



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

DEPTH SOUNDINGS

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

May 2021

“John 17: That All May Be One”



“A Zoom Desert Day Moment”

A snapshot of a Zoom Desert Day with The Anchorage. Someday we'll look back at this and recall learning about Zoom. I'm grateful as it gave us some semblance of community – and we are created for community – that all may be one. Community gives great joy – to us and to God!”



*anchor
deep*

“The Joy of Jesus Made Complete in Us”

By Catherine Powell

This is the last issue with the “John 17, That All May Be One” theme. I’d like to share a personal word. The pandemic and other stresses have been difficult for us all, some much more than others and my heart goes out to you and our prayers are for you. While my situation has been blessed compared to many, I’ve learned that comparison of pain is not usually fruitful. Pain needs to be honored for what it is. For me, a person with a sensitivity gene, the year has been full of anxiety. The ‘too-much’-ness has been in your face, overwhelming for sensitive souls, and some of you, maybe most of you in contemplative community may identify?

May I share what’s been helpful for me with hopes of a connection? The best help has been awareness of who God is. God is bigger than this and we belong to another Kingdom. Being in community has eased my heart and reminded me of the joy that comes from God through each other.

Finding the word joy in John 17 was a delight! It is part of becoming one. Jesus prayed for it so that his joy would be made complete in us.

My writing for this issue began to come together once I read an article about Thomas Merton given to me in 2015. It is from “Weavings,” by Nass Cannon and the title is “Stand on Your Own Feet.” He was writing about “invisible monks,” called to solitude and contemplation who live and work in all strata of society.

He’s talking about me! And maybe some of you? He says we learn to stand on our own feet by withdrawing from a false self, concentrating through solitude on the exploration of the inner realm in which we seek God. In the process we deepen our capacity for obedience, faith, freedom, and love – all critical elements for us monks to stand on our own feet before God. Not in independence but in intimacy.

With the recovery of our true self, we monks stand on our own feet by discovering our real but hidden identity in Christ, in which our spirits and God’s Spirit become one. Through immersion in the mystery of the presence of God within ourselves, we accelerate our maturity in becoming children of God. We become aware of our shortcomings and desire to overcome them. We seek wholeness, by pursuing integration of our bodies, minds, and spirits, subject to the Spirit of God, which enables openness to all persons and love for humanity. We hope for a final and complete integration through full union with the Divine, where we will experience the deepest aspiration of a monk, to stand on our own feet before God and see God face to face. Cannon speaks of giving God joy, as well as ourselves.

“Hope and Rest”

By Susan Rice

“But what about...” I started and then stopped. I could feel my friend’s eyes on me and the heat in my voice and face. My inner voice said “pause, breathe, really look.” Jesus knows I am trying to be more responsive and less reactive, so He seems to be offering me multiple opportunities to practice! I took a breath and looked. I saw a person who holds a different opinion than I do, but I know she loves God. She is compassionate and kind, helping others in need. It was good to stop and to really see her – not the words I disagree with, but the person beneath the words, the person that God created and loves. And then I sensed the invitation to not be defined nor define others by the world (John 17:16 MSG). There was an invitation toward deeper unity flowing from a heart posture, not just from a similar perspective.

As I have followed Jesus through Lent and Easter, I have been moved by His quietness, the times He did not respond or defend Himself. I imagine what it was like to be in His presence- encompassed by reality and love. I am asking what it means to prayerfully hold others in this presence, to seek Oneness not only with the Trinity, but with others who are seeking God. What does unity look like even when we hold different perspectives, what is sacrificial love, and how do I allow Jesus to live fully within me so that I can see with His eyes? These are the questions that I hold in the Easter Season,
(cont.’d on p. 4)



The Anchorage

Vision

For all people everywhere to see God more clearly, love God more dearly and follow God more nearly in response to God’s love. We believe that God loves all people and is healing the universe one person at a time as each of us moves toward living out of that graced space of knowing we are fully known and fully loved. We want to be part of God’s healing of the world.

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, book studies and 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 beloved community anchored in our Triune God.

Servant Leaders

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Susan Rice
Matt Rollins

Other Support

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Catherine Powell,
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The Anchorage

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“Finding Our God Revealed in Love”

By Lance Renault

Finding and exploring the love of God is critical to our understanding who we are and what our life is about. So, let's step back in time and explore God's love in the Old Testament.

Searching for God's Love in the Old Testament

During the early days of Western civilization, all people were governed by autocratic monarchies who ruled by divine right or at least felt compelled to appease the national gods to stay in power. The leader of the empire was often considered to be a god and it was a stern parent-child relationship he had with his people.

After a 400-year sojourn in Egypt ending in slavery, the Jews escaped back to their homeland by way of a miraculous passage through the Red Sea. When they were safely on the other side, their leader Moses sang a thanksgiving praise to God that included these words:

*You stretch out your right hand,
and the earth swallows your enemies.
In your **unfailing love** you will lead
the people you have redeemed. [Ex 15:12-13]*

**“God never ceases
to be the
ultimate expression
of love.”**

Pay attention to this! This is the first time in the biblical record that God was called “loving.” The Jews saw it as a parent-child familial love and likely the only time that any nation's god at that time was called loving. When the Jews left Egypt, three major empires ruled the Western World - the Greek empire, the Egyptian empire, and the Mesopotamian. The term “love” was not associated with any of their deities or their leaders, unless describing marriage or sex.

Following this expression of God's love in the book of Exodus, we find hundreds of verses in the remaining books of the Old Testament describing God's love for God's people. Additionally, God tells the people to love their neighbors and the strangers in their camp. However, note that God's love as described in the Old Testament tended to be transactional. God will pour out love for the children if they keep the commandments.

A New Understanding of God's love in the New Testament

Expressions of the Lord's love for the people continue in the New Testament where we see new dimensions of God's presence and love. We move from a familial relationship to a unitive relationship. God and all of creation are in this love relationship together.

God's love is now described as unconditional. God never ceases to be God and never ceases to be the ultimate expression of love.

In the New Testament we are introduced to Jesus, the anointed one of God, and also called the Son of God. We can say that Jesus lives in total union with his Father God. Also living in union with God is the Holy Spirit. Together, this Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, express themselves in perfect unity and represent the Christian Godhead.

Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, his mystical union with the Trinity became available to all believers who would identify with and worship him. We can look at the example of many saintly men and women, totally committed to Jesus Christ who, over the past 2,000 years, have demonstrated union through their Godly wisdom, grace, and love.

(Thanks to Lance for this article and for his participation with and support for The Anchorage since our beginnings. He was born on Christmas Day, 1940 in Salinas, CA. He worked in international relief and development for most of his professional life. He retired as Chief Program officer at American Leprosy Missions, headquartered here in Greenville, SC, in 2008. Lance and his wife Susan Stetson Renault have 4 children and 10 grandchildren. He is a member of The Village Church (Anglican Church of North America.) He is creator and principal author of a new blog titled “Exploring Union” found online at exploringunion.com. Exploring Union is a collection of essays that explore our spiritual/mystical union with Christ. This includes the death of self (ego) and being an open vessel of God's love expressed in thought, word, and deed.)



Upcoming Events

Desert Days: First Fridays, even months, June 4, Aug. 6, Oct. 1, Dec. 3, 9:30 – 2:30 (Led by Catherine/others)

June theme is “John 17: That All May Be One.” **New theme for Aug.** Reflection alone and with God.

Fee: \$20 if on Zoom

(\$40 if in person on the deck in Gower Estates, Greenville, SC)

Ignatian Retreat in person Wed., July 7 – Mon., July 12

Ignatius House in Atlanta has an excellent record; no Covid cases due to gathering. They reduce the number of retreatants, honor social distancing, and more. (Last July the retreat was very safe).

Fee: \$650 (room/board/daily spiritual direction with Catherine.)

Location: Ignatius House, ATL

“Ignatian Retreats” on Zoom.

3, 5 or 7-days, to fit your time frame.

You would need to have relatively quiet space for this daily: 45 min. for Spiritual Direction on Zoom, about 1 hour for solitude prayer, 3 different times. How much of the rest of your time would be in silence is up to your sense of God's call. (More is always better.)

Fee: 3-day (4 sessions), \$150,

5-day (6 sessions), \$195,

7-day (8 sessions), \$250.

Led by Catherine.

Spiritual Direction, meeting one-on-one monthly (currently on Zoom unless vaccinated) for an hour, is a prayerful time to reflect with another about your relationship with God, a listening together for God. Spiritual direction can be a coming home to your deepest heart, your truest self.

With: Catherine

Fee: \$60 if doable otherwise we will find an amount that is.

First session is always free.

We are hopeful to offer more events this year; our August issue will have details, as God leads! Please pray with and for us? We pray for you!

Thanks to all who joined us on Zoom for our Worship Service!

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



The Anchorage

A Contemplative
Community for All

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"But now I am coming to you and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves." John 17:13

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say Rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:4-7



(Hope and Rest, cont.'d from page 2)

asking for a resurrection within my heart. A quote from *The Good and Beautiful Community* has stayed with me this season. The author, James Bryan Smith, describes the true source of unity in diversity as the Trinity then says "God's very reality is radically multiple, radically relational, and infinitely active." What a magnificent image of true community: radically multiple, radically relational, and infinitely active. These are John 17 words!

"an invitation toward deeper unity flowing from a heart posture, not from a similar perspective"

Interestingly enough, these words give me both hope and rest. I can rest in my own process of becoming one with God and with others. I know that Jesus came for this, to make us one with the Oneness He shares with the Father. During this season I take deep hope in His promise. "I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the

Love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26 ESV). The rising tide of His work and revelation in us will not be stopped or ultimately drowned out by the noise of the world or the noise of my "self" as I learn to see and live in unity.

(Thanks to Susan Rice for this article and for her participation with and support of The Anchorage. She has served in international missions with Cru for 31 years mostly living and working in Eastern Europe. She currently resides in Greenville and is completing an MA in Spiritual Formation and Direction from Richmond University. She is a trained transformational coach and coach trainer with Coaching Mission International. Her passion is to create space for others to know and experience the depths of God's love and she offers this space through transformational coaching, spiritual direction, and spiritual formation groups. Together with her husband, David, they provide missionary care for nationals and Americans serving globally, sabbatical coaching, and transition care. Susan currently serves as a Servant Leader.)

Financial Status

as of April 23, 2021
(Fiscal Year is July 20 – June 21)

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| FY gifts budgeted | \$ 20,800 |
| Total received | \$ 18,600 |
| Amount needed for FY | \$ 2,200 |
| FY income budgeted | \$ 39,000 |
| Total received | \$ 25,500 |
| Amount needed for FY | \$ 13,500 |

Grateful to God for you, our donors and participants!

Thank you for your financial gifts to The Anchorage. They cover scholarships along with the day-to-day ministry operation, so we may offer:

Undistracted time with God.

And God keeps encouraging us to 'give it away.' Lack of funds will never keep someone 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.