



Offerings

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The cost of this newsletter was subsidized by a Board member in honor of all essential workers throughout Syracuse who keep providing necessary services during the pandemic, even at risk to themselves. You are God's hands!

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 STAFF

Jim Krisher, *Director*
Meg Castellini,
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Dear Friends,

Living in this time of the uncertainty wrought by the pandemic has not been easy for any of us, I know. At the Spiritual Renewal Center, we have discussed at length how best to continue serving God's people when it is not safe to gather and no one knows when it will be.



Despite stay-at-home orders, these last months were fruitful, as we used online means to offer Bible studies, an Ignatian retreat, and a day of renewal. We also continued our ministry of spiritual direction through video sessions with large numbers of people participating.

We were hoping to re-open our doors at the end of June. But the logistics of ensuring visitors' safety are too onerous for our limited team of staff and volunteers, and the financial stresses we are facing. And so, reluctantly, I have decided to delay even a partial re-opening until after Labor Day.

During these summer months, however, we will continue with our ministry of spiritual direction for individuals. New requests to meet with a director are being met promptly by our experienced and gifted direction staff. If you feel led to begin spiritual direction, contact us through our website or by email and we'll get you started.

We are available by phone at 315-472-6546 Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. to answer questions and take registrations, prayer requests, or book requests. Andrea, my administrative assistant, will be at the Center during those hours, although our doors will be locked and visitors cannot be admitted.

Our library of over 10,000 books is once again available for borrowing. You can 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; they will be re-shelved after the recommended 3 days of isolation.

This newsletter gives you a taste of the good things we have planned for the fall. If we can safely gather in person by then we will do so; these events will also be simultaneously live-streamed for people who wish to participate remotely. If the Center remains closed, these events will be entirely online.

And of course, we are so grateful for any financial assistance you can offer 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 are essential in keeping this ministry alive and thriving—thank you!

Better days are coming for all of us!
Peace in Christ, Jim Krisher, Director

THE NEWSLETTER GOES GREEN!

Help us save money AND the planet by switching to our e-newsletter! Get the same news and inspiration via pdf in your email. In these tough financial times, switching to an electronic newsletter will save the Center thousands of dollars. We will still gratefully receive donations through our website or by mail, and we're banking on your faithfulness in giving! **We'll continue to send print newsletters unless you let us know you are fine with the e-newsletter. Email us today at mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com to tell us that the e-newsletter is fine for you. Help us save trees AND money!**



Upcoming Events

The HORIZONS Program: Training to Be a Spiritual Director

Is God calling you to the ministry of spiritual direction? It's not too late to apply for our next HORIZONS Foundational Program for the Training of Spiritual Directors. This is a practicum-based, two-year program for people wanting to develop their gifts for this work. Monthly sessions focus on the principles and practice of spiritual direction, with close supervision of direction practice. Staff includes Jim Krisher, Sr. Marise May, Kathy Papa, Lana Riley, and Rev. John Rose. 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 at the Center October 2020 - June 2021, on the second Monday of each month, 1-5:15 pm. Tuition is \$700 per year. If circumstances require, we will adapt this program to an online format, at least for its initial months. A certificate is awarded upon successful completion of the second year. Our fall cohort is forming; contact Director Jim Krisher at mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com for an application.

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola: A 30-week Adventure in Prayer



The Center is again offering the classic *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola* in a thirty-week format. After more than 500 years, the *Spiritual Exercises* still bring people to a closer relationship with Christ through the Scriptures. In the 30 years we've offered this program, 100s of people from many Christian traditions have completed the Exercises.

Beginning September 15 and continuing through May, the program takes place Tuesdays, 1- 3 PM. This includes time with an individual prayer guide and a group teaching session. Each participant commits to 30-60 minutes of daily personal prayer with prescribed materials. For more information or to apply, contact Sr. Marise at 315-447-9887 or mariseosf@gmail.com. Space is limited, so register now!

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 Rev. Terry Zehr.

What Does *Grace* Look Like?

I recently participated in an online retreat day designed to help church leaders step away from ministry tasks and listen to God through silence and solitude. Participants from across the U.S. met virtually in the morning, retreated to a place of their own choosing, and reconvened in the late afternoon to debrief. Our retreat director led us through a prayer exercise in the morning, after which we shared our desires for the day. Before concluding the morning session, she called our attention to a thread within our collective sharing—we were grieving. She asked that we not ignore that part of our experience as we navigate this troubled time. With that, I drove to my small cabin in the forest, where I became aware of my weariness as well as my grief.

Around the middle of the afternoon I was sitting on my front porch praying. Time slowed down as my soul rested. When a beautiful mourning dove landed ten feet from me, I instantly knew its connection to the state of my soul. Then, it looked at me, keeping its head cocked toward me as it walked around. It was alert but not afraid, and remained gazing at me. Then it turned and with breathtaking power took to flight and was gone.

My soul heard it, and I felt consoled.

That's what *Grace* looks like.



Upcoming Events

Sabbath Vision | Restoring Hope in Tomorrow Presented by Meg Castellini Wednesday, August 5 | 9:30-11:30 am

In this online morning of renewal, we will reflect on Luke 13, which describes the Sabbath healing of an unnamed woman. Her life changed suddenly! Now what? What does this story tell us about healing and the blessing of a new reality?

The morning's reflection (via Zoom) offers the opportunity for small group and large group discussion. Prepare to be blessed by this time, designed to encourage you to contemplate what it is that guides your own vision.

Our presenter is Meg Castellini. She integrates her experience as a retreat facilitator, hospital chaplain, spiritual director, and caregiver as she helps communicate God's desire for relationship with us.

We ask \$20 for this event or whatever you can afford; preregistration is required. Registration through our website is preferred. You can also register by email at mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com; please include your name, email, and phone.



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

Help the Center Flourish into the Future!

Throughout the Spiritual Renewal Center's 40+ years of ministry, many have blessed us through faithful, generous financial gifts.



An additional way you can support the Center's ministry into the future is through **Planned Giving**. Planned Giving can take a variety of forms:

- adding the Spiritual Renewal Center as of beneficiary of a life insurance policy, IRA, or 401K
- designating the Spiritual Renewal Center as a recipient of a portion of your estate
- certain gifts of real estate

We also gratefully accept **gifts of long-term appreciated stock or mutual funds**. And if you need to take Required Minimum Distributions from your retirement accounts, consider having a check sent directly from your IRA to the Spiritual Renewal Center as a **Qualified Charitable Distribution**. Such gifts meet IRA distribution requirements but are not taxed as income.

All of these gifts help ensure that the Center's ministry of spiritual transformation, helping people see God's movement in their lives, can continue for future generations.

We gratefully accept funds to support our ministry in general; we are presently needful of funds to defray the cost of providing spiritual direction and renewal opportunities for those unable to contribute financially.

For more information, or to let us know that you have made a planned gift to the Spiritual Renewal Center, contact Jim Krisher (315-472-6546, or mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com). This will help us assure your wishes are clearly understood.

Spiritual Direction

Until we can resume meeting in person, many of our spiritual directors are continuing to work with people through video appointments and phone conversation. If you would like to be connected to a spiritual director, mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com and someone will contact you to set up an initial appointment. Direction can be a channel of grace at any time, and especially in trying times like now. Don't hesitate to get started.



Save the Dates!

“Children of Our Parents, Children of God,” September 16, 10 a.m. – noon. Mark Lawson, Methodist pastor and spiritual director, will help us examine how we understand ourselves in reference to our parents, just as Jesus grew in his own self-understanding, differentiating himself from his early family in order to mature into his identity as God’s Son. This session will help participants reflect on how we are children not only of earthly parents, but more essentially, children of God.



“Shame, Ego, and God Within Us,” October 8, 10 a.m. – noon (repeated 7-9 p.m.) Terry Zehr, Mennonite pastor and spiritual director, will lead this examination of how shame and ego shape us, and Jesus’ gospel invitation to live from a different place—the place where God’s Spirit resides in us.

A one day online retreat, “Spiritual Transformation: Our Journey Into God,” an online retreat offered twice, October 15 and October 17, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Jim Krisher, Center Director, will lead this exploration of how change is built into the fabric of God’s universe and into our nature as humans—and we need not fear it. This day of prayer and reflection will focus on our growing participation in the life of the Trinity—the process of spiritual transformation.

Go to our website at spiritualrenewalcenter.com for full descriptions, costs, and how to register.



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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