



DEPTH SOUNDINGS

The Anchorage:
A Contemplative Community for All
Come away...

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

February 2017

Community



This angel was a gift from the family of Doris Honeycutt Russ after her death in 1997, as a reminder of her love of singing, and that now she is singing with all the angels in heaven.



*anchor
deep*

“Making Music”

By Catherine Powell

Our annual theme of “Community” has brought to mind the fact that it takes more than one to have harmony. Pondering music communities, I spoke with my 13-year old granddaughter who plays the trombone in the middle school band. We became aware that while a trombone solo is really fun, by itself the trombone cannot create the fullness of sound that comes from the whole band. So we need each other, community, for harmony.

Notice the blonde angel on the front as she sings her heart out to God. She usually sings in my living room on the end table. She belonged to a friend, Doris Honeycutt Russ, who loved to sing in the church choir; the choir community meant a lot to her. It’s been said that “God’s universal language is music.” It comes from the heart and speaks to the heart.

Singing 8-part harmony in church choirs has been a significant joy of my life. There is an element of intimacy when a choir sings well as they breathe together and create beautiful music together with and for God.

This year we’ve decided to invite all our readers, as well as our donors, to an evening that will be full of God. In the past we have invited talented entertainers to provide music for our Friend/Fund Raisers. This year it will be something more in keeping with the ministry of The Anchorage. We invite you to this evening of worship! While worshipping alone is doable, what a difference to worship in community! There will be music for singing, some silence, Scripture, candles – a Taize worship service led by Donald Duncan, of Christ Church, Greenville.

But be forewarned – it is the first Friend/Fund Raiser in 3 years, and everyone will be asked to prayerfully consider a gift, a pledge to support the mission/ministry plan of The Anchorage. What joy, to worship together as The Anchorage community! (Doris will be with us in Spirit.)

Taize Worship Service Friend/Fund Raiser at the Kroc Center Friday evening, April 28, 2017

“The Gift of Community”

By Scott Cloninger

Since the fall of 2016 and so far in 2017, I have been learning of and experiencing the gift of community. That gift of community came in response to the gift of a cancer diagnosis. Through that gift there has been an awakening in my spirit and soul. That awakening has led to a deepening awareness of the many levels of the many networks of supporting, caring, praying, and loving people. I suspect that they have always been there but the diagnosis of cancer has rocked my world, yet it is as if there is a new clarity of vision and deeper sense of the beauty, love, compassion and grace which surrounds me.

There has been the community of fellow pilgrims along the journey of persons living with cancer and the caregivers who bring them to appointments and accompany them during the chemotherapy treatments. This community slices through many boundaries that this world seems to build to separate people. Things like economic status, ethnic origins, religious or secular division and age. I’ve not heard of anyone refusing prayer that is battling cancer in my limited experience so far.

The second huge community is that of the cancer survivors. It reminds me of the cloud of witnesses spoken of in the Bible. When I announced that I had been diagnosed with cancer to the two congregations my wife serves, I was overwhelmed by the number of persons who were cancer survivors themselves or had had family members who had been affect by cancer.

The medical community reaches out to patients not as a statistic, a number, or by the disease we are seeking to set in remission. I find myself in awe that they are trained to completely yet they take time to genuinely care and attempt to minister to their patients in practical ways that physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally connect to us

(Continued on page 4)



The Anchorage

Vision

A Contemplative Community to encourage all people in a mutual love relationship with God.

Mission

The Anchorage provides a setting for women and men to come away and be with God, as revealed in Jesus the Christ; and to come to love more deeply, this God who loves us beyond measure. Spiritual direction, “Depth Soundings” (quarterly mailing), Desert Days and a variety of contemplative retreats, are some of the ways we encourage and inspire.

Metaphor

A safe harbor in which to anchor deep in still waters as a respite from the wind and waves; where pilgrims may enjoy prayerful grace, honor the rhythm of Sabbath and open more fully to the mystery of God’s love.

Core Focus

Encouraging contemplative community anchored in our Triune God.

Servant Leaders

*(Board of Directors)
Rosemary Goodall
Jason Loscuito, Chair
Juan Ortiz
Starla Revels
Angela Sudermann
Holland Webb*

Other Support

*Susan Leaphart, Volunteer Coord.
Camp Wynn, Treasurer*

Staff

*Catherine Powell,
Founding Servant Leader*

The Anchorage

*P. O. Box 9091
Greenville, SC 29604
(864) 232-LOVE (5683)
www.theanchorage.org*

“A Matter of Life and Death”

By Bill Dietrich (Leading our May retreat)

As Lent approaches, I'm reminded of the Ash Wednesday ritual of anointing with ashes, accompanied by the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." It recalls the inevitability of death, a subject to which we often respond with avoidance or denial. I've seen this firsthand in social gatherings when sharing my experiences as a hospice volunteer: it usually kills the conversation. Perhaps we imagine that if we don't talk about it, it won't happen, at least not soon.

Yet in avoiding the subject of death and dying, we miss the grace and wisdom that comes from fully engaging with our mortality. After years volunteering in hospice and co-directing a program supporting those who serve the dying, I have learned this paradoxical truth: focusing on death is the way to become truly alive. Living in the light of death can help us live more fully, more courageously, more compassionately.

Rodney Smith writes in *Lessons From the Dying*: "Death points toward that which is beyond conditions. Its very nature confirms the eternal...This is why the message of death brings freedom...The realization that death is imminent empowers us to use our remaining time well. It takes away our excuses and forces us to take responsibility. We do what is appropriate because we cannot delay." In *The Grace in Dying*, Kathleen Singh adds: "We become...larger, more integrated, and somehow more real...with fewer gimmicks and simpler truth, with less frivolity and more joy, with less suffering and more gratitude."

My hospice experience confirms this to be true. Those for whom death is close typically suffer no small talk: they get right to the point and expect those around them to be real. I've also witnessed the joy and gratitude that can flow from being reconciled to one's approaching end. Isn't that how all of life should be lived? Why wait until death is imminent to live this way?

I suspect most of us might say it's not death itself, but rather the immediacy of death that we fear. Yet the reality is that we are dying each moment, a direct result of having been born. Life and death are not separate but "two sides of the same coin," as Father Richard Rohr says. To the extent we deny death, we also deny life. Rohr adds: "You must die before you die - and then you will know how to die and not be afraid of it." He also suggests the root of our fear is our fear of God, while others suggest it's our fear of life. Either way, if we resolve one, we normally resolve the other.

So how might we overcome our fear, how do we "die before we die"? Prayer, of course, can help us embrace our mortality, asking God's grace to overcome our fears and embrace all of life. Contemplative spiritual practices can also support our desire to let go of our attachments and live in the fullness of God's presence. Centering prayer and other forms of meditation are examples of such practices. Sometimes we're compelled to engage our fears and impermanence by serious illness or injury - what Singh calls "enlightenment at gunpoint." There can be real grace in this experience, and enormous growth when we don't make something tragic out of it.

However we engage with death, it is among the most important spiritual issues we will ever face. The cost of denial is too high. And the time to face it is now. Perhaps Mary Oliver speaks for us all in her poem, *When Death Comes*:

When it is over, I don't want to wonder
if I have made of my life something particular, and real.
I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened,
or full of argument.
I don't want to end up simply having visited this world.

(Thanks to Bill Dietrich for this article and for his friendship. Bill is a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), and the former executive director of the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation. In recent years his ministerial focus has been around end of life issues. He serves Delaware Hospice as a volunteer chaplain and co-directs Companioning the Dying: Opening Fully to Living, a program of support for those working in end of life settings. Bill lives in Rehoboth Beach, DE with his wife, Anne.)



Upcoming Events

***Fridays, Feb. 3, Apr. 7, June 2, August 4, 9:30-2:30 Desert Days** "Leaving everything, following Christ into the desert."
Fee: \$30 (\$20 if BYO lunch)
Led by Catherine Powell

***Tuesdays, Mar. 20, June 20, Sept. 19, 7-8:30pm Desert Evenings**, Same purpose as Desert Days, just in the evening.
Fee: \$10 Led by Catherine Powell

***Thursdays Feb. 9, 16, 23, 10-12 or 6:30-8:30pm Book Study.** *Let Yourself Be Loved: Transforming Fear into Hope*
Fee: \$36 Led by Catherine Powell

Mar. 10-12, Weekend Beach Retreat XIX "Ye Shall See the Face of God and Live: on Contemplation and Mercy."
Litchfield Inn, Pawleys Island, SC
Fee: \$395 **Stay for Mar. 12-13**, Sun. - Mon. "Going Deeper"
Fee: \$195, both retreats led by Sr. Caroline Smith, Ph. D.

Mon., March 27 - Fri., March 31 4-day Praying Scripture Retreat
Using the Ignatian method of entering into scripture with the imagination, companioned by a spiritual director in daily meetings, and joining the Trappist monks for prayer. The grounds are beautiful at Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner, SC
Fee: \$350 Full, one on waiting list
Led by Catherine Powell

May 5-7, "The Grace of Our Mortality: Opening to the Fullness of Life"
Kanuga, Hendersonville, NC
Fee: \$395 Led by Bill Dietrich
*****(See article to the left)**

Fri., July 21 - Mon., July 24, 3-day Praying Scripture Retreat
Fee: \$300 (Same format as 3/27)

Aug. 11-13, "My Story, Our Story, The Story"
SAVE THE DATE
Led by Porter and Arthur Taylor

*Gower Estates, Greenville, SC

**If \$10 is all you can pay,
then that's all you pay!**



The Anchorage

A Contemplative
Community for All

P.O. Box 9091
Greenville, SC 29604

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Greenville, SC
Permit No. 1070

Return Service Requested

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;
teach and admonish one another in all
wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing
psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.”
Colossians 3:16*

“The Gift of Community” *(Continued from page 2)*

and connect us to a larger faith community. Their compassion has challenged me to notice every kindness and to want to express my deepest gratitude.

Throughout my vocation, I served as a pastor of many different kinds of churches and church communities. I became cognizant of the many anonymous persons who interceded with prayer, acts of kindness, and acts of mercy. Sometimes people offered to help by providing transportation, by providing means when family members were too overwhelmed, worn-out, etc. Still others offered help financially.

Finally, I have felt the PRESENCE of GOD – being in community with GOD and GOD’S people in a different, more powerful way than ever before. There is the comfort of the Heavenly Host, the Bible, (the living WORD of GOD), and the unexplainable sense or awareness of the great cloud of witnesses who have preceded us and await us.

May you seek, find and experience community in a new and deeper way in this new year and each year to come.

(Thanks to Scott Cloninger for this article and for his support and participation with The Anchorage over many years. He is a retired UMC Pastor (2012) after 31 years of parish ministry, all spent in SC. His current interests are four grandchildren: one grandson (4), twin granddaughter’s (3½), and the newest granddaughter almost 3 months old. His mission field is a group of grumpy old men who gather for coffee and put up with him. His most recent spiritual experiences include the gift of being a male who has been diagnosed with breast cancer. The road is filled with challenges of accepting circumstances and learning to take life moment by moment, and day by day. The most recent lesson he is learning is life is out of his control and therefore the best possible place he can be is in GOD’S hands.)

Financial Status as of December 31, 2016 *(Fiscal Year is July 16 – June 17)*

Total gifts budgeted	\$ 19,660
Total received	\$ 9,455
Amount needed	\$ 10,205
Total income budgeted	\$ 37,495
Total received	\$ 13,023
Amount needed	\$ 24,472

***Praising God for YOU,
our donors and participants!***

***Also “Like” us on FaceBook
and share with your friends.***

**SAVE THE DATE!!
Friday April 28**

