



# Othona

WEST DORSET

Programme of Events **October 2011 to April 2012**

PEACE BE  
WITH YOU

- **Retreats**
- **Workshops**
- **Family holidays**
- **A welcoming community**
- **A spirituality open to all faiths and none**



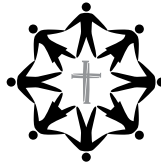
*“Othona is such a precious and crucial part of our family life. I’ve had the joy of watching my children flourish and grow here.”*

*“A balance of solitude, companionship and beauty – grounded once more!”*



*“It’s different from anywhere else... the vibe, the feeling in the air, the sense of peace emanating from the walls.”*

**Mission Statement:** The Othona Community is an open Christian community, whose purpose is to provide, mainly through its two centres in Essex and Dorset, a welcoming, accepting place with a pattern of work, worship, study and play where people of different beliefs, cultures, classes, abilities and ages can discover how to live together, learn from each other, explore together the relationship between faith and life with a view to more positive action in the world, and encourage one another in caring for the world and its people. Othona was established in 1946. Othona is registered charity number 277843.



## **Rooted in the Christian heritage... open to the widening future**

this centre is one of two operated by the Othona Community

### **A PLACE**

West Dorset is rich in history, wildlife and culture – a joy to visit, but not ruined by tourism. We occupy 7 acres of gloriously untamed grounds on an unspoilt stretch of coast.

In Community House you'll find simple but comfortable accommodation, with wide sea views and a homely log fire. The beach is 10 minutes walk away through National Trust meadows.

### **A PLACE TO BE**

Othona is a great place just to be. Leave the stress of your daily life behind. Let go of a few responsibilities. Relax in surroundings that lift your spirit.

Wake each morning to birdsong from the woods that surround us. Fall asleep to the rhythm of waves on the beach below.

### **A PLACE TO BE REAL**

In this beautiful setting many people find a surprising quality of acceptance. When image and status don't matter, we're free to be who we are, without judgment or expectations. Free to look within and recognise, perhaps, parts of ourselves that have lain dormant.

### **A PLACE TO BE REAL TOGETHER**

So you relax. The real you finds breathing space. And maybe you will also discover a rare depth of connection with other people.

Othona's a place with lots of unforced laughter, easy sharing of each other's life stories, and not a few unembarrassed tears. This is a taste of community – something so often missing in today's world. (All spiritual traditions recognise this. One Christian name for it is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.)

Our hope is that this experience carries over as a practical blessing in your everyday life.

For some **Frequently Asked Questions** see page 10

## **Simplifying our Charges**

We've just streamlined our charge structure. In the past many of our events had two charge components: an Accommodation Fee and a Course Fee which ended up with the speaker or facilitator. You had to pay these separately, one in advance and one on-site. It could be quite confusing and meant more paperwork.

Now we've combined the fees. It means the headline price for an event can look somewhat higher! But in fact it's just simpler. We hope you approve. As a reminder, we're flagging each affected event **ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED**

## **Walking Week – Footprints through Fiction** 23-29 Sept (Fri-Thurs a.m.)

Each of our group walks this week relates to a Dorset writer or book – from John Fowles to Lawrence of Arabia, from a tense pre-war thriller to a historical romance. You don't have to read them! Just join us in the footsteps of real authors and fictional heroes and villains. We explore the beauties and contrasts of the Dorset countryside in led walks of between 3 and 8 miles, mostly with hilly sections. In the evenings as we relax there will be a chance to see two of the books in a film version.

£274 (CONC. £207)

## **Breath of the Kabbalah** 30 Sept – 2 Oct (Fri-Sun p.m.)

Taking the ancient mystical wisdom of the Kabbalah as a guide, *Philip Clouts* has developed a unique series of meditations which harmonise the body and soul. Involving breath, light, sound and visualisation, they allow us to open to and align with the energies of healing and light from the higher realms. The process is enhanced by easily learned songs and chants which have been specially composed to deepen the experience. Kabbalistic meditation provides a way for us in the West to approach mindfulness, visualisation and mantra from within the source of our own tradition. Those who have tried it report a greater sense of calm, clarity and illumination.

Philip was a founder member of a Spiritual Renewal group in London in the early 1990s and has been immersed in Kabbalah from that time. He has devoted his professional life to composing and playing music, touring internationally and recording many CDs of jazz and world music, including *Songs of Eden*, a song cycle inspired by the Kabbalah.

£117 (CONC. £94) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Singing the World** 7-9 Oct (Fri-Sun p.m.)

*Sarah Pennington* and *Gilo* return this year to lead another welcoming weekend of vibrant song and acappella harmony.

FULLY BOOKED.

*Saturday is a Big Sing day open to friends and locals at a day charge of £18 with lunch or £24 with lunch & supper* £117 (CONC. £94) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

*“Surely the greatest service station on life’s motorway. I leave refreshed, refuelled and ready for my journey to tomorrow. I shall hold for a long time the love and care of a very special group.”*

## **Enneagram II – Subtypes and Essence**

13-16 Oct (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

For those who have a working knowledge of the Enneagram and already know their personality type, an opportunity to explore in greater depth. For each type there are three possible subtypes. Renowned Enneagram teacher *Karen Webb* will help you to identify yours and deepen your understanding of personality and soul – your own and others'. Learning more about ourselves and our habitual patterns of behaviour broadens our view of life. Acknowledging the counter-productive coping strategies that block our spiritual growth, we can begin to reclaim our potential. Karen is an experienced and sensitive facilitator who teaches in the narrative tradition, guiding us gently and positively towards awareness. She also leads our Enneagram Introduction in the spring. More about Karen: [www.theenneagram.co.uk](http://www.theenneagram.co.uk)

See also 1-4 March

£225 (CONC. £187) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Celebrating Abundance**

20-25 Oct (Thurs-Tues a.m.)

Not just what we eat, but how we eat, can help us to physical and spiritual health. At this time of Harvest join us for some hands-on baking, fruit picking, jam- and chutney-making, and homegrown feasts. *Chiara Santamaria* has been with us since March as Othona's chief kitchen genius. In her native Italy she was associated with the Slow Food movement from its earliest days. She's dedicated to the cause of 'real' food – grown carefully and as locally as possible, prepared with skill and imagination, savoured with friends but without rush. There'll be time to share some ideas about the place of food in our lives. Gathered round the table we can experience a fundamental connectedness with each other and with the natural world. And with Dorset Food Week running from 22 October you can also try a taste of our county's abundance of great local food producers.

£228 (CONC. £173)

## **Half Term Breather**

26-30 Oct (Wed-Sun a.m.)

Our much-loved short break for families (and others). Different activities each day... or just make new friends in the relaxed accepting atmosphere of community.

£182 (CONC. £137) AGES 11-18: £106 3-10: £78

## **Your Personality, Your Potential**

3-6 Nov (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

Awareness of our own motivations and gifts helps us to gain confidence in ourselves. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator®, is a model of human personality developed from the work of Carl Jung. It offers insights into many aspects of our life, including communication, our response to change, our emotional and spiritual needs and values, where we look for meaning and purpose. Understanding ourselves helps us to relate more easily to other people. In this practical and relaxed weekend *Elizabeth Sayers*, an experienced MBTI® practitioner and coach, will help you use the MBTI® at home and at work, and explore ways of fulfilling your potential. This will be suitable for people who are new to the MBTI® as well as offering fresh insights to those already familiar with it.

£172 (CONC. £138) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Open Space with Musical Mystery Tour option** 8-13 Nov (Tues-Sun p.m.)

Open Space means a classic Othona relaxation week – this time with a rather special option. Do you love listening to music? Don't you wish you could widen and deepen that experience?

This is your chance, guided by *Fiona Heyes* whose passion for all kinds of music is legendary. She's been a pianist, reviewer, jazz club impresario, and at all times a music lover with the broadest of tastes. Each day she presents a themed session, selecting tracks from her vast collection, everything from classical to electronic, from chillout to choral, from haunting world music solos to exuberant big bands. In between tracks Fiona shares insights and stories about the music, the artists and composers. (N.B. For those who enjoyed her Tour last year, this music will all be new to you.)

£228 (CONC. £172)

## **Handling our Emotions around Death, Dying and Loss**

25 Nov – 1 Dec (Fri-Thurs a.m.)

This course offers a safe environment for the exploration of feelings around loss of all kinds, including bereavement, separation and the loss (or threatened loss) of our own life or capabilities. The exploration cannot take away emotional pain or the reality of our own mortality, but it may offer us different perspectives and ways to handle such experiences.

If you are in the early stages of coming to terms with a loss, the course may not be appropriate at this time. You will need to feel able both to explore feelings and to understand your own processes. Please contact us if you wish to discuss suitability. If you are thinking of attending as a couple, there are advantages and disadvantages of doing so. You are welcome to discuss these.

*Hugh McMichael* has had an interest in 'loss' since facing his own death aged 17. He spent 10 years in hospice work. He was consultant senior lecturer at the University of Bristol where he developed this work for health care professionals but noted the personal impact of the courses. For the third time at Othona, he offers this version to all who are interested. Numbers limited – book early.

£368 (CONC. £292) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Exploring the Gospel of Thomas**

2-5 Dec (Fri-Mon a.m.)

The Gospel of Thomas is a collection of sayings attributed to Jesus, many of which are not found in the traditional Bible. For 1,600 years it was thought lost, until a copy was discovered in the Egyptian desert in 1945. Scholars are divided, but many have concluded it predates the gospels of the New Testament. The Gospel gives us a picture of Jesus the Mystic, a teacher of the inner path to union with God. It uses a mixture of simple parables, enigmatic images and Zen-like statements to break open the mind to the divine presence. This weekend will be an introduction to the Gospel, touching on its history but mainly working with the sayings so that they become a living experience of prayer.

*Simon Small* is an Anglican priest who works independently in the field of spirituality – writing, leading retreats and seminars, and acting as spiritual companion to individuals. Before ordination he explored modern spirituality in its many forms, including the great eastern traditions and the new age/alternative scene. It was during this period that he first encountered the Gospel of Thomas and has been contemplating its teaching ever since. More about Simon: [www.simonsmall.info](http://www.simonsmall.info)  
See also 22-27 Feb £171 (CONC. £138) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

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### **Roll Up Your Sleeves... for Christmas** 6-11 Dec (Tues-Sun p.m.)

Another chance to help around the house and grounds. Up to 6 hours work a day, with varied tasks to suit your abilities and the likelihood of an evening carol singing. We'll be preparing for the festive season; everyone should take home something (edible or otherwise) to add to their own Christmas celebration. And on the Saturday we can visit Bridport's renowned street market. £70

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### **Christmas in Community** 23-27 Dec (Fri-Tues a.m.)

Dare you try a totally different Christmas? "Less of what you'd like less of" – less commercialism, less bingeing, less TV. More of a Christmas spirit which is generous, co-operative, dedicated to Peace and Goodwill on Earth. All ages welcome.  
£196 (CONC. £152) AGES 11-18: £114 3-10: £84

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### **New Year Celebrations** 29 Dec – 2 Jan 2012 (Thurs-Mon a.m.)

Othona always greets the New Year in style, with a feast, homegrown fun and a New Year walk. A good time for families, couples or individuals. Care to join us?  
£196 (CONC. £152) AGES 11-18: £114 3-10: £84

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### **January Closure**

7-15 January we have a caretaking presence only and *our office is closed*.

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### **The Great Big Tidy** 23-29 Jan (Mon-Sun a.m.)

Homes are bad enough for collecting clutter. Communities can be even worse. Are you someone who gets real satisfaction from helping bring order out of chaos? In that case you could be ideal for our Tidy Team. We have a lot of sorting and clearing to accomplish. Depending on how many and who we are on the team, we could focus on any or all of these: paperwork, books, art materials, tools and DIY materials, household linen, foodstuffs, kitchen utensils, children's toys, pictures. We'll finish with a grand celebration of all the stuff we've shifted and all the 'stuck energy' we've liberated. £70

*"Little did I know that what actually awaited me was a carefully structured, deeply rejuvenating gentle programme of physical and spiritual nourishment that would touch and restore the mind, body and heart. Hilarious and nurturing company of sensitive, thoughtful people from all different places. The accepting, caring welcome of the core community."*

## **Film For Thought: Work and Leisure**

3-7 Feb (Fri-Tues p.m.)

What could be more enjoyable in damp, cold February than curling up in front of some good films, with the opportunity to discuss them afterwards over hot chocolate?

*Sandra Palmer*, educator, movie-lover and long-time Othona member, returns to choose an eclectic string of ancient and modern films from near and far, tied together by a theme of Work and Leisure. These dominate all our lives – since Adam and Eve were banished from the fabled garden to till the soil and labour in childbirth. But how often do we get a chance to reflect on them in spiritual terms, in good company and prompted by great film-makers? £197 (CONC. £152) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Half Term Breather... at the Movies**

10-14 Feb (Fri-Tues p.m.)

*Janine and Aiden Kane and their children Ruby, Laura and Esme* write: This is a popular time of chilling and watching movies together in the cosy cinema space of the library. We have a diverse selection of movies chosen by our family for you to enjoy. Afternoon family showing, early evening 12+ and late night teen/adult viewing! And in the mornings we offer opportunities to brush up on your improvisational comedy, drama/dance and makeup skills. Other activities may include a walk, a bonfire and a red carpet Othona Oscars night to complete the fun.

£182 (CONC. £137) AGES 11-18: £106 3-10: £78

## **Poetry Retreat: Staying Alive**

16-19 Feb (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

A poetry retreat, led by Othona warden *Tony Jaques* and drawing on contemporary poems from the widely acclaimed anthology "Staying Alive". It's packed with "thoughtful and passionate poems about living in the modern world". We'll share our discoveries among the hundreds of poems and use the poetry to nourish our minds and hearts in a contemplative context. One afternoon we expect a local poet as special guest. And each day there will be time and space for private reading, walking and relaxation by the log fire. How can you resist? £157 (CONC. £123) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **The Buddha's Four Noble Truths and The Way of Jesus**

22-27 Feb (Wed-Mon a.m.)

The Four Noble Truths lie at the heart of Buddhism, often called the Buddha's first teaching. They are a wonderful contemplative tool for penetrating the mystery of human experience, of suffering and its cessation. In this gentle retreat *Simon Small* will reflect on the Four Noble Truths and how they have deepened his journey as a follower of Jesus. Through a combination of talks, discussion, silence and prayer, this week will be a resource for any spiritual seeker, with particular relevance for those from a Christ-centred background who are interested in the way of the Buddha. Simon is an Anglican priest who before ordination spent many years exploring different spiritualities. He is chaplain to the Abbey House Retreat Centre in Glastonbury and author of a mystical novel "Star Pilgrim" and a spiritual bestseller "From the Bottom of the Pond: the forgotten art of experiencing God in the depths of the present moment." More about Simon: [www.simonsmall.info](http://www.simonsmall.info)

See also 2-5 Dec

£288 (CONC. £232) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

On or after the start date:

nil

All bookings are non-transferable. We suggest you consider taking out insurance against loss due to cancellation.

### MAKING YOUR PAYMENT

We can accept payment by cash, cheque, postal order or bank transfer (but not by credit or debit card at present). Please fill in your payment method and amount below, and then sign over-page before returning this form to us.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I am paying my deposit</b> (non-transferable & non-refundable) <b>of</b>	£
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I am paying the full charge</b> (standard or concessionary, see above) <b>of</b>	£
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I enclose a donation</b> (to help fund concessions/bursaries) <b>of</b>	£
<b>I am making my payment by</b> (tick whichever applies):		£

Cheque made out to The Othona Community

BACS (bank transfer) to The Othona Community, Account No. 20680303, Sort code 20-26-62

**Please give the start date of the event as Reference Code** (to link your payment to your booking)

Other (please give details).....

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS (see page 12)

When you sign the booking form you will be agreeing to our Terms and Conditions which repeat the cancellation details above. They also include health and safety considerations, so that we can go on welcoming you and other visitors to this lovely natural environment. Please read them before signing.

**Now send this to: Bookings, Othona West Dorset, Coast Road, Burton Bradstock, Bridport DT6 4RN**

For bookings enquiries, call 01308 897130 or email [bookings@othona-bb.org.uk](mailto:bookings@othona-bb.org.uk) To print more copies of this form, go to <http://www.othona-bb.org.uk/how-to-book/> Othona reserves the right to change or cancel events as necessary.

Phone:

Mobile:

Are you willing to share?

Yes – with another compatible visitor

Only if necessary

Yes – with member(s) of my party (as above)

No, not at all

We offer a limited number of single rooms for each event. You're advised to book early if you are unable to share.

Do you have any special needs?

(physical, dietary, health-related etc)

If so, please use this box to tell us >>>

Please say if you eat no meat and/or fish.

We cater at all times for vegetarians. For other special diets, we cannot promise special meals. We keep stocks of soya milk, rice cakes and wheat-free bread. You are welcome to bring your own supplementary foods if you need to.

Is this your first time at Othona West Dorset?

Personal recommendation

via Retreats.org site

Retreat Guide or other publication

via Othona publicity/leaflet

Google etc search

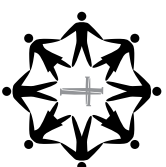
Other: .....

**Payment Information:** Please read and complete the reverse of this form, then sign below to indicate that you are over 18 and agree to Othona's Terms and Conditions as referred to over-page. We regret that we cannot accept bookings without a valid signature and date.

Your signature: ..... Date: .....

# BOOKING FORM

Please use a separate booking form for each person, unless you are applying as a couple or a family and paying together.



**Othona**  
WEST DORSET

**Booking for:**  
(event title)

**Arrival date:**

**Departure date:**

**Your name(s):**

**Age(s):** (exact age for children,  
decade is OK for adults)

1. .... 1. ....
2. .... 2. ....
3. .... 3. ....
4. .... 4. ....
5. .... 5. ....

**Postal  
address:**

**Postcode:**

**Email:**

## OUR CHARGES

Othona is a not-for-profit charity and is known as very affordable. Our **standard adult rate** reflects the real cost of your stay. If you value Othona's work and can add a donation, please do. Your gifts allow us to offer generous concessions and bursaries in case of need.

The **concessionary adult rate** is freely available to those who need it (up to 21 days per person per financial year). It's not tied to eligibility for state benefits, for instance. You choose if it's appropriate for you and we will accept your decision. We don't quote **concessionary rates for children**, but are happy to consider a reduction if your family needs it. Please contact us to discuss this in confidence.

If even the concessionary rate is a problem for you, we have a **bursary fund**. Applications for bursaries – in writing to the warden please (letter or email [tony@othona-bb.org.uk](mailto:tony@othona-bb.org.uk)) - are treated in confidence.

## HOW TO PAY

To find the full cost of any event, look on the website or in our printed brochure. The charge rates for each event are listed below the event description. **For each event booked, we require a standard non-refundable deposit of £30 per adult (£15 per child aged 3 – 18 years inclusive).**

### Are you booking more than 1 month ahead?

You need only send the non-refundable deposit. When we confirm your booking, we will tell you the amount still owing and when to pay it by. Alternatively, we welcome payment in full at the time of booking – it cuts down the paperwork all round.

### Are you booking less than 1 month ahead?

Please send full payment now with your booking. NB: Our charges, as quoted, now include any course fees.

**If you have to cancel** we will refund a varying proportion of your payment:

More than 1 month ahead of the event start date:	all but the deposit
Less than 1 month, more than 1 week ahead:	50%
Less than 1 week ahead:	10%

## **Introduction to the Enneagram**

1-4 Mar (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

The Enneagram is an ancient, extraordinarily accurate, model of human personality and spirit, based on nine personality types and their interactions. *Karen Webb*, a renowned Enneagram teacher and author, offers not just theory, but a living experience that makes for self-understanding and growth. She will introduce you to all nine types and help you to place yourself within them. The Enneagram, valued by many Christians, is also compatible with other spiritual traditions and philosophies. Many of us have found this a real “Aha!” weekend.

More about Karen: [www.theenneagram.co.uk](http://www.theenneagram.co.uk)

See also 13-16 Oct

£228 (CONC. £191) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Quiet Week**

9-15 Mar (Fri-Thurs a.m.)

Do you long for quiet, but not enough to go on a completely silent retreat?

This week offers a depth of tranquillity, a quality of presence which will rest parts of you that need rest... and awaken parts that have dozed off! Single room guaranteed (unless you specifically want to share). Some meals in silence. A blazing log fire and home-cooked food. A cosy library. A peaceful chapel. A long empty beach and good walking country. An accepting, creative community. Won't you join us?

£318 (CONC. £242)

## **At Sea with God**

16-19 Mar (Fri-Mon a.m.)

*Margaret Silf* returns to lead this, her second Othona retreat, developing ideas from her book of the same title. She will explore with us the images of seafaring as a model for our spiritual journey. Are we called to leave the safety of the boatyard for the uncertainty and risk of a voyage across uncharted waters to a mysterious destination? Margaret is a very popular retreat leader, very honest and down-to-earth in her approach. She is author of numerous spirituality books including *Taste and See*, *Landmarks* and *At Sea with God: a Spiritual Guidebook to the Heart and Soul*.

£166 (CONC. £133) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Reflective Caring**

5-8 Mar (Mon-Tues p.m.)

Are you a carer, a listener, someone involved in pastoral work? If so, where do *you* come into the picture, so that both you and the people you minister to can become more whole? *Bob Whorton*, hospice chaplain and Othona trustee, looks deeply into this question in his book “Reflective Caring”. In this short course – suitable for anyone in a caring role, professional or not – he introduces some techniques of ‘Soul Reflection’, the process of paying attention, without judgment, to reactions from the different selves within us. Working individually, in pairs and groups, we can enter a dialogue between different parts of the self and voices from the Bible or other literature. Bob's is an imaginative but highly ethical approach which creates a safe space for accessing and sharing deep inner experience. He is joined as co-facilitator by his wife Sue Whorton, a professional singer and voice teacher who will help us remember that ‘soul’ comes to us incarnated in the miracle of ‘body’.

£182 (CONC. £148) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## The Aramaic Jesus and the Sufis: Shared Paths of the Heart

22-25 Mar (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

Aramaic was Jesus' mother tongue. His words, viewed through Aramaic eyes, reveal many aspects of his original way of prayer, contemplation and spiritual practice. Historically, early Islam had a close relationship with Aramaic and Arabic Christianity, which share the same emphasis on the mystical and spiritual side of Jesus' teaching. Within the larger community of Islam, the Sufis expressed this mystical side, used some of the same practices and told many stories about Jesus, whom they still hold in high respect. As we explore this relationship, we aim to help build bridges between the differences we perceive within and between us. This three-day workshop is led by *Neil Douglas-Klotz*, world renowned expert on the Aramaic Jesus. It will feature chanting (in Aramaic and Arabic), Sufi stories, meditation and movement, Dances of Universal Peace and Sufi zikr focused on the shared prayers of the heart that connect the Aramaic Jesus and the Sufis.

£182 (CONC. £148) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## Roll Up Your Sleeves

27 Mar – 2 April (Tues-Mon a.m.)

Another chance to help around the house and grounds. Up to 6 hours work a day, with varied tasks to suit your abilities. Shared jobs in community are a lot of fun too!

£75

## A Passion for Music

5-10 April (Thurs-Tues a.m.)

This season – the Jewish Passover, the Christian Easter and the coming of Spring – has inspired countless composers and other musicians. This year we shall experience Easter primarily through the medium of music. We'll sing and make music together, and watch or listen to recorded performances including some of the powerful 'Passions' written by contemporary composers. Also we shall be able to partake of one or two of the concerts/gigs available at Easter in the locality (cost not included). *Colin Hodgetts* is a composer, performer, priest, educator, community activist, sometime Othona warden and creator of the "Othona Psalms". He will lead this weekend fresh back from a year spent with his wife Julia in rural Ethiopia, as project director for an Anglican peace and education centre. We can look forward to some of Colin's vivid, humorous, profound reflections on that experience too.

£228 (CONC. £172)

## Families at Play

12-15 April (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

This long weekend is the ultimate letting-off steam before school starts again and the dread season of exams. Othona's founder always recommended a community lifestyle of "work, worship, study and play". These few days we'll concentrate *almost* entirely on Play, with indoor and outdoor games – some we'll invent ourselves – and a visit to a local outdoor centre, with some great activities to try (cost not included). The idea is for grown ups and young people to muck in and have fun together, with grown ups *not* calling all the shots. The one thing we won't do, is rely on Xbox or Wii or any other digital technology; this is a low-tech holiday. (Please discuss with us if you plan to bring children under 7.)

£142 (CONC. £108) AGES 11-18: £85 3-10: £63

## **Walking Week 1 – A County of Contrasts** 18-24 April (Wed-Tues a.m.)

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Dorset is fantastic walking country, with many contrasting landscapes on the coast and inland. At this time of year the wildflowers are spectacular and the cream teas inviting. We offer four days of diverse group walks with packed lunches. Saturday (weather depending) is a rest day and a chance to visit the renowned street market in nearby Bridport. The walks this week are only between 3 and 6 miles long but inevitably include uphill sections – this is Dorset! (N.B. This year we introduce Walking Week 2 in May, to offer longer and more challenging outings.) £273 (CONC. £207)

## **Fill Your Hands with the Mud, like a Blessing** 26-29 April (Thurs-Sun p.m.)

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When the poet Mary Oliver asks us to “fill our hands with mud, like a blessing”, she highlights the sense we have of the ordinary world being suffused with extraordinary wonder. Over the course of the weekend we will range widely, using a variety of sources, including poetry by Marge Piercy, the mystical prose of Simone Weil and our own personal experiences, to explore this theme. *Jennie Barnsley* and *Roy Bayfield* have been working since the 1990s with the Appleseed method of gentle, creative self-discovery. It uses a combination of talks, kindergarten-simple arts-based response activities (requiring no previous experience whatsoever!) and worship sharing, as a framework for spiritual and personal exploration. Jennie and Roy have devised and delivered Appleseed courses in a range of Quaker, church, education and community settings. £172 (CONC. £138) ALL-IN PRICE, COURSE FEE INCLUDED

## **Advance Dates for your Diary**

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### **12-19 May Walking Week 2**

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Stretch your Legs for Spring (longer more challenging walks)

### **14-17 June Simply Divine**

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A retreat for gay and bisexual men (with *Urs Mattmann* and *Stafford Whiteaker*)

## **Sabbatical stays in November and April**

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During November or April (exact dates available on application) you could spend anything from a fortnight to a month living here alongside the core community. You may or may not be on a sabbatical from paid work. But we take it you are looking for a few weeks ‘off the treadmill’ of whatever your normal daily life is. The cost will vary from £17 to £34 per day, depending how much you wish to work with us while you are here. Please email [shaun@othona-bb.org.uk](mailto:shaun@othona-bb.org.uk) for more details. We plan further sabbatical space in June and November 2012.

*“Hugely enjoyable and deeply transforming. Thank You.”*

# FAQs

## **Do you have single rooms?**

Yes – and twins, doubles and family rooms (but no en-suites). Just tell us your preference on the booking form. Book early for single rooms – sometimes we will only have space left if you're prepared to share.

## **Is everything provided in the bedrooms?**

Duvet, pillows and blankets are provided. You can bring your own duvet cover, bottom sheet, pillowcases and towels if you wish to save money. Or you can hire them from us at a one-off cost of £6 per person.

## **What time of day do events begin and end?**

Residential events usually begin with supper at 6.30 or 7.00p.m. It helps us if you arrive after 4.30p.m. Departure times are mid-morning unless otherwise indicated (e.g. Sunday p.m.).

## **Can I arrive a day early or stay over an extra night?**

This kind of extension is sometimes possible, particularly to bridge from one event to the next. Please ask us about the specific dates you have in mind.

## **Can I reach you by public transport?**

Yes. For more information see the back cover.

## **How do I qualify for a concession?**

You don't have to. Our concessionary rate is freely available to anyone who feels they need it. It is not just for people receiving state benefits. After all, some pensioners are comfortably off, while some people in full time work are very hard up because of their commitments. So we trust your judgment about your own needs.

## **Can I pay by credit or debit card?**

We will shortly (autumn 2011) be adding a Paypal facility to our website for payments and donations. In the meantime you can pay by cheque or best of all a bank transfer - please phone or email us for details.

## **Do you offer individually guided retreats?**

No. You can find places which do through [www.retreats.org.uk](http://www.retreats.org.uk) or 01494 433004.

## **Do you offer private retreat time, within or outside advertised events?**

This is not usually possible outside advertised events, but see below about sabbatical stays. Many people looking for a retreat experience find our Quiet Weeks and Open Spaces, with a balance of chill out and community, meet their needs.

## **Can I stay for a longer period?**

Our new 'sabbatical stays' can be anything from a fortnight to a month. In March/April, June and November each year we have some places available on this basis. Please contact us to explore possibilities. We cannot offer prolonged stays where your main needs are therapeutic. As a rule Othona only has living space for those who work as part of the core community.

## **Do you hire out the centre for group use?**

Yes, occasionally. We have a few openings each year for 'outside group' bookings not advertised in our own Programme. Please contact the warden to discuss possibilities.

## **How do you cater for people with disabilities?**

All our communal rooms and two downstairs bedrooms are wheelchair-accessible. There is a hearing loop in the chapel. Guide dogs are an exception to Othona's general no dogs rule.

## **Will I have to do the washing up?**

Yes! Community life means we share a few simple tasks such as washing up and preparing vegetables, usually one each per day. Approached in a spirit of care and co-operation they can be more like gifts than chores.

### **What's your food like? Will my diet be a problem?**

We always try to provide home-cooked, healthy, scrumptious meals. We grow some of our own food and use a lot of produce which is local (West Dorset is a bit of a foodie heaven), organic or fairly traded. We cater at all times for vegetarians as well as meat-eaters. With our small kitchen we cannot provide special meals for those on other dietary regimes. If that's you, we hope you'll find plenty to nourish and delight you in what we do serve. Please do bring any supplementary food you are likely to need; ask for fridge space if you need it; but realise that you won't usually be able to cook it at Othona. We always stock soya milk, wheat-free bread and rice cakes and our local town, Bridport, has various specialist food shops. If you have a serious medical intolerance to any foodstuffs please make sure you notify us at time of booking – then we will clarify with you whether we can exclude them from the menu.

### **Will I have access to media?**

All mobile networks now have coverage at Othona, if sometimes a bit patchy. Urgent messages can be left for you if necessary on our office phone 01308 897130. We don't currently have a computer for visitors' use, nor do we have wifi. Othona generally offers a rest from the chatter of tv, radio, etc. except occasional use of e.g. DVDs for discussion. If you listen to radio or music in your room we trust you'll keep it quiet and not disturb others. Also we ask that electronic games machines are left at home.

### **Will my children like it?**

Who can ever predict? But seriously, events during school holidays are usually designed to be family-friendly. Most children adjust quickly to community life and love its freedoms. We have an established child protection policy.

### **How inclusive are you?**

Othona values diversity and aims to break down barriers of age, sex, race, ability and background. We were pioneers among Christian centres in actively welcoming people regardless of sexual orientation.

### **What if I'm not Christian, or not even religious?**

You don't have to be Christian to enjoy Othona or to be welcome here. Many Othona people are Christian, but some are of other faiths. And many others are reluctant to be identified with any one religion, seeing themselves on a spiritual search. Only if you were indifferent or hostile to any such search would we suggest you think again about visiting Othona.

### **How 'holy' is the atmosphere in your community?**

Spiritual health is about being fully human – which may or may not include being religious. Othona supports anybody who takes spiritual health seriously (by which we don't mean solemnly!) But you won't encounter a lot of pious talk, nor pressure to share other people's beliefs. We hope you'll find 'soul nourishment' in our chapel – as well as on the beach, in the art room, round the dinner table. Our library is a treasure house of books (and now some audio) to stir the heart and feed the mind, particularly strong in progressive theology and multi-faith spirituality.

### **So in what sense is Othona Christian?**

In a profoundly open sense – open-hearted and open-minded – which we believe Christianity at its best is. Here at Othona West Dorset we speak of being "rooted in the Christian heritage... open to the widening future". We honour the revolutionary heart of Jesus' teaching, when Othona embraces and learns from people of all faiths and none. Could a Christianity evolving for the 21st century settle for less? How crucial it is that the world's great faiths should relax their defensiveness and explore common ground. Othona is one tiny step in that direction.

### **What does the name Othona mean?**

Nobody knows! Except that it was the Romans' name for a fort they built on the Essex coast. Out of the ruins of that fort rose a Christian church in AD654. Close by that church is the other (and first) Othona centre at Bradwell-on-Sea in Essex. Today the Othona Community is a far-flung network of people with a love for one or both centres. Newcomers and non-members are just as welcome as long-established Othona members.

# Terms and Conditions

*Please read this page carefully. It relates to your financial security and personal safety. Without your agreement to these terms (by signing the booking form) we cannot accept your booking.*

## **Cancellation Costs**

**If I have to cancel** I accept that Othona returns a varying proportion of my payment:

More than 1 month ahead of the event start date:	all but the deposit
Less than 1 month, more than 1 week ahead:	50%
Less than 1 week ahead:	10%
On or after start date:	nil

I am aware I could take out insurance against loss due to cancellation.

**I accept that Othona reserves the right to change or cancel events as necessary.**

## **Recreation at Othona**

*One of the delights of Othona is its relatively 'wild' outdoor environment. We want to keep this open to all and safe for all. Please read this carefully as it constitutes part of your terms and conditions for booking.*

By booking to stay at Othona West Dorset I am agreeing to all of the following:  
Any or all of the members of my family or party listed on the booking form may want to play and engage in other recreational activities in the grounds of the Othona Community, including use of the equipment known as the Treehouse.

I understand that:

- a. The grounds include varied terrain on which care is needed to avoid accidental injury.  
They are largely 'undomesticated' for the sake of wildlife and bio-diversity.  
There may be plants growing wild which are poisonous if eaten.
- b. As in any wild environment, common sense is needed to enjoy the surroundings and avoid danger.
- c. The possibility of injury to myself and others will always exist.

I confirm that:

- a. I am aware and accept that there are potential risks to myself and others and I will not deliberately endanger myself or others.
- b. I acknowledge and accept the responsibility for the supervision of any child of mine who plays in the grounds, including use of the Treehouse.
- c. I will comply – and ensure any child of mine complies - with the Othona Community guidelines as to use of the Treehouse or any other play equipment.
- d. I will only allow my child(ren) to use the Treehouse when I have satisfied myself that it is safe for them to do so.

I hereby release, remise and forever discharge from any claims and liabilities whatsoever without limitation the Othona Community, its employees and volunteer helpers and any other person playing in the grounds who might injure me or my child(ren) howsoever arising, and I make this release on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors and administrators.

If you need extra booking forms and cannot photocopy, call us on 01308 897130 or visit <http://www.othona-bb.org.uk/how-to-book/>

In this chapel our guiding light  
is the example of Jesus  
He offered a welcome to all  
regardless of status or preference  
of sex, race or religion  
We seek to honour all faiths  
as responses to the divine  
as paths to liberation  
We look for the Christian tradition  
to evolve with new understandings  
and to join hands with all  
who hunger for justice and peace



We have no one set form of chapel service. Sometimes a volunteer will lead by choosing music, a simple chant, sharing experience and thoughts, contributing readings, poems or prayers. Sometimes we just enjoy a companionable silence.



Othona is about a mile east of Burton Bradstock village on the coastal side of the B3157. You can reach us by train (or coach) and bus. We send further travel details in the month before your visit.

**Othona Community**  
**Coast Road**  
**Burton Bradstock**  
**Bridport**  
**Dorset DT6 4RN**

Office: **01308 897130**

Email: [mail@othona-bb.org.uk](mailto:mail@othona-bb.org.uk)  
Website: [www.othona-bb.org.uk](http://www.othona-bb.org.uk)

Check availability for any event on our website [www.othona-bb.org.uk](http://www.othona-bb.org.uk)

Community House is in the care of a small resident group, the Core Community. Day to day management rests with the warden, Tony Jaques, backed by a deputy, a Committee and Trustees drawn from the Othona Community at large.



***“All my friends commented that my sparkle had returned after a very long absence. I’m still glowing a week on.”***