

# *Little Gidding Way*

**You are here to kneel.....**

## **Listening**

Little Gidding is a place where people have listened to God's call. Our calling is to follow them in this.

## **Rhythm**

When we have become still we shall find less difficulty in alternating between times of activity and times of quiet.

## **Work and Worship**

Part of the rhythm is the alternation between worship and work: breathing in and breathing out.

## **Prayer and Praise**

Within worship there is also the alternation of giving and receiving, of praising God for what He has done and asking in faith for what He wants to be done through us.

## **Working Together**

As people work together they learn something of each other's nature which cannot be conveyed in words.

## **Openness**

As confidence is gradually built up we may learn to trust each other with ourselves in all our weakness and strength.

## **Sharing the Same Cup**

Our commitment to God and to each other is symbolized in our common meals and in the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine.

## **Welcome**

We welcome each guest as if he or she were Christ Himself.

## **Part of Creation**

We are all created by God. We revere all God's creatures and treat them with care and gentleness but without sentimentality. We also respect the soil on which God has placed us and the plants which bring us life.

## **Responsibility**

We are responsible to God for everything we do. In our work each of us has a particular responsibility but each is responsible to someone else.

## **Wealth**

Everything we possess we receive from God. We learn to discover which possessions we can share with others.

## **Christ**

Christ is present with us all the time and He brings us out of our contempt for ourselves and each other into the glorious liberty of His pardon and power.

## **Spiritual Company**

Until we have reached an exceptional level of sanctification we all need someone to help us in our spiritual search.

## **Meeting together**

That the community may develop in accordance with God's will its members will meet at regular intervals to listen together to what God is saying.

## **England and Nowhere**

We are at a place which has been associated with the destiny of the nation. We bear it in our hearts and offer to God all who work for the redemption of our people from the forces of commercialism.

## **Of All Ages**

A natural community contains people of all ages and differing abilities. Old and young have much to give each other. The intellectually bright can learn to receive from the more practical, and each person's gift to the common life becomes acceptable when judged by God's standards, not the world's.

## **The Church**

We are part of Christ's body. It is broken, but we do not break it further. We do not separate ourselves from our neighbours who travel this way with us but we learn to be strengthened by them and to strengthen them.

## **The Companions of Little Gidding**

The Companions are an integral part of the Society of the Friends of Little Gidding. The Friends were founded in 1946 by Alan Maycock, with T.S. Eliot as vice-president. The Society was reconstituted in 2003 and seeks to celebrate the life and memory of Nicholas Ferrar, his family and those who in the 17<sup>th</sup> century formed the first Little Gidding Community, making it a holy place; to help maintain the fabric of Little Gidding Church; to assist Ferrar House; and to celebrate the connection between Eliot and Little Gidding.

Companions are therefore invited to join the Friends (£15 p.a. subscription). Membership forms are available in the Church and Ferrar House.



People come to Little Gidding for a variety of reasons:

- ***A place for Prayer***
- ***Reflective Study***
- ***Fellowship***
- ***Contemplation***
- ***Community Experience***
- ***Spiritual Day Groups***
- ***Young People's Experience***
- ***Spiritual Teaching, Poetry, Art and Music***

~Find a time for personal reflection amongst the quiet and beautiful countryside – time to break away from noise for a day or two.

~Look for space to breathe, think, pray and be silent.

~Celebrate or have times of worship.

~Be inspired by the past, from which we can learn.

~Recollect the prayer life of Nicholas Ferrar, leader of the 17<sup>th</sup> century family community.

~Be drawn by the poetry of T.S. Eliot who found Little Gidding a magical place.

~Attend monthly poetry evenings and other events .

You can be involved in sharing as a Companion of Little Gidding through supporting the work of the Friends of Little Gidding and through prayer, study, fellowship, work and lifestyle.

**Prayer.** Examples of ways in which Companions may join in prayer at Little Gidding are:

daily prayer at 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. from Wednesday to Sunday;

regular worship at Little Gidding, including a monthly service at 12 noon on the second Friday of each month, and Evensong when there is a fifth Sunday in the month (see [www.ferrarhouse.co.uk](http://www.ferrarhouse.co.uk) for dates and times).

**Study.** This could include the life and work of Nicholas Ferrar and T.S. Eliot, attending poetry evenings, using poetry and the arts to deepen one's awareness of the truth.

**Fellowship.** Attending meetings of the Companions and sharing meals and conversations at Ferrar House.

**Work.** One example is helping to keep the Church clean, tidy and beautiful, including arranging flowers.

**Lifestyle.** Assessing one's lifestyle to examine its effect on the environment, e.g. travel, food, clothes, work. A simple lifestyle was an essential part both of Nicholas Ferrar's household and more recent experiments in community living at Little Gidding. This could be part of the development of a Rule of Life in which each Companion would be encouraged to take part

To find out more please telephone or email the contacts given or fill in the enclosed form.

# COMPANIONS of LITTLE GIDDING

