

# **SPEAKING IN TONGUES and SPIRITUAL DIRECTION**

**by  
Christeen McKay**

**A Research Project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
Spiritual Directors' Formation Programme of Spiritual Growth Ministries**

## Introduction

The resurgence of the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal movement over the last century has been one of enormous growth and has touched most Christian communities throughout the world today. Historically, little emphasis has been placed on the various renewal movements that have constantly emerged in the life of the church over the last 2000 years even though people like Irenaeus, Tertullian, Justin Martyr and Origen have recorded the charismatic gifts including the gift of tongues, which is the focus of this study, as being common in the churches of their time. One scholar, Hyatt, argues that in their writings it appears that for at least the first three centuries AD the church followed the pattern of conversion and the receiving of charisms of the Holy Spirit including speaking in tongues.<sup>1</sup>

The manifestation of this gift is also referred to as Glossolalia, defined in the English Oxford Dictionary as: The phenomenon of (apparently) speaking in an unknown language, especially in religious worship. From: Greek glossa 'language, tongues' and lalia 'speech.'

Integration of the outward manifestations of the charismata into the traditional Christian communities has at times been the cause of some discomfort. C.S. Lewis in his essay "Transposition" describes glossolalia as a "stumbling block" for himself and, "an embarrassing phenomenon" while at the same time acknowledging this gift as legitimate in that Paul himself, "spoke in tongues more than anyone else."<sup>2</sup> Some linguists argue that it is not a supernatural event but a type of speech that can be learned and with practice become automatic.<sup>3</sup> Many have asked whether this gift is from God, from the human psyche, from demons or whether it occurs in the form of a trance or in a normal state.

A common criticism of the charismatic renewal in general is its frequent emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit, in particular speaking in tongues, and less on the fruit of the Spirit. For example, Paul Hinnebusch discusses a tendency for some groups in this movement to lack a universal Christian viewpoint expecting "my personal saviour" to make my life "a bed of roses" with the expectation that because "He bore our infirmities" I have nothing to suffer.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, Sheets<sup>5</sup> points out the danger of getting lost in the gift of speaking in tongues and losing sight of the fullness of life in Christ and its outworkings.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hyatt, E.L. "2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity." (Charisma House, 2002). P23

<sup>2</sup> Lewis, C.S. "Transposition and other Addresses," Gutenberg Canada ebook: London (Geoffrey Books, 1949), Kindle Edition.

<sup>3</sup> Polythress Vern. "Linguistic and Sociological Analyses of Modern Tongues-Speaking: Their Contributions and Limitations," Westminster Theological Journal 42/2 (1980) pp.367-388.

<sup>4</sup> Hinnebusch, Paul, O.P. "Contemplation is for all." In, *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986) pp.32-34

In an essay by Thomas Keating he describes some groups within the Charismatic Renewal movement manifesting a fundamentalist orientation which, while this movement has reawakened the dynamic activity of the Spirit, has placed an emphasis in particular on the gift of tongues possibly at the expense of, “integrating the knowledge and experience of each successive age into its inherited body of doctrine and practice.”<sup>6</sup>

This study does not address questions around the authenticity of this gift but will explore its potential subjectively as a religious experience in terms of the role it plays in the prayer life of the recipient and whether or not it enhances their relationship and communion with God. Questions which may be of interest for spiritual direction have been listed are attached, (Appendix A).

### **Personal Context**

My interest in this topic dates back forty years when in my late twenties I was searching for an aspect of the Creator that I could tangibly ‘know’. I had no formal religious training and was not attracted to Christianity. However, in my searching I was introduced to an evangelical church community which operated the gifts of the Spirit including speaking in tongues and taught that these gifts were available for all. I found here what I had been looking for. My journey since then has been long and twisting but one of the main threads running throughout has been the gift of speaking in tongues. As a form of prayer, above all else it gave me the sense of being connected to Infinite Good. Exercising this gift has perhaps lessened over the years particularly as my life has simplified and as I have begun to practise contemplative prayer, however, speaking in tongues has remained an anchor and a gift I deeply treasure. It is also a way of praying that never ceases to give me a sense of awe and humility at the mysterious ways in which God operates from within.

In my studies for training in spiritual direction the emphasis has been on contemplative prayer and although encouragement is given to be inclusive of all forms of prayer there has been little mention of speaking in tongues as a pathway into God’s presence. Consequently, I wondered if the gift of tongues was as relevant to spiritual direction and to directees as it has been for myself in journeying toward union with God.

I would like to acknowledge that this small study can in no way be considered definitive but may be useful anecdotally and may, in fact, reflect the experience of many Christians worshipping within the culture of the New Zealand’s diverse Christian community.

---

<sup>5</sup> Sheets, John. “Graced-Life as Contemplative.” In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986). P23, 53

<sup>6</sup> Keating, Thomas. “Charismatic Renewal and Contemplation.” In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*. (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986). Pp27-29

### **Neurological Study: Newberg (2006)**

A study was completed by Newberg and his colleagues in 2006<sup>7</sup> which explored the phenomenon of speaking in tongues neurologically. The brain activity of two groups of five women randomly selected from a charismatic church community in Philadelphia was compared with a control group. In one group the women spoke in tongues while the other group sang gospel songs. Significant differences between the two groups were noted. Firstly, in the group who spoke in tongues during the brain scan there was a significant decrease in pre-frontal cortex activity. This is the part of the brain which gives us a sense of being control and which consciously directs intentional thought. Secondly there was increased activity in the Parietal region of the brain. Among other things, this area uses sensory information to create a sense of self in relation to the world/other.

These differences in brain activity support the subjective experience reported by the women from the tongue speaking group which was that speaking in tongues involves a relinquishing of control (decrease in frontal activity) while increasing an experience of the self in relationship to another, in this case, to God (increase in Parietal activity).

Also reported was a third finding that the brain activity while speaking in tongues was the opposite of that seen in those in a meditative state. When meditating on a sacred object there is an increase in Frontal Lobe activity while the Parietal Lobe activity diminishes reflecting an increase in controlled, conscious focusing in the meditative state with a reduction in the sense of self in relationship to another.

### **Fieldwork: Coakley 2013**

Theologian, Sarah Coakley carried out qualitative fieldwork study sampling two groups operating within the Anglican community in London and although the purpose of her study was focused on people's relationship with the Persons of the Trinity, she also commented on findings relevant to this study<sup>8</sup>. Twelve interviewees came from a charismatic renewal group in the Anglican congregation and six from a breakaway fellowship group. Her interview questions included the impact of each person's initial encounter with renewal, including their experience of praying in tongues.

Coakley found that there was almost no difference between the groups in terms of the initial "experience" of the Spirit, the continuing effects of regular prayer "in the Spirit" and answers to her question, "How has your prayer changed since you encountered renewal?"

---

<sup>7</sup> Newberg et al, "The Measurement of Cerebral Blood Flow During Glossolalia." J of Psychiatric Research: Neuroimaging, Nov 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Coakley, S. "God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay on the Trinity." (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013). pp.169 – 185

The responses were similar to those given in this current study and were typified by positive emotional states and feelings of praise and exaltation. “There was a sense of new excitement,” and, “It was so delightful to find that it was acceptable to be openly enthusiastic about God.”<sup>9</sup> In terms of the actual experience of the Spirit Coakley described the informants typical responses reflecting a two-way relationship in which there was the sense of, “God (the Holy Spirit) already cooperating in their prayer, energizing it from within, and no less also responding in it, alluring them again, inviting them into a continuing adventure.”<sup>10</sup> She concluded that with tongues came a sense of this prayer being a uniting thread in life so that prayer became the “wellspring of all activities.”<sup>11</sup>

Although the Anglican charismatics at St Matthew’s had almost ceased to use tongues in public worship, they mostly kept their tongue-speaking as a private “love language to God.”<sup>12</sup> Whereas the Fellowship group continued to encourage corporate praise in tongues as well as privately. Of interest was the way the use of tongues for this second group converged spontaneously with themes from the contemplative Christian traditions with some voicing the thought that tongues naturally lead to silence and intense stillness. Also expressed was the way in which speaking in tongues helped in, “getting out of the way”<sup>13</sup> so that the Spirit could act directly. As observed above, in her commentary Coakley noted how little has been made of the phenomenon of tongues throughout the Christian tradition from the desert fathers, Teresa of Avila and the various renewal movements throughout the ages and that the charismatic gifts have mostly been assimilated into the contemplative (or mystic) mode.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Present Study**

For this study forty questionnaires were sent by email to both practising Spiritual Directors and those in training in New Zealand inviting the participation of those who had experienced speaking in tongues. Also included were five questionnaires sent to people not currently in spiritual direction but who had received this gift of the Spirit in the past. In total twenty-four questionnaires were completed and returned. All the responses from Questions 5 – 15 have been recorded verbatim, with a few exceptions to avoid undue repetition or to omit possible identifying factors (Appendix B).

---

<sup>9</sup> Coakley, S., “God, Sexuality and the Self” P169

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, P169

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, P70

<sup>12</sup> Coakley, S. “God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay on the Trinity.” (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013), P172

<sup>13</sup> Coakley, S. “God, Sexuality, and the Self:” P173

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, P174

## Summary of Results

### Questions 1 – 4

These questions gathered information on: gender, age, church affiliations, frequency of involvement in a Christian community, and an understanding of and engagement in Contemplative Prayer.

Twenty of the participants were female and four were male. Ages ranged from 27 to 78yrs with the majority of respondents being between the ages of 50 to 70yrs. Church affiliations were spread across different streams of Christianity:

Baptist (4)

Presbyterian, (3)

Interdenominational (3)

Catholic, (1)

Charismatic/Pentecostal (5),

Anglican (2)

Evangelical (6)

The list of church groups identified above is not exhaustive as several respondents described their church community in combinations. For example:

Presbyterian/Contemplative, Evangelical Progressive, non-affiliated/contemplative and Pentecostal/contemplative. Twenty of the respondents described themselves as attending services regularly and four with irregular or non-attendance. For only five respondents was contemplative prayer not part of their prayer practice. This was not a surprise because out of the population for this study nineteen of the twenty-four respondents were either spiritual directors and/or attending spiritual direction. All participants except two expressed an understanding of contemplative prayer typified by the following example:

*It's prayer in stillness, centering on God and His presence in me, through silence or use of a sacred word or image.*

**Question 5. At what stage in your faith journey did you first experience speaking in tongues?**

**And:**

**Question 6. In what context did this experience occur? Please briefly describe the teaching you received at the time to help you understand this gift of the Spirit?**

By far the majority of respondents had experienced the reception of the gift of tongues at an early stage of their Christian journey and, with a few exceptions, had been taught an understanding from Scripture contextualising this gift. Only one person said they had had no teaching. For most people this event occurred in the context of a small group setting or service in which speaking in tongues was common practice. Three people described the appearance of this gift during or after reading a book describing gifts of the Spirit.

**Question 7. Has this understanding changed and if so, in what way?**

For the majority of respondents, their understanding of the gift of tongues had changed very little over time but there was a tendency for a change to have occurred in terms of the application and the emphasis placed of this gift.

*Yes, I would now not see it in such a “legalistic” way – it’s a gift that the Spirit gives but is not at all tied to salvation or any particular “hierarchy” of Christianity.*

And:

*My main understanding that has changed in regarding to tongues has been that it is only one of the spiritual gifts. Another church I attended placed a huge amount of importance on speaking in tongues, so much so that people felt left out, unworthy or not good enough if they had not “received” it. I now contextualise it as one of the many possible gifts, and not the “best” spiritual gift, and not possessing it does not make you less of a Christian or affect your salvation.*

**Question 8. In what way does or did praying in tongues impact your relationship with God and your faith journey in general?**

For the majority of people the impact had been significant in a positive way and was described as being life changing and deepening their relationship with God. Typical was an experience of moving the recipient into greater connection with God in a direct manner and so making their sense of the presence of God more real.

*Completely changed my relationship with God to being more open to God’s presence and personal love for me, more open to using the other charismatic gifts, led me into ministry in ways that I never envisaged, (i.e. leadership). It has had and still has a significant impact on me, and I view it as a very valuable part of my spiritual walk with God.*

*It got me beyond a rational understanding, trusting the Spirit’s leading and impartation.*

*A deeper connection with God and strengthen my personal experience of God.*

.

**Question 9: What role has speaking in tongues played in your prayer life? Has this changed up to the present time and if so in what way?**

The following comments were typical of the responses to this question suggesting multiple aspects and meaning for this type of prayer:

I pray in tongues when:

*I’m really upset/despairing, or, Joyful/ praising God.*

*As a way of bypassing my own thought*

*When interceding for someone else/when I want to pray but don’t know what to pray.*

*Wanting to connect/reminding myself of God’s Presence.*

*When there are no words of my own.*

*Warding off darkness.*

*I think when I have felt emotionally desperate and haven't had the words but wanted to express something praying in tongues has felt like a release and hope and a way of expressing what's felt too hard to say.*

Several people described a trend in which they had prayed a lot in tongues initially and gradually moved toward exercising the gift less frequently and more toward being silent before God. However, for most of the respondents this gift had remained an important aspect of their prayer life over time.

*It was something I engaged in a lot when I was younger, and then not much at all for a long time. I prayed in tongues in my personal prayer and also in groups, where others did or sometimes in church services. In those circles, it was an expected thing. After quite a few years of not engaging with it much, I think I have found myself coming back to it again over the last 5 or 6 years as another 'tool' in my prayer box, rather than the main tool, and as something I use when I feel like I have no idea how to pray.*

*Praying in the Spirit is something I do daily. It builds my faith. It is a constant reminder of the power of God in my life. This has not changed, only deepened my experience with God.*

**Question 10. Do you or have you experienced a felt sense of the presence of God when exercising this gift?**

The response to this question for the majority of respondents was YES with only two not aware of any particular sense of the Other.

**Question 11. If so, can you describe in what way you experience or have experienced this felt sense?**

Many described a sense of warmth and presence.

*Goosebumps, warmth.*

*Probably comfort and peace. Also, a conduit of release when I am feeling intense emotions, usually upset in nature. It's like I can talk to God without worrying about what I am saying.*

*A sense of nearness, timelessness and "weight".*

*Experienced being held in love beyond words and warmth in my face.*

*A deep drawing towards God, feel more connected.*

Another common thread was that of quietening the busyness of life and stilling one's mind: *The beauty of the love poetry deeply impacts me and encourages me to believe that when I lift my heart in tongues I am expressing a love unfiltered by the restraints of my mind.*

**Question 12. In what ways, if at all, does the practice of speaking in tongues feature in your contemplative practice?**

At least half of the respondents said that this gift did not feature in their contemplative practice which possibly reflected the differences between these two types of prayer. Responses to Question 14 suggests the two types of prayer are more complementary than compatible.

**Question 13. Have there been particular times in your life when praying in tongues has been important to you or played a role in your faith journey?**

Typically, the respondents described praying in tongues at times when experiencing feelings of praise or despair, when they had no words to express feelings or desires and not knowing what to say or how to pray, and when warding off darkness.

*It's a gift that I value, particularly as a vehicle for expressing praise and worship in song, which often elicits feelings of joy. And at times when I'm particularly aware of the deep river of joy in my soul I'll pray or sing my thanks and praise for it in tongues. I've also prayed in tongues during times of concern for others, personal anguish, grief and yes, desperation – although the full expression of emotion, (both the comfortable and uncomfortable) requires much more than prayer in tongues!*

*At particular times when I have not had the words to say to God in English, or when I have been overwhelmed or burdened it has given me the ability to feel connected and reassured that God hears me no matter what. Also in times of joy or thanksgiving I now I am offering perfect prayer in the Spirit that is not tainted or interfered with my own natural understanding or agenda.*

**Question 14. Do you see praying in tongues as compatible or incompatible with Contemplative Prayer?**

In terms of perceived compatibility only two respondents saw them as incompatible. Most saw them as compatible in the sense that they were both ways of setting aside one's own agenda to communicate with God and many described these two different ways of praying as being complementary.

*The two seem to fit together quite naturally. I can be going about my day enjoying some aspect of God's creation which leads me to praise God and I sometimes do that through song and sometimes by speaking or praising in tongues. My personal prayer time each day doesn't always include tongues as it has become more "quiet" but there are times I feel the urge to use the gift of tongues to praise or intercession.*

*Well, I have always thought centering prayer was silent so not sure how the two marry actually although both seem to bypass the mind and conscious thought.*

*Definitely compatible. I now see myself as a “contemplative charismatic”. Each of us is unique and our relationship with God is unique and I believe that we cannot put ourselves into just one particular stream of prayer. God moves us on in our journey but I believe that we do not need to leave any aspect completely behind if we find it nourishes us spiritually.*

*It mostly hasn't until recently. At a recent retreat I found myself inwardly rebelling at the focus on body posture and other methods of stilling myself – as if I remembered that there was a more direct path I had experienced previously. Since then I often “edify myself” in tongues and that helps to meet with God in the quiet.*

**Question 15. Please add any of your own comments which have not been covered by the above questions.**

The following were typical of the responses given and emphasised the importance of this form of prayer for a number of the participants.

*I am glad that you have raised this question as I had not been integrating this significant part of my prayer development into my contemplative prayer practices. I can imagine tongues will not be central to contemplative prayer times but important in terms of maintaining and abiding in Christ.*

*I sadly often forget about this amazing gift of the Spirit and don't use it as much as I would like. This survey is a good reminder to use it more in my contemplative prayer life.*

*My only comment is that I wouldn't want to replace prayer in the Spirit with just contemplative prayer. God has gone to amazing lengths to provide for us a prayer language that cannot be tainted or interfered with by our fleshly minds. It enables us to pray in a way that both builds us up and gives us direct, miraculous communication with Him. He has laid out in 1 Cor 1, 13 and 14 how to operate it both in the church (as a sign for unbelievers: 1 Cor 14 v22) and in our own private lives so it was meant to be an important part of the Christian walk 1 Cor 14 v 2,4,18,22, in fact the whole chapter explains the importance of tongues perfectly).*

## **DISCUSSION**

From the responses given in this study, there was some evidence of discomfort around the way the gift of tongues manifests and the emphasis placed on this phenomenon within some communities. For example:

*My issue is that tongues has been made such a huge deal by charismatics... I would love to see an emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit altogether. I guess tongues is just very visible/noticeable.*

However, it was clear that praying in tongues had remained a valuable religious experience treasured by most of the respondents. The majority of answers indicated that this form of prayer was a way of deepening their connection with the Spirit of God.

In terms of the compatibility of contemplative prayer and prayer in tongues, there were responses indicating some integration of these two apparently different ways of praying. Although in appearance the two forms are very different some similarities were identified in the responses given. For example, in both there was a by-passing of the intellect and a letting go of one's own agenda to give one's self over to the movement of the Spirit within. Also indicated, was that both prayer paths can lead to a deep stillness and awareness of simply being in God.

There is also support for the incorporation and integration of both types of prayer in literature. Speaking in tongues which is understood as a kataphatic form of prayer, expressive in its vocal form and sometimes accompanied by physical actions and movements is very different from the apophatic way of stillness and silence associated with contemplation. As a way of praying, it tends to be emotionally expressive as opposed to cultivating quiet attentiveness. However, Richard Rohr, in describing the kataphatic way or via positiva and the apophatic or via negative, says, "I see this energy between – the healthy interplay between kataphatic and apophatic – as where the Spirit shows up to play."<sup>15</sup> Ernest Larken<sup>16</sup> views charismatic and contemplative prayer as complementary and as requiring a similar attitude of heart describing them as both demanding a surrender of the familiar and a trust of God which invites "an opening up to God and a release to Him of spiritual faculties beyond the rational."

Ensley points out that there have been many charismatic renewals throughout the 2000 year old history of the church and almost always they have been part of a deeper contemplative renewal. He subscribes to a blending of both forms of prayer saying that a 'charismatic-contemplative' prayer meeting can be a profound experience.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Rohr, Richard. "The Divine Dance: The Trinity and Your Transformation." Kindle 2950, (Whitaker House, CAC.org, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> Larken, Ernest. "The Charismatic Renewal and Forms of Contemplation." In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*. (Paulist Press, New Jersey.) 1986. P70

<sup>17</sup> Ensley, Eddie. "Contemplation – The Challenge and the Possibility" In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986). P. 80

In Coakley's study it was found that in the group operating within St Matthews, there was some dawning recognition of the convergence of contemplative and charismatic spiritualities.<sup>18</sup>

Keating<sup>19</sup> suggests that when speaking in tongues there is no understanding of the words being said but that there is a sense of praying or praising God and that such a simple and loving attention to God is a beginning of contemplative prayer. He also suggests that exercising this gift alongside reading of Scripture normally, "leads to a growing attraction for interior silence." He points out the need for the gifts of the spirit to be operated with detachment and for the prayer to not be taking pride in themselves but remain humble.

As a spiritual director, given the comments above and many of the responses received in this study, a tendency to overlook tongues as purely an emotional/psychological manifestation or as a "lesser" gift compared to the contemplative path may be a disservice to directees. An essential element of spiritual direction is for the spiritual director to help a directee notice religious experience, encourage the savouring of that experience and to attend to their own response to this movement of the Spirit. Attending to this way of praying may be an opportunity to encourage discernment in the directee around the fruit of this gift in their external lives. As such, I believe the gift of tongues is to be treasured as a religious experience equally alongside the many other forms of prayer and experiencing of God's presence. As one of the many stepping stones on the journey toward union with God, prayer in tongues deserves to be noticed and attended to with the sensitivity and reverence due to all God given gifts.

---

<sup>18</sup> Coakley, Sarah. "God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay on the Trinity." (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013). P 181

<sup>19</sup> Keating, Thomas. "Charismatic Renewal and Contemplation" In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*. (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986). P 31

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Coakley, Sarah. "God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay on the Trinity." (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013).
- Ensley, Eddie. "Contemplation – The Challenge and the Possibility" In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986).
- Hinnebusch, Paul. "Contemplation is for all." In, *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986).
- Hyatt, Eddie. "2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity." (Charisma House, Florida, 2002).
- Keating, Thomas. "Charismatic Renewal and Contemplation." In: *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986).
- Larkin, Ernest. "The Charismatic Renewal and Forms of Contemplation." In: *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986).
- Lewis, C S. *Transposition and other Addresses*, Gutenberg Canada ebook: London: Geoffrey Books, 1949
- Moltmann, Jurgen. "The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation." (First Fortress Press, USA, 2001).
- Newberg, A. and colleagues. "The Measurement of Cerebral Blood Flow During Glossolalia." In *Journal of Psychiatric Research: Neuroimaging*. ( Nov 2006).
- O'Brien J.A., *The Ministry of Spiritual Direction, Essay in Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986)
- Polythress Vern. "Linguistic and Sociological Analyses of Modern Tongues-Speaking: Their Contributions and Limitations," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 42/2 (1980). 367-388
- Rohr, Richard. "The Divine Dance: The Trinity and Your Transformation." CAC.org, Whitaker House, 2016
- Sheets, John. "Graced-Life as Contemplative." In *Contemplation and the Charismatic Renewal*, (Paulist Press, New Jersey, 1986).

## Appendix A

### Possible Questions for a Spiritual Direction Conversation

- Has speaking in tongues ever been part of your prayer life?
- How do you understand the gift of speaking in tongues?
- What shaped/shapes your understanding of what is happening when you speak in an unknown tongue?
- What does it mean to you personally?
- What have you experienced while praying in tongues?
- How do you feel when you pray in this way?
- What does it feel like to have God move in you in this way?
- What is it like to stay with this felt sense of the presence of the Infinite One?
- What does the experience of using this gifted language mean to you in your relationship with God?
- Does this differ from time to time?  
(For example: for myself the role of exercising this gift has shifted from being a faith building way of praying, especially in times of anxiety or grief and has now become more a prayer of praise which emerges in times of thanksgiving).
- What do you most treasure about speaking in tongues?
- What might it be like to contemplate the extraordinariness of this gift?
- Is there some way you would like to further incorporate speaking in tongues into your prayer life?
- Is there anything about speaking in tongues that worries you?

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

#### **No 5: At what stage in your faith journey did you first experience speaking in tongues?**

Within the first day of decided to "become a Christian"

At the point of conversion during baptism.

As a teenager at the time I was attending a Pentecostal church.

In my late 20's during the time of the Charismatic renewal.

30 years ago when I came to a deeper, more personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Two days after my salvation experience, 45 years ago!

During the charismatic Anglican movement in the 60's when I first became a Christian.

At an Aglow conference a few years after becoming a Christian.

A few weeks after my life-changing encounter with Jesus the risen Lord who loved me.

In the 70's at a Life in the Spirit seminar.

As a new Christian in the Charismatic renewal days.

At the beginning of my journey.

Late in my faith journey, a few years ago.

Very early on: within 6 months of understanding Jesus a little.

At about 19 I was "saved" at an early stage of Christianity.

When I was young as part of the culture and expectation from the church and family.

A few months after I recommitted my life to Jesus in my early 20's.

In the early stages, late in my teens/early 20s

About 6 weeks after I really gave my life to God around the age of 19

When I was worshipping the Lord alone.

Early on, around 20 years ago.

When I was around 14 or 15, praying with a group at youth camp

**No 6: In what context did this experience occur? Please briefly describe the teaching you received at the time to help you understand this gift of the Spirit.**

When the Pastor laid hands on me and prayed for me to be baptised in the Spirit, my mind sort of went blank and when I came back I was speaking in tongues. Teaching encompassed gifts of the Spirit which included speaking in tongues.

I was on my own and prayed for the gift of speaking in tongues. I'd read several books about it.

The teaching centered around surrendering to Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour. God's personal love for me, opening to the leading of the Holy Spirit in my life and willingness to receive and use charismatic gifts.

The book I was reading at the time taught that the gift of tongues is given to enable believers to pray directly to God without using their mind (intellect) that when a person prays in tongues they're speaking mysteries of God, and in doing so the spirit of the pray-er is edified. Some taught that speaking in tongues was proof that you'd been filled with Holy Spirit, the implication being that if you didn't speak in tongues you didn't have Holy Spirit. I didn't and don't subscribe to that view.

A friend briefly described that it was a Spiritual gift.

We were taught it was a gift to build intimacy with God, especially to be built up and sensitive to the directing of the Holy Spirit, and as a means to overcome the evil. There was a sense that it was for everyone.

It was proof of the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and enabled direct communication with God.

I had no teaching as such to understand, I only knew that this was language unique to myself that gave me a direct line of communicating with God/Jesus. I had heard my mother and other people in the church speaking in it..... so I didn't question its validity.

Thought it was a "second experience" to conversion.

It was at an Apostolic church (Pentecostal.) It was a common experience there and most teaching was seeing and experiencing the gift plus some teaching in small groups/person to person.

I was reading a book at the time on prayer including tongues and it was in this time that I experienced it. I was surprised as I thought it would be something that would descend on me but it seems to have come from within. This gift seems to be for my own benefit and my very personal relationship with God. I also believe it releases kingdom things either within me or the broader kingdom.

In a home group where the teaching was that it was a sign of your salvation

Speaking in tongues was a gradual process for me. .... It was pretty casual in the end. I did an introduction to Christianity course at church and this covered everything from Baptism to speaking in tongues and the fundamentals of Christianity that they believe in and followed as a church.

While I was part of an Apostolic church community .....like salvation part 2 .....that was essential to be a serious follower of God. It was presented as a normal thing to be operating in / seeking after, and if you didn't have it, you could easily feel in some way inferior.

In a discipleship training school we were taught that the gift of speaking in tongues was for every believer, for the edification of our Spirit. It was presented as a way for our spirit to communicate directly to God, without the need for our own language to get in the way. .... As I allowed myself to stop overthinking what it was itself I began to speak out words that had no earthly meaning at all to me. With time, the language grew and I still use it regularly today.

When I was worshipping the Lord alone. The AOG taught on the gifts of the Spirit and tongues is one of them.

I attended a "Life in the Spirit" seminar in a local church that included teaching and opportunity to receive the infilling of the Spirit and release in gift of speaking in tongues.

### **7.Has this understanding changed and if so, in what way?**

Seven participants responded with no or not really.

No not really. I still see it as one of the gifts of the Spirit and value it in my life.....I have changed in that I don't "judge" people if they do not speak in tongues. Before I thought it was sort of like a rite of "spiritual" passage that all should aim to go through. Now, not so much.

I've always thought it was a wonderful way to be able to pray because you don't have to think of the words, just pray.

The understanding of this has not changed. I still meet with a prayer partner or family and use the gift of tongues sometimes. I also still use it in my prayer and worship as I feel led or need to.

I have probably deepened that understanding with reading and experience.

Not really. I think it's more a case of the gift being neglected. I've also been uncomfortable with excessive focus on the 'gifts of the Spirit' and believe the primary focus needs to be loving God and loving our neighbour.

Developed into contemplative and meditation as well.

I don't think it has changed except that I've been taught Scriptures which refer to it as edifying both myself and the church and as a way of "building myself up", however, I don't actually know what that means except that it will make me stronger in my faith. However, I now don't believe in that as the purpose that I wish to pursue because it seems to go against what I feel about having a relationship with God.

Yes, I believe we receive the fullness of the HS at conversion. However there still needs to be some teaching around the receiving and experiencing of the gifts of the Spirit.

Not really, although I think that God can give this gift to anyone upon asking.

Yes

It was not life changing.

My main understanding that has changed in regarding to tongues has been that it is only one of the spiritual gifts. Another church I attended placed a huge amount of importance on speaking in tongues, so much so that people felt left out, unworthy or not good enough if they had not “received” it. I now contextualise it as one of the many possible gifts, and not the “best” spiritual gift, and not possessing it does not make you less of a Christian or effect your salvation.

Yes, I would now not see it in such a “legalistic” way – it’s a gift that the Spirit gives but is not at all tied to salvation or any particular ‘hierarchy’ of Christianity.

In a broad way this understanding has changed very little, but my personal application has changed slightly. I now try to spend more time focusing on the words that I am speaking, and asking God what it means to Him and how I should respond. I seek the HS to communicate with me during these times. So that I do not simply let my tongue roll but look for the outcome of the time.

I struggle to know if speaking in tongues is THE sign of the HS or A sign. I know there are many signs of the spirit and tongues is one of them, however, it seems that everyone in the Bible who is filled with the Spirit speaks in tongues. I haven’t fully reconciled this understanding and I’m not sure where I stand. I know that I feel my prayer is most powerful when I pray in tongues and I rely on the word that says my tongue is praying my deepest spiritual needs rather than my surface wants and desires.

### **8. In what way does or did praying in tongues impact your relationship with God and your faith journey in general?**

I think I will pray in tongues when I am really upset. It seems to help/comfort me. Also possibly when I want to bypass my brain/thinking in my prayer process. Relieves the responsibility of me trying to articulate things with God but still being able to connect and communicate.

It’s being able to entrust God with something or someone when I have no idea how to pray.

Completely changed my relationship with God to being more open to God’s Presence and personal love for me, more open to using the other charismatic gifts, led me into ministry in ways that I never envisaged, (i.e. leadership). It has had and still has a significant impact on me, and I view it as a very valuable part of my spiritual walk with God

I frequently pray in tongues “on the fly” – as I’m going about daily life. In doing so I’m turning my heart towards God in thanks and praise and also reminding myself that God is right here with me in whatever it is I’m doing.

A great deal in the past. Not so much now.

More confidence in my faith and boldness in all types of prayer.

It has been very significant for me during intercessory prayer, and when I have experienced spiritual opposition and confusion. I think it has kept me from doubt and struggle around God’s existence.

Gave me greater understanding of Scripture and led to ordination.

It gave me a base in which to refer to in later years as a form of confirmation that God was real. At the time, I had an amazing physical experience which is difficult to explain but which started at the

top of my head and went through my body. As though the Spirit of God was filling up every single part of me.

At the time, it seems a significant sign of receiving God's immediate power for daily life.

Very "useful" as a means to pray/intercede and with which to praise Him. I have used it almost daily, often in song or prayer, sometimes in formal prayer times, but most usually as I go throughout the day. Sometimes there is a sense of meeting with God, but not always.

Usually when faced with or hear about difficult situations I find myself praying in tongues. When I don't know how to pray it gives me utterance. I think it probably increases my faith, and helps keep me connected to God. When we are in prayer ministry with someone I will often pray in tongues quietly as another is doing more of the ministering work.

Wonderfully, felt mystical right from the start and something beyond myself.

As I have become older and built a relationship with Jesus it has helped me when I have not known what to say and just to be able to communicate with Jesus without using words.

It makes me feel closer to Him and connects me to Him. I find real reassurance in praying in tongues, especially in situations where I had to fully rely on God and was unsure of what would happen to me. It gives me words to speak and pray to Him when I have none of my own.

When I was younger, it was an energising thing in my relationship with God – it helped me feel closer and more connected more 'in touch'. Almost like it was a 'faster track' to God.

Speaking in tongues is precious to me for many reasons. When I set aside a specific time to speak in tongues during a personal prayer time with God, I always come away from it feeling encouraged and filled up. During worship, I find myself often praying in tongues between songs, seeking to stay connected with the Spirit of worship that is being offered to God at that moment in time. I feel closer to God for having this gift in my life.

A deeper connection with God and strengthen my personal experience of God.

It got me beyond a rational understanding, trusting the Spirit's leading and impartation.

Probably like lots of Christians I sometimes wrestle with unbelief but I can never disprove the presence of speaking in tongues in my life. I fully believe that it is a gift from God for me and so while I can continue to pray, then God must continue to be real.

**9. What role has speaking in tongues played in your prayer life? Has this changed up to the present time and if so, in what way?**

When I went to a Pentecostal church speaking in tongues was encouraged within the service and when praying with/for people. Also, we were encouraged to pray in tongues when we had our own prayer time. The idea that when we didn't know what to pray for the Spirit of God could do it for us and through us through speaking in tongues. I don't pray in tongues much at all now. However, even by just doing this survey it is making me question why this is and maybe it is a time to come back to a more regular practice of speaking in tongues.

I've prayed in tongues when I've had no idea how or what to pray, entrusting to God.

Initially it was very important and I spoke in tongues regularly in my prayer time or when praying for others. Although I still use the gift it is not so often partly because I do not have much regular contact with a charismatic group and partly because my prayer has evolved into being more quiet.

In times of deep distress or in situations when I don't know what to pray, praying in tongues enables me to pour out my heart to God. At other times, when I've felt my prayers were ineffectual, praying in tongues has been a comfort since the Holy Spirit always knows how to pray effectively.

Generally when I begin intercessory prayer, especially when walking.

It's only part of my prayer life and sadly I do not practise it constantly.

When I remember I often pray in tongues while doing something else: housework, in preparation for a meeting, on the move... This was especially so when I have lived in very dark areas, where my surroundings continually prompted me to pray. I think in the last few years I have become less aware of my spiritual surroundings.

Used when I'm not clear about what's needed for self and others and sometimes in meditation.

Praying in the Spirit is something I do daily. It builds my faith (re-Jude 20). It is a constant reminder of the power of God in my life. This has not changed, only deepened my experience with God.

I would speak in tongues because I didn't know what else to do. If I had run out of English words I would speak in tongues, however, in terms of making me feel closer to God, I wouldn't say that it did.

I occasionally use tongues – mostly when I am praying for someone and don't know what to pray. Occasionally as a language of worship when words fail in this too.

It has not changed really as I have had it modelled to me in the Breakthrough prayer ministries.

Comes and goes as I am moved in prayer, in distress, in praise, depends where I am, if I'm out .....alone I'll sing in tongues, pray, practice interpreting.

It is not something that I really do much. I would rather sit in contemplative silence.

Only in my relationship with Jesus, strengthened maybe??

Initially it was a big part of my prayer life. It has changed a lot over the last year, as my prayer life has reduced. Also, the church I attend does not openly speak in tongues and the majority of the congregation do not either. It felt strange being one of the only ones who does, so I do not do it as often as I used to.

It was something I engaged in a lot when I was younger, and then not much at all for a long time. I prayed in tongues in my personal prayer and also in groups, where others did or sometimes in church services. In those circles, it was an expected thing. After quite a few years of not engaging with it much, I think I have found myself coming back to it again over the last 5 or 6 years as another 'tool' in my prayer box, rather than the main tool, and as something I use when I feel like I have no idea how to pray – which has happened more in recent times.

My prayer has definitely been affected by speaking in tongues. I make sure to set aside time for different aspects of prayer, including speaking in tongues. The different prayer points have different applications, all with different results. Prayers presenting requests before, prayers thanking God, prayers honouring God, speaking in tongues, and silent prayer listening to what God may present.

During worship and prayer. It has not changed.

I do not spend so much time speaking in tongues now. I connect easier with the Lord through contemplative practices.

My prayer life has always been problematic. I've never been a regular prayer on a personal, private level. I enjoy communal praying and the power in the room when many gather together to pray, and to do so loudly and boldly. My current church prays VERY quietly and I haven't heard any speak in tongues or mention its existence. I then struggle to pray in tongues in small groups because I don't want to draw attention to myself or offend others in some way.

### **10 Do you or have you experienced a felt sense of the presence of God when exercising this gift?**

I think so. Definitely brings calm and sometimes it feels like my spirit can directly speak to God about what is happening even if I'm not consciously aware of what is going on...especially in an emotional sense.

The only time I've experienced a felt sense of God when I've been praying in tongues, is when I've prayed aloud with somebody.

Yes, definitely.

Yes!

Yes.

Sometimes

Yes, actually it helps

Yes, actually it helps me to connect and can speedily take me to an awareness of God's relational presence.

Yes, but not to order!

Yes

Not particularly

Yes, still do.

It is the same felt or absence sense of presence that occurs with all other times of prayer.

At times but not every time.

Yes

I think it used to. Sort of like a warmth.

Sometimes but not really

Yes

I think I do and I suspect that this is why I have come back to it a bit in recent years, because when I have no idea how or what to pray, when I pray in tongues, I feel a connection with God and that I am praying – my mind is more unengaged, it almost feels like using a mantra or sacred word as in contemplative praying.

Yes, absolutely

Yes

Yes

Yes

**11. If so, can you describe in what way you experience, or have experienced, this felt sense?**

Probably comfort and peace. Also, a conduit of release when I am feeling intense emotions usually upset in nature. It's like I can talk to God without worrying about what I am saying.

Weeping and seeing God speak to whoever I was with.

Sometimes when using this gift in a prayer group setting I felt the glory of God and a physical weight in my hands or as a prompting to give a word of knowledge. Often I believe that God is speaking to me either in my thoughts or by prompting me with a Scripture verse. Occasionally it is a sense of the fullness of God's presence or a reassuring word that gives me peace or joy.

I love to worship by singing in tongues and often experience God's presence during those times. What I feel or am aware of varies. Sometimes it's joy welling up from within; sometimes I feel surrounded by a sweet, loving, comforting presence; sometimes a deep sense of awe, or a desire to be still and quiet. My body relaxed a little during an encounter like that and afterwards feels refreshed. There have also been occasions when I've experienced a powerful, authoritative anointing while praying or singing in tongues.

Many years ago someone brought the interpretation of an utterance in tongues. The beauty of the love poetry deeply impact me and encourages me to believe that when I lift my heart in tongues I am expressing a love unfiltered by the restraints of my mind. I have often found questions coming into clarity as I have prayed in tongues.

Goosebumps, warmth

A sense of nearness, timelessness and 'weight'.

Experienced being held in love beyond words and warmth in my face.

Even those times when I do not feel strong or full of faith, the fact that this unknown language is pouring forth from my lips enables me to have a full sense of God's presence in my life. Sometimes it is more intense than others, but it never fails to convince me of His power in my life.

Warmth, lifting the senses, other worldliness.

Warm closeness. Feeling of accomplishing something that may not have occurred otherwise, especially if I have little or no knowledge of the event/circumstances I have been praying for in the intercessory sense.

Very hard to describe that. More an awareness, a sense of a type of pressure behind my eyes, sometimes tears when the Spirit is especially moving.

It is beyond oneself, so trusting the unknowing of this gift and the awareness of breath that is used in this exercise.

At times I have felt Jesus heard me and understood what I was trying to say in my heart.

I guess I feel a warmth, and usually a sense of peace. When I first start speaking in tongues and I was doing it more regularly it became such a natural thing that I couldn't even tell I was doing it I wasn't thinking about what I was saying at all. It's like when you are walking, and you do it so automatically that you don't have to register putting one foot in front of the other.

Not really. Maybe as a setting aside of my mind and thoughts so more engagement with my spirit.

I feel His peace with me, I feel His love and encouragement, and I also seek his direction for different things in life and He provides this direction.

A deep drawing towards God, feel more connected.

I feel faith arise as I speak in tongues

I wish I could offer more specifics, but it's just a general sense of power and blessing and an emotional state of peace.

**12. In what ways, if at all, does the practice of speaking in tongues feature in your contemplative practice?**

Doesn't...yet

It doesn't.

The two seem to fit together quite naturally. I can be going about my day and enjoying some aspect of God's creation which leads me to praise God and I sometimes do that through song and sometimes by speaking or praising in tongues. My personal prayer time each day doesn't always include tongues as it has become more 'quiet' but there are times I feel the urge to use the gift of tongues to praise or intercession.

Speaking in tongues doesn't feature in my contemplative practice.

It mostly hasn't until recently. At a retreat I found myself inwardly rebelling at the focus on body posture and other methods of stilling myself – as if I remembered that there was a more direct path I had experienced previously. Since then I often 'edify myself' in tongues and that helps to meet with God in the quiet.

Only occasionally when I feel at a loss as to what to pray, or need a change of direction.

Not so much in the contemplative.

Not every time but sometimes at conclusion.

Because you have no understanding of the tongue you are speaking, and therefore my mind is free to think independently from the tongue I am speaking in, I do find that during prayer I contemplate God's will, plan direction, power in my life. I also read the Word while I pray sometimes.

Doesn't

Singing (to a known or made up tune) or words in prayer time – not often during 'contemplative time' of Centering prayer or Examen.

Occasionally but not as a rule.

When I am moved deeply by something I see I'll sit in silence and awe, then sometimes I'll sing in tongues because it's great to have an expression that I can't understand.

Not

Usually when something is really tough for me and I am emotional

It's just another form of prayer for me, when I do pray.

When I'm doing centering prayer, I don't pray in tongues – but I tend to turn to it when I am praying for others, or about situations that I feel I am bringing to God, when I want to say something but I don't have words in English. It feels like praying in tongues puts some words to deeper inner feelings. More and more I feel like I don't know how to ask God to move in a particular situation or person's life, so it feels like spiritual words that I can wrap around someone or something that I am bringing before God.

To be honest, speaking in tongues often feels like the work out, or the stretch of spiritual muscles, after this the resting time afterwards allows for the rest and the refilling kind of like a protein shake.

During times of silence when overflowing joy is expressed in quiet tongues.

Not a strong part.

Not often if at all.

**13. Have there been particular times in your life when praying in tongues has been important to you or played a role in your faith journey? For example, during a time of darkness? As a way of expressing feelings of desperation, praise or joy?**

Probably desperation rather than praise or joy.

It's been with other people, knowing God was showing them something and being able to entrust difficult situations to God.

When I am anxious about a situation or person tongues is an important way for me to get in touch with God and be open to what God may be saying to me about the issue. The answer may not come immediately but can suddenly become clear later. Occasionally even suddenly awaking at night and there I a 'knowing' about what to do. I also find speaking in tongues useful when I am just going about my day and suddenly want to sing. It is quite often the charismatic praise songs that spring to mind and his then leads into tongues, and gives me a sense of joy in God's presence.

The gift of tongues has been a meaningful part of my faith journey from the very beginning. It's a gift that I value, particularly as a vehicle for expressing praise and worship in song, which often elicits feelings of joy. And at times when I'm particularly aware of the deep river of joy in my soul I'll pray or sing my thanks and praise for it in tongues. I've also prayed in tongues during times of concern for others, personal anguish, grief and yes, desperation – although the full expression of emotion, (both the comfortable and uncomfortable) requires much more than prayer in tongues! (Praise is an act of the volitional will and is therefore not a feeling or emotion although feelings and emotions may be involved in an expression of praise.”

Yes, all of the above. I have often prayed loudly in my car to dispel oppression and discouragement, or to clear out the atmosphere in my home.

When I do not know what to pray for a person, at times of praising God, and when a person is manifesting things not of God.

As a way of praying when words were inadequate; these days I prefer to pray in silence.

Useful when interceding or praying for others.

Yes! Every day it does, however at particular times when I have not had the words to say to God in English, or when I have been overwhelmed or burdened it has given me the ability to feel connected and reassured that God hears me no matter what. Also in times of joy or thanksgiving I now I am offering perfect prayer in the Spirit that is not tainted or interfered with my own natural understanding or agenda.

Yes, I think when I have felt emotionally desperate and haven't had the words but wanted to express something praying in tongues has felt like a release and hope and a way of expressing what's felt too hard to say.

Not really

Yes, in intercessory prayer times, especially when I run out of words in English for them but I sense that prayer is still needed – praying for people I know, the government or NZ, or other countries, or issues within the world such as slavery or social justice.

Not often aware when I pray in tongues – can be at all sorts of times through the day. Probably when a feeling particularly close to God and if I experience or am aware of awful situations. When things need a breakthrough.

I have preached and spoken in tongues in the middle of the sermon and then waited for the interpretation, I warned the congregation I might do this as I felt I was being led to. Also, if I am deeply traumatized by something I'll pray in tongues.

When I have been overseas and working in ministry or when I have been in desperation with a family member's health.

There were times when my anxiety was so much I could not get out of bed....in these times I had to pray and praying in tongues was the only thing that I felt I could do. God knew what I was saying, and the language provided me with words that I could not form myself. I find that I use tongues more when I need God and am struggling. I use prayer and words to say thank you to God or when I want to praise Him.

I have probably been drawn to it most in situations of extreme emotion – when words are difficult to find.

I consider speaking in tongues to be a form of spiritual discipline, so I seek to do it every day. This being said, I have sought to do it more during times of darkness, and I have also spoken exuberantly in tongues in moments of great joy.

Of course. It is common on occasions when strong feelings are present

Yes, particularly in times of desperation or uncertainty.

When I am seeking to connect with God, often before playing in the worship band praying confidently in the spirit brings me closer to God and more in touch with the intention of being in the band. Also, when in positions of leadership I would pray to seek guidance.

#### **14. Do you see praying in tongues as compatible or incompatible with contemplative prayer?**

Well, I have always thought centering prayer was silent so not sure how the two marry actually although both seem to bypass the mind and conscious thought.

It seems to be very compatible to me.

Definitely compatible. I now see myself as a 'contemplative charismatic'. Each of us is unique and our relationship with God is unique and I believe that we cannot put ourselves into just one particular stream of prayer. God moves us on in our journey but I believe that we do not need to leave any aspect completely behind if we find it nourishes us spiritually.

I see them

as different modes of prayer and therefore compatible.

I think that now I see tongues as primarily helpful in tuning me up to commune with God. I can imagine that at times I will also intentionally express the overflow of my heart in tongues.

Compatible. It is the Spirit so is compatible with all the work of the Spirit

Absolutely

Compatible. It's another form of prayer and the only one given for our own specific needs as known to God.

Perfectly compatible

I think there's a place and a season for everything. So yes, if it helps to focus and settle the mind. As a meditative type technique and then to be quiet when it feels like it's time to be.

I guess it's compatible. Anything is really. But I haven't given it any thought as to how.

Compatible. Anything which enables communication with God is compatible.

If by this you mean centering prayer, I would say it is not compatible for me as this is God's time to do some deep work in me.

Yes, all things are a part of the mystery and if we think otherwise who do we think we are?

Compatible

Personal prayer only

Definitely compatible, if my understanding of contemplative prayer is correct.

I do see it as compatible with contemplative prayer, which is often something that can bypass the mind and thoughts – as does praying in tongues. When engaged in from a grateful and humble position, it can be a gentle and comforting practice.

I absolutely consider it compatible, and like peanut butter and jelly the two go best together.

Yes

It doesn't seem to be emphasised in contemplative prayer, seems like there is quite a divide between a Pentecostal expression/culture and that of contemplative. This has caused much searching for me as being from a more Pentecostal expression a contemplative expression has been misunderstood and sometimes even criticised but personally I don't see any conflict between the two and in fact are complementary.

I'm not sure I understand, but probably compatible.

**15. Please add any of your own comments which have not been covered by the above questions.**

I have never heard, or didn't notice, anyone speaking about speaking in tongues in any of our training for Spiritual Direction. You've really made me think about my use of speaking in tongues especially in regard to contemplative prayer. Thank you very much.

I am deeply grateful for what God has given me through the gift on tongues and charismatic spirituality. It has given me a firm spiritual base and I wouldn't be true to myself or God's gifts to me if I rejected or no longer was open to it. As I have moved on in my journey I still retain the charismatic aspect but also embrace where I am now in my spiritual journey and ways of praying and would encourage others to also be open to all that God has offered to each of us in our unique journey.

I am glad that you have raised this question as I had not been integrating this significant part of my prayer development into my contemplative prayer practices. I can imagine tongues will not be central to contemplative prayer times but important in terms of maintaining an abiding in Christ.

I sadly often forget about this amazing gift of the Spirit and do to use it as much as I would like. This survey is a good reminder to use it more in my contemplative prayer life.

My only comment is that I wouldn't want to replace prayer in the Spirit with just contemplative prayer. God has gone to amazing lengths to provide for us a prayer language that cannot be tainted or interfered with by our fleshly minds. It enables us to pray in a way that both builds us up and gives us direct, miraculous communication with Him. He has laid out in 1 Cor 1, 13 and 14 how to operate it both in the church (as a sign for unbelievers: 1 Cor 14 v22) and in our own private lives so it was meant to be an important part of the Christian walk 1 Cor 14 v 2,4,18,22, in fact the whole chapter explains the importance of tongues perfectly).

We work with so many different cultures, peoples, stages of faith, experiences of God in so many forms, it is wonderful to be open to what people are bringing as their felt experience of God. Yesterday I had someone who had been to a medium, that was new and I just flowed with it, God is at work in mysterious ways I'm just the servant.

I'm not sure that praying in tongues would be appropriate in a spiritual direction session.

It has been interesting to find how I have been drawn back to this form of praying a little again in recent years, after having had quite a reaction against it, I think, at one stage of my faith journey. With the benefit of some distance in time and place from the contexts where I first experienced it I have been able to separate it out from that context and see it more as a 'standalone' gift that can actually enhance my prayer life, and I sometimes find myself involuntarily praying in tongues, when driving or walking. There is something comforting and familiar about it, that brings a quick connection with God.

I believe the Pentecostal/charismatic church would really benefit from a greater understanding and practice of the contemplative. Often 'church' can be so busy/'doing focused', slowing down and reflective/contemplative practices have been so healing and empowering for me.

Also, the anecdotal experiences of many of those who participated in this study indicated an effect which appears to be similar to the desired approach to contemplative prayer – that of openness and surrender to God, a way of self-emptying and the sense of allowing God to do the work within, a taking one's hands off the steering wheel in order to allow God to operate.

Rather than being a prayer exercise that is largely overlooked, for those who exercise this gift, to explore the experience in prayer, its meaning in relationship with God and validating the valuing and exercising of this gift as another way of being in relationship with the mystery of God.