

The Slow Work of God: Change in human consciousness or "metanoia"

The committed Christian Stephen McCarthy presents the following thoughts for discussion:

Over the last two millennia the human race has experienced a number of occasions of "metanoia" – unexpected positive changes in attitudes, behaviour and mores. Among areas concerned are: interpersonal violence, warfare, slavery, human rights, governance, and the status of women. They all originated in what used to be called Christendom, and can be attributed to the radical teaching of Jesus as it slowly penetrates across the whole world; under the continuing influence of the Holy Spirit. These metanoias are in fact 'the slow work of God'.

Can we now hope and work for a new "metanoia"? The existential crisis humanity now faces (climate change etc) results from our society's excessive materialism, consumerism and extreme inequality in wealth, which was condemned by Jesus and does not bring personal fulfilment. The theologian and scientist Teilhard de Chardin's vision of continuous human development gives hope that humanity can turn away from these false values altogether. This talk, which will be based on Stephen's forthcoming new book, develops some of the themes in his previous work: *God, Who on Earth are You? Mystery and meaning in Christianity today*, which was published in 2022.

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English

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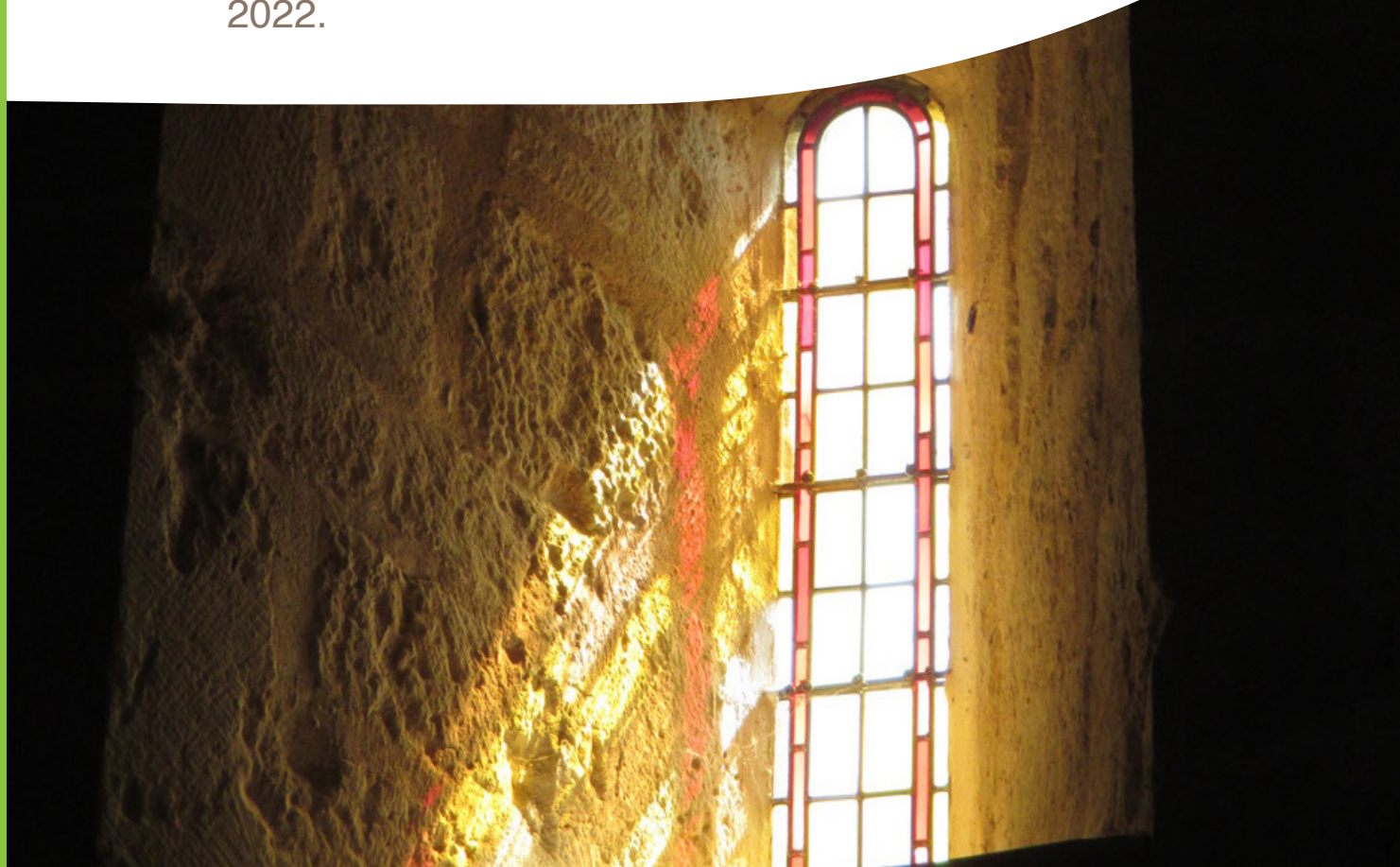
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Despite studying Physics at Oxford, Stephen spent his working life as a development economist – first for six years in Botswana and then at the EIB. After taking early retirement he trained and practised as a spiritual director. He has authored a couple of previous books relating to economic development and also edited *The Contagion of Jesus* by Sebastian Moore, which was shortlisted for a theology prize. He is currently working on a new book with the possible title: *The Slow Work of God*. Stephen and his wife have now lived in Luxembourg for more than forty years and took out Luxembourg citizenship several years ago.



COOPERATION

