



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

DEPTH SOUNDINGS

Encouragement, Inspiration and News from The Anchorage

November 2021

“Comfort and Joy”

By Richard Greenfield* (bio on page 3)

Buried under the sea of beleaguering memories
Cascading reminders of my colluding self
Hills of pride flattened
Idols unmasked
Worries I have cradled
Fears in my tight fists
Elitism exposed
Entitlements repented of
Prejudices rebuked
Racism unveiled
Seeing through, finally, my own conceited visions
To receive a glimpse
Of my great UnVeiler
Who risked all
To save me
From my triteness
Passivity
Rebellion
Greed
Ritualism
And relentless rancor
This self-willed estrangement from myself
To find my true self in You
A loving rest
Comfort and Joy
Past all my misgivings, failures, disappointments,
presumptuous sins, blindness,
Faithlessness, laziness, unbelief and ill-directed loves
Safe at home at last.

The face of Jesus on a sacred heart statue at the Jesuit Spirituality Center in Wernersville, PA.



*anchor
deep*

“Comfort Seems to Bring the Joy”

By Catherine Powell

Praying you and yours are well. The theme for this year “Comfort and Joy” continues to resonate. It seems to express just what we need. There is much for which we need comfort! It has been a rough time for so many. Those of us who lean toward the more sensitive side, are aware of a new dimension of overwhelm. Being an empath has usually been a blessing as I’ve been able to feel what others were feeling, and it is a good thing when offering spiritual direction. However, this year is the first time it has been a problem for me, and I’m not dealing with near the trauma that others are. So, let’s continue to ask for comfort in the pain, for others and for ourselves, knowing the love of God is enough and the joy will come.

One sermon I heard this week was on Romans 8:31-39 and I don’t think it gets any better than that. “Nothing can ever separate us from God’s love... as revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” That’s comfort and joy – bedrock! So needed today. A phrase that comes to mind because of that truth, is that our main identity is as “a child of God.” That’s who we are! A friend told me someone called him “God’s kid.” I encourage you to enjoy the comfort and joy of being God’s kid!

“A Spoonful of Comfort”

By Christina Auch

Where I live in North Carolina, the nighttime temperatures are just beginning to fall into the 50s and reliably that change trips a craving for simmering soup. My favorite ones are a thick chili, corn and potato chowder or barley vegetable soup.

Of course, I’m craving the comforting warmth that fills my tummy, but a bowl of soup provides more than physical comfort. Each bowl is also filled with the comfort of memories of children’s stories like Stone Soup and Strega Nona’s pasta pot — stories that remind us that we are part of a community where we love, and are loved by, our neighbors. They also stir memories of introducing our daughters to giving at events like “empty bowls” or “bowling for dollars”, fundraisers where local potters donate handmade clay bowls that then are filled with delicious soup and the ticket price is donated to charity, addressing unmet needs in our community.

Having sated my appetite and stirred these memories, a bowl of soup also prompts my gratitude. I am grateful that I’ve never had to wonder where my next meal will come from, and I am grateful for the abundance of gardens and farms for the vegetables on the cutting board, for the grains harvested from fields and for the seasonings and spices that add flavor to the meal.

For me, a bowl of soup is a metaphor for faith. We trust God for our daily bread, confident in the steadfast love of the One who provides for us. We come together in community, brought together by each of us sharing the gifts and vocations we have. And then, in Holy Communion, God calls us to the Table to eat and be filled. Physically fed and nourished, then we’re able to listen to God’s Word and notice those places where it feeds our minds and spirits. What a feast God has prepared and how thankful I am to participate! *(Thanks to Christina for this article and for her support and participation with The Anchorage over several years. She earned degrees from James Madison University (Va) and Luther Seminary (MN). She has completed three units of clinical pastoral education and the School of the Spirit which introduced her to group spiritual direction and contemplative practices and teachers. She is the fulltime called pastor at Ascension Lutheran (ELCA) in Shelby, NC and a parttime staff chaplain at Atrium Health, Cleveland. She serves as the Chair of the Board of Directors (Servant Leaders) with The Anchorage. She was ordained in 2014 and enjoys knitting, reading, yoga and her family.)*

**“what a feast
God has
prepared”**



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.

Servant Leaders

(Board of Directors)
*Christina Auch, Chair
Eric Barnhart
Angie Gage
Jonathan Jones
Susan Leaphart
Tom Newbould
Susan Rice
Matt Rollins*

Staff

*Catherine Powell,
Founding Servant Leader*

The Anchorage

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

“Comfort and Joy, Relief and Stability”

By Matt Rollins

Comfort and joy is one of those phrases that rolls off the tongue. The two words go together. Immortalized in the Christmas carol, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, they just kind of type themselves, a sort of spiritual autocorrect. While these two connected emotions certainly occupy similar spaces in the plane of spiritual health, I do imagine them serving different purposes.

Isn't comfort something of a spiritual salve to treat grief and mourning? “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted” (Matt 5:4). Comfort fills in the gaps of brokenness and incompleteness, working to halt or reverse the course of trauma, harm, or anything that drains our spirit or pulls us away from the abundant life God desires for us.

Joy, on the other hand, is more of a source of steady hopefulness from God, which works to offset the need for comfort, even in the midst of difficult periods. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:13). Joy is that spiritual resource we proactively receive, prayer by prayer and open heart by open heart, to stave off difficult life events and to minimize their effects. Not to be confused with happiness or pleasure, which come and go and are more dependent on external factors, joy is internal and issues to us from God's grace.

Comfort is spiritual relief for someone experiencing a difficult chapter of one's faith journey. Joy is spiritual stability, a healthy presence which can ease the need for comfort during those difficult chapters.

As I considered the need from a spiritual health standpoint for both comfort *and* joy, relief *and* stability, I was reminded of a similar need from a physical health standpoint of the most vulnerable in society. Comfort and relief in the form of hot meals, shelter, and clothing; joy and stability in the form of policies that can prevent cycles of homelessness, and community structures that can provide levels of protection for the most vulnerable among us. The beautiful Spirit centered relationship between comfort and joy can also be applied to what a Christ-like relationship to the marginalized can be. “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matt 25:35).

Just as God desires for everyone both spiritual relief (comfort) and spiritual stability (joy), so does God desire for the most vulnerable among us both physical relief (comfort in the form of hot food, shelter, and health) and physical stability (employment, safety, and community). “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10). *(Thanks to Matt for this article and for his support of The Anchorage. He currently serves as Chair-Elect of our Servant Leaders (Board of Directors). A Greenville native, he has been married to his high school sweetheart, Rolyn, for 24 years, and they have three children - Jack (18), Celie Ann (14) and Lucy (11), a cat, Sammy, and a dog, Princess Leia Grace (Gracie). Matt worked at Lockheed Martin as a systems analyst for three years until 2003 when he was called into Christian ministry. He has been at First Baptist, Greenville ever since, where he serves as the Minister of Spiritual Formation and Outreach. His three favorite things to do in his spare time have not changed since high school - basketball, reading, and crossword puzzles - although serving God through the church and being with his family are the most important things in his life now.)*

**(Thanks to Richard for the cover poem and for his support of The Anchorage. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) who serves homeless men with addictions in Columbia. He has a wonderful wife Karen, five amazing daughters, eleven special grandchildren and has written 400 poems.)*



Upcoming Events

Desert Days: First Fridays, even months, Theme is “Comfort and Joy”

9:30 – 2:30

Hopefully in person! Reflection in silence with God and others.

Dec. 4 (Led by Catherine) (with a taste of Advent)

Feb. 4 (led by Jonathan Jones)

Apr. 1 (led by Matt Rollins)

Fee: \$40 if in person on the deck in Gower Estates, Greenville, SC) (\$20 if on Zoom)

24th Annual Beach Retreat Jan. 28-30, weekend.

Theme is “Hope in God in Contemplative Community”

Fee: \$495 (includes ocean front single room) and 5 meals.

Deposit \$10 by Dec. 29

Led by Catherine Powell and Cindy Orr, Music also by Cindy.

Location: The Litchfield Inn, Pawley's Island, SC.

“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 either in person or on Zoom, about 1 hour for solitude prayer, 3 different times.

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 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.

“Taste and See” is a 2-hour taste of a contemplative retreat. Hoping to have one soon. TBA

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



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Community for All

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Greenville, SC 29604

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*"My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing."
James 1:2-4 (NRSV)*

"Today, I Choose Joy"

By Susan Leaphart

Last month I joined my daughter's family at the beach after losing a beloved pet of 18+ years. I walked into my bedroom where I saw a large plaque that said, "Today, I choose joy." James 1:2-3. There were painted flamingos on the plaque frolicking in the beach surf, their long stick legs looking like they were dancing. I couldn't not smile! The view out of the window of the beach and ocean was spectacular. No wonder the beach is my happy place!

Of all the wonderful offerings of The Anchorage, the annual Beach Retreat is our favorite. It is always a special weekend full of God in community. Somehow, the combination of the beach with all the beauty nature has to offer together with the spiritual program is very powerful. It truly "gets into your bones." Ocean front you pray, sing, laugh and enjoy delicious meals in fellowship. Saturday afternoons are free to walk on the beach, nap, or journal. I love to collect shells and enjoy the slower pace that nature encourages. I look around and am thankful for this beautiful world God has created for us. Evenings are a quiet time to sit on the porch and watch the sunset.



Sunrise from The Litchfield Inn

(Thanks to Susan for this article and for her participation and support of The Anchorage over many years. She currently is serving her second term as a Servant Leader. She taught pre-school and Sunday School for over 30 years before retiring. She and her husband David have attended St. Peter's Episcopal Church and practiced centering prayer for many years. Visiting their grandson and his parents is always a special time.)

Financial Status

as of October 24, 2021

(Our Fiscal Year is July 1 – June 30)

Total FY gifts budgeted	\$ 26,600
Total received	<u>\$ 4,700</u>
Amount needed	\$21,900
Total FY income budgeted	\$ 41,320
Total received	<u>\$ 6,800</u>
Amount needed	\$34,520

Desert Days on Zoom have been better than expected, and of course we don't charge as much because folks are printing their own materials and buying their own lunch. Best thing is we can include friends out of town! Some have chosen not to meet for spiritual direction on Zoom, preferring just to wait until the pandemic is over.

Our Friend/Fund Raiser "Hope in God in Contemplative Community" was even on Zoom. Thank you so much for believing in what we are about and giving generously. 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 as The Anchorage is a 501c3 non-profit ministry.

(Use our convenient online PayPal donation/registration.)