



DEPTH SOUNDINGS

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

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

August 2023



*anchor
deep*

“What Does It Mean to Begin Again”

By Catherine Powell

It is a new fiscal year, and we have celebrated our 25th anniversary all year! Thank you for your part in it. We are now beginning our next 25 years sensing God does indeed want us to continue. So, we sense God is in our new theme, “Always, We Begin Again” St. Benedict. What comes to mind for you? For me, I picture the children coming to Jesus. He must have been such a welcoming presence. And his words in Mark 10:15, “Whoever does not receive the kingdom as a little child will never enter it” is such a huge encouragement to me! I hope it is to you. It means many things, but at least part of it is that we don’t have to have all the answers! It is another invitation to let go of our striving and just let God love us.

The articles here are delightfully different. The first one below is by the artist who painted the cover picture, that you might recall from our Friend Raiser invitation back in February. She was the one who first gave me the idea for this theme. And the other is from a poet who writes about his experience of beginning again. Please send us your stories – there will be space for them in the next issue.

“Always We Begin Again”

By Miyoung Paik

I began my life in the United States in 1977 after I graduated from a high school in South Korea. Since then, there were many milestone beginnings: going to an art school in New York City, going to a seminary in New Jersey, being ordained as a pastor in South Carolina Annual Conference of United Methodist Church, and being appointed to different churches by the bishop.

When I retired in June 2022 after 32 years of ministry, I knew it was another beginning for me and remembered a quote by St. Benedict, “Always we begin again.” I wondered what that means for a retired pastor. I was excited to retire from the busy life of a pastor and wondered, “If I am not a pastor, then who am I?”

I had to begin again to let go of what was and learn to welcome what is. I came back to Lexington community where I lived for 20 years, and I decided to go back to the church community that I served for 15 years. However, I took a year off intentionally from worshiping in person and meeting with people to give new pastors room to get to know the congregation and for me to unlearn being a pastor in charge.

After the first year of retirement, I still have not found my routine. I am not disciplined enough to do what God wants or what I desire to do or be. As I begin each day, I ask myself, “How do I take myself lightly? How do I resist trying to come up with answers or resolutions?”

“Always we begin again” is not about major milestone accomplishments. It is about unlearning things, learning new and simple things. I never gardened before. I regret not watering my mother’s beautiful vegetable garden when she had to be away even after she pleaded. I used to say to her, “Ask God to water it while you are gone. You and God work it out.” Now I have a few flowers in the ground and a few little plants in pots. I wonder who is going to water my plants while I am out of town. I bought a wildflower seed bag and threw them on the ground. I had a no idea what was going to happen. I don’t claim to be a gardener. But I am glad to be a beginner. I smile looking at little flowers and new shoots coming out.

Does God smile at me? Do I smile at God? Do I smile at my friends and families or strangers? Today, I begin again with a smile.

(Thanks to Miyoung Paik for this article and for her generous permission to use her painting as our cover art, for this issue and our Friend Raiser (in color!) Rev. Dr. Miyoung Paik is a retired United Methodist pastor and an artist. She loves to sit in her backyard, sings with the Lexington County Choral Society and wishes to paint more.)



The Anchorage

Vision

A contemplative community to encourage all people everywhere to live in a mutual love relationship with God.

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 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.

Core Focus

Encouraging a love relationship with our Triune God, especially in contemplative community.

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The Anchorage

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If we have inadvertently left someone off this thank you list, we are very sorry. Please accept our apology and let us know – so you can be listed in our next issue.

Heartfelt thanks
 for you and your
 spiritual gift of
 generosity!"



Chronological Listing of Upcoming Events

“Desert Days” 1st Fri. even months, Aug. 4, Oct. 6, Dec. 1. Theme is **“Always, We Begin Again” (St. Benedict)** Opening prayer, varying content, reflection time in solitude, lunch with conversation, similar timing for the afternoon. Begins at 9:30, concludes by 2:30.

Fee: \$42 in person (\$30 if BYO lunch) Deposit (\$10) due a week ahead.

Led by: Catherine -Aug, Michael Fleenor-Oct, Susan Rice-Dec

Location: Gower Estates, Greenville, SC

Fall Book Study, *Just This* by Richard Rohr. This small book is a collection of brief and evocative meditations and practices that invite us to cultivate the gift of waking up to the beauty of reality in all its glorious ordinariness. It creates a spaciousness for the soul to grow into a kind of seeing that goes beyond merely looking, teaching us how, not what, to see. It's the heart of contemplation - the centerpiece of any inner dialogue.

3 Tuesday mornings from 10:00 – 12noon, Sept. 12 - 26

Fee: \$45 (does not include \$10 book) (deposit (\$10) due a week ahead)

Led by: Catherine

Location: Gower Estates, Greenville, SC.

“Ignatian Retreats” Dates TBA Companionship retreatants one-on-one in person or on Zoom for 3- to 5-day directed retreats is my deepest sense of calling. You would need to have quiet space for this daily: 45 minutes with me either using Zoom or in person to process your prayer and about 1 hour, at 3 different times, for prayer with suggested scripture.

Fee: \$150 for 3 days (4 sessions), \$195 for 5 days (6 sessions), \$250 for 7 days (8 sessions).

Led by: Catherine

26th Annual Beach Retreat: “Always, We Begin Again” Jan. 26-28 weekend.

We will focus on this inviting idea of going back to the basics of our faith, relishing the key parts of our love relationship with God. Plan to arrive between 4 and 4:30, we will begin at 5 and conclude by 11:00 Sunday. We will have ample time to walk on the beach, nap, renew our souls with God and each other. Maybe even walk a labyrinth on the beach? Cindy will again lead us with her music and teaching.

Fee: \$495 (includes oceanfront single room) Dep. (\$10) by Dec. 29th

Led by: Catherine and Cindy. Music by Cindy Orr.

Location: TBA, Myrtle Beach area, SC

Lenten Book Study, *Living in God: Contemplative prayer and Contemplative Action* by Nicholas Amato. If you're looking for a scholarly work this book may be a bit of a disappointment, but if you want a concrete way of disposing yourself to experiencing God as face-to-face, to have that presence have an impact on your life, then this work may be of assistance. Fr. Nicholas has spent his life leading retreats with this material and put it in book form at the request of many who were blessed by it.

5 Tuesday mornings from 10:00 – 12noon, Feb. 20 – Mar. 19

Fee: \$75 (does not include \$14 book)

Led by: Catherine

Location: Gower Estates, Greenville, SC

Spiritual Direction is offered monthly. Our first session is always free as we discern together if what I'm offering is what you are seeking. Spiritual Direction is a graced process for tending the holy in our lives by listening with another for God, minimizing distractions as much as possible.

Fee: \$60 (If that is not doable, we'll find an amount that is.)

With: Catherine

Location: Gower Estates, Greenville, SC or on Zoom

If \$10 is all you can pay, then that is all you pay!
(Donations are always welcome for scholarships)

LEADERSHIP

Michael Fleenor -- Note: Michael is leading our October Desert Day. (Please see bio info below his article on page 5)

Cindy Orr - Cindy has been active in music ministry most of her life. She has served in her church music program, taught Sunday school classes, and served in other various ways. She was in a group, RainChild, that performed often, then felt led to embark on a solo adventure in music ministry, serving as Worship Leader at Russell Community Church, in Greenville, SC. She has led music for beach retreats and Friend Raisers for The Anchorage. Cindy will again do some teaching at the beach and provide worship, guitar in hand, that glorifies God and encourages us.

The Rev. Dr. Catherine Powell, Founding Servant Leader of The Anchorage, earned a DMin from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Her formation also includes the Spiritual Guidance Program of The Shalem Institute, The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and training at the Jesuit Center in Wernersville, PA to lead 8-day retreats. Her passion is one-on-one spiritual direction, both monthly and when leading Ignatian retreats. She enjoys time with her husband Skeeter and their pets.

Susan Rice, has served as a Servant Leader and enjoys offering spiritual direction, transformational coaching, and creating space for others to experience the love of God. She loves reading, being in nature, and exploring new places and ideas. One of her greatest joys is listening with others as they discover God's voice and the transformational unfolding of their gifting and unique shape in the world. She and her husband, David, have 3 grown children. They have served in cross cultural missions for the last 36 years and currently work in member care for missionaries. Susan is a professionally certified coach with the ICF and has her Masters in spiritual direction and formation.

I don't know what got into me . . .

By Michael Fleenor

After decades, I did it again. As I approach the mythic Biblical 3 score and 10, I thought I was beyond doing such a thing ... But I did it again anyway . . .

After living in Asheville for nearly 10 years, I refrained from indulging myself even when surrounded by them.

I bought a guitar.

It must be a delusion of old age that surfaced after I attended the 4-day Merlefest in Wilkesboro, NC in May. During my youth with nearly an exclusive immersion in church music, I found myself absorbed into a wider variety of music genres including bluegrass, country, rock, ballad, blues and old time. Sure, I was familiar with all of these, I just was convinced that they were a distraction from the "real thing" at church. To my surprise, as I investigated my genealogy and previously unknown facts of our family that literally brought me into the world, the music of my ancestors came to pull at me.

My previous experience with a guitar was in college over 50 years ago. Then, I had little money, so the guitar I bought was of marginal quality. I hit my first obstacle when practice became a painful affair. Was it going to be worth the pain? Would I ever get used to it? Would I ever get good at it?

Little did I know then that that guitar's high "setting" required a great deal of force to depress the strings to produce clear sounding notes and it seriously limited my practice time to no more than 15-30 minutes per day. Even the callouses that finally began to develop only slightly mitigated the pain of playing. Beyond that, I tried to teach myself how to play from books because I thought I couldn't afford lessons with the additional time and the expenses with the cost of studying other things. So, like many aspirations, my music "career" was uninspired and died for lack of air.

What am I learning now? A better quality guitar has less "action" and the need to exert high force on the strings. Commit to one: It is less painful. Take lessons from a master and be faithful to practice every day. Don't be a perfectionist; enjoy the process and forgive yourself for mistakes and good music will eventually come. Repetitious refrains are the way to "muscle memory" and playing music naturally without thinking. In other words, repeat . . . pause, take a deep breath . . . repeat. Then, once you have the basics down, learn to improvise. Every song you learn gets better. And the most important lesson: You are never too old to learn . . . and its corollary, "Better late than never!"

Is all of this a painless process? No, I still feel the bite of the strings on my tender fingertips. I get frustrated some days with slow progress: I simply don't like missing notes; but I correct my errors by watching the teacher and gradual progress has been noticeable. Is it easy with old fingers? No, but the music seems to come in spite of it.

Come to think of it, isn't this The Way of a creative spiritual journey with Christ? Every note, clear or buzzing, can become a joyful noise.

Always begin again. Ps. 100:1 Lam 3:23-24

A tanka meditation on Mark 11:23 and Exodus 3:5

Where do you begin?

Steps of faith move the mountain

Of where you are now

To begin where you become

Holy Ground; take off your shoes

(Thanks to Michael Fleenor for this article and for his support and friendship over the years. He is a retired internal medicine physician who spent the vast majority of his medical career in public health, the last 10 years as Health Officer of Jefferson County (Birmingham), Alabama. He moved from Alabama to Asheville, NC in 2014 with his wife, Betsy, of 42 years. He lives a quiet life in the mountains enjoying hiking, writing, genealogy, and contemplation. He has been involved with The Anchorage since 2017, serving a term as a Servant Leader, a year as Chair, and responsible for spear-heading our rewriting of our bylaws.)

"A Book for Our Time"

By Catherine Powell

Thanks to those of you who purchased the book I was privileged to help write back in 2019. God was the instigator! Several events were cancelled in 2020 that were to help get the word out, so I'd like to use a bit of this open space to let you know there are still copies available, at Amazon, Barnes & Nobel, Fiction Addiction in Greenville, SC and other booksellers can get it. I'm glad to sign a copy for you.

I'm delighted to have used it as a main resource for the Spiritual Formation class I was asked to teach at The United Lutheran Seminary (combined LTSP and LTSG) in their MDiv program. What a joy to have students preparing for ministry read it and respond. They are the men and women for whom it was written!

Trusting God to get the word out. I'm grateful that it continues to speak to all people, but especially those in ministry, clergy and laity.



"Trusting God to get the word out. I'm grateful that it continues to speak to all people, but especially those in ministry, clergy and laity."



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Community for All

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*“(Jesus said) ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them and blessed them.”
Mark 10: 14b-16*

“Award Richly Deserved”

By Catherine Powell



Thanks to Matt Rollins for his 3-year term of service as a Servant Leader (Board of Directors) with The Anchorage. He served his 3rd year as our Chair. The words on his award read

“Thank you for your willingness to go the extra mile, depth of understanding of the contemplative way, your leadership and sense of humor, and your love for God and God’s people.

Financial Status (as of June 30, 2022)

Total gifts budgeted	\$ 20,600
Total received	\$ 25,404
Amount OVER	\$ 4,804
Total FY income budgeted	\$ 34,666
Total received	\$ 37,606
Amount OVER*	\$ 2,940

We are thrilled to be in the black!

IT IS BECAUSE OF OUR FAITHFUL PARTICIPANTS AND DONORS! THANK YOU – FOR BELIEVING THAT WHAT WE OFFER IS OF VALUE AND NEEDED TODAY!

Our February Friend/Fund Raiser **“Always, We Begin Again”** was in person after years of Zooming!

We give all the glory to God with grateful hearts for those who listened for God’s leading about how much to give.

All gifts are fully tax-deductible.

Use our convenient online PayPal donation/registration!