

Tend Your Awakening Heart with Us.

(Special thanks to [Julie Stevens](#) for helping us to update our new look!)



Awakening Hearts Cultivating Wisdom Revealing the Sacred

May 2020



Words from the Director...

Frankly, offering words this month seems inadequate. I resist using words as a security blanket, to try and make myself feel better, or to appear wise in these traumatic and trying times. I recognize my most sincere yearning, rather, is to offer action, movement. Discerning appropriate and Spirit-led action, or stillness, for each of us, is a complex and ongoing activity, and yet now, feels all the more urgent given the eruption of the visibility of the inadequacy of our human systems. No single response to these times of chaos serves all of us equally, except perhaps, collectively, in Love.

Below, I offer a short video meditation on practicing suppleness. The practice will not change the world immediately and certainly feels small in light of the tremendous eruption of activity emerging in recent days. Nonetheless, it is an action that can begin today and it falls within a category of actions that can be undertaken every day, for the sake of awakening and awareness in the long-haul, daily, on our ever-demanding journey along the Way of Love.

[Exercise for Suppleness](#)

On Contemplative Dialogue...

Note: here, I continue the series begun earlier.

Spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender are three postures that support contemplative living. They are contemplative postures which support contemplative dialogue. Given the turn of events around the world in recent months, many of us currently experience unexpected (forced, even) spaciousness because of orders to shelter in space or the unknowing of what will happen to our neighborhood. Many of us currently experience intense suppleness because of the forceful fluxes that emerge as we face the brave work of responding to the current pandemic and social upheaval. No matter where we find ourselves on a continuum between spaciousness and suppleness, a third posture of surrender also surely emerges. Evelyn Underhill teaches that the essence of mysticism is summed up in two experiences: union with the flux of life and union with the Whole (Practical Mysticism, p. 15-16). The dance of spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender prompt us to face both the flux and the whole of life, especially in uncertain times. Over the next few months, I invite you to attend to the ways in which spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender are showing up in your life rhythms. I will offer a short

reflection on each of these over three months.

Suppleness is a contemplative posture that that allows for openness. Suppleness is not fickle; rather, in its spiritual sense, it carves creative pathways of connectivity. Suppleness welcomes the strange(r) and the unknown. Suppleness listens and knows how to respond gently, yet with power. Suppleness has an "active" side, yet it is not pushy; it meets the other where they are. Suppleness can fill up a given space and then flow easily out of it. Suppleness enlivens the mind and awakens the heart. Suppleness relishes dynamism. Too much suppleness can feel wearisome and insufficient suppleness can feel brittle. Suppleness flows from the self to the other. Suppleness seeks the ground that the other also stands on.



Reflect/Act with Us.

Below, please refer to both reflections and actions suggested by the Episcopal Church in Minnesota in response to the events this week and to address the larger issues of systemic racism and injustice.

[Statement from the Bishop and Bishop-Elect in response to the killing of George Floyd.](#)

[National Episcopal News Service, Call for Justice](#)

Join Us.

SOULstice Journey

Offered by Rabbi Shefa Gold

Friday June 19, 10 am – 11:30 am (central time)

via zoom

no cost for this gathering, open to all

We come together at this auspicious time to connect, celebrate and open to the blessing of this special Shabbat. In the yearly cycle of reading the Torah, we come to the story of the spies who are sent into the Land to bring back a sign that will either stir up fear or hopefulness. Now at this moment of Light and fullness, we are those spies, glimpsing through our prayers, a Land that is flowing with milk and honey. What report shall we bring back to our communities, families and friends? How shall we plant the seeds of hope? How shall we resist despair in the face of such suffering and turmoil? How shall we inspire ourselves and each other to journey through our shared wilderness with hearts uplifted?

Rabbi Shefa Gold was our scheduled presenter for the June retreat, which has been postponed. Rabbi Shefa has generously offered to hold space through a shorter session which will include gathering, chanting, and reflecting together.

[Register](#)

Retreat with Us.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Episcopal House of Prayer has cancelled or postponed all retreats through June 30. As the situation unfolds, the Executive Committee will determine a re-opening policy and protocol based on a per-month timeline. For a full update on our response, [click here](#). By June 15, we will have made a decision about the July Kenosis retreat with Ward Baumann.

Pray with Us.

This year, we began to offer "short teachings" on prayer after the weekly contemplative sit in Collegeville. These short-teachings intend to engage those gathered whether they are new to, or seasoned in, contemplative prayer. The session lasts fifteen minutes and includes three parts: 1) a short selection of text on prayer from the tradition, 2) short teaching on the text, 3) questions and opportunity for reflection.

As the body of these short-teachings grow, they will be shared in this section of the newsletter. They will be arranged by topic and will include two pages or less of text.

Forms of Prayer

[Forms of Contemplative Prayer by Evelyn Underhill](#)

[Walking Meditation as Walking with the Holy by Thich Nhat Hahn](#)

[Mindfulness by Chwen Jiuan Lee and Thomas Hand](#) (new this month)

Techniques or Methods of Prayer

[Attention in Contemplative Prayer by Evelyn Underhill](#)

[Awareness as Waking Up to Wisdom by Anthony de Mello](#)

[The Sacred Word in Centering Prayer by Thomas Keating](#)

[Chant by Cynthia Bourgeault](#) (new this month)

[The Body in Centering Prayer by Cynthia Bourgeault](#) (new this month)

Silence in Contemplative Prayer

[Why Silent Prayer by Henri Nouwen](#)

[Silence as Revelation by Anthony de Mello](#)

Contemplation in Action

[Practical Fruits of Contemplative Work by Wayne Teasdale](#)

[Transformation as the Reality of Inner Change by Wayne Teasdale](#)

The Role of the Heart in Prayer

[The Role of the Heart by Henri Nouwen](#)

[From Breath to Stirring of the Heart by Chwen Jiuan Lee and Thomas Hand](#) (new this month)

The Theology of Contemplative Prayer

[God and Self in Contemplative Prayer](#)

Chant with Us.

Chant and sacred song are an important element of our weekly prayer and retreat experiences at the Episcopal House of Prayer. Over the years, a number of beloved and favorite chants have echoed in the oratory, even as new ones are heard for the first time. I invite all members of our community to consider either recording some of your favorite chants and/or listening to them when they are posted in the newsletters.

Thank you John Mischke for this month's chant: [Refuge Prayer](#)

From the April Newsletter [From You I Receive](#)

From the March Newsletter (updated version with harmonies) [We are Swimming in Mercy](#)

From the February Newsletter [Beloved One, You are my being](#)

Chants from 2019 Newsletters

[I am in Thou](#)

[All Shall be Well](#)

[Spirit of Truth](#)

[Listen, Listen](#)

[Let Me Hear](#)

[As the Deer](#)

[Bind my Head](#)

[Holy Wisdom, Holy Logos](#)

Join Us.

If you are seeking spiritual transformation, we invite you to join us for weekly Contemplative Prayer (online) in Collegeville.
All are welcome!

[Visit our website](#)

Vision with Us.

Our Mission is to assist in the ongoing work of discerning God's voice, both within ourselves and in the world; provide guidance in the search for wisdom; teach all forms of contemplative prayer; offer training in the inner work of the spiritual life.

The vision of the Episcopal House of Prayer is to be a contemplative ministry of spiritual transformation, grounded in the Christian tradition, in the practice of Benedictine hospitality, reaching out and welcoming all.

Support Us.

The Episcopal House of Prayer is a contemplative ministry grounded in the Christian tradition and held within a Benedictine container,
with locations in Collegeville, Saint Paul, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.
This ministry is dedicated to supporting individuals and groups as they seek to be "formed into Christ" (Galatians 4:19).

[Donate](#)

Connect with Us.

