

Tend Your Awakening Heart with Us.



Awakening Hearts Cultivating Wisdom Revealing the Sacred

March 2021

Words from our Director...On *Interpersonal Skills* in support of Contemplative Dialogue

([click here](#) to view the interpersonal skills in a broader Christian framework)

([click here](#) to view the interpersonal skills in a triple-cycle of contemplative dialogue)



Last month, I introduced receptivity/openness as the first of five interpersonal stances that support contemplative dialogue. These next few months will similarly focus on the interpersonal skills that support the movements of contemplative dialogue (grounding in self, open to others, seeking God, facing suffering, and commitment to wholeness), and work in tandem with the contemplative postures (spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender). The complete list of interpersonal skills is: openness/receptivity, mutuality, dynamism, ambiguity, and resonance. As we move toward the second interpersonal stance, an important question remains: how does engaging the hard work of contemplative dialogue impact the world in service of the good?

The second interpersonal stance is *mutuality*. The stance of *mutuality* is characterized by intentional permeability and it builds on the earlier dual-stance of openness/receptivity. A mutual stance involves both offering a self and also desiring to go beyond oneself. Mutuality finds expression through a curiosity that constantly seeks out the unknown, probes what is already known, and allows for deepened knowing. In relationships, people operate from a stance of mutuality when they exhibit genuine respect for others. In spiritual encounter, mutuality occurs when one allows the boundary of self to be touched or impacted by others and by God.

An important nuance related to the stance of mutuality is the role of simultaneity. In mutuality, simultaneity points to mutual regard in all relationships. For example, I do not first think of my worth and dignity and then, later, afford you a sense of respect based on my sense of my own dignity and worth; rather, each is called to approach others as if worth and dignity are *already* present in the other, mutually benefitting each other *at the same time*. This recognition often occurs in the context of service and mission trips when those who thought they were "going to serve the other" recognize that they, too, received gifts from the one who supposedly needed to be served. Mutuality reminds us that we all serve and we all need to be served.

A similar dynamic is at work when we consider mutuality as part of our relationship with God. In this case, mutuality obviously does not point to sameness—we, of course, are not God. Yet, we are called to live more fully into the image and likeness of God, and similarly, God does not hold-out in offering high regard for us until *after* we have become holy; rather, God *already* sees the dignity and holiness within and helps to call it forth from us in mutual, loving regard (as Julian of Norwich reminds us in her image of the Servant who serves the Lord). Mutuality in our relationship with God helps us to step outside the conventional boxes of compartmentalization, in which God is in one special place (usually up) and we are some other, separate place (usually down). The mark of simultaneity on our mutual stance with God assures us that God is present to us *even as* we continue to work out the details of becoming more and more holy; God is not waiting until later, once we've figured it all out.

Whereas openness/receptivity invite us into a sense of spaciousness, living into a stance of mutuality calls us into the posture of suppleness. When we honor our own perspective as well as those of others who are different, we enter the dance

of mutuality through the sleek moves of suppleness. When we allow God to show up in the midst of daily life and not just in certain places or spaces, we take another supple step toward mutuality. Within ourselves, when we allow both our shadows and our gifts to form us into better human beings, we applaud yet another instance of suppleness in service of mutuality.

Over the next few weeks, I invite you to consider how a stance of mutuality might help you to show up in the world, in service of the common good.

- What habits and activities allow you to practice mutuality? When and where is it more difficult?
- Who are the people in your life that inspire you to respect others?
- How can you open to others in ways that promote mutuality?

Christine Lena Munger

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



Pray with Us.

The Episcopal House of Prayer now hosts its weekly Wednesday night 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.

Wholeness in Uncertain Times: Zen Wisdom in Conversation with Christianity

Tuesday Evenings: 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30

6-8 pm

Join us for an opportunity to engage in dialogue between the Christian and Buddhist traditions. This unique, rich, and experiential series invites participants to work with one traditional Zen koan (traditional teaching story) each week, watching it shift, change, and ultimately blossom into greater self-awareness, self-compassion, and the wisdom inherent in love. Each week will feature an assigned koan, an experiential exercise, time for discussion and exploration, a teaching presentation designed to support and facilitate deeper engagement, and handouts of all related material for further individual exploration. A commitment to a daily meditation practice is requested. Each class will be recorded, so participants will be able to access all the material throughout the course of our month together. Please join us for this opportunity to connect with yourself, and also with other courageous, inspiring, and like-minded souls.

Rev. Bussho Lahn first came to Zen Buddhism in 1993, was ordained in 2009, and became a full priest in 2015. Bussho is a trained spiritual director, connecting with and mentoring those who wish to deepen an intentional and contemplative spiritual life. He explores the connection between spirituality and psychology. He is active in both the recovery and Christian contemplative communities and teaches and leads retreats and overseas pilgrimages through the Episcopal House of Prayer and the Aslan Institute.



Last minute registrations welcome through March 2!

Register

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 Memoriam, Mary Darnall



A message from Joanie Delamater, EHoP First-Vice Chair of the Board
 It is with great sadness and deep belief in resurrection that I write to tell you that our dear sister, Mary Darnall passed away on February 18, 2021. Her beloved husband, Tom was with her and she went peacefully without pain. Mary had been moved to Quiet Oaks, a hospice house, just a few days before her passing. Tom was able to be with her and love her into the arms of God. He said he carried all our love and prayers to her as she passed.
 Mary and Tom have been involved with the Episcopal House of Prayer since its inception. They acted as hosts at the House before we had a director and were actively involved in all aspects of EHoP through the years. They were founding members of the Contemplative Body as well.

Mary and Tom have both been on the Board. Mary was first vice-chair when I moved into this position. I asked her to stay on in the second vice-chair slot while we searched for a new director, (Christine), and until we found someone to fill her shoes. Mary had the detail orientation and writing skills as well as words of wisdom which we needed. She was a centered, grounded and spirit-filled gentle leader, a dear friend and confidant. Mary embodied what a strong Christian contemplative is, grounded in spiritual practices, as a life- long learner. We were all blessed to have her in our lives.

May she rest in peace and soar with the angels in light! Shine on, Mary!

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers. Please reach out to Tom Darnall at 2193 72nd. Ave. N., St. Cloud, MN 56303.

The family has requested that memorials be sent to [Quiet Oaks](#) or the [Episcopal House of Prayer](#).

With eternal hope and gratitude,

Joanie Delamater

First vice-chair

EHoP Board

Practice with Us.

This year, we offer short exercises before our weekly sit, which are experiential introductions to contemplative prayer that are designed to help us strengthen our contemplative prayer muscles. These short-teachings engage both new and seasoned practitioners of contemplative prayer. The short session lasts fifteen minutes and includes two parts: 1) a short guided exercise (to support stilling the mind, awakening the heart, tuning into the senses, breathing intentionally, and focusing attention) followed by an opportunity for contemplative dialogue about the experience of the exercise.

As the body of these exercises grow, the text 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](#).

Exercise: [Noticing the Location of your Attention](#)

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 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 January 2021, the Executive Committee updated the following:

- The young men from the Benedictine Volunteer Corps will stay with us at least through April.
- Retreats for the the first quarter of 2021 will be online.
- By mid-March, we hope to decide whether we will open the in-person retreat season in May.
- Rentals for personal retreats and events are on hold at least through August 2021.
- [Monday weekly contemplative sits](#) (Minneapolis) are on hold.
- [Thursday weekly contemplative sits](#) (Saint Paul) are on hold.
- Monday night ChiKung in Colleeville is now online. You can join the zoom meeting at <https://csbsju.zoom.us/j/97415157718> or Meeting ID: 974 1515 7718

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.

