

Tend Your Awakening Heart with Us.



Awakening Hearts Cultivating Wisdom Revealing the Sacred

February 2021

Words from our Director...On *Interpersonal Skills* in support of Contemplative Dialogue

([click here](#) to view the interpersonal skills in a broader Christian framework)

([click here](#) to view the interpersonal skills in a triple-cycle of contemplative dialogue)



In the last few weeks, a phrase resonating in our shared public life here in the United States caught my attention: "we are in a battle for the soul of our nation." Phrases like this from our shared public life sear the seemingly inward-facing orientation of the often-personal work that is done in retreat centers. What contribution does a place like the Episcopal House of Prayer make to our larger society, especially in chaotic times like these? Are we not also doing "soul work"? How does inner work impact and benefit public life?

My own hunch is that the work of healing and wholeness benefits both the individual and the society. Yet the fruits of activities that claim the benefits of healing and wholeness are often best-evidenced at the interpersonal level, in the social spaces where we test the fruits of the inner life in the fire of real life. With that "hunch" in mind and heart, I offer the next phase of reflection and practice on contemplative dialogue.

This next phase will focus on the interpersonal skills that support the movements of contemplative dialogue (grounding in self, open to others, seeking God, facing others, and commitment to wholeness), and work in tandem with the contemplative postures (spaciousness, suppleness, and surrender). The interpersonal skills are: openness/receptivity, mutuality, dynamism, ambiguity, and resonance.

The first stance of *receptivity and openness* is a dual-stance. The two descriptors serve as opposite faces of the same stance, whereas receptivity emphasizes the passive side and openness emphasizes the active side, much like the play of black and white colors in the yin/yang symbol. For example, *receptivity* is characterized by emptiness, whereas *openness* is characterized by expansiveness. Whereas a receptive stance is one that provides neutrality and willingness, an open stance is one that exhibits welcome and availability. Receptivity lets in comfort, allows for knowing, and attends to the details. Openness accepts newness, appreciates difference, and relishes in possibility.

Openness and receptivity mark moments of spaciousness. Openness and receptivity are the building bricks laying the foundations of becoming grounded in the self. When we take a deep breath to honor the moment, we lay a brick of openness. When we notice how we show up in a tense situation, we lay a brick of receptivity. When we seek to recognize our own shadows, we offer another brick of openness and when we let go of our judgments of others' shadows, we offer another brick of receptivity. Openness and receptivity are part of the scaffolding that holds up the hard, practical work both of respectfully engaging others and of deeply encountering the sacred in the midst of daily life.

- What habits and activities support you in developing openness and receptivity? What hinders?
- Who are the people in your life that inspire you to be open and receptive? Who challenges your ability to be open and receptive?
- How do ground yourself in the Holy One in ways that promote growth in openness and receptivity?

Christine Lena Munger

Director, Episcopal House of Prayer, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA

EHoP invites you.

Pray with Us.

The Episcopal House of Prayer now hosts its weekly Wednesday night sit in Collegeville online, via zoom.
Join us for all, or a part, of the session.

5-5:15 p.m.–time for tech and social connection

5:15-5:30–short teaching

5:30-6:30–formal sitting period

To join, [simply click here](#) or use this Meeting ID: 644 263 888

Join Us.

Praying with the Psalms
with Susan Stabile

Tuesday Evenings: February 2, 9, 16, 23
7-9 pm

Suggested donation: \$100

This retreat will be great warm-up for Lenten observations!

[Register](#)

EHoP Short Sessions

[Mystic-a-Month series](#)

[Gerard Manley Hopkins on February 8 with Susan Stabile](#)

[Prayer series](#)

EHoP Circles

[Small Group Spiritual Direction](#)

[Small Group *Lectio Divina*](#)

[Small Group Book Discussions](#)

Be Grateful with Us.

In January, we invited a new EHoP teacher, Elizabeth Jarrett-Andrew, who led nine of us in a writing retreat on spiritual memoir. We were happy to welcome a few new folks into the ever-widening EHoP circles. The small-group writing circle that Elizabeth will facilitate this spring has already filled up, so keep your eyes open for further offerings!

Also in January, we hosted the first of our monthly teaching series, From the Ground Up, with Cyprian Consiglio. Cyprian's community faced 14 inches of rain this last week, so we were especially grateful for their safety and for Cyprian's marvelous teaching on the Trinity. Look for future sessions of this ongoing session.

Be safe with Us.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Episcopal House of Prayer continues to assess when we will open the House again and gather our community in person. In January 2021, the Executive Committee updated the following:

- The young men from the Benedictine Volunteer Corps will stay with us at least through April.
- Retreats for the the first quarter of 2021 will be online.
- By mid-March, we hope to decide whether we will open the in-person retreat season in May.
- Rentals for personal retreats and events are on hold at least through August 2021.
- [Monday weekly contemplative sits](#) (Minneapolis) are on hold.
- [Thursday weekly contemplative sits](#) (Saint Paul) are on hold.
- Monday night ChiKung in Collegeville is now online. You can join the zoom meeting at <https://csbsju.zoom.us/j/97415157718> or Meeting ID: 974 1515 7718

Practice with Us.

Last year, we began to offer "short teachings" on prayer as part of the weekly contemplative sit in Collegeville. Below, you will find the final three sessions of the short-teachings format. For a full listing of all the teachings, visit our website and navigate to the [Prayer Teaching Library page](#).

This year, we continue with the short teaching session fifteen minutes prior to the weekly prayer sit. However, in the upcoming months, we will focus on short exercises which intend to "strengthen our contemplative muscles." Join our learning community as we engage in these practical exercises.

[Life and Prayer](#) by Beverly Lanzetta

[Mindfulness](#) by Beverly Lanzetta

[Obstacles in Spiritual Practice](#) by Beverly Lanzetta

Chant with Us.

Chant and sacred song are an important element of our weekly prayer and retreat experiences at the Episcopal House of Prayer. Over the years, a number of beloved and favorite chants have echoed in the oratory, even as new ones are heard for the first time. I invite all members of our community to consider either recording some of your favorite chants and/or listening to them when they are posted in the newsletters.

If you would like to listen to the entire set of chants, visit our website and navigate to the [Chant Library page](#).

Be with Us.

If you are seeking spiritual transformation and tending an awakening heart, we invite you to join us!

All are welcome!

[Visit our website](#)

Vision with Us.

Our Mission is to assist in the ongoing work of discerning God's voice, both within ourselves and in the world; provide guidance in the search for wisdom; teach all forms of contemplative prayer; offer training in the inner work of the spiritual life.

The Vision of the Episcopal House of Prayer is to be a contemplative ministry of spiritual transformation, grounded in the Christian tradition, in the practice of Benedictine hospitality, reaching out and welcoming all.

Support Us.

The Episcopal House of Prayer is a contemplative ministry grounded in the Christian tradition and held within a Benedictine container, with locations in Collegeville, Saint Paul, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. This ministry is dedicated to supporting individuals and groups as they seek to be "formed into Christ" (Galatians 4:19).

[Donate](#)

Connect with Us.

