



The Anchorage
A Contemplative Ministry

Come away...

DEPTH SOUNDINGS

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

November 2007



**“Trust
in the
Lord
with all your heart
and lean
not to
your own
understanding.”**

Proverbs 3:5



*anchor
deep*

FAITH

“Yes... whatever”

By Cathie Powell

In August, we began our new fiscal year of quarterly newsletters and our theme is “Faith, Hope and Love.” You may recall that last month we began with Love? That is because verse 13 of first Corinthians finishes with the words, “and the greatest of these is love.” Does that mean Love comes first? Not necessarily, but there was a strong sense that Love was ready, raising her hand to be first, so she was.

Now we turn to Faith. To me, the word Faith is troublesome. It is too easy to miss the more demanding and more life-giving meaning of the word. “Faith” is a noun and the verb “believe” cannot capture what faith is. The less demanding path misleads us by saying that if we can say, “I believe in Christ” then we have put our faith in Christ, but is that really so? Just as I can believe a chair will hold me, I have not put my faith in the chair until I sit in it. So, it is with putting our faith in God. Are we ready to put our weight down, trusting everything to God? Is God really enough?

Many folks resonate with the book title, “I’d Say Yes God, If I Knew What You Wanted” by Nancy Reeves. I recommend the book; Nancy develops the concept well. Often I use the title as an example of how we approach God with our life choices. That book title brought this more demanding idea to mind: “I’d say yes God ... - whatever.”

Not only is it more demanding; it is more life-giving. Last month, during our 4-day Directed Retreat at Mepkin Abbey, one retreatant was struck by this phrase and two weeks later, as he moved into “Yes – whatever” living he says the tilt of the earth is different! He realized that though he had faith, he was not living there. It is easy, too easy, to slip into that space. Now he is seeing with new eyes; seeing things he would not have seen before. He is seeing God’s abundance because of his “Yes...whatever!” to God.

**Is God
really
enough?**

“My Resident Theologian”

By Mary Frances Thompson

As I have thought about faith, I realized that “faith” and “trust” are such related concepts that I have trouble defining one without using the other. Yet, I don’t think these concepts are always interchangeable. One of my resident theological instructors, better known as my cats, helped me understand the distinction, though I still cannot write succinct, differentiating definitions. Often my cat will turn on her back exposing her stomach for me to rub or scratch. That is an example of trust. She makes herself vulnerable because she trusts me not to harm her. When I am away from home, my cat does not leave (at least not permanently) because she expects that I or someone I’ve selected will come to feed her and maybe even give her attention. That is faith. My cat’s

**...even when
God’s presence
is not obvious**

past experiences have taught her that she will receive care even if her usual caregiver is not visible. I trust God when I follow to the best of my discernment God’s will, even if doing so may be against my natural instincts and expose me to the uncomfortable, the unfamiliar, and, yes, sometimes even the dangerous whether physically, emotionally, or financially. I have faith that God will be with me and provide for my needs wherever God may send me, even when God’s presence is not obvious, because of my past experiences with God and because of the knowledge of God’s faithfulness and love I have learned from the Bible and from other Christians. This illustration may not make sense to anyone else but it helps me understand faith and trust much better.

(Thanks to Mary Frances Thompson for this article and for her involvement with The Anchorage. She lives in Greenwood where she teaches second and third graders in Sunday School at First Baptist. She is in a discernment process regarding God’s plan for her vocation.)



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, 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 spiritual direction and contemplative retreats, 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

Francina Bardsley
Peggy Dulaney
Mike Flanagan
Donna Meyer
Robert Miles
Cathie Powell, Exec. Dir.
Molly Wilkes, Chair
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The Anchorage

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“Not By Sight”

By Kyle Matthews

In 20 years traveling, I've often sensed that more practical ministry happened through the safety of letter writing than through face to face interactions. One young man in his mid-twenties sent me a letter asking what I thought he should do about his feelings of depression over seven different major decisions in his life, as if anyone could tell him such a thing.

My response was too long and probably not what he was looking for. But in one passage I began to hear myself talking to myself.

Dear Kevin:

... I struggled dearly with those same decisions, and like everyone else, my choices were complicated by a zillion personal factors I thought no one else would understand. I hope you don't ever feel odd or unfaithful because you don't know the road ahead: you're not supposed to.

In times like this, it's wise to monitor yourself for signs of depression. Be sure you're sleeping and eating normally, getting some exercise, and not experiencing either panic attacks or too much lethargy, or self-destructive thoughts and behaviors. Depression happens to most people at some time, and it is not a personality flaw, just a chemical and emotional fact of life for many people in the midst of major life adjustments: relationship change, career change, grief, injury or illness, dislocation, etc...

If you think you're a candidate for that, I'd simply tell your doctor and talk to one of the qualified pastoral counselors in your area. But I wouldn't do one without the other, because a pastor will not be equipped to address a chemical/medical issue, and the doctor may not be able to address the relational and spiritual issues.

Beyond that, I can tell you that I've caught myself sometimes creating my own stress by trying to make decisions before the time was right. The myth is that people of faith should always be able to do... something, to be proactive. But the truth is, if you can't decide what to do, there may be a very good reason; it may not be time to decide. For that reason, I caution you about making any two of those major life decisions at the same time. They each have their own timetable and deserve their own attention.

Making one just to accommodate the other would be a mistake. No God-follower in the Bible ever got to see the future when they wanted it. They were told to do what they knew to do, letting today be enough trouble for today, and trusting that daily faithfulness will produce the long-term results that honor God. I never get relief from “analysis paralysis” until I stop asking “what should I do with my life?” and start asking: “what kind of person do I want to be between now and dinnertime?” This is a biblical understanding of faithful living. It is counter-cultural, but our culture is full of a bunch of stressed out, unhappy people.

Solvitur Ambulando is a phrase from the ancient world that means: “it will be solved by walking.” And it will!

(Thanks to Kyle Matthews for this article. Over years of writing/performing his songs, Kyle has emerged as one of Christian music's most prolific songwriters. His song “We Fall Down” won numerous music industry awards, including the Dove Award for Traditional Gospel Song of the Year. His music is only a reflection of his deeper commitment to sound theology and spiritual health.

*In 2006, his alma mater, Furman University, awarded him the Richard Furman Baptist Heritage Award, recognizing him for “thinking critically, living compassionately and making life changing commitments.” He lives in Nashville with his wife Susan and their children Emily and Christopher, writing for Universal Music Group and traveling many weekends to perform and speak - even in **Greenville!** See p. 4.)*



Upcoming Events

July, 2007 – June, 2008

Nov. 16, Fri., 9:30 – 3:30

“Fall Quiet Day: On Loving God with Bernard of Clairvaux,” led by Cathie Powell

Dec. 13, Thurs., 6:30 – 9pm

“Making Room in the Inn (XI): an Advent Retreat” asking God to empty us, led by Cathie Powell

Jan. 3, Thurs., 6:30 – 9pm

“Epiphany Retreat: String of Lights” reclaiming this forgotten holiday, led by Cathie Powell

Jan. 25 – 27, weekend,

“Beach Retreat: Celtic Spirituality” at the Litchfield Inn, Pawleys Island, SC led by Caroline Smith

Jan. 27 – 29, Sun. – Tues.,

“Praying the Monastic Hours” at the beach, led by Cathie Powell

Feb. 21 to Mar. 20, 1st & 3rd Thurs., 9 – 11,

Lenten Contemplative Book Study of *Having a Mary Spirit: Allowing God to Change Us from the Inside Out* led by Peggy Dulaney

Mar. 3, Mon., 9:30 – 3:30,

“Spring Clergy Day: The Biblical and Contemporary Character(s) of Encountering God” with Jeff Rogers

Mar. 25 to May 13, 2nd & 4th Tues., 6:30 – 8pm,

Spring Contemplative Book Study of *The Sacred Way*, led by The Anchorage Community

Apr. 4 & 5, Fri., 5pm – Sat., 3pm

“Windows into the Soul” retreat at Solitude Pointe, Cleveland, SC with Peggy Dulaney

Apr. 18, Fri., 9:30 – 3:30

“Spring Quiet Day: Give Your Agenda to God,” led by Francina Bardsley

All events are at The Anchorage unless otherwise noted.

To reserve your space, send \$10 payable to The Anchorage. Thanks!



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*“In quietness and trust
 shall be your strength”
 Isaiah 30:15b*

“The Light at My Feet”

By Kyle Matthews and Sammy Ward

Faith is like walking by night
 Following but without sight
 And when there's only darkness
 And I cannot go on

*Chorus: You shine the light at my feet
 And I take one step
 And you shine the light at my feet
 And I take one step
 I can't see the way before me
 I don't know the road ahead
 So, you shine the light at my feet
 And I take one step*

I wanna see, I wanna know more
 My struggle here, what's it all for?
 And you reveal the answers
 But not before their time
(Chorus)

And I look back on all the things
 That you have brought me through
 And I see where this is going
 How you make me more like you
(Chorus)



We are excited to announce that Kyle will be our keynote musician/speaker for our Feb. 23, 2008, From God's Abundance event in Greenville, SC. Be in touch if you are interested.

Financial Status as of October 31, 2007 (Fiscal Year is July 07 - June 08)

Gifts hoped for	\$ 33,500
Received <i>FGA</i> *	\$ 13,501
Other gifts received	\$ 4,878
Balance needed	\$15,121
Total income budgeted	\$ 58,500
Total received	\$ 23,465
Balance needed	\$35,035

**FGA: From God's Abundance*

As you can see, we are ahead of our \$\$ projections!

THANK YOU, DONORS AND PARTICIPANTS!

We invite you to prayerfully consider, is God nudging you to partner with us, to fulfill our exciting new vision? A 3-year pledge of any amount lists you as an “FGA Donor” in the August 2008 “Depth Soundings.”

We are glad to send you our mailings at no cost to you. If you no longer wish to receive our mailings, please let us know.

THANKS!