

Tend Your Awakening Heart with Us.



Awakening Hearts Cultivating Wisdom Revealing the Sacred

January 2021

Words from our Director...On Contemplative Dialogue

([click here](#) to view a chart that situates Contemplative Dialogue in a larger framework)



Commitment to Wholeness is the fifth movement of contemplative dialogue. It is related to one of the [Five Ordinary Movements](#), Vibration of Concentric Circles. To Commit to Wholeness means learning to perceive Reality from a lens of unity rather than duality. To Commit to Wholeness is to recognize that the fabric of all Being is relational, inter-connected. To Commit to Wholeness is to hold together both the part and the whole, including everything and excluding nothing. The Commitment to Wholeness addresses big questions such as, What is the purpose of existence? What qualities manifest as the Source of Everything-that-is? What is the relationship between the diverse expressions of particularity and the eternal expression of universality?

Practically, all of the questions asked earlier, within the framework of the other four movements, also get enfolded in the Commitment to Wholeness.

In the work of life-span development, the Commitment to Wholeness is visible in the bright fire of life exuding from folks who have overcome selfishness and who have learned to integrate all of their daily life activity into a vision of Wholeness in service to the Common Good. People like Mother Teresa, Ghandi, Thomas Merton, and Martin Luther King readily come to mind, but the Commitment to Wholeness also shows up in slivers in the lives of "ordinary folks." When parents prioritize their children's needs, when co-workers set aside ambition in favor of the common good, when lovers love their partners according to the others' tastes, letting go of their own preferences, when communities watch out for the least among them and direct resources to the needy--all of these are glimpses that contribute to the Commitment to Wholeness.

The spiritual life is full of opportunities for Commitment to Wholeness. *Humility* is a spiritual habit related to the Commitment to Wholeness. Too often, humility is perceived of as a "lowering of self" in relationship to others. Such a view of humility often ends in false humility--a shadowy version of pride that seems to belittle the self while actually focusing on the self. In fact, true humility is about really living into who you fully are--no more, and no less. And for seekers shaped by the Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, this means living fully into the reality of having been made in the image of God. The Commitment to Wholeness recognizes the fundamental goodness at the heart of Creation and constantly says "yes" to any movement of life that honors the original unity of Being.

Whereas the fourth movement of Contemplative Dialogue, Facing Suffering through the Tension of a Web, emphasizes the posture of supple-surrender, the Commitment to Wholeness through the Vibration of Concentric Circles emphasizes the posture of spacious-surrender. *Spacious-surrender* makes room for the resonance that occurs when the Vibrations of Concentric Circles are revealed in life's moments of harmony and interconnection, both among people and across generations. To give in to spacious-surrender means to allow for delight in the fullness and wholeness of whatever presents itself in any given moment. The Holy One, God, is always, already fully Present everywhere and all the time. The posture of spacious-surrender helps us to sense and respond to that reality.

The season of dark and light, the transition from one year to the next is an optimal time to honor one's Commitment to Wholeness. When we pause at the beginning of the new year to reflect on the past, acknowledge the moment, and set an intention for the future, we weave together slivers of wholeness. As we aspire in hope toward the unknown, as we remember the mystery of all that precedes us, and as we moor ourselves in gratitude for the current moment, we weave a

tapestry of life that honors Wholeness.

Reflection questions for the Commitment to Wholeness:

- How can you honor Wholeness as you reflect on the arrival of the new year?
- What shadows, suffering and trials need to be integrated into the Whole? What lights, delight, and good works need to be celebrated as part of the Whole?
- What practical steps need to be taken in order to ensure that all peoples can hold their rightful place as part of the Whole?

Specific practices to support the Commitment to Wholeness include: [Centering Prayer](#), [Walking Meditation](#), and [Chant](#).

Below, find a summary of each of the five movements of Contemplative Dialogue with a chant to support each one:

A chant to support Grounding in Self: [Let Light In](#)

A chant to support Opening to Others: [Let Love In](#)

A chant to support Seeking God: [Turn and Return](#)

A chant to support Facing Suffering: [Surrender Still](#)

A chant to support Commitment to Wholeness: [What Is](#)

Similarly, below find a summary of the Exercises presented so far in this series on Contemplative Dialogue:

[An Exercise for Spaciousness](#)

[An Exercise for Suppleness](#)

[An Exercise for Spaciousness, Suppleness, and Surrender](#)

[An Exercise for Contemplative Dialogue](#)

As we end this series on Contemplative Dialogue and transition from one year to the next, I invite you to offer your attention to your own Commitments to Wholeness, inclusive of drawing upon each of the earlier movements.

Director, Episcopal House of Prayer, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA

Pray with Us.

Beginning Monday, January 4, from 5:30-6:30, teacher Gary Barrett will lead weekly online sessions via zoom.

To join the **Chi Kung** sessions, [click here](#) or use this Meeting ID: 974 1515 7718

The Episcopal House of Prayer hosts weekly Wednesday night contemplative sit in Collegeville online, via zoom.
Join us for all, or a part, of the session.

5-5:15 p.m.–time for tech and social connection

5:15-5:30–short teaching

5:30-6:30–formal sitting period

To join, [simply click here](#) or use this Meeting ID: 644 263 888

Join Us.

2021 Programming Line-up

While 2020 disrupted all of our lives, as well as planned EHoP programs, we are happy to present our proposed programming line-up for 2021. Please visit our website to view the line-up. While on our website, you will find a variety of offerings, including Online Teaching Series, Online Prayer Series, Online Mystic-a-Month Series, and In-Person retreats. Please note that registration is open for all online programming, but registration for in-person retreats will not open until at least March when we hope to confirm whether we will be able to open and gather safely again.

[Visit our website](#)

Spiritual Memoir: Where a Life Meets Mystery

Offered by Elizabeth Jarret Andrew

January 29 2021-Sunday January 31 (online)

Join Elizabeth Jarrett Andrew for a weekend introduction to the art and spiritual practice of writing memoir. What is memoir, and how is it different from autobiography? What makes memoir spiritual? How can the practice of writing memoir, either for an audience or for no audience, support spiritual growth? Using writing exercises and readings from master writers, we will get started with the basics. We will also discuss how to sustain spiritual memoir writing as an ongoing contemplative practice.



Elizabeth Jarrett Andrew is the author of the novel *Hannah, Delivered*, the spiritual memoir *Swinging on the Garden Gate*, a collection of personal essays, *On the Threshold: Home, Hardwood, and Holiness*, and two books on writing: *Living Revision: A Writer's Craft as Spiritual Practice*, winner of the silver Nautilus Award, and *Writing the Sacred Journey: The Art and Practice of Spiritual Memoir*. She works independently as a developmental writing coach and teaches through Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality. You can connect with Elizabeth at www.spiritualmemoir.com and www.elizabethjarrettandrew.com

[Register](#)

In addition to Retreats and Series events, EHoP also invites you to consider joining an EHoP Circle

EHoP Short Sessions

[Mystic-a-Month series](#)

[Prayer series](#)

EHoP Circles

[Small Group Spiritual Direction](#)

[Small Group *Lectio Divina*](#)

[Small Group Book Discussions](#)

Be Grateful with Us.

In late August, EHoP sent out an [update letter](#) informing folks about how we are doing in these unprecedented times. As part of that update, we included an appeal for your financial support and a [brief](#) on our programming pivot. We are pleased to share that your generosity has reached over \$38,000 through December. You are welcome to continue giving of your time and treasure for our fall appeal. Also, please remember that participating in our retreats and events is one way to support us that lies at the core of our mission and vision!

Donate

Be safe with Us.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Episcopal House of Prayer continues to assess when we will open the House again and gather our community in person. In August 2020, the Executive Committee updated the following:

- Benedictine Volunteer Corps men will continue to reside at the House at least through April. Consequently, the House is not open for personal retreats or rentals until further notice.
- Retreats for the first-quarter of 2021 will take place online; we hope to open the in-person season by May.
- [Monday weekly contemplative sits](#) (Minneapolis) are on hold.
- [Thursday weekly contemplative sits](#) (Saint Paul) are on hold.
- Monday night ChiKung in Collegeville resumes online starting January 4, 2021 at 5:30.

Practice with Us.

This year, we began to offer "short teachings" on prayer as part of the weekly contemplative sit in Collegeville. These short-teachings engage both new and seasoned practitioners in reflection about 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 regarding practice.

As the body of these short-teachings grow, the new teachings will be shared in this section of the newsletter. For a full listing of all the teachings, visit our website and navigate to the [Prayer Teaching Library page](#).

[What is Contemplation](#) by Thomas Merton

[Faith and Contemplation](#) by Thomas Merton

[Meditation and Distractions](#) by Thomas Merton

[Learning Meditation](#) by John Philip Newell

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.

If you would like to listen to the entire set of chants, visit our website and navigate to the [Chant Library page](#).

Be with Us.

If you are seeking spiritual transformation and tending an awakening heart, we invite you to join us!

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.

