



Offerings

September / October 2020
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The Center During COVID

Due to the pandemic, doors of the Spiritual Renewal Center remain closed at least through October 31. But this newsletter shows the many ways in which the Center's ministry is flourishing, even in these unprecedented times.

- ❖ We continue with our ministry of **spiritual direction** for individuals by virtual means. If you feel led to begin spiritual direction, contact us through our website or by email and we'll get you started.
- ❖ We have a great line-up of renewal events, retreats, and training opportunities, all delivered virtually this fall. Look inside these pages for details; register for any event via our website spiritualrenewalcenter.com/events
- ❖ **Andrea, our Administrative Assistant, is available** by phone (315-472-6546) Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. to answer questions and take registrations, prayer requests, or book requests. Our doors will be locked and visitors cannot be admitted.
- ❖ Our **library** of over 10,000 books is available for borrowing. Peruse the library's catalog on our website and send an email or call with the titles you'd like to check out. Andrea will pull the books and arrange a time to deliver them to your car in our parking lot. Books can also be returned by pre-arrangement.
- ❖ Help the Center save money AND the planet by **switching to our e-newsletter!** Get all the same news and inspiration in your email box. Switching to an electronic newsletter could save the Center thousands of dollars annually. To sign up, email mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com and simply tell us that the e-newsletter is fine for you!
- ❖ And as always, we are so grateful for your **financial assistance** during these trying days. We need your help! You can send donations through the mail, or through our website using a credit card. Your gifts keep this ministry alive and thriving—thank you!

This newsletter was subsidized by two members of our Board, and in memory of Rev. Thomas McLaughlin and Rev. Edward Wright. Thank you!

ABOUT US

The Spiritual Renewal Center is an ecumenical Christian ministry providing spiritual direction and renewal opportunities to all members of the community.

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OUR BOARD MEMBERS

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Recurring Groups

The Center offers these regularly meeting groups for your spiritual growth. **Newcomers are always welcome.**

Our weekly **Tuesday** morning **Catch the Spirit** Bible study group will be meeting online from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and resumes September 8. Marise May, OSF, and Rev. Paris Price co-lead the discussion on the coming Sunday's lectionary readings.

People who have completed the Spiritual Exercises are invited to the online **Ignatian Spirituality Group**, meetings one **Wednesday** a month, 6:30-7:30 p.m., to pray together in the Ignatian way. Led by Lou Sogliuzzo, SJ, upcoming date is October 14.

Email mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com for zoom links for these virtual meetings.

**We have a great line-up of special renewal events, retreats and study groups this fall!
Register for any of these online at spiritualrenewalcenter.com/events
or by calling our office 315-472-6546 Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 1 pm.**

Children of Our Parents, Children of God
Presented by Rev. Dr. Mark Lawson
Wednesday, September 16 | 10 am - noon via Zoom



We can't truly understand ourselves apart from seeing how we reflect our parents. Yet, our development involves differentiating ourselves from them. In this presentation, Rev. Dr. Mark Lawson will examine this truth, and then look to the gospels for clues about how Jesus grew in his own self-understanding, differentiating himself from his own earthly family in order to mature into his identity as Son of God. This session will help participants gain a deeper understanding of their lives, as children not only of earthly parents, but more essentially, as children of God.

Mark holds a PhD in New Testament and is the pastor of United Church of Christ in Bayberry, a staff spiritual director at the Center, and an adjunct faculty member in the religious studies department at LeMoyne College. This session was offered in January to such enthusiasm that we are repeating it for those who missed it then. *Fee: \$20, or whatever you can afford.*

Shame, Ego and God Within Us
Presented by Rev. Terry Zehr
Thursday, October 8 | 10 am - noon OR 7 pm - 9 pm via Zoom



In the complexity of being human, shame and ego interact in our lives in ways that shape us. The gospel invitation of Jesus is to live from a different place—the place where God's Spirit resides in us. In this seminar, Rev. Terry Zehr will explore the interaction of shame and ego in our lives by looking at Jesus' interactions in the gospels, the Orthodox concept of *Theosis*, and the Anabaptist ethos of *Gellassenheit*.

Terry is a Conference Minister for NY Mennonite Conference and a pastor in the Mennonite church; he also serves as a spiritual director at the Center. *Fee: \$20, or whatever you can afford.*

Register for ANY of these events online spiritualrenewalcenter.com/events or call 315-472-6546

Spiritual Transformation: Our Journey Into God
Presented by Jim Krisher
Thursday, October 15 OR Saturday, October 17 | 10 am - 5 pm via Zoom



Here's an opportunity for a day of prayer and reflection at a quiet place of your choosing. Jim will meet via Zoom with retreatants at 10 a.m. for a one-hour session to present the day's theme and offer suggestions for times of prayer during the day. Retreatants will meet together again at 4 p.m. to share the fruits of their prayer and hear closing remarks. Participants will have the opportunity for a short individual spiritual direction session with Jim or another staff spiritual director during the afternoon.

Our day's theme is spiritual transformation. Jim will talk about how change is built into the fabric of God's universe and into our nature as human beings—and we need not fear it. He will focus on our growing participation in the very life of the Trinity, which is the process of spiritual transformation. How might we grow towards that union with God?

Preregistration is required; space is limited. We ask \$30 or whatever you can afford. Registration through our website is preferred. You can also register by emailing us at mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com; please include your full name, email address, and phone number.

What Does Grace Look Like? is a series of reflections about God's grace. This month's feature is written by one of our staff Spiritual Directors Kathy Faber-Langendoen

What Does *Grace* Look Like?

I didn't expect God's grace to come to me through YouTube, but there it was: an email from a friend, saying "You should watch this."

Just as COVID hit the US, musicians from Elevation Worship released "The Blessing," a song based on familiar benedictions in Scripture.

*The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you*

As the world went into isolation, Lent became a time of separation and Easter services in our churches became impossible. Unable to gather in Holy Week, musicians across Pittsburgh, in bedrooms and attics and empty sanctuaries, individually recorded the song. Engineers put the song together in a YouTube video, the screen split into dozens of frames. Apart but together, united in song under the covering of God's blessing.

*The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace
May His favor be upon you and 1,000 generations*

What began in Pittsburgh spread. On YouTube you can find covers of "The Blessing" from Haiti, Zimbabwe, Hawaii, Canada, Sweden, South Africa, South Korea, Lebanon, Uzbekistan, Australia (google YouTube UK Blessing for one wonderful version). The blessing is sung in English, Spanish, Hebrew, French, Tiv, and Gaelic.

*May His presence go before you, and behind you, and beside you
In your coming and your going,
In your weeping and rejoicing, He is for you*

The musicians are Christians of every kind. While we were isolated in homes and locked within borders, God granted us creativity, hope, ingenuity, and technology, giving us a taste of the beautiful fullness of God's Kingdom.

That's what *Grace* looks like.



Autumn Intern for the Spiritual Renewal Center

We're so happy to welcome Rev. Paris Price, who is finishing her last year of seminary at Northeastern Seminary in Rochester. She hopes to work in adult Christian spiritual formation, and thought that the Center would be an ideal placement for her. Paris lives in Cicero, NY with her husband Darin, and serves as the pastor of the Harriet Tubman AME Zion Church in Auburn, NY. Paris will co-facilitate with Sr. Marise May our Tuesday morning Bible study, and will be part of various other programming and administrative activities. We're glad to have you with us Paris!




Last Chance: Training Program in Spiritual Direction

Might God be calling you to the ministry of spiritual direction? It's not too late to apply for our two-year HORIZONS Foundational Program for the Training of Spiritual Directors. In this practicum-based program, monthly sessions focus on the principles and practice of spiritual direction, alongside close supervision of direction practice. Center Director Jim Krisher oversees the program. Applicants must have substantial knowledge in theology, scripture, and spirituality, and at least one year's experience receiving spiritual direction.



The first year of HORIZONS meets October 2020 - June 2021, on the second Monday of each month, 1-5:15 pm. Tuition is \$700 per year. HORIZONS will be offered via Zoom online until circumstances allow us to resume meeting at the Center. Just a few openings are left; contact Jim no later than September 15 at mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com for more details or an application.



Connect with the Spiritual Renewal Center

Get social with the Spiritual Renewal Center and find us on Facebook and Instagram today. You can also share your email address with us at spiritualrenewalcenter.com and get the the latest information sent right to your inbox.

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