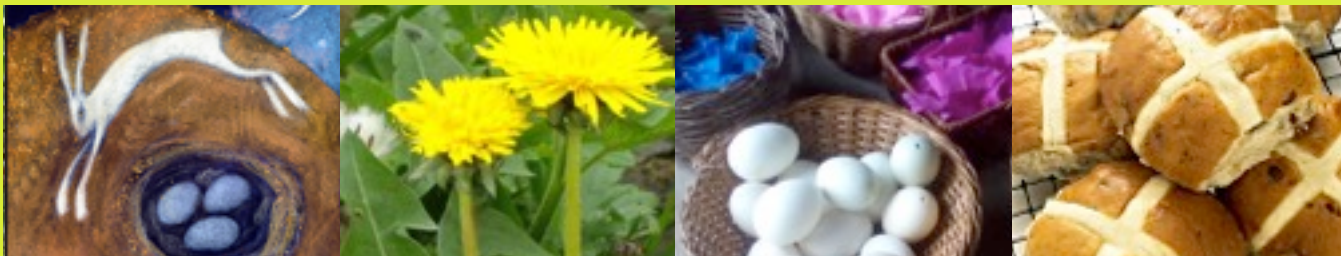


# BLÁTHÚ Newsletter



An update for members and friends

Easter 2021

*From heaven above comes sunlight streaming;  
Shining, glistening, and gleaming.  
My silver crescent-cup is filled,  
(Be careful that it is not spilled),  
Such joy weaves round me everywhere  
In water and earth and in light-filled air.  
A wave of joy in me as well  
Springs from my heart, a surging swell.  
By joy I'm taught my God to know.  
I am his child - He tells me so.*

*From - In the Light of a Child, Michael Hedley Burton*

## Editorial March 2021

In his book, *The Wisdom of Fairy Tales*, Rudolf Meyer says.....

*"We cannot imagine a springtime without snowdrops, violets or primroses. We love them as the very idea of Spring. If we were ever to become indifferent to their flowering, it would be a sure sign that in our hearts we have broken faith with the earth."*

With this Bláthú Spring newsletter, we find ourselves at the anniversary of the first Covid 19 lockdown,

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with the beautiful Spring sunshine reminding us strongly of last year.

Thankfully we are back again in our settings amongst the children. For me personally, the difference between being locked down at home and being able to go to work and be in the presence of these children who live totally in the now, is immeasurable. The relief to have a familiar purpose in my day, to be able to leave



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lámháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth



the house, to be busy and needed, cannot be overstated.

So we have come through Winter, that season of inwardness and holding in a sense, where nature appears to be asleep. We are emerging into Spring where nature bursts forth into unbridled growth and joy. But we cannot yet emerge and travel or meet our family and friends in an “unbridled” fashion.

So we have to go within even more than before and find deeper reserves that allow us to tolerate ourselves and others around us. How do we do this when our patience and strength are wearing thin?

Possibly by deliberately cultivating a reverence and love for the simple things around us, and keeping our heart connection to the earth as Rudolf Meyer speaks about above. By this I mean:

- Really looking at a flower (or even a weed) in your garden,
- Sitting with a lighted candle and breathing deeply for a few minutes before the others in your household wake up.
- Taking a cup of tea outside to hear the dawn chorus,
- Tracking the moon as she fills out in the night sky as we head towards Easter
- Join Ulrike in our weekly Wednesday Zoom meetings (More information below).

Simple things that nobody can take away from you that we can choose to see, connect with, and enjoy. It is our inner choices that make us free.

So as we head to Easter, that festival of resurrection, hope and new life, I wish you inner freedom, peace and joy.

*Niamh Ruiseal*



# CALENDAR OF THE SOUL

*In preparing this season's Newsletter, and looking up the weekly verse from Calendar of the Soul, I thankfully was reminded that Easter is the beginning of the soul year. In reading this chapter I was pulled into the world of this wonderful resource, and found myself grounded and comforted in the dance that it created for me. Like the beginning of anything in life, it is good to take the time to be still, reflect and create what we want for the future, and maybe you will find something for yourself in reading it.*

- Fiona Coady

## **Easter. April 7-13**

***When from the worlds' wide bounds  
The sun speaks to the sense of man,  
And joy from depths of soul  
Grows one with light in gazing,  
Then thoughts from selfhood's narrow  
case  
Draw outward to far spaces  
And mutely bind  
Man's being with the spirit's life.***

With this verse the soul year, the 'spiritual year,' begins. However much the Easter festival can move within the early part of spring according to the configurations of the spring Full Moon, this verse falls with absolute certainty on Easter Sunday irrespective of the date; its position is therefore fixed. For its position as the verse leading into the spiritual year, depends on its being experienced together with Easter Sunday. Everything prior to this has as it were disappeared from view. Our gaze reaches not backwards but forwards. For the first time we stand surveying the coming year. All has become future and is in movement! We try to listen to this future, and from it the coming year begins – faintly and barely audibly at first – to sound.

If the right basic feeling for the Soul Calendar is to be acquired, it will always be necessary not merely to experience the individual verse for the week to which it belongs, but also the verses related to it. Three additional verses belong to each particular one, so that only a quartet of verses can bring a full experience both of feeling and of understanding. The four verses form a true quartet and sound forth in four voices:

*As tenor from Easter to St John's.  
As baritone from St John's to Michaelmas.  
As soprano from Michaelmas to Christmas.  
As alto from Christmas to Easter.*

Thus the radiant tenor voice rings out and sings:

***1. When from the worlds' wide bounds  
The sun speaks to the sense of man***

But then from the far future there answers a tender alto voice, which softly sings:

***52. When from the depths of soul  
The spirit turns towards the life of worlds***

These two voices interweave, strongly in the tenor, gently in the alto; and the soul is overwhelmed by the feeling that Easter has indeed come, Passion has been vanquished, the Resurrection has become a reality, the sun is manifesting itself from the worlds' wide bounds. The senses experience the light that reveals itself to them as a pair of outspread wings; a mighty breath of light glides forwards, loving, warming, weaving and enlivening. And the soul begins to sound forth at the touch of this breath of light, as it resonates; and the soul's bliss of joy comes to birth. Thus from outside, from beyond the soul, the light-breathing miracle of spring approaches man and enkindles joy with him. The world's breath of light reaches right into man's heart.

This is different if the words of the alto voice sing in the week for Palm Sunday for then the breath is



released not from without but from man's inner being, the spirit is turned towards the life of worlds and the beauty welling from the wide bounds of space is received into his heart. But at Easter this stage is now overcome. Easter morning rays forth and the world reveals itself to man.

However, this Easter verse has two distinct points of emphasis: when.....then. When what has been described happens, something else also comes about:

*Then thoughts from selfhood's narrow case  
Draw outward to far spaces*

The approaching light is so powerful that it causes the structure of the human sheaths to tremble, quivering with the approach of newly awakened nature; and now thoughts are liberated from man's bodily – selfhood's narrow case – being that draw upwards, outwards to meet the dawning light, thus binding man's being in a consciousness of dream and sleep with the spirit's life.

Thus there is something of a twofold nature that we are to experience here: with the approach of the breathing world of light, not only does joy arise within the soul but man's body releases the substance of thought which is united with the wedded to the spirit's life. Man's answer to nature's summons is twofold: joy is born from the soul, and thoughts from the body.

With this our origin in the spirit comes to fulfilment. The longing that will fill the alto voice at the year's end, which yearns for the beauty of the wide bounds of space and softly mingles with the loud singing of the tenor, is not now present. The tenor radiantly proclaims what is actually taking place: the world of nature and the world of the spirit have turned towards the human soul. The 'when' and 'then' have been consummated. But now a new twofold voice mingles, like a very quiet undertone,

with the two other voices. A dark baritone strikes up its song:

*26. Nature, thou soul of motherhood,  
I bear thee in the essence of my will*

and it is joined by a song coming as thought from a bright, soaring soprano voice:

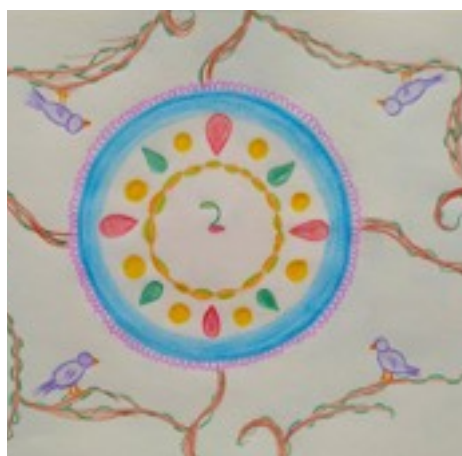
*27. To dive into my being's depths  
Stirs up a yearning in me, boding well*

In these two verses the 'when' and 'then' proclaimed in the verse for Easter Sunday comes to fulfilment. The verse for Michaelmas week, beginning with the words 'Nature, thou soul of motherhood,' speaks of the total union between nature and the human soul. Whereas the message proclaimed in the verse for the first week after Michaelmas, when autumn has truly arrived, refers to the seed which then appears at Easter in the 'then.' Thus the 'when' of Easter leads to Michaelmas, whereas the 'then' is the last part and the completion of what comes about directly after Michaelmas.

These indications will have to be sufficient for now; they can be supplemented by what is said about the corresponding verses for Michaelmas. The crossbeam of the cross of the year is being referred to here. The tension between Easter and Michaelmas has been established, and so the basic outline of the whole of the coming year has been given. The world opens up in its rejoicing; joy fills the human heart; but there sound forth voices which utter these words of warning:

*O man, take heed!!*

This extract is taken from: ***The Calendar of the Soul – A Commentary***, Karl Konig, Floris Books ISBN 978-086315-784-4



# WHO LOOKS AFTER THE TEACHERS?

*By Smaragda Petridi*

In the kindergarten, all our energy is going into creating and nurturing a welcoming environment for the children and their families. As educators and carers, we put in energy by maintaining a healthy and clean space, looking after and mending toys and equipment, cooking healthy meals, tending to the garden. We do this by being aware of ourselves, being emotionally available for the children, modelling what we consider to be a healthy adult presence, create and hold a safe space where they can explore and settle into their own bodies and grow. We look, listen, observe, process. When going home, our group comes with us in our thoughts and our unconscious. We are keeping ourselves available to the families, ensuring open and welcoming communication and support pathways. We are like the gardeners of the kindergarten. Still, in this full of people space, it can get lonely and the weight of the responsibility can drag us down. So a question arises: who looks after the teachers?

This school year, I felt held and looked after by our weekly mentoring Wednesday groups with Ulrike. In the meetings, I connect with other Kindergarten teachers from around the country, which cultivates a sense of connection, togetherness and support. Through reflection, practice, exercises of all kinds (movement, journaling, observations, readings etc) I have come to grow as a human being. My awareness is increasing, tools and skills for my personal and professional life are enriched, my

understanding of my work is deepening. I have found a space to turn to where I feel safe to bring questions and any issue that arises from my everyday life at the kindergarten. Since an important aspect of early childhood is having healthy role models in one's life, isn't it important to invest on and look after those choosing to work with the younger ones from our communities? I see this as a circular process where what educators are offered returns to the community in the form of higher quality of work, deeper, more grounded presence and continuity.

In this newsletter, some of the participants from our Wednesday meetings are sharing our Mandalas. Their creation was an invitation to bridge the work of the conscious and unconscious, to express our inner processes. What for me started as a task ended up being a joyful and mindful means of documenting my development. In my Mandalas, I've connected elements from nature and my own body as a woman, visually expressing nature connection, layering of inner boundaries and interconnectedness of life. Working with colours, shapes, patterns, symmetry turned out to be therapeutic, healing and calming for me. I am grateful for the opportunity I have, to participate in these meetings. Such meetings should become the norm and if you already have the opportunity to join us on a Wednesday afternoon ( at present on zoom), take it!



# TO INSPIRE YOU . . .

After the first lecture by Philipp Reubke, the pedagogical section Goetheanum in Switzerland has brought out 3 more short video lectures on the topic of '**Building Trust in Corona times**'. They are in German with English subtitles.

Claus Peter Röh: [From 'You' to the new 'We' - three inner impulses in online teaching](#)

The current situation in schools is characterized by permanent change, uncertainty and the search for reorientation. Education is the art of creating new balance between movements and counter-movements. What is the inner counter-movement that the present landslide towards teaching at home and online is asking for?

Florian Osswald: [How to approach sleeping and waking \(not only\) in times of crisis](#)

In stressful situations, when we are upset or anxious about the future, many of us experience how unpleasant feelings can take over: pain,

anger, shame that something turned out one way and not another. We are anxious or uncertain about what lies ahead. This contribution shows that the moments of going to sleep and waking up are conducive to the realization that these feelings can be transformed. The night can bring openness, creativity and trust in life if we can cultivate this awareness.

Constanz Kaliks: [Being wanted, seen and recognized](#)

“Where there is school, there is hope,” writes Sebastião Salgado in the introduction to his new book *Retratos de Crianças no Êxodo* – images of refugee children. What can school as a place of hope do, where can school be a place of hope, what is essential? It is crucial that children and adolescents can have the experience that they are wanted, perceived - seen - and recognized. Enabling these experiences is the task of the environment in which children and young people grow up: a challenge during the pandemic, a question for schools.

## VACANCIES

### BURREN SONAS KINDERGARTEN

**Kindergarten Assistant** - We are looking for a kindergarten assistant 27- 30 hours per week at a Steiner based sessional early years' service located in Kilfenora, County Clare.

Duties will include: Participating in all activities with children aged 2 1/2 -- 5 years, craft making, planning and meetings, outside play with the children, and simple cooking and shopping. Applicants must have at least a Level 5 Early Years childcare qualification. Experience or interest in Steiner education preferred.

Closing date for applications is Thursday, April 8th, 2021.

Please contact Deirdre Riffel at 0877131590.

### TWO RIVERS KINDERGARTEN

**Head Teacher** – Two Rivers Kindergarten is a magical environment for children to grow and learn. Set in the beautiful surroundings of An Sanctoir, Ballydheob, Two Rivers provides the children, parents and teachers alike a unique and truly immersive early years' experience. The role of Head Teacher offers an opportunity for the right person to work in a gentle atmosphere, supporting one Assistant Teacher in a low childteacher ratio school, allowing for special focus on each individual child. This is a part-time position of 25 hours per week (9am – 2pm) which will include teaching time, tidying and admin work. It is a wonderful opportunity to work in a fantastic community in the most idyllic part of the world.

Applicants should forward a current CV to [tworiverscommittee@gmail.com](mailto:tworiverscommittee@gmail.com)

Full job description available upon request



## The True Easter Hare

There was once a mother hare and a father hare, and they had seven little hare children. One day an Angel flew down to them and said .... “One of your children is to become the True Easter Hare.”

So mother hare took seven eggs, painted them, put them in a basket, called her children to come and said, “Take an egg from the basket to a garden where there are children!”

The eldest hare chose a golden egg. He ran across the meadow, jumped over the stream, and tiptoed through the woods. When he came to the garden gate, he jumped too high and too hardy, and he dropped his egg and it broke. So he was not the true Easter Hare.

The second hare chose a silver egg. She ran across the meadow, jumped over the stream, and tiptoed through the woods. When she came to the garden gate, a magpie which was perching upon it called “Would you like to swap your silver egg for a shiny sliver sixpence?”. While the hare was thinking about it, the magpie swooped down and took the egg back to his nest. So she was not the True Easter Hare.

The third hare chose a speckled egg. He ran across the meadow, but when he came to the stream, he saw his reflection in the water. “The True Easter Hare should look very handsome,” he thought, so he began to comb his long velvety ears. Plop, plop, plunk went the egg into the water. So he was not the True Easter Hare.

The fourth hare chose a chocolate egg. He ran across the meadow, jumped over the steam, but in the woods a squirrel scampered down a tree and said, “That looks lovely, can I have a lick?” So the squirrel had a lick, and the hare had a lick. And the squirrel and the hare had a lick-lick-lick, and soon the egg was all gone. When that little hare came home, his mother pulled his whiskers, which were still covered in chocolate, and said, “You are not the True Easter Hare!”

The fifth hare chose a red egg. She ran across the meadow, jumped over the stream, and tiptoed through the woods. There a fox approached and said, “My children would like to see your egg, come to my den”. There the fox cubs batted it and patted it until it rolled against a stone and cracked. it The fifth hare put down her ears and ran home. She knew she was not the True Easter Hare!

The sixth hare ran to the children’s garden. But he forgot to bring an egg with him!

The seventh hare was a shy, gentle hare. He chose a blue egg. He carefully ran across the meadow, jumped over the stream, and tiptoed through the woods. When he came to the garden gate, he jumped.... not too high and not too long....and he landed in the children’s garden. There he found a nest which the children had prepared, and he laid the egg in the children’s nest. And so, he was the True Easter Hare!

Under the trees, under the sun,  
Seven little hares, run, run, run,  
Over the steam, up to the sky,  
Seven little hares can jump so high!  
Across the meadow, under the moon,  
Seven hungry hares hop home soon.



# FOR THE SEASONS - EGG CRAFTS

## Egg Painting

1. Collect eggs, pierce small holes at both ends using a sharp knife then blow the eggs into a bowl. This is great fun for the kids. Rinse the inside and leave to dry completely. You can put them back into the egg carton and leave near a heat source.
2. We painted our eggs using acrylic paints, you can also use watercolours but best to use white shelled eggs for these.
3. To make it easier, we put a skewer through the middle of the eggshell to make it easier to hold the egg when painting, using containers to prop the skewer, you can also paint the eggshell in the egg carton. Doing half the egg then the other half when dry
4. Cut lengths of yarn approx. 30cm, loop and tie a knot bigger than the smallest hole in the eggshell. Then using a skewer thread the loop through the two holes to form a hanging loop. You need to hold the yarn taught against the skewer to do this.

*Contributed by Claudia Juncal & Maya Hogan*



## Crepe Paper Easter Eggs



### MATERIALS

Coloured crepe paper;  
Blown eggs (white duck eggs work best);  
A bowl of water;  
Egg box for drying;  
String; and a stick such as a match stick

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Blow the egg so it is empty and rinse it out.
2. Tear the coloured crepe paper into small pieces.
3. Holding the egg in one hand dip the crepe paper quickly into the water with the other hand and stick onto the egg.
4. Cover the egg completely.
5. Place in the egg box to dry. (On a radiator or a warm place)
6. Once dry, peel off the crepe paper to reveal the coloured egg.
7. Break the matchstick to fit in one of the holes where you blew the egg. Tie the string around the middle of it and slide it into the hole.
8. Hang it on an easter branch and admire the beautiful colours.

*Contributed by Ziva Ellis*



# FOR THE SEASONS - FOOD & TRADITION

by Ruth Marshall

## Hot cross buns

### You will need:

#### For the buns:

1lb (450g) bread flour - a 50/50 mix of white and wholemeal  
1 tsp mixed spice  
1/2 pint (275ml) milk (or coconut/oat milk substitute)  
3 oz (75g) butter  
instant dried yeast  
2 oz sugar (or 2 tbsp honey)  
6 oz (160g) dried fruit and peel  
pinch of salt  
2 beaten eggs

#### For the cross

A little bit of white shortcrust pastry

### Instructions:

Warm the milk to body temperature, add the butter and honey or sugar. Mix in the beaten eggs. Mix the spice and dried yeast into the flour in a large bowl. Make a well in the centre, pour in the liquids, and stir with a wooden spoon. Add more liquid if needed. Turn out onto a floured board and press in the dried fruit. Knead the dough and return it to the bowl, covering with a clean tea towel. Leave in a warm place until doubled in size. Knead the dough again and shape into buns. Place these on a baking sheet and leave to rise again. Meanwhile, make a very small quantity of white pastry. Roll out thinly and cut into thin strips. Brush the tops of the buns with a glaze made of milk and honey mixed. Lay the pastry strips on the buns to form crosses. Bake at gas mark 7 (220C) for 15 minutes. Add another layer of glaze whilst the buns are still hot from the oven, and leave to cool on a rack.

Hot cross buns are sweet, milky, spiced bread buns, filled with dried fruit, and marked on top with a cross. They should be made, and eaten, on Good Friday. Although nowadays they are available all-year round, it is still a good idea to keep to the tradition, and have special foods to mark special occasions. In older times, people fasted and avoided eggs, butter and milk during Lent. These buns were a real treat for breaking that fast, and used up lots of the rich fatty foods they'd saved up for Easter. Hot cross buns are at their best when still fresh and warm, although they are delicious toasted the next day too. Tradition says they have been known to stay edible for a year and, if one is hung in the kitchen, it will protect the home - much as a Brigit's cross does. The equal-armed cross within a circle has always been a protective symbol, even before the Christian era. It is of course also inscribed onto every round soda loaf. We can interpret this as the life-giving sun, the seasons and the perpetual cycle of life, or as the resurrected ever-living Christ. The symbol is potent, whatever our beliefs and traditions.



*Hot cross buns, hot cross buns  
One a penny, two a penny,  
Hot cross buns.  
If you have no daughters,  
Give them to your sons,  
One a penny, two a penny,  
Hot cross buns.*

*Hot cross buns, hot cross buns  
If you haven't got a penny  
A ha'penny will do.  
If you haven't got a ha'penny,  
Well God bless you.*

# FOR THE SEASONS - FOOD

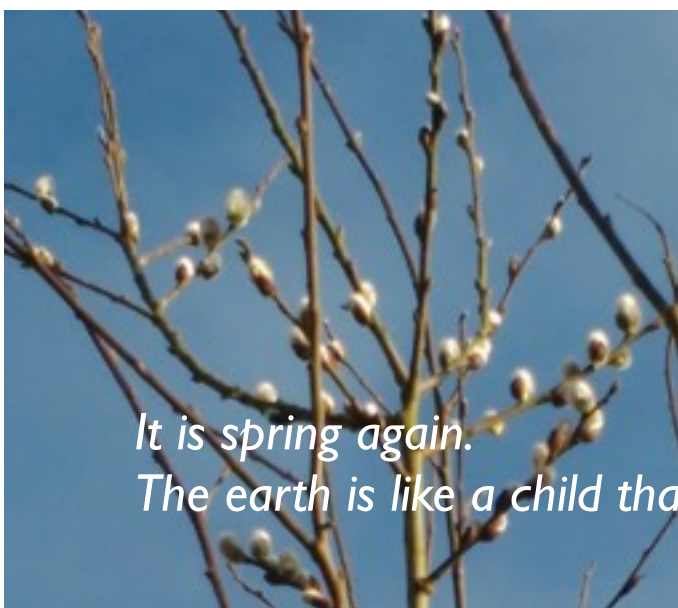
Recipe for millet dumplings – *secret recipe from Ulrike*



1. Pour a mug full of organic millet into your cooking pot, add hot water and bring it once to the boil, drain the water away and add 2 mugs almost full of warm water and a ¼ teaspoon of salt, some thyme and bring it to the boil. Reduce the flame to minimum, put a lid on the pot and simmer it for a while. (*Millet cooks faster than brown rice, but slower than white rice*)
2. While this is working, make an oat base for the dumplings. You boil as much water as you need for approx. 5 soup spoons full of oats with some vegetable stock, stir it well until it is a sort of sticky solid base.
3. Depending on the taste of the family you can add many herbs, garlic, grated vegetables, more salt into this mixture. Or even use only salt, stock and later herbs and cheese or no cheese.
4. When the millet is ready, leave it for a short while to cool down. Then you add this oat paste and with grated cheese and finely cut onions, parsley, and mustard. Mix all well together.
5. Put some baking parchment on your baking tray, and then with your **wet hands** form small dumplings. You can press them into any shape according to your fantasy. One can make lovely small ones for the children and bigger ones for adults, feel free to experiment. If you make them flatter, they bake crunchier, if they are a bit rounder and not too flat, they are softer inside. A bit of cheese on top and into the oven!
6. You bake these dumplings for approx. 35-45 Minutes at 170C.

### Serving suggestions:

They taste lovely with any green lettuce or salad, a yoghurt sauce with herb salt and pumpkin seed oil, steamed vegetables of your choice. I like to serve a carrot salad with them, so we have many colours on the plate. These dumplings taste fresh from the oven but also when they have cooled, they make a good healthy snack. Enjoy!



*It is spring again.  
The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.*



- Rilke

# FOR THE SEASONS - NATURE, VERSES, CRAFTS

## The Lamb

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.  
By the stream & o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing wooly bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice!

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb I'll tell thee!  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb:  
He is meek & he is mild,  
He became a little child:  
I a child & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.

Little Lamb God bless thee.  
Little Lamb God bless thee.

*William Blake,  
Songs of Innocence*

*In the heart of a seed buried deep so deep,  
A dear little plant lay fast asleep.  
"Wake!" said the Sunshine, "And creep to the  
light!"  
"Wake!" said the voice of the raindrops  
bright.  
And the little plant heard and it rose to see,  
What the wonderful outside world might be.*

*~ Kate Louise Brown*



## Knit a Little Lamb

Knitting a little lamb is something children often do in class one. Here is the basic pattern.

### You need:

White, cream or dark brown wool  
Pair of knitting needles  
Wool fleece or roving for stuffing

### To Knit:

Cast on 36 sts. Knit 8 rows (back legs).  
Cast off 8 sts on each side.  
There are 20 sts left. Knit 6 rows (body)  
Cast on 8 sts on each side for front legs (36 sts).  
Knit 8 rows.  
Cast off 12 sts on each side (12 sts). Knit 20 rows  
for neck and head. Cast off.

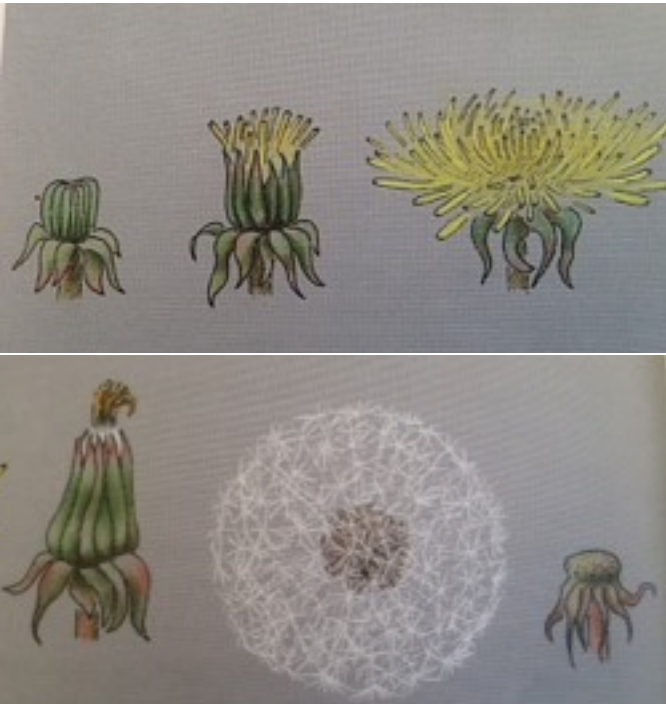
### Sewing up and stuffing:

Fold each leg in half lengthwise and stitch from bottom to top. Use a pencil to push stuffing into legs. Fold the lamb in half and sew from behind down under the stomach to the front to put the body together. Stuff the body with fleece or roving. To sew the head, fold it in half, and stuff the head, forming the ears as you sew. You can crochet a little tail and attach to the lamb's bottom.



# FOR THE SEASONS - NATURE

## Dandelion - *Taraxcum Officinale* by Doris Potter



Like primrose, also the dandelions are very early flowering this year. Already now in March we can see several species in sheltered locations, their flower heads opening to the spring sun. In a normal year the dandelion is the meadow flower of May, though we expect them this year to be in full bloom already in April.

At present you can find dandelions still in many stages. They need a 2 year growing cycle to mature. You can now find newly shooting leaves that are quite small and rounded, whilst the ones, that will flower this year, will have formed rosettes of ragged leaves with one or more hairy green flower buds in the centre, tight to the ground. At this stage a tuber like root is penetrating from the centre of the rosette, purposefully and deep into the earth.

If the dandelion germinated in autumn, it cannot flower in the following spring. It first needs a full year and a whole summer wherein it can orientate itself to the sunlit surrounding, by producing around itself continuously spreading green leaves. Over the winter the forces of the earth drew in the rosette including the flower buds and leaves covered with fine hair. When warmth and light of the spring greets the so developed plant, it draws the plant out towards the cosmos again. The light green latex carrying, hollow stem will stretch itself and carry the bud towards the sun and the cosmos.

The bud holds a composite flower, which means many flowers nestling together as if one. This is the highest developed flower structure in the plant kingdom. In the case of dandelion between 100 and 200 golden yellow florets combine in the the flower head, thus showing an earthly image of the sun. The single floret is tubular and opens into one long petal. Dandelion has a special relationship with the sun. You may observe it moving its head with the rhythm of the sun throughout the course of the day, or its opening and closing depending on rain or sun. In Greek mythology dandelions sprang up from the dust of the golden chariot when daily the sun god Apollo rushed across the heaven.

Most dandelions flower in a period of about 2 weeks and the greens shine with a yellow hue in the meadows and at the sides of country roads, making them look rich and juicy. They are visited by bees, and bumble bees, beetles, flies and butterflies.

Then once more the dandelion closes its head, at the tip brown yellow petals sticking out. For another 2 weeks it seems as if nothing is happening and then the flower head opens once more, creating magically the most delicate seed head, held by the flower base, that has bulged from the centre out; each seed connected to it; each seed with a silver propeller forming a semi-transparent globe with the other seeds - the well-loved dandelion clock that will disperse in the wind.

The milky sap is spread through the entire plant. There is nothing hard about the plant in developing itself, all along creating and dissolving qualities predominate. All hardening processes seem to be kept entirely for the very last stage and only for forming the seed.

When we make the beautiful life cycle of the dandelion conscious to ourselves, is it surprising, that dandelion has been used as a health bringing and medicinal plant for hundreds of years? It was one of the herbs most used by herbalists. There were people who could make themselves a living by digging up and drying dandelion roots up until the 1930s.

The whole plant can be eaten. It is especially beneficial to the digestive processes, in particular the liver and the gall. Leaves and roots are bitter in taste, the flower replaces the bitterness by a mild sweet taste.

Roots and leaves are used in Digestive Bitters but also in homeopathic dilutions. It can harmonise the whole digestive tract and can reduce blood sugar. They are also diuretic, and help kidney and bladder function. This can be helpful treating water retention connected with heart problems. As there are high levels of potassium, dandelion has not got the side

effects of chemically produced diuretics. On a soul level they are helping us with our will forces. In biodynamic agriculture the dandelion preparation (made from the flower heads and the bovine mesentery) are used for the compost. This enhances the silica process and its distribution in the earth.

## Things to do with dandelions:

**Salad:** Collect young leaves for salad.

If you would like them less bitter, put a flowerpot over them and blanch them.

Collect seeds and grow your own mild crop in a seed tray with compost.

Use the yellow petals for extra colour and flavour in your salad.

### Dandelion tincture

Collect and thoroughly wash the roots, dry them, grind them, put it in a sterilised jar and cover with high per cent alcohol, such as Brandy or Vodka, close and keep in a warm dark place, for about 4 weeks, shake every few days. Then fill into small bottles with a dropper. Use to help digestion, 5 drops in water, before meals,

### Dandelion honey

#### Ingredients

- 85 g of dandelion flowers (without any green!)
- 500 g of preserving sugar
- 500 ml of water
- 2 Tbsp of lemon acid

#### Instructions

1. Take of all the yellow flowerets without the green stems of the dandelions.
2. Cook the water in a pot with the preserving sugar.
3. Turn down the heat once the sugar is dissolved and add the dandelions.
4. Stir well and bring back to the boil.
5. Sieve it into a jug and pour it into clean jars.
6. Seal and let them cool completely.
7. Enjoy on some bread or with cheese!





# BOOKS

**Floris Books** are again offering a wonderful fundraising opportunity for schools and services. Order books from Floris at a special 50% discount, and for every €10 book you sell on to parents, your school makes €5.

Unfortunately, due to shipping issues following Brexit, Floris have temporarily suspended European orders on their website, but they are able to process European trade and school orders. So, ordering this way is a great way to help parents access these books as well as fundraise for your school.

If you need any further information or you would like to organise a Spring/Summer book fair for your service, please email Fiona at [nc.blathu@gmail.com](mailto:nc.blathu@gmail.com) or call 089 2411816.

Below we share some suggestions from Floris and you can view their full range of books at [www.florisbooks.co.uk](http://www.florisbooks.co.uk).

## New from Floris Books

**Pippa and Pelle and the Birthday Gifts**  
Daniela Drescher

**Sam and the Gnome's Red Hat**  
Admar Kwant

Coming this April  
**Home of the Wild**  
Louise Greig  
Júlia Moscardo

**Spring and Summer Activities Come Rain or Shine**  
Seasonal Crafts and Games for Children  
Edited by Stefanie Pfister

**Autumn and Winter Activities Come Rain or Shine**  
Seasonal Crafts and Games for Children  
Edited by Stefanie Pfister

**Hello Baby Animals Who Are You?**  
Loes Botman

**Spin a Scarf of Sunshine**  
Dawn Casey and Stila Lim

**Evie, the Strawberry Fairy and the Strawberry Surprise**  
Stefanie Dahle

**Spring and Summer Nature Activities for Waldorf Kindergartens**  
Irmgard Kutsch & Brigitte Walden

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 [www.florisbooks.co.uk](http://www.florisbooks.co.uk)



# ANTHROTRIBE

[www.soulscape.eu](http://www.soulscape.eu)

Training : Exploring Anthroposophy as a Foundation for Life  
Reflection, Spring 2021

When we initially advertised this course, we had hoped it could take place face to face. By the time we began however, it was clear that it would only be possible online. This required some courage and re-imagining on our part, but we decided that if people were interested in this journey, especially at this challenging point in time, we should respond and trust that what is meant to happen will happen. As a result of the decision to go ahead, we felt rewarded with joy at being able to facilitate a group of enthusiastic students to begin their journey towards an understanding of Anthroposophy, so that everyone can work with this living concept in their own way. Gale, Martin, and I are looking forward to continuing our course weekends over zoom, and especially to when we will be able to meet in person. - *Ulrike*

Below are some student reflections from the first weekend:

*“Strengthening myself. Interesting... where life leads us when we follow our intuition! And so I find myself back as a student of the foundation year “Exploring Anthroposophy”. But it does not feel like going back, it is the start of a new journey.*

*I am absolutely delighted, deep in my heart, to be on this path, looking forward to all that is to come, giving me more strength, hope and deeper understanding. Thank you, Ulrike and Martin, for running this special course.”*

- *Heike Stenzel.*

“Life is for Learning. Rudolf Steiner once said, ‘It is important that we discover an educational method where people learn to learn and go on learning their whole lives’. There was certainly no shortage of learning during the first weekend of the 2021 Exploring Anthroposophy course, facilitated by Ulrike Farnleitner and Martin Henry. The facilitators themselves did a remarkable job learning how to deliver such an in-depth experience over Zoom, while the participants were captivated by stories and absorbed in practices. Steiner had spoken about super-sensible knowledge - the knowing that is experienced beyond the senses. This new group of learners and teachers certainly utilised this part of us throughout the weekend, reaching through the ether to find a connection through our computer screens. We regretted not being able to meet in person, but we did ‘feel’ a bond as we set out on this year-long journey together. Thank goodness for this remarkable technology, this has allowed learning to continue despite the current restrictions.”

- *Fiona.*

*“An incredible first weekend of course content which has left me eagerly awaiting what is to follow! Martin and Ulrike are both exceptional presenters and facilitators. They helped to create real connections*

*between the group, even through Zoom. A wonderful introduction into the life and works of Rudolf Steiner which I would thoroughly recommend to anyone with an interest in this area - both from a personal development or career perspective.”*

- *Mandy*

“We are a tribe of explorers: twelve souls led by two “Soulscapeers”. Over a hundred years ago a group of Anthroposophy pioneers set their national differences aside and built the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland in the heart of a continent war. Today, amid a spiritual war and pandemic, our little tribe begins its journey to build our own symbolic temple, egregore in a time of distance and isolation, a place sculpted not from wood and concrete but from our feelings and experiences in the higher and material worlds.”

- *Amanda*

“Over a year and half ago, I did not know about Steiner Waldorf teachings nor did I know about anthroposophy. It is very interesting where the soul’s journey takes you. I am in awe, how Steiner cultivated the path that he did and his deep appreciation of our place in this world. **“If we do not believe within ourselves this deeply rooted feeling that there is something higher than ourselves, we shall never find the strength to evolve into something higher.”** **“Rudolf Steiner.** I am excited for the year ahead and the journey that is to come with likeminded people. The presentation of the course on zoom was a very enjoyable experience. The connection the internet has provided for us in these strange times is amazing.”

- *Clodagh.*

## BLÁTHÚ WELCOMES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OUR READERS

### AppleOak FibreWorks

Hello, my name is Jenny and I am the owner of AppleOak FibreWorks, a natural dyeing Company and Fibre Craft Supply shop, based in Raheen, Tuamgraney. Co. Clare. We are a little hidden in McLysaght's Estate, behind the glass houses, but are generally open to the public by appointment during non-covid times. I have been asked to write a little about our company and I do hope I can keep your attention right to the end!

Our main occupation is dyeing yarn, fabrics and fibres using roots, leaves, flowers, bark and insects. I know, the insect part sounds a bit questionable, but I refer to the cochineal louse, which has been used for dyeing stunning reds, pinks and purples for centuries and is also the only insect we use.

We dye our own fabrics and yarns, as well as custom dye for individuals, companies and designers. Sofa cushions seems to be one of our regularly occurring jobs, as well as ribbons, yarn, fabrics and clothing.

We are the only natural dyeing service in Ireland and most likely even further afield and we have put great effort into making the company as waste free and ecological as possible.

Our company is based on a circular economy model, which works hand in hand with nature. We only use non toxic mordants, low temperatures and all our dye and drinking water needs are met by using collected rainwater, filtered for drinking, of course. Once the dye has been extracted from the natural (organic if

possible) material, the dye stuff is composted in our wormery. The dye water, once used, is pumped through 3 settlement tanks, several planted gravel and sand filters and 2 further settlement tanks, before being drip fed into an evergreen woodland acting as the final and last biological filter in the chain. We contracted engineers and waste water specialist Ollan Herr to create this filtration system.

Dyeing is of course, the heart of our operation and we always have something exciting on the go. We are currently starting a new venture, called the eco.friendlyclothesline, by buying secondhand clothing and giving them new life by dyeing and printing them naturally. Next to our dyeing facilities, we also run a shop, where we sell all our own yarns and fabrics, but also many other fibre related craft supplies. We stock pure wool felt in several thicknesses and many colours, doll making supplies, natural dyeing kits, interesting yarns and fabrics like nettle yarn and natural dye supplies. We also give tours and workshops.

AppleOak FibreWorks is an ongoing project and there is always more to do. In the near future, we hope to change to solar panels and install a big heated water tank. We are also starting small pilot projects locally, looking into growing dye plants and using them fresh rather than dried. Our mission is to change the way people think about colour within the crafting, textiles and fashion industry – one step at a time.

Thank you for reading!

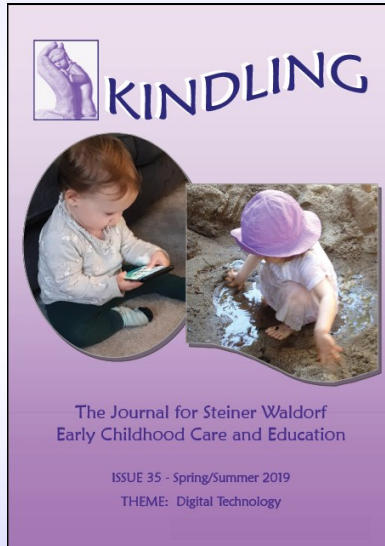


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# BLÁTHÚ

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Croílár, Mountshannon,  
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Tel: **089 2411816**

Email: [nc.blathu@gmail.com](mailto:nc.blathu@gmail.com)

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