



DEPTH SOUNDINGS

*The Anchorage 20:
A Contemplative Community for All
Come away...*

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

November 2018



“The Beloved and the beloved”

(Thanks to Andrew Dotter for the photograph of this picture in the hall at the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth in Wernersville, PA)

“Sabbath Rest”

By Mike Fleenor

God’s inner score vibrates best
when the mind’s gentle fingers
Press firmly on the strings of the heart
in rhythm: one beat and then a rest.
Like a bee’s sated calm --
after the press of labor,

That lasts hour upon hour --
It suckles nectar,
Both sweet and sour,
Gathered in with peculiar art,
Then ceases buzzing and lies at rest
Quiet, asleep on the flower’s breast.

(Thanks to Mike Fleenor for this poem, and for his support and participation with The Anchorage over the years. He is a retired physician from Asheville, NC. After missionary service in Macau, China and Lisbon, Portugal and a several year stint in internal medicine practice in AL, he spent 25 years in public health practice in Birmingham, AL. He is a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in North Asheville. He is married to Betsy and is “owned” by their rambunctious Boston terrier, Roxie.)



“Our Weakness: Our Best Hope for God’s Strength”

By Catherine Powell

For the last three years, I have let a word “choose me” using the process provided by The Abbey of the Arts website. My sense is that God is in it and that it opens me to new learning. My word for 2017 was “weakness.” At first it felt so fresh, full of new growth! (Especially after the elections when there was no talk of one’s own weakness.) It wasn’t long before I realized it would be a year of seeing my own weakness. And it was. It became a profound gift to me as I began to learn in each instance to look for God’s strength there – right there – in my weakness.

The picture on the cover of this issue helped me own this truth more deeply. I saw myself as the praying woman in God’s huge yet gentle hands. This picture was on the wall outside my room on my annual 7-day directed retreat. I saw it every time I went in or out. It seems to fit well with our theme for the year: The Beloved and the beloved.

A year later I’m still grateful for the weakness that I am, aware of God’s strength being enough. Living life WITH God we have all we need. We are God’s children. That is our identity – God’s strength in our weakness.

“A Haiku in Memory of Fireheart”

Stray cat at the door
Sitting, presenting himself
A presence of love

Fireheart, our large tabby who was the most contemplative cat ever, developed lymphoma in early July and was given two months to live, if we gave him some steroids and fluids. Our wise vet said he would let us know when it was time to let him go. Thankfully he was very clear and I held him as he breathed his last. God was close, with us both through it all.

“The Breath of God”

By Lance Renault, TSSF

For those who would seek to know God and the fullness of his love, stop your striving to find him. He is not in a place beyond yourself. We may speak of drawing close to God, or we may say, “Come Lord Jesus.” But that’s all metaphor, because he is already here, within you!

“...the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people..... is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
[Col. 1:26-27]

And what about the fullness of God’s love.....how do we experience that? That also is already within us. God’s presence and God’s love are inseparable because they are really one and the same. The Apostle John tells us, “*And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.*” [1 John 4:16]

However, knowledge and experience are two different things. Are we looking for the personal experience of love? Then look first for experiencing the intimate presence of God, the author of love. All creation emanates from God and reflects God’s glory. Like the fish whose life is sustained by the water in which it lives, so all of creation is sustained by the permeating presence and love of God.

Yes, we can quote the Bible, and we can reason our way through a logical understanding of where to find the love of God, but that doesn’t mean we are able to “experience” the transcendence of God’s love. For the experience of God’s love we have to move from the propositional side of our faith to the contemplative - mystical side. This is counter cultural, and yet it is exactly the radical faith that Jesus taught. It means the death of the false self that we have created over a lifetime of managing our fears and fostering our self-centered universe.

(cont.’d 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.

Staff

*Catherine Powell,
Founding Servant Leader*

Servant Leaders

*(Board of Directors)
Peggy Dulaney
Michael Fleenor
Alan Kinsey
Starla Revels, Chair
Angela Sudermann*

Other Support

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

The Anchorage

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

“Images from a Contemplative Retreat”

By LaMon Brown

It was still dark as I walked to the guest cafeteria. The Rosemary bush was waiting.

Early morning walk
Caressing the Rosemary
The day's first blessing

Later walking to the chapel to chant with the monks and praise God
another blessing from Nature.

The path to worship
Covered in Honeysuckle
Aroma of God

I have always been blessed to experience the beauty and glory of God in Nature. It was no different at Mepkin Abbey whose beautiful grounds boarding on Cooper River afforded ample opportunities for silent meditation.

In blessed silence
I heard the presence of God—
Music of Nature

I came to the retreat hoping to grow in love for God and acquiring more of the compassion of Jesus. One day I walked in a labyrinth marked off by wildflowers.

In the labyrinth
Unbidden a song arose:
More love to Thee
In those seven grace-filled days, I also meditated on Scripture. With the psalmist, I learned to sing my own song, “All my life I will sing to you, my Jesus.” Over and over again as I read in the Gospels, I experienced the glad-hearted kindness of Jesus.

Blessed are the kind
For they are children of God
Kindness is divine

I was loved by God on this retreat and I returned home with more love and compassion for others—at least for a time. The ordinary world often makes compassion difficult, doesn't it? So, my growth in love and compassion is far from complete. But in that wonderful retreat perhaps I sprouted a new blossom or two.

Trust in God's slow work
Transformation takes ages
For each one of us

(Thanks to LaMon Brown for this poem and for his friendship and support over many years. He served as a Baptist Missionary early in his ministry and then served many churches as a fulltime minister of the Gospel, while doing adjunct teaching at local seminaries. LaMon is a prolific writer. He is currently retired from pastoral ministry both in the church and in the seminary classroom. He still enjoys part-time work as a supply preacher, interim pastor, spiritual director, writer and as a seasonal worker for a plant nursery. He lives in Birmingham, AL with his wife Pat.)



Upcoming Events

***First Fridays in even months, Dec. 7, Feb. 1, Apr. 5, June 7 9:30-2:30 Desert Days**
"Leaving everything, following Christ into the desert." Reflection alone & together.
Fee: \$40 (\$30 if BYO lunch)
Led by: Catherine Powell

2019

Feb. 8 – 10, Fri. – Sun. 21st Annual Beach Retreat, "Finding God in Poetry" at The Litchfield Inn, Pawleys Island, SC. Oceanfront single room, all meals. Fee: \$395 Led by: Caroline Smith

***Mar. 15, 16, Fri. 6:30-9:30, Sat. 9:30 – 5. "Prayer: Experiencing the Intimate Encounter"** We will experience the new life that comes from intimacy with self, God and others in mutual listening. Fee: \$75 (includes lunch)
Led by: Duke Walker

Mar. 29 – Apr. 1, Fri. - Mon. "3-day Praying Scripture Retreat" Using the Ignatian method of entering into scripture with the imagination, companioned by a spiritual director daily and joining the Trappist monks for prayer. Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner
Fee: \$300 Led by: Catherine Powell

May 3 – 5, "Make Your Home in My Love" Weekend Retreat Based on John 15, the vine and the branches, this retreat will provide ample time for reflection in solitude and together with others. Kanuga Conference Center, Flat Rock, NC
Fee: \$495 Led by Clarence Fox, Cindy Orr, Catherine Powell and Harriette Sturges.

May 17 – 20, Fri. – Mon. "3-day Praying Scripture Retreat"
Mepkin Abbey. (See Mar. above)
Fee: \$300 Led by Catherine Powell

Nov. 11-15, Mon.- Fri "4-day Praying Scripture Retreat,"
Mepkin Abbey. (See Mar. above)
Fee: \$350 Led by: Catherine Powell

**Unless otherwise noted, events are at Gower Estates, Greenville, SC.*

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



The Anchorage 20

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

*“But (God) said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you for power is made perfect in weakness.’ So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; **for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.**”*
2 Corinthians 12:9-10

“The Breath of God” (continued from page 2)

The true self, on the other hand, is the self that God gave us at birth to reflect God’s sacrificial love so beautifully described by the Apostle Paul: *“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”* [1 Corinthians 13:4-7]

There is a process, developed by the Christian monastic tradition, to reclaim this depth of selfless love that is available to everyone. In the Franciscan order it employs a personal discipline that includes worship, penitence, prayer, self-denial, retreat, study, simplicity, work, and obedience. And these practices are not restricted to religious orders alone. They are all important for rediscovering our true selves, but for many, prayer is the most important. And in a noisy world clamoring for our attention, prayer needs to include the contemplative prayer of silence. We know that daily sleep is crucial to physical and mental health as the body is repaired, restored, and re-energized. In the same way, contemplation restores and re-centers our spirit so that it is more receptive to God’s presence.

And so love is rediscovered, but also faith and hope. And now faith hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. It is the very breath of God.

(Thanks to Lance for this article and for his participation and faithful support of The Anchorage over many years. Born on Christmas Day in Salinas, CA, Lance spent most of his career in international relief and development, serving with the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction in the Philippines, Compassion International, and American Leprosy Missions. While living and working in the Philippines, Lance acquired a deep spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ which has guided his heart and mind ever since. Now retired in Greenville, South Carolina, Lance is active in his church and various service organizations. Lance and his wife Susan recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with 4 children and 10 grandchildren.)

Financial Status as of October 26, 2018 (Fiscal Year is July 18 – June 19)

Total gifts budgeted	\$ 24,220
Total received	\$ 6,204
Amount needed	\$ 18,016
Total income budgeted	\$ 58,180
Total received	\$ 12,407
Amount needed	\$ 45,773

Grateful to God for you, our donors and participants!

Thank you for your financial gifts. They are God’s blessings to The Anchorage. They provide our programs, scholarships along with the ordinary running of a ministry, all essential parts of what we offer:

Undistracted time with God.

And God keeps encouraging us to ‘give it away.’

Please prayerfully consider **what is that encounter with God worth?** However God leads, it will be just the right amount!

You are a blessing!

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