

Pathways Retreat

Rhythms



November 2014



God before us, God behind us,
God above us, God beneath us.
We on your path, O God.
You, O God on our way.
In the twistings of the road,
in the winding of the path,
be with us by day, be with us by night,
be with us by day and by night.

~John Philip Newell

Making Room for More!

Since our beginning seven years ago, Pathways Retreat has been a small, maybe even private, operation. The two of us have done it all – ministry, hospitality, finances, communications. Pathways has largely been a two-woman show.

On October 12 that all changed as Pathways welcomed six new associates: (front left) Sylvie Gudin, Sara VonGunten, Sally Weaver Glick, Evan Miller, Melissa Schroeder, and Sherry Anderson.

The associates are spiritual directors who bring a variety of much-needed gifts to support and expand Pathways Retreat's ministry. Administratively, they assist with the lending library, communications and other projects. Two of them (Evan and Melissa) serve on our Board of Directors. One leads a spiritual discovery group. Several provide individual spiritual direction. All of them provide ministry here in some form.

One new weekly prayer practice that began in September, thanks to the associates, is **Tuesday Evening Prayer** from 5:30 – 6:00. The form of this prayer is lectio divina, the meditative reading of scripture. The focus throughout December will be on advent scriptures. Consider making this an advent practice this year.

Monthly Quiet Day Retreats will begin in the New Year. These retreats will follow a rhythm of community and solitude, prayer and silence, reflection and rest. Themes for each retreat will be chosen by the spiritual director leading the retreat. Keep watch for more information.

The prayer at the top of this page concludes every Pathways Retreat organizational meeting. We give thanks for this particular twist in the road that brought us six new associates to support and expand the much-needed mission of Pathways Retreat: to offer rest, reflection, and renewal with God.

With gratitude,
Linda and Julie

Exploring the Spiritual Practice of Gratitude

Gratitude Together

Gather with others in a circle. For five minutes go around the circle answering the question: *I feel grateful for...*

Each time it is your turn, hear the question anew. Let what arises in the moment be spoken. Be present to each other. Listen and absorb what is said. At the end of ten minutes, reflect upon the experience.

Gratitude before a Meal

Before a meal, take time to answer any or all of these questions.

A blessing of the day...

Something that made me smile...

An encounter that opened wide my heart...

Thank God for the blessings you have noticed and for those you have yet to recognize.

Gratitude Journal

Use your i-phone or paper journal to keep record of 3-5 things you are grateful for each day.

Gratitude Meditation

Sit in a quiet place. Let yourself appreciate and give thanks for the gifts that have touched your life today. See the people, events, encounters and experiences of the day. Let your heart open and receive the richness and nourishment from the grateful experiences of the day. Allow the images from the day to arise and fade away. Silently name any gratefulness you feel.

Next, recall any unpleasant or difficult experiences from the day. Focus your attention on one particularly painful encounter or event. Now, try to touch that memory with gratefulness. What do you notice as you practice giving thanks for something painful? What emotions arise? How do you feel, peaceful or angry? Stay with one image, repeatedly giving thanks for the fact that this person, event, experience was part of your day. Let your heart open to any gifts this experience has brought or is bringing. Continue to touch this experience with gratefulness.

Finally, give thanks for your life. Take a moment to explicitly name all the qualities of your life for which you are grateful. Practice being thankful for your breath, your body, the people who care for you, your spouse, lover, children, friends, for the colors of the day, for your home, for your food. Review as many gifts as come to mind, speak a word of silent thanksgiving for everything you have and for all that you have become. Notice what happens in your body as you practice giving thanks. Notice what emotions arise. Practice this meditation every day. At the end of the week, what do you notice?

~Adapted from Wayne Muller, *How Then Shall We Live*

Pathways Retreat is a day contemplative retreat center in the city limits of Goshen, Indiana, for rest, reflection and renewal with God.

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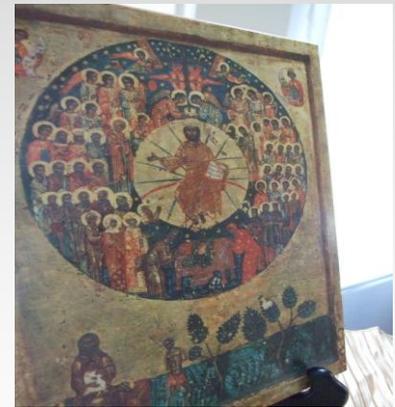
Mystic of the Month

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin,
Jesuit priest and paleontologist
(1881–1955)

In his thinking and writing Teilhard studied the intimate relationship between the evolutionary development of the material and the spiritual world, leading him to celebrate the sacredness of matter infused with the Divine presence.

**“By means of all created things,
without exception,
the divine assails us,
penetrates us, and molds us.
We imagined it as distant
and inaccessible,
when in fact we live steeped
in its burning layers.”**

~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin



Feast of All Saints Icon

This month pause to remember and give thanks for those who have blessed and continue to bless your life.