



The Anchorage
A Contemplative Ministry
P.O. Box 9091
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The Anchorage
A Contemplative Ministry

DEPTH SOUNDINGS

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

August 2010

Return service requested except for
"temporarily away"

"We also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."
Romans 5:3-5



Robert Miles and Donna Meyer completed their 3-year terms as Servant Leaders with The Anchorage. Front row: Cathie Powell, Margaret Hardy; back row: Robert Miles, David Leaphart, Donna Meyer, Henry Mitchell, Sharon Decker, Carroll Page. (Not pictured Susan Leaphart.)

Financial Status as of July 27, 2010 (Fiscal Year is July 09 - June 10)

Total gifts budgeted	\$ 54,680
Total received	\$ 2,248
Amount needed	\$52,432
Total income budgeted	\$ 89,700
Total received	\$ 4,098
Amount needed	\$85,602

Grateful to God for you, our awesome donors and participants!

From God's Abundance
(2008-2011)

3-year Goal	\$153,700
Pledged:	\$138,408
Remaining:	\$ 15,292

Beginning now, you may **donate gifts/register for events online!** Hoping to make it VERY easy for you.

All gifts are fully tax-deductible.

VOLUNTEER AT THE OFFICE?

If you could help us out a few hours a month it would be fantastic! Be in touch!

Come away...

"Washed Way"

*I know what it is to be hungry in a field left bare.
I know what it is to thirst from drought and sand.
I know what it is to be drenched by rain and no longer care.*

*Yet in the eye of every hurricane there is calm.
In every field there is a treasure.
In every irritated clam there is a pearl.
And in every jar broke open there is a healing ointment spilled forth to wash the way.*

"She Carries Rocks"

*She carries the rocks with her.
They weigh her.
They slow her.*

*These burdens we place on her.
They carry her too -
when she remembers their origin.
She knows she is carried too.*

*She knows the rocks she carries will be tomorrow's building blocks.
Stone, by stone, by stone.
And she knows the rocks that she carries might someday carry her too.*

"Broken Wholeness"

*Broken grain
Broken grapes
Make bread
Make wine*

*Communion arrives -
thru brokenness.
For brokenness -
our wholeness.*

Our sustenance woven in weakness.

Since Jesus himself has now been through suffering and temptation, he knows what it is like when we suffer and are tempted, and he is wonderfully able to help us.
HEBREWS 2:18

(Thanks to Shannon Medlin for these poems and for her involvement with The Anchorage over the years. She and her husband and 2 children have just moved from Simpsonville, SC to Nashville for her to begin an M. Div. at Vanderbilt Divinity School. We already miss her!)



Suffering

“Suffering: How Important Is It Really?”

by Cathie Powell

Our theme for “Depth Soundings” as we begin this new fiscal year, is an invitation to ‘be with’ four words that all begin with “S.” The first “S-word” is “Suffering” and though few if any of us would actively pursue an opportunity to suffer, given the chance, and perhaps rightly so, suffering comes to us and demands our attention. So rather than pretend it does not exist, it seems important to give it its say, to offer a more contemplative way to honor it, to be with it, in our increasingly distracted and splattered culture.

Some of you have heard me tell of my New Testament professor, Dr. John Blumenstein, who taught us that you could not define Christianity without the word “suffering.” A question on our final exam was to write a 25-word definition of Christianity. Our answer was incorrect if the word suffering was not included. Can you relate to the idea that suffering is essential to Christianity? There seems to be a popular kind of faith around that promises to eliminate suffering. Could that be real? Could it be of God? I don’t think so.

What have you learned from your suffering? I confess that most of my suffering I brought on myself, with my egocentric ways and difficulty letting go, but even then, I have learned from it, things I probably could not have learned any other way. If you are thinking that you have not suffered much, take a moment to reflect on times when others have suffered and you suffered with them, those you knew and strangers.

And looking at the life and death of Jesus himself we see suffering not only in his death, but also throughout his life. How often he ached for those around him to understand what he was saying. How many folks just came to him to receive his miracles, without any interest in the Kingdom of God?

Those of you who know the life and writings of John of the Cross, probably thought of him as soon as you saw the word suffering. His writings became more accessible to me a few years ago through a book, *The Impact of God*, written by Iain Matthew, O. D. C. This quote of Iain Matthew says it well, “In taking us into our poverty, prayer sets us at the center point where the pain of our brothers and sisters converges. It sees us at the heart of the world’s suffering. In prayer, distance disappears and new veins of communion open up. The gospel has eyes which reach out and heal; and prayer can serve, by entering the pain of the brother and sister and holding it before the gaze of Christ.”

The word “privilege” came to me, I know I didn’t think it up, when I first heard my breast cancer diagnosis. It wasn’t until rereading a bit of *The Impact of God* for this article that I found from whence it came. It was in this life-changing book that I had read three times. Here it is: “(‘The Dark Night’) presents suffering not as the only place, but as a privileged place of God’s inflow. In it, love not only comes; love also opens a space for its coming. That is the God-content of pain; it has power to unlock us at the point we cannot unlock ourselves. John does not want to say, ‘It’s all right, you see, because this is the explanation.’ He wants to say, ‘It’s not all right; it’s a mess. But you are not alone in this. God is present in this.’”

So is it essential? It is normal to pray to avoid suffering for ourselves, for the world, but when it comes, perhaps an honest prayer could be, “God help me not waste my suffering.”

Short Bibliography:

The Impact of God: Soundings from St. John of the Cross by Iain Matthew
A Treatise on Prayer from the Heart by Jean Pierre Caussade
A Cry of Absence: Reflections for the Winter of the Heart by Martin Marty



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
Henry Mitchell
Carroll Page
Priscilla Pearce

Cathie Powell, Executive Director
Margaret Vincent, Office Manager
Peggy Dulaney, Stewardship Chair
Camp Wynn, Treasurer

The Anchorage

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Upcoming Events

Wed., Aug. 25, 7-8:30 p.m.
Information Session for “Retreat in Everyday Life”. Led by Donna Meyer, space for 1

Fri., Aug. 28 – Sat., Aug. 29
“Listening to God, Oneself, and Others” Summer Retreat The Oratory, Rock Hill, SC Led by Patty Levering, Quaker

Thurs, Sept 23, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Fall Caregivers’ Dinner First Baptist, Greenville Led by Peggy Dulaney

Fri., Oct. 15 – Sat. Oct. 16
“Listening to Your Stories” Snails Pace, Saluda, NC Led by Carroll Page

Fri., Nov. 1 – 8
7-day Fall Directed Retreat Mepkin Abbey, Moncks Corner, SC. Led by Peggy Walsh, space for 1

Fri., Nov. 12, 9:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Fall Quiet Day, Garden Room. Chapel at Furman, Greenville, SC. Led by Margaret Hardy

Thurs., Dec. 2, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Advent Retreat Led by Peggy Dulaney

Thurs., Jan. 12, “Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Reunion”. Led by Donna Meyer and Cathie Powell

Fri., Jan 21 – Sun., Jan. 23
Beach Retreat, Springmaid Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach, SC Led by Caroline Smith, space for 6.

Sun., Jan. 23 – Tues., Jan. 25
“Praying the Hours” at the beach, led by Cathie Powell

Mar. Thurs., 6:30-8:30 p.m.
“Lenten Book Study” John Michael Talbot book, led by Cathie Powell

Sabbatical: Sept 20 – Dec. 31
Cathie hopes to practice the presence of God more intentionally.

All events are at The Anchorage unless noted above. To reserve your space, send \$10 payable to The Anchorage.