

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Soul Tending

Practices for Sowing to the Spirit



Winter/Spring 2019

DAVIDSON
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Wesleyan Contemplative Order of DUMC & Contemplative Outreach of Piedmont NC

In the spirit of shared values, community, and collaboration
Expanding Impact - Strengthening Souls - Transforming Lives

"A farmer is helpless to grow grain; all he can do is provide the right conditions for the growing of grain.

He cultivates the ground, he plants the seed, he waters the plants, and then the natural forces of the earth take over and up comes the grain...

This is the way it is with the Spiritual Disciplines - they are a way of sowing to the Spirit... By themselves, the Spiritual Disciplines can do nothing; they can only get us to the place where something can be done."

Richard J. Foster (*Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*)

*Disciplines are not the answer;
they only lead us to the Answer.*

Richard J. Foster



Soul Tending

Learning and practice sessions that get us to the place where God's transforming work can be done.

Spiritual Formation is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is about placing our small spirit before the Spirit to form us into the character of Christ. Though this is God's work and God's work alone, we must cooperate. One way is through the spiritual practices of Jesus and the early church - practices that train us to intentionally and routinely open space for God's grace to work within us. Please join us as often as you are able.

For beginners and seasoned practitioners. All are welcome!

Sundays, February 10, 17, & 24 OR Wednesdays, February 13, 20, & 27
10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The Listening Life

Practicing the Ignatius Daily Examen using the book
Sleeping With Bread: Holding What Gives You Life

God is constantly revealing himself to us in our experience. St. Ignatius saw the *Examen* (pronounced ig-'zā-mən) as the cornerstone of spiritual life - so much so that when others asked if they could skip their prayer exercise, he told them to skip anything but the Examen. The Examen is what changed Ignatius from a wild soldier to a pilgrim walking barefoot to Jerusalem.

The Linns, authors of *Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life* state: For many years, we have ended each day the same way. We light a candle, become aware of God's loving presence, and take about 5 minutes of quiet while we each ask ourselves two questions:

For what moment today am I most grateful?
For what moment today am I least grateful?

This 3-week discernment group invites participants to explore and discuss their answers to these 2 questions. This simple process has been found to be the most helpful way for people to hear the voice of God guiding them from within.

REGISTER AND ORDER A BOOK:
Davidson United Methodist Church
(704-892-8277)

- Sunday and Wednesday morning groups are offered. Each group is limited to 14 participants.
- Room 212/214, Davidson United Methodist Church, Davidson, NC
- Questions? Reach out to Melanie Chrencik (mellie_mel2007@yahoo.com) or Ann Starrette (astarrette@davidsonumc.org)
- Resource used: *Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life* by Dennis, Sheila, and Matthew Linn. It looks like a children's book, but don't let it fool you! The foreward will explain the cover.

Saturday, March 09 / 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Centering Prayer Workshop

Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer, prayer in which we experience God's presence within us. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship.

This class provides an opportunity to learn about Centering Prayer or to renew and deepen your practice – to be with God beyond concepts, words, and images; listening with “the ear of the heart.” As we enter the Season of Lent, this is offered three days after Ash Wednesday.

In addition to this class, at no additional cost, continuing sessions are offered to help you establish and deepen a daily practice. More information will be provided when you register.

First Presbyterian Church was established in 1815 for the use of all denominations as Charlotte's Town Church.

Presenters:

- The Rev. Dr. Deborah Conner is the Coordinator of Contemplative Outreach of Piedmont NC and the Pastor for Congregational Care at Myers Park Presbyterian Church.
- The Rev. Dr. Richard Little is a retired Lutheran Pastor who last served as the Senior Pastor at Advent Lutheran Church.

Both facilitate weekly Centering Prayer groups.

REGISTER: www.copnc.org

- Cost: \$35.00
- First Presbyterian Church - 200 West Trade Street, Charlotte, NC

Sunday, March 10 OR Tuesday, March 12 / 10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Invitation to Personal Retreat

The Gift and Necessity of Time Away with God

With the holy season of Lent upon us, have you ever had these kind of thoughts? “This year, Lent will be different. This year, I’ll really enter into the journey with Jesus. I’ll watch and pray for what the Spirit desires to put to death and bring to new life within me.” I know I have.

Retreats are central to spiritual growth anytime, but especially at Lent. One way wisdom figures throughout antiquity have nurtured the process of spiritual growth is through personal retreat - the gift and necessity of time away with God. Why a retreat? It is an intentional time to fast from noise and distraction, to decompress, and listen. A time to pause, rest, release, and let God take charge to do in us what God alone knows we need.

This short class offers:

1. Practical tips for planning your personal retreat - one *that works for you, your life, and in your setting*, either alone or with a companion or two.
2. Sample retreat schedules and fixed hour prayers to provide structure, yet flexibility.
3. Reflection questions and spiritual practices to enhance your time away with God.

Presenters:

- Audrey Brendel is a Benedictine oblate in formation through Belmont Abbey, a vowed member of the WCO, Sabbath Circle Band, and host for Quiet Space Fridays (Silent Retreat Days) at Starrette Farm. A contemplative artist, Audrey has a God-given gift of quiet hospitality.
- Ann Starrette is a seasoned retreat practitioner and leader.

**REGISTER: Davidson United Methodist Church Office
(704-892-8277)**

- Room 217, Davidson United Methodist Church, Davidson, NC
- Questions? Reach out to Ann Starrette (astarrette@davidsonumc.org).

Sunday, April 7 / 2:00 p.m.

Wesleyan Contemplative Order Information Session

Explore the life-giving power of contemplative spiritual practices within a supportive community. We are an ecumenical and inclusive community of clergy and laity who meet in small bands to create space for God's grace to work in our lives. The intent is to nurture the process of inner transformation through contemplative practices as exemplified in John Wesley's *means of grace*, saying they allow the Holy Spirit to "form the Savior in the soul."

**REGISTRATION HELPFUL:
astarrette@davidsonumc.org
Walk-ins welcome!**

- Chapel of Davidson United Methodist Church - 304 South Main Street, Davidson, NC
- Facilitated by Tom Peckham, Carol Prescott, and other order members.
- Questions? Contact Lisa Marion (ourphalt@gmail.com).

What participants have said...

"I love my Julian Band - the people, safety, and acceptance, and all we learn by listening to one another."

"I really appreciate our monthly gatherings. They help me stay focused on what's most important. I don't know that I ever understood what it meant to just 'sit at the feet of Jesus like Mary' until I started practicing it with you all."

Saturday April 13 / 10:00 a.m. (doors open at 9:30) - 3:00 p.m.

Welcoming Prayer Workshop

This workshop offers a simple spiritual tool for deepening our relationship with God, self, and others by re-grooving our brain, renewing our mind, and erasing the constant chatter and prerecorded clichés of our interior commentary ... chatter, chatter, chatter that keeps us tripped up, stirred up, and stuck. [Or maybe I (Ann) am the only one with that human condition?]

What we're after is the healing action and GRACE of the Divine Indwelling flowing from our center, a grace that in time, with our cooperation, produces interior freedom amidst the challenges, chaos, and confusion we may encounter in life. If that sounds appealing to you, please join us. You won't be disappointed!

REGISTER: www.copnc.org

- Registration includes lunch. Cost: \$40.00 before April 8; \$45.00 after.
- Presented by Ann Starrette. You will receive a teaching/note taking booklet, other materials, watch 2 excellent videos to support your practice, plus enjoy fellowship with likeminded people.
- Hosted by St. Gabriel Catholic Church - 3016 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC
- Questions? Contact: Judy O'Toole (jotps46@windstream.net).

Saturday, May 18 / 9:45 am. (doors open at 9:00) - 3:15 p.m.

"Taste & See" Ancient Practice Sampler

Last fall a short class was offered on Creating a Sacred Rhythm, known by the ancients as a Rule of Life. We were especially delighted by the response. Many asked for a *taste and see spiritual sampler* retreat day - coupled with personalized support to help create a sane, simple, sacred rhythm around what matters most. It is true, as Jenn Giles Kemper writes, "As a society, we aren't a people who live by the concept of rhythm. Rather, commitments, responsibilities, and calendars tend to drive our days...."

One way to bring intention to our lives is to cultivate a weekly rhythm... even monthly or quarterly rhythms that support our greatest priorities and values - and lead us Godward. At this *Ancient Practice Sampler* workshop we will briefly learn about AND practice Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina, Solitude & Silence, Active/Breath Prayer, Welcoming Prayer, and spiritual discernment using the Daily Examen. Plus, seasoned practitioners will share how they arrange their days to consistently and routinely make themselves available for God's transforming grace.

REGISTER: www.copnc.org

- Hosted at the United Methodist Foundation - 13816 Professional Center Drive, Huntersville, NC
- Cost: \$40.00 by May 1; \$45.00 after. Space is limited to 25 participants. Registration includes lunch, refreshments, and materials.
- Presented by Ann Starrette and The Rev. Dr. Anne Hilborn. As a professor at South University, Dr. Hilborn instructs beginning students in creating a personal rule of life. Anne is the transitional pastor at Albemarle Road Presbyterian Church and a vowed member of the WCO, Julian Band.
- Questions? Contact Ann Starrette (AStarrette@davidsonumc.org or 704-488-5825)

**Second Friday monthly / 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Come and depart as you are able.**

Quiet Space Fridays

Experience sacred space to encounter God in community yet alone, in the beauty of nature, and the healing rhythm of sacred quiet. We provide no agenda. It is your quiet day, your way - a day to draw back, refresh, and re-calibrate. People come to these "set apart" days for all sorts of reasons... so whatever your reason, welcome!

DETAILS & REGISTRATION:
www.thelydiagroup.com/quiet-space-fridays/

**The Piedmont NC Chapter
of Contemplative Outreach Ltd, International**

offers programs and support for those who want to deepen their relationship with God through the practice of Centering Prayer.

There are weekly groups throughout the greater Charlotte/Lake Norman area that meet to encourage members in the practice of Centering Prayer.

To learn more, see www.copnc.org or contact Chapter Coordinator Support, Colleen Siadak (copnc@icloud.com).

Visit us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/COPNCpage/>

**Wesleyan Contemplative Order
of Davidson United Methodist Church**

is an ecumenical and inclusive lay order of clergy and lay folks who meet in small bands to create space for God's grace to work in our lives. The intent is to nurture the process of inner transformation through contemplative practices. John Wesley called such practices *means of grace* that manifest in outward acts of love.

To learn more, see www.WesleyanContemplativeOrder.com or contact Lisa Marion (ourphalt@gmail.com)

Questions?

**Contact Ann Starrette, Director of Spiritual Formation
Davidson United Methodist Church
astarrette@davidsonumc.org • 704-488-5825**