supper break
<b>20.00-21.00</b>	<b>Poetry with Pádraig Ó Tuama</b>
21.00-21.30	Evening break
<b>21.30-21.45</b>	<b>Night prayers</b>

**Wednesday 29 June morning**

<b>8.00-8.30</b>	<b>Morning worship options</b>
8.30-9.30	Breakfast break
<b>9.30-9.45</b>	<b>Collective worship</b>
<b>9.15-11.00</b>	<b>Padraig O Tuama &amp; Rachel Mann in conversation</b>
11.00-11.30	Coffee break
<b>11.30-12.45</b>	<b>Closing worship</b>