

Tend Your Awakening Heart with Us.

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



July 2020



Words from our Director...On Contemplative Dialogue

Note: here, I continue and conclude the three-part series begun earlier.

Spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender are three postures that support contemplative living. They are contemplative postures which support contemplative dialogue. 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.

Surrender is a contemplative posture that prepares us for healing and wholeness. To surrender is not to give up; rather, to surrender, in its spiritual sense, is to recognize the full meaning of what faces us (be it joy or sorrow), and yet, to consciously choose to be with whatever presents itself. To surrender is to honor that Something, Someone, beyond our own self and our own vision, is already constantly tending to both the flux and the Whole of life and to trust in that activity. To surrender usually involves letting go of clarity, assurance, and control. Yet, to surrender is also to say yes to the powerful, enlivening work of the Hand of the Holy One at work in creation. To surrender is to join our particular sense of spacious or supple activity with the Sacred Actions of the Holy One. Surrender empowers oneself to be at ease with the Ground of All Being.

I invite you to continue to notice the dance of the interplay between spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender, and to consider how the three are emerging in your own context. In my own rural context, in which I offer service as the Director of the Episcopal House of Prayer in Collegeville, MN, our community sits with the dance of the three postures as well. I noticed myself holding the obligation to shelter in place as a treasured time for slowing down and remembering what stillness feels like...it feels like life-giving spaciousness (even as I recognize that others are faced with chaos). I notice myself holding the commitment to flatten the curve in tension with a desire to gather our folks again, and I am faced with the back and forth flow of suppleness. I notice myself offering Julian of Norwich's chant, *All Shall be Well*, every week during our online sit, even as it takes my breath away to tally

more than a half-million people dead during the pandemic, and it tears me up to see the ugly face of racial injustice as it continues to lift its persistent head.

In the last few months, many have reflected upon how wearying it feels to face the contradictions that emerge when we recognize the differences that really make a difference...skin color, party line, front-lines, privilege...the list goes on. How can I/we hold these immense tensions? I draw upon the life-giving power that comes through surrender and its counterparts of spaciousness and suppleness. Commitment to contemplative dialogue, theoretically, prepares me to face tough times. *Actually* practicing contemplative postures in tough times, concretely, pushes me to the ground beneath my feet, pulls me into solidarity with those on shaky ground, and propels me into a felt sense of the interconnectivity in the Ground of the Wholeness of Being.



Reflect/Act with Us.

Below, please refer to reflections and actions suggested by the Episcopal Church in Minnesota to address the larger issues of systemic racism and racial injustice.

[Resources for justice work](#)

[Statement from ECMN Bishop IX Brian Prior and Bishop X Craig Loya in response to the killing of George Floyd](#)

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

Pray with Us.

Since mid-March, the Episcopal House of Prayer has hosted its weekly sit in Collegeville online via zoom. We continue to meet each week. Join us!

5-5:30--time for tech and social connection

5:30-6:30--formal sitting period

6:30-6:45--short teaching

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

Join Us.

The Five Wisdoms: a One-day Online Retreat

Offered by Dan Wolpert, MDiv.

August 15, 2020 from 9 AM – 3 PM

This unique one-day retreat will combine online teaching and discussion and individual contemplative practice done at your home. During the course of

the day, you will learn about the Five Wisdom practices, spend time in prayer by yourself, and will then return to the online group for reflection, questions, and conversation. This format will allow us to be on retreat together, even as we are not physically in the same location.

The Five Wisdom Teaching describes five personality and constitutional types, each arising from a unique elemental energy. Based upon Chinese and Tibetan Five Element Theory and contemplative (mindfulness) psychology, these teachings promote contemplative practice that grounds us in our created, elemental world.

Daniel Wolpert, MDiv, a Presbyterian minister, is cofounder of the Minnesota Institute of Contemplation and Healing (MICAH). He has been a student of the spiritual life since age 21 and has taught in the fields of psychology and spiritual formation. Dan provides counseling and spiritual direction. He is the author of four books: *Leading a Life with God: the Practice of Spiritual Leadership*, *Creating a Life with God: the Call of Ancient Prayer Practices*, co-author of *Meeting God in Virtual Reality*, and most recently, *The Collapse of the Three Story Universe: Christianity in an Age of Science*.

Register

Be Grateful with Us.

On Friday, June 19, Rabbi Shefa Gold led a two-hour short-retreat session, **SOULstice Journey**, hosted by the Episcopal House of Prayer. Over 100 people registered from across the world! We look forward to the day when Rabbi Shefa will be able to join us in person. In the meantime, you can [view the event here](#).

Support Us.

Spring Appeal Reflection and Invitation

by Sherie Bosak, Member of the Contemplative Body and Recent Member of the Board

I have been thinking about how quantum physics supports the idea of the importance of contemplation. "Quantum physics - the study of the micro world of atoms and particles - recognizes that a particle like an electron isn't physically real until it is observed. If it remains unobserved it remains a wave of probability. It isn't until it can be observed that it comes into matter. Equally fascinating, is that particles at great distances from each other can have an instant effect anywhere in the universe as if there is no space between them. Einstein rejected this idea and called it 'spooky action at a distance.' Quantum technology depends on it being real."

At EHoP we call contemplation "our work." It is work to bring the mind back to the breath, or to a word, or to a phrase, or to nothing. Always imperfectly, we make space to observe. If you will, we observe the smallest of an unseen reality. In so doing, we may be, in fact, creating matter. Quantum physics suggests that we are doing the work of incarnation. We are at the disposal of Divine energy (God) to observe and bring probability into matter. Since quantum physics recognizes the instant effect particles have on each other anywhere in the universe, it stands to reason that we have such an effect on each other. We know, psychologically speaking, that if a child is unseen (unobserved) the child does not fully come into its full self. So by truly observing the other, or by listening with the ear of the heart, we assist each other toward our fullest incarnation.

It is a privilege to be associated with EHoP and to be supported in its mission of bringing contemplation into the world. If you are similarly grateful for its mission and wish to support it, please consider a financial gift or remember us in your estate planning. The Episcopal House of Prayer will continue through and beyond Covid-19. Incarnation needs us.

Donate

Be safe with Us.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Episcopal House of Prayer continues to assess the possibility of opening the House again and gathering our community. In June, the Executive Committee of the Board decided upon a number of new updates:

- Onsite retreats and rentals through August 31 are cancelled or postponed (this includes the Kenosis retreat in July and the Five Wisdoms retreat in August).
- Monday and Thursday night weekly contemplative sits in the Twin Cities will resume in outdoors locations.
- Monday night ChiKung in Collegeville can also resume after July 4, as an outdoor activity (the building will not be open).
 - Common guidelines for outdoor gatherings include six-foot distancing, using facemasks, and bringing your own materials.
- A sub-committee is working to assess and compose protocols for a partial reopening to retreats and rentals. We hope for a partial re-open by September, though this may change.
- For the full update, visit: <http://ehouseofprayer.org/covid-19-update/>

Practice 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 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](#).

[Centering and Surrender by Howard Thurman](#)

[Spiritual Disciplines and Prayer by Howard Thurman](#)

[The Prayer of the Name Lands in the Heart by Abhiskiktananda \(Henri Le Saux\)](#)

[Forms of Prayer by Abhishiktananda \(Henri Le Saux\)](#)

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 Bill Brand for this month's chant: [In the Name](#)

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

Join Us.

If you are seeking spiritual transformation, we invite you to join us for weekly Contemplative Prayer (online) in Collegeville or outdoors in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

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" (Galations 4:19).

[Donate](#)

Connect with Us.



