



The Anchorage
A Contemplative Ministry

Come away...

DEPTH SOUNDINGS

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

May 2011



STILLNESS



*anchor
deep*

“Stillness or Silliness?”

By Cathie Powell

Every time I saw the word “Stillness” as I began preparation for this issue of our newsletter, I saw it as “Silliness.” The fact that I saved Stillness to be the last of our 4 issues, would normally indicate that I think it is the MOST important of the 4. Some of you may recall that we began with “Suffering” and then moved to “Surrender” as more or less a natural flow when we get to the end of ourselves. The previous issue combined two, “Silence and Solitude” setting the stage for “Stillness.” (or silliness?) Maybe I’m to use 2 words again? We’ll see.

Some of you experience snowfall regularly – and it may have lost its magic for you. Here in Greenville, SC we only have it occasionally and EVERYTHING stops. School is called off because the buses cannot navigate the snow covered roads, especially the back roads that are narrow and winding. Some adults do not have to go to work because they can’t get there. For many, it is a day for playing in the snow – for ALL ages!

“a stillness that exists, hidden in everything”

Our last heavy snow just happened to fall during my last week of radiation treatments so I did not have to dress for 4 days in a row giving my blistered shoulder skin, covered with ointment, a chance to “air” while I sat on the sofa, wrapped in a prayer shawl (thank you again) sipping a cup of hot tea and reading a good book. Except for an occasional squirrel or bird at the squirrel/bird feeder, which I could see well from my comfy seat, the pervading sense of quiet outside was so inviting I felt urged to get up and go to the front door. I stepped out onto the front stoop. The stillness was palpable. No cars, no sounds, nothing... just quiet.

The stillness felt so good! It seemed to wrap me in what I would call God’s love. A sense of awe settled over me and in me. Gratitude filled my heart. This stillness was an unplanned gift and I realized again how essential it is for me to take time to be still – even when the ground is NOT covered with snow.

Paula D’Arcy, in her book, *A New Set of Eyes: Encountering the Hidden God*, speaks of an experience in snow saying, “There are no words to describe a quiet so potent. I knew the snow was echoing a stillness that exists, hidden in everything. I do not understand how I suddenly knew this, but the knowledge filled me. I saw that this stillness generates all life. And sitting there in the snow I wept at the profound sound and power of that silence. It was hard to witness its beauty, knowing I’d lived many years never knowing it was there.”

The outer stillness reminded me of my need for inner stillness and that may be one reason for the 4th commandment God gave to Moses: the invitation to Sabbath rest. I’ve heard this: “It’s not so much that the Jews have kept the Sabbath, as that the Sabbath has kept the Jews.” How about us Christians, have we let the Sabbath keep us? How often are we ceasing from our striving so that we can be still and ‘know who is God?’ Could it be that God is waiting in our depths to relate to us if we would only get still enough to hear?

(Cont.d. on page 4)

Our Taste & See: First Ever Annual Friend Raiser!

We are delighted to report that our event April 30 was a huge success! Our main goal for the evening was that our guests, VERY generous donors, would experience God’s presence in that place. Not only was God’s grace-filled presence evident in Kyle’s musical presentations, but also in each person in the room as we talked about our experiences of God at different events with The Anchorage over the years. What a glorious evening!

Another reason for the evening was to pledge the donation part of our 2011- 2012 Ministry Plan, or about \$44K. Lately more folks have needed to take us up on our, “If \$10 is all you can pay, then that’s all you pay.” It is so important that money not get in the way of what God is doing. We are excited to say that almost half of that amount was pledged by the generous donors who attended. We hope to hear from more of you!



The Anchorage

Vision

For all people everywhere to see God more clearly, love God more dearly and follow God more nearly. For when just one person moves toward living out of that graced space, where we know we are loved, there is a ripple effect which is our best hope for the healing of our world. The Anchorage wants to contribute to that hope.

Mission

The Anchorage provides a setting in which women and men may come away to be with God, as revealed in Jesus the Christ; and to come to love more deeply, through contemplative retreats, book studies, and spiritual direction this God who loves us beyond measure.

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.

Servant Leaders

Sharon Decker
John Hever
Janice Jennings
Carroll Page, Chair
Priscilla Pearce

Other Volunteers

Susan Leaphart, Volunteer Coord.
Peggy Dulaney, Stewardship Chair
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The Anchorage

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“A Call to Stillness”

By Kelly Dickerson Strum

Years ago, I first heard it said, “The longest distance in life is from your head to your heart.” I couldn’t agree more. It seems that many of the truths that rest in my heart right now have traveled there through God’s gift of *stillness*. There are others that are still on this path within me.

Nearly 2 years ago now, after losing my father, I could not resist God’s call to be still during a portion of every day. Only the stillness helped me to cope with my heavy grief day after day. It was in the stillness that I heard the distant hoot owl, learned the distinct song of the red bird and noticed the doves that were always in pairs. It was in the stillness that I felt the breeze, saw the wind move the leaves on the trees and noticed the shadows cast by the sun. It was in the stillness that I was visited by the butterflies, took in the colors of the sunrise and was awe-struck by the stars.

God visited me each day in the stillness and my soul echoed Meister Eckhard’s, “There is nothing in all creation so like God as *stillness*.” The more I felt God’s presence there, the more I wanted to be there...

God’s irresistible call to the stillness has been such grace. It is here that my brokenness is being healed, as God’s love is moving from my head to my heart. It is here that I feel God’s love being shared with me.

If ‘being still and knowing that God is God’ is not my starting place (Psalm 46:10), then I have nothing of eternal worth to share with others. I can be the most active Christian on the earth, but if I have not love – the kind of love that God imparts in the stillness– then I am only a “resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.” (I Corinthians 13:1)

Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, is one of my favorite heroes of the faith. The statue of him in my backyard memory garden is so calming. A bird is resting on his hand and one at his foot. Another I recently saw was one in which butterflies were resting on him. It reminded me of the quote, “Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.” (Nathaniel Hawthorne)

Do you hear God’s invitation: “Sit down quietly and let me love you”? In this stillness, God changes us. God changes the world. Thanks be to God!

(Thanks to Kelly Dickerson Strum for this article and her participation with The Anchorage. She serves as a co-pastor of Eau Claire Baptist Church in Columbia, SC and is married to Dave. Following her career in school counseling, Kelly graduated from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (Baptist Studies program) with a Masters in Divinity in 2008.)

NOTE: “Living in the Light: A Journey of Discernment” is our first retreat of the new year **led by Bill Dietrich!** You may recall his article in our February issue of “Depth Soundings” on Silence & Solitude. (*On our website*) The following is a description of our retreat August 26 - 28. It may fill up before our booklet comes out in July.

Quakers say that we each have an *Inner Light*, what early Quakers identified as the Light of Christ and which illumines God’s leadings for us. How do we experience and respond to the movements of this Inner Light in our lives? How can we live more habitually in awareness and discernment of the God who invites us to co-create a world of peace and wholeness?

This weekend retreat will offer an opportunity to pray, reflect, and open to the invitations of our own Inner Light using the life and example of John Woolman, the 18th Century American Quaker whose *Journal* is a testament to a life wholly given to God. The rhythm of our time will include reflections on discernment taken from Woolman’s writings, extended times of silence both in solitude and in community, and time to rest in God amidst the beautiful grounds of Kanuga. We will close with communal worship, celebration and sharing on Sunday morning.



Upcoming Events

May 19, Thursday, 6:30 – 8:30pm

“Spring Caregivers Dinner: Seeing God’s Love and Care” First Baptist, Greenville, led by Peggy Dulaney

***July 24 – Aug. 1**, 7-day Directed Retreat, Jesuit Center, Wernersville, PA, led by Cathie Powell

Aug. 26 – 28, “Living in the Light: A Journey of Discernment” Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, NC, led by Bill Dietrich

Oct. 10 – 14, “Fall Directed 4-day Retreat” Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner, SC, led by Cathie Powell

Oct. 14 – 15, “Telling Our Stories Retreat (II)” Snails Pace, Saluda, NC, led by Carroll Page

Nov. 17 – 19, “Prayer & Thanksgiving: Making the Holidays Holy” Snails Pace, Saluda, NC, led by Sharon Decker

Jan. 27 – 29, Beach Retreat (XIV) Springmaid Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach, led by Caroline Smith

Jan. 29 – 31, “Praying the Hours” Springmaid Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach, led by Cathie Powell

Feb. 10 – 12 “Artists & Mystics Retreat (III)” Snails Pace, Saluda, NC, led by Cathie Powell and Ashlyn Mengel

Feb. 24 – 26 “Male Spirituality Retreat” Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, NC, led by Carroll and Adam Page

Mar. 23 – 25, “Greatest Silence Retreat (II)” Snails Pace, Saluda, NC, led by Sharon Decker

Mar. 26 – 30, “Spring Directed 4-day Retreat” Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner, SC, led by Cathie Powell

May 4 – 7, “Creative Spirits Retreat” Crystal Beach, FL, led by Cathie Powell, Ashlyn Mengel, with material and cameos by Hal and BJ Stowers,

* Not an Anchorage event. For all others send \$10 payable to “The Anchorage” to reserve your space.

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



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Return Service Requested

*"Be still and know that I am God."
Psalm 46:10*

(Cont. from p. 2)

In 2010 The Anchorage offered a retreat with Martin Laird after using his book, *Into the Silent Land: A Guide to the Christian Practice of Contemplation*, for a book study the year before. He suggested that we meet our fear, our pain and our cravings with our stillness. Practicing stillness, we begin to see that we ARE the awareness and NOT the drama. Practicing stillness does not come easy, but over time we find that there is a 'Something' in the nothing.

Bright men and women of God have been writing for years about our need to slow down in order to experience this Something in the stillness. Some wrote in the 1960's (Merton) or the 1940's (Steere) or even better, in previous centuries! And is the pace going to slow down? For us to experience stillness is it WE who will need to slow down. My sense is that God longs to give us that stillness – God's very self - hidden in everything.

So what do we make of my word "silliness?" Could it be that what



I was pondering was SO deep that I needed some lightheartedness? Maybe. It may also have been God's way of inviting me to come play. Could it be a fun pun on God's part that in English, (and most whose native tongue is English are more driven than those who speak other languages) the words 'play' and 'pray' have only one letter different?

"There is no spectacle in all the bible so sublime as the silent Savior answering not a word to the men who were maligning Him, and whom He could have laid prostrate at His feet by one look of Divine power, or one word of fiery rebuke. But he let them do their worst and He stood in the power of stillness." Dr. A. B. Simpson

Financial Status as of April 30, 2011

(Fiscal Year is July 10 – June 11)

Total gifts budgeted	\$ 54,680
Total received	\$ 36,749
Amount needed	\$ 17,931
Total income budgeted	\$ 89,700
Total received	\$ 62,808
Amount needed	\$ 26,892

Praising God for you, our awesome donors and participants!

From God's Abundance (2008-2011)

3-year Goal	\$ 153,700
Pledged:	\$ 152,525
Remaining:	\$ 1,175

This 3-year Friend Raiser ends next month, June, 2011. Of the \$152K pledged, \$5,000 is still outstanding. Please pray for these faithful folks hoping to complete their pledge.

New Friend Raiser

Taste & See

(July, 2011 – June, 2012)

1-year Donation Goal:	\$ 44,400
Pledged:	\$ 15,800
Remaining:	\$ 28,600

Please prayerfully consider pledging as God leads. It will be just right!

Gifts are fully tax-deductible.