



the Belltower

Sept
2013

"To grow as disciples in Christ, prayerfully opening our hearts and minds to joy and service."

Growing

Christian formation is the lifelong process of growing in our relationship with God, self, others, and all creation. – Web site of The Episcopal Church

[Formation] is a bringing out of what is there and giving it the power of expression, not packing in what does not belong; and spiritual [formation] means learning how to give expression to the Divine life that is in us... -- Oswald Chambers

My dear Christ Church family,

It is said that the Christian walk is much like riding a bicycle: we are either moving forward or falling off. I believe that is true! Saint Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335–394) even went so far as to define “sin” as “the refusal to keep growing.”

No matter our age, we are in continuous need of growing spiritually. We used to talk about “Christian Education”, but more and more, churches (especially Episcopal churches) are getting away from that phrase. “Education” implies *intellectual* learning – and growing spiritually involves so much more than just intellectual learning! More and more, therefore, we are using the term “*Christian Formation*”. We are *formed* into the image of Christ – we grow into Christ – not simply by “head learning”, but by spiritual practice, prayer, silence, spending time in nature (which Richard Rohr calls “God’s first Bible”), worship, singing, listening to music, etc.

I am very pleased that we offer many opportunities for Christian Formation at Christ Church. For children, we continue to offer Sunday School, lovingly taught by Shirleen Sabatino. This year it will be offered during the 9:00am hour, in order that parents of our children might join our new *Faith-Seeking Journey*. (There will be a nursery from 9:00am-11:15am.) Older children and youth have the opportunity to serve as acolytes during worship – another formational activity. Youth can participate in the diocesan Genesis and Quest weekends at Frontier Ranch. This past year, we were privileged to be able to join the Episcopal Churches in Colorado Springs in joint activities: some of our youth participated in a weekend retreat at Cathedral Ridge, a Middle School Mission Trip to Leadville, and Summer Camp at Cathedral Ridge. (I met just yesterday with leaders of these Colorado Springs Churches to begin planning next summer’s mission trips.) Pastor Bob Kippley from Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church and I have arranged to offer a monthly “youth group” gathering this year (see information elsewhere in this newsletter). Also this year our youth who are 16 or older will have the opportunity to join the youth from the Colorado Springs Episcopal Churches in a joint monthly Confirmation Class. (We are looking for adult Mentors – please talk with me if you are willing.)

For adults, we continue to offer Bible Studies for men and woman, a Centering Prayer Group, and Daughters of the King (an Episcopal women’s society committed to prayer). pb Walsh continues her gracious offer to teach, one-on-one, contemplative prayer to anyone who asks her. She also tends our bookshelves in the parish hall, keeping them stocked with books and recordings which can help in our Christian Walk. This Fall, we are blessed to have Mary Derbort, a member of St. Michael’s Church and a friend to many of us, teach a new “BeFriends” course at Christ Church on Tuesday afternoons (2-4pm), beginning Oct. 15. (I will be taking that course, and I encourage you to also consider it. See elsewhere in this newsletter for more information, and visit www.befrienderministry.org/.) Of course, our big new exciting offering this year is *The Faith-Seeking Journey*, which I strongly encourage all adults to consider joining. (See more information elsewhere in this newsletter – and please sign up soon, so that we may order materials.)

Why not consider taking advantage of these wonderful opportunities for spiritual formation and growth – and invite a neighbor to join you?

In Christ’s love and service,
Mark

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THE REV. MARK D. MEYER, RECTOR † THE REV. MERLE HARRISON, DEACON † ALL MEMBERS OF CHRIST CHURCH, MINISTERS

Our Senior Warden says....



Welcome Fall. We will probably have a beautiful fall season with the rain that we have had. I love the season as the trees are at their finest and the flowers are in full bloom.

Our Christ Church Family celebrated Loaves and Fishes Sunday during the month of July when we collected food and money to be given to our local organization of Loaves and Fishes. We are encouraged to donate money as Loaves and Fishes is able to purchase so much more food with the dollars than we can. As a church community, we donated \$1000 during the month which enabled Loaves and Fishes to purchase 5000 pounds of food! The food goes directly to feed the hungry in our community.

Christ Church website is up and running. Kudos to both Becky and Father Mark for their continued effort in making the website timely, interesting and usable. In addition to the news of our church, the calendar is referenced and will indicate when and where events are taking place. People often visit websites and Facebook entries before they visit a specific church. Social media is more and more important....check out both our website and Facebook page.

Please pray for Bob Barnhill, Dee Dumond, Christopher Rock, and Velva Vaughn, as they are all recovering. And, stop and visit our friends in nursing homes.

The family of Dean Earl Baird celebrated his life with a service this summer. The service was very special as family and friends had the opportunity to speak about their fond memories of Earl. Our church family is blessed to have known Earl and will miss him deeply.

Deacon Merle participated at St. Michaels in Colorado Springs in training several of our members to be Lay Eucharistic Visitors. The team of LEV's visits members who are homebound yet want to participate with our church family in receiving the Eucharist. Members of our LEV team are Deacon Merle Harrison, DeeAnn Jayson, Pat Manzanares, Jim Maxon, Christopher Rock, and me. If you are homebound and want to receive communion, please call Christopher Rock.

Faith Journey teaches us about Christian Faith and the Episcopal Church Tradition. We will be starting with the Inquiry Period on Sunday, Sept. 22. Jim and I are planning to participate. I hope you will also.

Colossians 3:17

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Barb Smith, Sr. Warden



Are you a good listener?

Coming in October: A 20-hour course to help us learn or re-learn an effective way of listening that is useful in all relationships, at home or at work (paid or volunteer). The cost for the workbook is \$15 (no cost if you already have one). The class will be held on Tuesday afternoon, 2:00-4:00 pm starting October 15, extending for 10 weeks. Registration deadline is October 1, 2013. To register, call Mary Derbolt at 942-5083.

"One of The Faith-Seeking Journey's biggest surprises was gaining a sense of community where I hadn't even known it was missing. In lecture and group, and through my dear sponsor and our blessed clergy, an aura of loving-kindness and trust that I'd been missing most everywhere in my life came back.

"Sharing memories and impressions with my small group as a journeyer in The Faith-Seeking Journey gave me a focus place to reflect and realize just how palpably God's Spirit is working something strange and wonderful in all of us.

"Piecing together the deeper contexts of religion and personal faith is often a private affair that many prefer to keep that way. The Faith-Seeking Journey moves seekers beyond these reservations in a secure and enjoyable way. "

"Because The Faith-Seeking Journey touches so many chords in the deep themes of our traditions, its benefit to all types of parishioners is compelling." Ethan Engel, 2011-2012

Youth Group

It's back! This year we will offer youth group, once a month, for Middle School and High School youth from Christ Church and Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church. Meetings will be held from 5:00-7:00pm on the third Sunday evening of each month, alternating meeting at each church. (Yes, there will be food!) Sept. 15 and Nov. 17 we will meet at Christ Church; October 20 and Dec. 15 will be at Shepherd of the Hills. Please come – and invite a friend! Questions? See Fr. Mark.



Confirmation

It is our bishop's practice to hold Regional Confirmations during the Easter Season each year. Preparation and formation for Confirmation of Adults will be participation in *The Faith-Seeking Journey*. For Confirmation of youth (ages 16 and older), we will be joining youth from the Episcopal Churches in Colorado Springs. Confirmation classes will be held in Colorado Springs once a month from 1:00-3:00pm, beginning September 22, ending in May. Any youth or adult desiring to be Confirmed should see Fr. Mark. Questions? See Fr. Mark.

Spiritual growth does not happen all at once. It is more like a developing fetus. Over time, it becomes like a human shape, but even when it is born it is not perfect. Growth continues for years. Think of the way seeds of grain winter over before they sprout. A fruit tree sapling takes years to bear fruit. Spiritual progress is a continuing process. It is gradual, incremental.

Pseudo-Macarius (4th Century)



Summer Camp, 2014

Summer Camp for those ages 8-14 will be held at Cathedral Ridge June 15-21, 2014. Registration should open in December.

The meaning of earthly existence lies, not as we have grown used to thinking, in prospering, but in the development of the soul.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

The American Bible Society, which has generously hosted our church web site at no charge for the past dozen years, is getting out of the web-hosting business. This means that we are having to find a new web host. Becky is working hard at this (and it is proving to be more complicated and more work than we had imagined). In the meantime, I will continue to try to continue to post information to the old site www.christchurchcanoncity.org as long as it is operational. (They may dismantle the old site at any time.) Thank you for your patience while the new site is under construction!



Remember our Food Pantry

Please remember to add a few canned or boxed food items to your grocery basket each time you shop and bring your food offering to church each Sunday.



June and July

- Fr. Steve Zimmerman will be at Christ Church on June 29 to discuss our CDI Project of growing our awareness and understanding of God, spirituality and the unique gifts the Episcopal Church has to offer. A \$100 honorarium and \$45 in traveling expenses were approved for Father Zimmerman.
- Summer Youth camp will be at Cathedral Ridge in July 7 through 13. Eucharistic Visitor Training will be July 27. The Regional Meeting will be August 10 at St. Rafael in Security. All are invited.
- Father Mark is on vacation in Chicago July 7 through July 13
- Rachel Alexander's resignation from the Vestry was accepted with regret. Rachel will be missed as she was a huge asset to Christ Church.
- Positive progress of several projects including the watering system, bells, flowers, and roof was reported. The sound system continues to be reviewed.
- The front walks and possible removal of pew space for wheel chairs will be studied.
- The Holy Hoedown, Ministry Celebration (9/15), Loaves and Fishes Sunday (7/14), and Stewardship were discussed.
- We are meeting our financial obligations without difficulty and our investments are doing well.
- Our Altar Flower Fund needs income and members are asked to please consider donating.

August

- Terry Squier was welcomed as he will be fulfilling Rachael Alexander's seat on the Vestry.
- The Faith-Seeking Journey will begin Sept. 22. Sunday School will be at 9:00 allowing parents to attend the Journey and nursery services will be provided. The Ministry Fair has been postponed until spring when it will become a part of the Initiation Stage of the Faith-Seeking Journey.
- Evening Prayer continues Mondays through Thursdays 5:30 – 6:00
- Regional Diocesan Delegates are Christopher Rock, Bryan Fredrickson and pb Walsh

- Befrienders training classes, given by Mary Derbort, at Christ Church will begin in October. Call if you are interested in attending.
- During the month of July, Christ Church collected \$1000 for Loaves and Fishes. That amount enables them to buy 5000 pounds of food.
- The Junior Warden reported on progress on the roof, ADA requirements, the chestnut tree, the roof on the rental garage, cleaning the carpet in the parish hall, a fire safety inspection, the boiler inspection, the bell in the bell tower, and possible repair of the concrete on the ramp. Thank you Bill for all your Junior Warden work! Please refer to the complete minutes for details.
- The Financial Reports were reported and accepted.

"In The Faith-Seeking Journey I learned the whys and wherefores for the lessons chosen for each week -- giving me a framework for listening and reflecting deeply on what it means, and how I can use those lessons in my own life. -- Kitty Taylor, 2011-



Visit us on
Facebook

Christ Episcopal Church is on Facebook. Our parish administrator is keeping the "wall"

updated with our news. Go to <http://facebook.com/ChristChurchCanonCity> and click "LIKE".

"As a lifelong Episcopalian, I was active and comfortable in my faith, serving in laymen's roles in worship and music. Then came The Faith-Seeking Journey! What an incredible awakening to the faith I thought I'd always known. Now my religion has much deeper meaning."

— David Watts, 2011-2012

Rector
The Rev. Mark D. Meyer

Deacon
The Rev. Merle Harrison

Senior Warden
Barbara Smith

Junior Warden
Bill Price

Treasurer
Walter Roche

Vestry
Robert Barnhill
Kay Bevens
Bryan Fredrickson
Bud Gentry
Connie Liptrap
Jim Maxon
Bill Price
Christopher Rock
Stephanie Ropp
Terry Squier

Acolyte Director:
Marnie Chapman

Bulletin: Christopher Rock

Centering Prayer: pb Walsh,
Nancy Kovalcik

Child Care Attendants
Michelle Cook
Shirleen Sabatino

Coffee Hour: Bob & Earline
Barnhill

Episcopal Church Women:
Ann Roche

ECW Thrift House:
Lois Kitchell

Eucharistic Visitors:
Christopher Rock

Hospitality: Shirley Squier

Lectors: Mary Olson

Library: pb Walsh

New Child Montessori
School: Michelle Cook

Operation Christmas Child:
Ann Roche

Organist: Barbara Kohl

Parish Administrator:
Becky Jamison

Pastoral Care: Ann Roche

Prayer Chain: Donna Cooper

Risk Management:
John Merriam

Sangre de Cristo Region Rep:
Lois Kitchell

Sexton: Larry Jamison

St. Gabriel's Guild:
Jocie Rohde

Stewardship: Vestry

Sunday School:
Shirleen Sabatino

SWEEPS Council:
Mary Olson

United Thank Offering:
Audrey DeBekker

Ushers: John Merriam

Engagement Announcement

The families of Sunaholy Shekina Sanchez and Zachary Michael Jayson are pleased to announce their engagement. Ms. Sanchez is the daughter of Apolonio Miguel Sanchez of Maturin, Venezuela and the late Noemi Avila of Camuy, Puerto Rico. She is a graduate of the Universidad del Turabo with a BA in elementary education with a minor in English and the University of Phoenix with an MA in early childhood education. She is currently employed as an English teacher with the Department of Education in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Sgt. Jayson, the son of Ron and Deeann Jayson of Canon City, is a 2002 graduate of Canon City High School and a 2008 graduate of Colorado State University with a degree in microbiology. He is currently serving with the United States Army stationed in Fairbanks, Alaska and will attend pharmacy school in 2014.

A December 14, 2013 wedding is planned in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.



“The Faith-Seeking Journey brought back to life the joy I felt as a child learning of the hope that Jesus brought to a world without hope – and taught me how to keep that feeling alive in my heart and in my life.”
— Connie Allen, 2012-2013



Church Calendar on web site

Our parish calendar is now on our web site, www.christchurchanoncity.org.

What deadens us most to God's presence within us, I think, is the inner dialogue that we are continuously engaged in with ourselves, the endless chatter of human thought. I suspect that there is nothing more crucial to true spiritual *comfort*... than being able from time to time to stop that chatter including the chatter of spoken

Prayer Practice III

Centering Prayer

“In the body there is a little shrine. In that shrine there is a lotus. In that lotus there is a little space. What is it that lives in that little space? The whole universe is in that little space, because the source of it all is in the heart of each one of us.”

--Parable from the Upanishads

“Listen...and incline the ear of thy heart...” That’s from the first line of the prologue to the Rule of St. Benedict written for monastic life in the 6th century. But how does one “incline the ear of thy heart?”

I’m going to ask you to perform an interesting exercise. Don’t worry. It won’t last any longer than 20 minutes and does not involve physical exertion. Sit comfortably and calmly in a chair in a quiet place, both feet on the floor, your hands in your lap folded or open, and your eyes gently closed. Take a couple of deep breaths. Relax. Begin to notice the thoughts flicking through your mind, letting them come and go as if you were a mere observer and not heeding them or giving them any energy at all. You may find yourself thinking about the past or the future, what you should be doing or what you have already done. You may feel remorse for an injury you caused or resentment over an injury you received. Whatever the thoughts are, just let them come and go. Watch them. Don’t engage them. If during the process you find yourself carried off by a particular thought, gently bring your attention back to the present moment, without judging yourself. Some people use a sacred word, such as “Abba” or “Jesus,” to help them get off the “thought train.” Others merely focus on their breath. After about 15 or 20 minutes, gently come out of the exercise.

You will probably notice several things. First, your thought stream is almost constant. Second, you will observe that your mind often jumps from one thought to another. Buddhists call this the “monkey mind.” You may also notice that the same “tapes” tend to play over and over again in your mind. This is the “noise” that we all live with that hinders us from St. Benedict’s call to “listen.”



But, you say, I cannot stop my thoughts. And for the most part you are right, of course. In fact, by consciously trying to stop your thoughts you are engaging in one more thought. However, if you practice consistently and often, perhaps once or twice per day, over time you will come to an interesting, even startling, realization: you are not your thoughts. Your deeper self (the observer) exists independently of your thoughts, separate from the noise of your daily existence. With practice this exercise becomes contemplative prayer where you may find a quiet, silent “place” beneath the stream of conscious thought to commune in silence with the Holy Spirit.

John O’Donohue, a wonderful Irish Catholic poet and philosopher, put it this way: “The soul has two faces. One face is turned towards our lives; it animates and illuminates every moment of our presence. The other face is always turned towards the divine presence. Here the soul receives the Divine Smile or the Kiss of God, as Meister Eckhart might express it.” O’Donohue, *Beauty*.

Meditation is a beautiful form of prayer where we create interior space amidst the noise of our lives to allow the Holy Spirit to indwell. It is the room Jesus calls us to when he said, “When you pray, go into your private room, shut yourself in, and so pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. In your prayers do not babble as the gentiles do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard.” (Matt. 6:6-7). Jesus invites us often to this place where we “who travail and are heavy laden, may be refreshed.” (Matt. 11:28).

Of course, meditation can take many forms. What is described above is one form of what is often called centering prayer. If you want to learn more about it, we have a centering prayer group at Christ Church. We will look at another form of meditation next time in this prayer practice series.

--Bryan Fredrickson

What is *The Faith-Seeking Journey*?

The Faith-Seeking Journey is a program (perhaps “experience” would be more accurate) through which participants share their faith, doubts, questions, and learn the foundational teachings of the Church in areas such as Church History, Bible, Prayer, etc. As a Foundations Course, *The Faith-Seeking Journey* can serve many purposes: 1) It can be an introduction to Christianity and the Episcopal tradition for those who are new to the Church; 2) It can be a refresher for longtime members of the Episcopal Church, helping them deepen their faith; and 3) It can serve as instruction for those preparing to be Baptized (or parents/godparents of those being Baptized), Confirmed, Received, or those Reaffirming their Faith.

There are four stages or phases in the program, corresponding to the seasons of the Church Year:



1. It begins in September with the **Inquiry Period**, during which time the focus is on Story -- both the faith stories of each individual and the faith story of the Church. We meet people where they are in their faith journey, and share with them the collective faith journey of the Christian Church down through the centuries. The Inquiry Period lasts through the end of the Pentecost Season (last Sunday before Advent).

2. At the end of the Inquiry Period, participants can decide whether they want to make the commitment to continue on into the next phase, the **Formation Period**. If so, there is a brief covenanting ceremony during worship on the First Sunday in Advent. During the Formation Period, the focus is on the Liturgy of the Word (the Bible). The Inquiry Period lasts through the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

3. At the end of the Formation Period, participants can decide whether they want to make the commitment to continue on into the next phase, the **Enlightenment Period**. If so, there is a brief covenanting ceremony during worship on the First Sunday in Lent. The Enlightenment Period focuses on Prayer (using the Book of Common Prayer and other resources). The Enlightenment Period ends with a festive celebration of The Great Vigil of Easter early on Easter morning, at which time participants who have not been baptized may choose to be baptized. The Great Vigil of Easter becomes the most important service of the year, as it was in the ancient Church. A festive Easter Brunch is held after the Vigil.

4. At the end of the Enlightenment Period, participants can decide whether they want to make the commitment to continue on into the next phase, the **Initiation Period**. The Initiation Period focuses on the Sacraments and on Ministry. Participants are helped to discern the ministry/ministries to which God is calling them. The Initiation Period continues through the Easter Season, ending on Pentecost, when participants are commissioned in their new ministries. It is our Bishop’s practice to celebrate Regional Confirmations during the Easter Season, and those participants who choose to be Confirmed or to Reaffirm their Faith will do so at that Regional Confirmation service.

When will the course be offered?

The Faith-Seeking Journey will be offered beginning Sunday, September 22, 2013 from 9:00am-9:45am. This is currently the time when our Adult Class is being offered. It is hoped that in the first year of *The Faith-Seeking Journey*, most current participants in the Adult Class will decide to participate in FSJ.

What is the cost?

The Church supplies a student manual and a Serendipity Bible for each participant to use.

How do I sign up?

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. You may also call the Parish Office, 275-2028, and tell Becky you want to sign up for *The Faith-Seeking Journey*.

Christ Episcopal Church

“To grow as disciples in Christ, prayerfully opening our hearts and minds to joy and service.”

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Eating Your True Self

Jesus says, “If you eat this bread you will live forever” (John 6:51). It is so interesting that he chooses taste, flavor, and nutrition as the symbol of how life is transferred, and not intellectual cognition. If you live by the momentary identity that others give you, that’s what dies when you die, and you’re left with nothing. Your relative identity passes away, but it is like the painful erasing of an unwanted tattoo. When Jesus says he’s giving himself to you as the “bread of life,” he’s saying, as it were, “Find yourself in me, and this will not pass or change or die. Eat this food as your primary nutrition, and you are indestructible.” This is your absolute and indestructible identity.

We all slowly learn how to live in what Thomas Merton would call the True Self—who you are, and always have been, in God. Who you are in God is who you forever are. In fact, that’s all you are, and it is more than enough. Everything else is passing away. Reputations, titles, possessions, and roles do not determine our identity. When I hand out the Eucharistic bread I love to say to the assembly, “You become what you eat. Come and eat who you are—forever!” You access Great Truth by absorption and digestion, almost never by analysis or argumentation.

Richard Rohr, Adapted from Eucharist as Touchstone

Congratulations to our Youth!

Three of our Youth received awards at the recent Fremont County Fair.

Taryn Chapman was awarded Reserve Grand Champion Senior Horse Western Showmanship, Unit 3 Vet Science unit Champion, Overall Grand Champion Vet Science project (and will be going to the Colorado State Fair), Champion yearling breeding heifer, Overall Reserve Grand Champion Breeding heifer, and Overall Reserve Grand Champion Senior Master Showman.

Sarah Liptrap was awarded a blue ribbon in Computers, peer to peer, Unit Champion and Reserve Grand Champion and blue ribbon in Unit 5 Cake Decorating: Cupcakes and Unit Champion (and will also be going to the Colorado State Fair).

Tammi Chapman was awarded Reserve Grand Champion—22 Shooting Sports and will be going to the State Fair. She also was awarded Grand Champion Intermediate Beef Showmanship, Overall Grand Champion Intermediate Master Showman and Reserve Grand Champion in Horse Gymkhana. Congratulations!