



Contemplative Outreach Ontario

Fall 2011 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

How are you? We've been involved in so many unforeseen events (somewhat parallel to your own life, I imagine) that this newsletter got lost in the shuffle. So I'll start by indicating some Contemplative Outreach happenings slated for the fall in 2011 in Ontario.

Golden Horseshoe Calendar

August 15 – (Monday from 5:00 pm till whenever) Centering group members and friends come together for our traditional ***potluck supper*** in Carolyn's apartment. (40 Pleasant Blvd. PH1, Code #1260). It was good to see each other again.

September 12 – (Monday evenings, 7 to 9 pm at St. Leonard's Church, 5 Wanless Ave., Toronto) The ***midtown centering group*** will begin again. For information about other groups, contact Contemplative Outreach facilitators nearest you or phone Judy Wootten regarding possible new groups at 416-487-8521.

September 24 – (Saturday, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm) An ***Introductory Day*** for people who want to hear more about Centering Prayer will be held at the Resource Centre, 60 Pleasant Blvd., Ste. 804. Contact Peter Catt at 416-484-9620 for more information. See p. 8 of this newsletter.

September 29 – October 2 – (San Francisco) The Contemplative Outreach ***2011 Annual Conference*** features "Re-awakening the Contemplative Dimension of Life". Please contact Carolyn Gratton at 416-922-6451 if you plan to attend.

October 15 – (Saturday from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm in Carolyn's apt., Toronto) We are holding a ***Formation Day for centering group facilitators***. Men and women thinking of starting a new group are most welcome. We ask that you bring your own lunch and your questions. Contact Judy Wootten for more information close to the day. Report on last facilitator meeting on p. 6.

November 11-13 – (Convent of Sisters of St. John the Divine, Cummer Ave. Toronto) ***Weekend silent retreat***. Contact Elyse Strathy at 416 482-1619 for further information. More on p. 4.

Fall of 2011 – (Brantford. Date and time to be announced.) A day of ***meditative labyrinth walking***, centering prayer and discussion is being planned in Brantford, Ontario. Contact Carolyn at 416-922-6451 if interested.



Southwest Ontario Calendar

September Introductory Workshops

- Saturday, September. 24, 2011 – Windsor
- Saturday. September. 17, 2011 – Leamington

Advent Preparation Day

- Saturday, November 26, 2011 – Windsor

Lenten Preparation Day

- Ash Wednesday, February 22 - 25, 2012 – Windsor

World Day of Prayer

- Saturday, March. 24, 2012 – Windsor

Weekend Centering Prayer Retreat

- April 27-29, 2012 – Oxley

For more information or details on all these events, please call Marlene at 519-324-0118 or S. Therese Ladouceur at 519-253-7616.

Report on the Finances Meeting held at St. Leonard's on June 20, 2011

Everyone on our mailing list received a letter in early June explaining that our finances in Ontario are "at an all-time low" and asking for concrete proposals to reinvigorate them so that we can continue making resources available to centering groups across Ontario. We did manage to salvage the rent for our small office by subletting it, but we also judged it imperative to extend an invitation to our full membership to better consider our long-term options. What follows is a report on that meeting.

Minutes

Over 20 interested people met for a brainstorming session on how to stay economically viable in today's climate of "charity fatigue." The meeting coordinator set out a two-year historical account of expenses and income. The current situation can be acted on in two ways: 1) by lowering expenses, or 2) by raising income. Since most expenses are fixed, the best recourse seems to be to increase income. The main questions then become:

- Does the group set a fundraising target?
- If so, what should the target be?

The possibility that every event should be profit generating was put forth. As well, the following suggestions were offered and discussed at length:

Office: The extra office was sublet at cost price. It was suggested that in the future a higher rent could be charged to new tenants. The possibility of a virtual office or not having an office at all was not well received. We still need a place to stock resource materials and to hold meetings.



Report on the Finances Meeting at St. Leonard's. (cont'd.)

Retreats: One of the questions posed was whether retreats could be made profitable rather than break even as they traditionally have.

Meditation CDs: At present CD's are being sent out with only a request to cover costs. There is a reluctance to sell the CD's due to the possible infringements on copyright laws. However, it's possible to make CDs that can be sold outright.

Membership Fees: The idea of charging a membership fee has been discussed in the past and was raised again at today's meeting. The consensus was that it is not appropriate for a prayer group to charge membership fees. Further, there are members of some groups for whom even minimal annual fees would be a strain. It seemed to be generally agreed that group facilitators could attempt to contribute either \$50.00 or \$100.00 towards the Ontario Network. With 41 groups in Ontario, annual revenue could be between \$2,000.00 and \$4,000.00.

Tax-deductible Donations: The Benedictine Sisters in Winnipeg process all donations requiring a tax receipt and each February send us a cheque for all contributions received by December of the previous year. It was suggested that a contribution be made to the Sisters in recognition of their service and that tax-deductible donations be better publicized and encouraged.

In conclusion, it was agreed that:

- The ideas put forward would be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting on September 22.
- Facilitators need to be educated about our financial needs. A summary of our current expenses and income will be prepared for them.
- Individual groups can organize fundraising events on their own initiative – potlucks, bake sales and other endeavour – and donate the proceeds.
- The donation form may need revising. See Gifting Process form below.

Overall it was agreed that a financial contingencies plan is needed to offset unexpected expenses. We would appreciate input from anyone in our network that can help with ways of making Contemplative Outreach more financially viable.

The Gifting Process

Did you know...

that in Ontario a tax-deductible charitable donation provides you with a *tax credit of about 20% on amounts up to \$200 and 40% on sums that exceed \$200.*

You can help build...

the Centering Prayer Community in your region and in Canada. The process is working. Regions that have set up a bank account and encouraged member donations are building modest surpluses that help fund new materials for their members.



Contemplative Outreach Canada Gift Form

To: Contemplative Outreach Canada
19 Ambergate Dr.
Winnipeg, MB
R2P 2R7

I wish to support centering prayer with a gift of \$ _____.

Please allocate my gift as follows:

- _____ % to _____ Region (please specify)
- _____ % to Contemplative Outreach Canada
- _____ % to Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. (International Headquarters)
- _____ % to St. Benedict's Foundation

Please make your cheque payable to the St. Benedict's Foundation.

For tax purposes, kindly provide your name and full address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone or email: _____

Thank you for your generosity.

National Service Team

Weekend Silent Retreat in Golden Horseshoe Area, November 11-13, 2011

Contemplative Outreach Ontario is offering its third annual weekend retreat at the lovely guesthouse run by the Sisters of St. John the Divine in Toronto. We received some feedback from our members to the questions posed in our Winter 2010 Newsletter and concluded that there is sufficient interest in our unique Centering Prayer retreats to continue to offer them. The schedule for the retreat will be much the same as in the past, that is, a number of centering prayer sessions daily, personal time, silent meals, time for walks on the grounds and for reading, daily liturgy and the option of watching a Fr. Keating video.

Although our June 10th deadline for registrations has passed, there are a few rooms still available and commuters are always welcome. If you are interested in attending the retreat, please contact Elyse Strathy at 416-482-1619 or at strathy@sympatico.ca



March 2012 Intensive Retreat in Toronto

We are delighted to announce that Susan Rush, Coordinator of Contemplative Outreach of New Mexico, will facilitate our retreat at Scarboro Missions next year. The retreat will be held the week of March 12 - 18, 2012.

Susan will borrow from a number of mystics such as Meister Eckhart and Teresa of Avila, and explore with us ways to embody the Silence throughout our day with our Centering Prayer being our 'bookends'. Information and registration forms for the March retreat will be sent by email or by regular mail to those of our members who do not have email, in the fall.

If you have any questions regarding the retreat, please contact Elyse Strathy at 416-482-1619 or at strathy@sympatico.ca

We're online at www.coontario.org ! Check out web designer Stewart Johnson's fine work. The regional coordinators have agreed to pay a proportional share of the modest cost of maintenance.

Facilitator Support Day, April 16, 2011

We had a very good response to our Facilitator Support Day with many new people in attendance as well as old, familiar faces. We divided into three discussion groups to deepen the topics raised in Judy Wooten's opening talk and came together periodically to share information. Following is a summary of issues faced in the ongoing life of our prayer groups and some resources that various groups have found helpful.

Some of the issues/concerns expressed:

- One group is meeting without a facilitator; there were other new facilitators present as well. We gave them Facilitator Manuals and offered a day of training plus other informal advice.
- How to introduce new people to an established group especially if the group is in the middle of a DVD series? This link to a short presentation by Fr. Keating of the Guidelines to Centering Prayer is a helpful resource for newcomers. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IKpFHfNdnE>
- How to attract new people?
- Whether to keep a group open or close it to new people? One person suggested starting a new group rather than closing a group.
- How does a facilitator encourage others in the group to share responsibility?
- How to handle group discussions? Several use guidelines for sharing (found in the manual/ones created by the group facilitator); some use a 'talking stick' or stone.
- The importance of the physical space for creating an ambiance for prayer.
- The timing of when to pray, especially if some members regularly arrive late.



Facilitator Support Day, April 16, 2011 (cont'd.)

Books:

- All of Fr. Thomas Keating's books, but particularly the newest editions of **Open Mind, Open Heart** and **Intimacy with God**. **Invitation to Love** gives a very good summary of the 28 Spiritual Journey DVDs. One group is re-reading **Open Mind, Open Heart** for a second time after a three-year interval. Some groups read paragraph by paragraph discussing along the way; others read a chapter prior to the group meeting.
- **The Loving Search for God** by Fr. William Meninger explains to the modern reader the 14th century book **The Cloud of Unknowing** from which much of centering prayer is derived.
- Cynthia Bourgeault's **Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening** and **The Wisdom Jesus**. **The Meaning of Mary Magdalene**, her new book on Mary Magdalene was also recommended.
- **The Naked Now** by Fr. Richard Rohr.
- **Practical Mysticism** by Evelyn Underhill.
- **One Thing Necessary** by Henri Nouwen.
- **Into the Silent Land** by M. Laird.
- **Field of Compassion** by Judy Cannato.

Audio-visual Resources:

- Many people use the 28 Spiritual Journey DVDs/tapes by Fr. Thomas Keating. A transcript of these is also available.
- There are many other Fr. Keating's tapes and DVDs, which can be found on the Contemplative Outreach website. Several are available at the Resource Centre.
- Some groups have their members contribute a loonie or a toonie to buy resources for themselves and/or to make a contribution to the parish where they meet.
- One group profited from Jean Vanier's videos on prayer, Ron Rolheiser's on the parables of Jesus and other Fr. Keating videos (e.g. *Living in the Presence of God*, *The Ultimate Reality*).

Web and Stuff:

- Fr. William Meninger
Contemplative (Centering) Meditation and The Cloud of Unknowing (3-DVD set)
<http://www.contemplativeprayer.net/>
- James Findley's *The Beginner's Guide to Contemplative Prayer*
- Margaret Rizza's music – Videos posted on YouTube & many sites like:
http://www.soundclick.com/bands/page_music.cfm?bandID=841969
- World Community of Christian Meditation – <http://www.wccm.org/>
- Fr. Richard Rohr – <http://cacradicalgrace.org/>



Facilitator Support Day, April 16, 2011 (cont'd.)

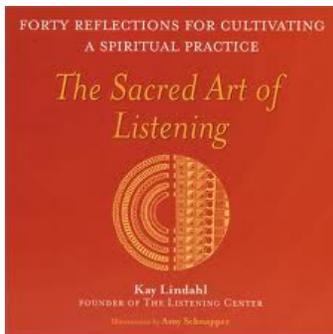
Movies:

One group shows a movie to end its meetings before summer break. Others attend a movie together as a group. Suggested titles included:

- *Into Great Silence, The Mission, Of Gods and Men, Babette's Feast*
- *The Seventh Chamber: Edith Stein, the Interior Castle and Auschwitz*
- *Vision: From the Life of Hildegard of Bingen*

Book Review

The Sacred Art of Listening: Forty Reflections for Cultivating a Spiritual Practice by Kay Lindahl, illustrated by Amy Schnapper. SkyLight Paths, 160 pages.



Toronto is the “meeting place” of inhabitants from a multitude of countries. We live in fertile terrain for exploring intercultural and interfaith dialogue, thus fostering a more peaceful world. To my mind, for this process to occur, we need to deepen two essential skills: to strive always to “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4) and to listen deeply. Kay Lindahl’s book **The Sacred Art of Listening** will help us to engage in more effective dialogue and deepen our appreciation of people from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds.

Kay modeled good listening skills in writing the forty short reflections on deeper listening. Before her Centering Prayer, she would ask herself which topic of listening should be written next. She would repeat the question before her morning runs. Through meditation and reflection, the themes were set and the words expressing each theme flowed easily – Spirit was guiding her in a creative and fruitful process.

Some people believe they cannot practice contemplation. “Just try it,” says Kay. “The next time you’re stuck in that frustrating parking lot that is the Don Valley Parkway, focus on thoughts of compassion and patience. Spend a few minutes in the garden listening to the birds or delighting in the flowers. Take in these sounds and sights leaving other thoughts aside and experience a peaceful respite.”

Forty circular black ink designs by artist Amy Schnapper complement each chapter. Amy drew the circles before even reading the text. She then matched each theme with a given circle such as the one on listening with humility that reflects “interconnectedness and service in mutual support.” It reminds us to consider all people as equals, to act without pretence, not to impress and, finally, to listen well to serve others most effectively.

The art of listening will enhance all our interpersonal relationships. The book could be read during Lent, endeavouring to practice a deeper way of listening each of the forty days. Or, we could savour one chapter at a time before our daily prayer. As the writer of Revelation 3 reminds us, “Are your ears awake? Listen. Listen to the Wind Words, the Spirit blowing through the churches.”



Lenten Ottawa Silent Retreat Including Centering and Welcoming Prayer

“It looks like a Tom Thomson painting,” said Barbara as we looked through the trees to the Ottawa River. We were chatting over dinner on Friday night, before the full silence of the silent Lenten retreat officially started. The Galilee Centre in Arnprior is located right on the river, so for the entire weekend of March 18th to the 20th we were surrounded by beauty.

After dinner we had an introduction to the work of Contemplative Outreach, a wide community of people “dedicated to transmitting the living tradition of the contemplative Christian heritage.” The Rector of St. Luke’s, the Rev. Gregor Sneddon, is the contact person for Contemplative Outreach in Eastern Ontario.

For the rest of the weekend participants split into three streams: one group explored Centering Prayer, another group explored the Welcoming Prayer, and a third group opted to be in complete silence for the entire retreat. Interspersed with the interactive workshops, everyone came together to practice Centering Prayer several times a day, to celebrate Compline, the final church Office of the day, and to eat meals together.

The Welcoming Prayer is often referred to as “the right hand of Centering Prayer.” It was developed by Mary Mrozowski and can be practiced in as few as fifteen seconds. The Welcoming Prayer workshop was led by Therese Saulnier of New Jersey, who shared multiple real-life examples of how the Welcoming Prayer can help us “consent to God’s presence and action in our physical and emotional reactions to events and situations in daily life.”

The retreat was a wonderful chance to both get away for a weekend and deepen our spiritual practice. We are looking forward to next year’s retreat, already booked for March 16th to the 18th at the Galilee Centre.

What is an Introductory Day?

The Introductory Program to Centering Prayer, which comprises a three-hour introductory talk followed by six follow-up sessions, is an excellent way to establish the daily practice of Centering Prayer.

The initial three-hour introductory talk, presented by Commissioned Presenters, is made up of four talks of about 20 minutes each combined with two prayer practice sessions. The talks are designed to help orient people who are accustomed to thinking of prayer as “talking to God” to the notion that prayer is the development of an ongoing intimate relationship with the Divine Presence within. A key part of fostering that relationship is learning to respond to God in the silence of our hearts.

Participants are given two opportunities to practice the guidelines of centering prayer and the Presenters field questions that individuals may have about their experience.



What is an Introductory Day? (cont'd.)

In the six follow-up sessions individuals have an opportunity to practice centering prayer with others, share concerns they have about their daily practice and watch a video of Father Thomas Keating describing in detail some aspects of centering prayer.

Each region of Contemplative Outreach Ontario holds introductory sessions, typically one in the spring and one in the fall. In addition, we respond to requests from individuals to put on the program in their individual parishes.

See the Calendar on pp. 1-2 for times & locations or visit <http://www.coontario.org/>

Thinking about this newsletter...

One of our volunteers, after the copy for this newsletter had been handed on from one person to another, had some of its contents lost and had been misplaced several times over the course of three months, remarked that we should have named it "the little newsletter that couldn't." However, here it is written by a variety of people and conveying only a brief glimpse of what has happened since the Spring for this somewhat loosely organized group of meditators.

So we thought that we had better ask how many of you find that receiving this newsletter adds something of value to your ongoing journey. Or would you be just as happy if it didn't turn up twice a year in your computer or mailbox? Maybe just sending email notices from time to time to the $\frac{3}{4}$ of you who have email will suffice. How would we get in touch with the $\frac{1}{4}$ of you who choose not to receive email? In other words, how can this small band of folks interested in "restoring the contemplative dimension of the Gospel" keep in touch with one another when even the money for the stamps has become a consideration?

Could you let us know by email (coontario@bell.net), by snail mail (60 Pleasant Blvd., #804, Toronto M4T 1K1) or by leaving a message at the Resource Centre (416-927-1350) with your response to the following:

- A – I would like to continue receiving a newsletter, even if only occasionally.**
- B – Here is my email address, which I never got around to sending you.**
- C – At this point, I prefer to be taken off the mailing list entirely.**
- D – I have an idea I've been meaning to pass on to Contemplative Outreach Ontario. (Maybe you could make a note of your thoughts on the back page and send it to us. We'd be most grateful.)**

In any case, we send you our best wishes as the summer of 2011 begins its ebb into September. Together we continue this journey into the heart of reality, into Ultimate Mystery. God bless us all.

As ever,

Your friends at Contemplative Outreach Ontario

Ontario Centering Prayer Groups

August 4, 2011

	(Co-) Facilitator	Telephone	Email
Eastern Ontario			
1) Arnprior	Ruth Willms	613-623-5402	ruthwillms@sympatico.ca
2) Carp – St. James	Kathy Craig	613-595-0807	k-craig@hotmail.com
3) Kanata – St. John's	Gregor Sneddon	613-595-0807	gregorsneddon@gmail.com
4) Kingston – St. Joseph's	Sr. Marilyn Mangan, CND	416-466-2892	
5) Orleans – Church of the Epiphany	Dan Elmore	613-595-0807	delmore@hotmail.com
6) Ottawa – Centre – St John the Evangelist	John Zegers	613-595-0807	jzegers@rogers.com
7) Ottawa – Centre – St Luke's	Barbara Maynard	613-595-0807	barbaramaynard@sympatico.ca
8) Ottawa – Westboro – All Saints'	Marcie Taylor	613-595-0807	marcie.taylor@hotmail.com
Golden Horseshoe			
9) Brampton	Tom Manley	905-453-1645	barb-manley@rogers.com
10) Burlington – St. Luke's (Wednesday PM)	Rev. Stuart Pike	905-634-1826	pikes123@sympatico.ca
11) Markham / Unionville	Johnson Ling	416-495-1067	jr.ling@rogers.com
12) Oakville / Burlington	Joan Vinall-Cox	905-845-4620	jvinall-cox@cogeco.ca
	Michella Poetz	905-827-6195	mpoetz@cogeco.ca
13) Toronto – E – The Listening Post	Carol Marquis	416-928-0098	marquis.c@sympatico.ca
14) Toronto – Midtown (Afternoons)	Mary Alice O'Connor Hayes	416-493-8521	maryalice1@sympatico.ca
15) Toronto-Don Mills-St. Andrew Kim (한국어)*	John Shin	905-709-0414	kangshin@gmail.com
16) Toronto – S – St. Michael's Cathedral	Marg Baker	416-864-0828	margiebaker@bell.net
17) Toronto – E – Scarborough	Kathy Murtha	416-261-7135	kmurtha@scarboromissions.ca
18) Toronto – E – St. John's	Elaine Attwood	416-693-5031	gattwood@rogers.com
19) Toronto – E – St. Saviour's	Shelley McVea	416-694-4516	shelleymcvea@gmail.com
20) Toronto – N – St. Clement's (Wed. 1:30 PM)	Martha Dvorak	416-482-9290	dvorakmartha@gmail.com
	Freda Perry	416-482-0975	dfperry@bell.net
21) Toronto – N – St. Leonard's (Monday PM)	Peter Catt	416-484-9620	petercatt@rogers.com
	Carolyn Gratton	416-922-6451	carolyn.gratton@sympatico.ca
22) Toronto – N – St. Leonard's (Tuesday AM)	Peter Catt	416-484-9620	petercatt@rogers.com
23) Toronto – N – St. Leonard's (Saturday AM)	Peter Catt	416-484-9620	petercatt@rogers.com
24) Toronto – W – All Saints'	Marie-Noëlle Maillard	416-769-6278	logos302@sympatico.ca
	Olga Kolisnyk	905-278-2505	olga.kolisnyk@bell.net
25) Toronto – W – Sacred Heart (한국어)*	Lee, Gregory	416-620-0479	gregdhl@hotmail.com
26) Whitby / Oshawa	Vince Butler	905-426-5874	vincebutler@rogers.com
Near North			
27) Midland / Penetang	Teresa Marchildon	705-549-9470, ext.3057	teresa.marchildon@yahoo.com
28) Markdale	Lynn Wyvill	519-986-3707	lynnwyvill@everus.ca
29) Orillia – Centering Prayer (Afternoons)	George Sanders	705-325-4001	gsanders@sympatico.ca
30) Orillia – Prayer & Meditation	George Sanders	705-325-4001	gsanders@sympatico.ca
Southwest Ontario			
31) Amherstburg	Jeannie Garinger	519-7360014	jeannegaringer@aol.com
32) Leamington – St. Michael's (Monday AM)	Marlene Kelly-Kolotylo	519-324-0118	kolkel@sympatico.ca
33) Leamington – St. Michael's (Tuesday PM)	Brigitte Lalonde	519-687-6258	brigitte53@live.ca
34) Kingsville – St. John De Brebeuf	Debbie Wilson-Safa	519-326-2027	deborah.wilson-safa@sympatico.ca
35) London	Doreen Kraemer, CSJ	519-473-4318	dorkrae@sympatico.ca
	Sarah Lucier	519-472-2451	slucier39@hotmail.com
36) London – Elmwood Presbyterian Church	Rev. Kevin Steeper	519-438-3492	k.steeper@sympatico.ca
	Helen Downie	519-472-6577	k.steeper@sympatico.ca
37) Windsor – E – St. Joseph Centre	Yvonne Parent, CSJ	519-974-3753	ycparent@sympatico.ca
38) Windsor – Church of the Ascension	Fred Eldridge	519-258-9170	edeldridge@excite.com
39) Windsor – 215 McEwan Ave.	Therese Ladouceur, SNJM	519-253-7616	mcqnsnjm@mnsi.net
	Joseph Quinn, CSB	519-985-1171	quinnjoe@hotmail.com

* Korean-language groups