



In Communion... with Others

8:45 a.m. + November 17, 2024

The deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion.
It is wordless. It is beyond words. It is beyond speech. It is beyond concept.
Not that we discover a new unity, but we discover an old unity.
My dear brothers and sisters, we are already one. But we imagine we are not.
And what we have to recover is our original unity.
What we have to be, is what we are.

Thomas Merton

Spoken in Calcutta in October 1968, two months before his death

Crossing the Threshold

Receiving Divine Grace and Love

*We come here to worship, we come here to pray.
Aware of our weakness, in need of your grace.
Some of us hiding, some of us found.
Standing together upon holy ground.*

*Boundless love and beautiful grace,
Filling the place, filling our hearts.
In our delight and in our despair,
Still, you are there,
Flooding our lives with boundless love.*

"Boundless Love"

Call to Worship

*At oases on the pilgrim way we rest together,
Sharing the stories and meals that refresh us.
O God, you do not judge us by success or by failure:
You call us to be faithful and true,
To do your will, to delight in your blessing.
Brothers and sisters, friends of God,
How joyful and pleasant a thing it is –
Like the gathering of a mountain range –
When we dwell together in unity.
It is like the very beauty of holiness itself,
A sense of presence in the places of prayer,
The Godward eyes of faithful people,
The times we are surprised by new blessings.
So we give you heartfelt thanks, O God,
That we can glimpse the harmony of humanity,
That we can trust that all creation will be restored,
That all things will be suffused with the light of your glory.*

Psalms 133 (Out of the Silence)

Song of Presence

"In the Name of the Holy One"

*In the Name of the Holy One,
In the Name of the Son,
In the Name of the Spirit,
We are made One.*

Contemplating Scripture

Philippians 2:1-8

*If there is for you comfort in the Anointed One,
and if consolation is in your heart by Love,
and if communion of the Spirit,
and if tenderness and mercies,
complete my joy – be of one mind –
one love, one soul, one mind.
Do nothing from partisanship or vainglory,
but in humility of mind let each consider their neighbor as greater than themselves.
Let no one care for their own soul only,
But everyone also for their neighbor.
And feel this way in your soul, which also Jesus the Anointed One did,
Who, though he was in the form of God,
did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped,
but rather his soul was emptied,
and he took the form of a servant,
and he came in the likeness of humanity,
and he humbled his soul, and obeyed unto death,
even the death of a cross....*

Meditation

Song of Presence

"In the Name of the Holy One"

*In the Name of the Holy One,
In the Name of the Son,
In the Name of the Spirit,
We are made One.*

Our Prayer for Community

A Celtic Prayer

*God build your community,
From brokenness and indifference,
Build love and caring,
For you, for each other, for your creation.
God build your community,
From self-centeredness and independence,
Build friendship and compassion,
For the marginalized, the abandoned and the despised.
God build your community,
From mistrust and misunderstanding,
Build unity and togetherness,
For other peoples, religions and nations.
God build your community,
May we build together your living community,
Bound together by love and joy,
Interrelated to all God's people, to the earth and all creation.*

Remembering Our Purpose

“The Heart of God”

*Faith that moves mountains,
Grace that forgives.
Peace that calms stormy seas.
Love that brings healing.
Trust that endures.
Truth that can set us free.
Help us embody all that you are,
And live lives that reflect your grace.
To walk with the stranger until we are friends,
And we all find our place – at home in the heart of God.*

*Make us faithful to forgive,
When we're wounded by the world.
Peaceful bearers of your grace,
Help us love as you love.*

The Question

Henri Nouwen (Bread for the Journey)

*The word community has many connotations, some positive, some negative.
Community can make us think of a safe togetherness, shared meals, common goals, and joyful celebrations.
It also can call forth images of sectarian exclusivity,
in-group language, self-satisfied isolation, and romantic naïveté.
However, community is first of all a quality of the heart.
It grows from the spiritual knowledge that we are alive not for ourselves but for one another.
Community is the fruit of our capacity to make the interests of others more important than our own.
The question, therefore, is not “How can we make community?”
but “How can we develop and nurture giving hearts?”*

Song of Presence

“Holy Beloved One”

*Holy Beloved One,
Rend this veil between us.
Holy Beloved One,
We are one with you.*

Silence

During these minutes of silence, simply rest in God's abiding and loving presence in this moment. You are in God and God is in you. Just be and relax. Center your attention in your heart and imagine your breath flowing in and out from your heart area. If it helps you to center, use a sacred prayer word such as Jesus, Abba, Spirit, Light, or Love.

Song of Presence

“Holy Beloved One”

Holy Communion

Receiving a Good Word



Our Staff

Haley Brown – Associate Director of The Anchor House
Courtney Garrison – Ministry Assistant
Peter Johns – Associate Director of Contemplative Worship

Zachary Montasser – Violinist
Rev. Rachel Sciretti – Associate Pastor
Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. – Pastor of The Center

Today's Music

"Boundless Love" – Peter Johns, *"In the Name of the Holy One"* – David Keller,
"Heart of God" – Peter Johns, *"Holy Beloved One"* – Michael Sciretti Jr.

For information about The Center for Christian Spirituality and upcoming events, visit:

www.TheCenterFCS.org.

Please register your presence in the notebooks in the foyer.

If you have a prayer request or seeking support, please contact Rachel Sciretti, rscoretti@chapelwood.org.

Houston Compassion Week Labyrinth Walk

Today | The Labyrinth | 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Compassionate Houston's [Compassion Week 2024](#) concludes with a reflective labyrinth walk, embracing the week's theme of *We All Belong* hosted at the Labyrinth at The Anchor House. This peaceful, meditative journey will be led by Certified Veriditas Labyrinth Facilitator Sarah Gish. Participants will be prompted to visualize welcome and inclusion in their own lives and to ponder their personal connections to our shared humanity. As we walk the labyrinth together, we will cultivate compassion, connection, and a deeper sense of belonging for all.

Everything Belongs: Songs from The Center Vol 2 Class

Today | The Anchor House | 6:00 p.m.

Poetry Circle

Tuesday, November 19 | The Anchor House | 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Join us for the next meeting of the Poetry Circle with Mark Jodon. The Center's poetry circle will share and critique our poems, explore poetic forms and devices, try our hands at writing prompts, and grow together in fellowship and community. This circle is for anyone who loves poetry, no matter your writing experience level.

Pilgrim Tales

Wednesday, November 20 | The Anchor House | 6:30 p.m.

Great Grow Out Workshop with the Coastal Prairie Conservancy

Friday, November 22 | The Anchor House | 10:00 a.m. – Noon

Join the Coastal Prairie Conservancy, in partnership with the Center for Christian Spirituality, for a hands-on native plant grow-out workshop! Staff from the Coastal Prairie Conservancy will lead participants in lessons on our great grow out workshop, plant propagation and sourcing, biodiversity surveys, and how our organizations can support your efforts to foster nature on your grounds. Participants will go home with germination trays, soil, and native seeds to grow out for restoration projects. Open to ages 10+.



The Yoga of Jesus: Practice and Discussion with Jonathan Mangrum

Saturday, November 23 | The Anchor House | 9:00am – 10:30 a.m.

In this course, we will use yoga practice and this book, *The Yoga of Jesus*, as a lens to explore the gospels and what it means to embody spirituality. Each class will include time for breath work, meditation, yoga postures, and poses, as well as a discussion at the end of each class.



Upcoming Advent Opportunities & Special Services

Dec 2 – Guided Silent Retreat at Villa de Matel

Dec 15 – Advent Community Gathering

Dec 22 – The Service of the Longest Night

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve