



The Community of Hope International

Connections



Fall 2014

Dear Community of Hope Friends,

Thanksgiving blessings and the peace of Christ to each of you. Our hearts brim with gratitude for all the ways you supported and celebrated our 20th Anniversary. As we prepare for the coming year we humbly embrace the amazing grace of new training centers starting weekly, reports of the creative use of curriculum videos and the beginning of curriculum videos in Spanish. We hold sacred your stories of the transformative power gleaned by being in community and providing ministry to others.

As 2015 unfolds expect a Community of Hope International Facebook page and a newly created website. The COHI 17th Annual Conference, *Becoming Community*, at Camp Allen June 1-3, 2015 will be among the best ever! Keynote speaker, Bishop Rob Wright, Bishop of Atlanta, is highly acclaimed for his stirring message and love of community. His wife, Dr. Beth-Sarah Wright, mother of five is also an inspirational speaker, writer and professor at Emory University School of Medicine will also speak. Another highly acclaimed presenter is Sister Carol Perry, resident Bible scholar at Marble Collegiate Church in New York City. You will receive an eblast when registration for the conference opens.

As you plan your classes for 2015 please honor our ecumenical tradition of inviting one or two members of other denominations to take the training so that they can return to their church to establish their own Community of Hope training center. Benedictine spirituality is about becoming community, building bridges, welcoming the stranger and letting go of "self" as we pray that the stranger will experience the love of Christ through us.

To each of you a blessed Thanksgiving, a holy Advent and Christ-centered Christmas,

Helen⁺

The Rev. Dr. Helen W. Appelberg, COH Founder



WITH LOVE AND JOY WE
WELCOME THESE NEW CENTERS!

St. Francis by the Lake Episcopal Church
Canyon Lake, Texas - July 2014

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
Port Angeles, Washington - September 2014

St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church
Tuscon, Arizona - September 2014

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Tuscon, Arizona - September 2014

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
Houston, Texas - September 2014

Trinity Episcopal Church
Excelsior, Minnesota - September 2014

St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral Church
Seattle, Washington - September 2014

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News from the Regions

GEORGIA REGION

HARMONY KISER



St. Aidan's Community of Hope welcomes newly commissioned members on August 10, 2014:

Front Row: Pam Blaesing, Harmony Kiser, Judie Borden

Second Row: Becky Sullivan, Ann McManes, Deb Stecher, *Wade Hembree, *Joe Rich, Kathy Bump, *Carol Keith, Eileen Steffens

Back Row: *Kathleen Nixon Lancelot, *Bill Williams, Betty Hood, John Ray

Not Shown: Sarah Sambol

*newly commissioned August 10, 2014

HERITAGE REGION

BEVERLY DAVIS



The Community of Hope Center at East Houston Regional Medical Center and Bayshore Medical Center welcomed new lay chaplains at a commissioning on July 29th, 2014.

The new chaplains are;

Maria Esthela Aguiniga, Jesus Ambriz, Kenneth Cabarrus, Caludia Garcia, Patrick Gorrell, Hope McClure, Alicea Briseno, Pauline Ford, Roberta Gamble, and Joline Reese.

Ms. Beverly Davis, Community of Hope Heritage Region Representative, attended the ceremony.



Above, from the Rev. Patsy Barham at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Henderson, Texas.

St. Matthew's Community of Hope celebrates the commissioning of Dr. David Craig at Invitation Sunday, September 21, 2014.

Reading Recommendations from COHI Board Members

Lorrie Slaymaker recommends:

"Here if You Need Me: A True Story"

by Kate Braestrup

Catherine Miller recommends:

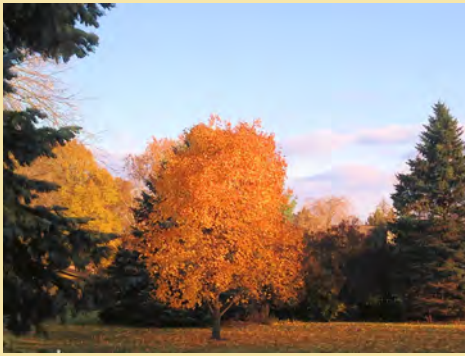
"Sabbath"

by Wayne Mueller

Br. Michael Gallagher recommends:

"The Coming of God" (good advent reading)

by Sr. Maria Boulding, OSB



TWO SOUTHWEST REGION REPRESENTATIVES:

A fond farewell with heartfelt thanks to one
and
a warm welcome to the other!



EILEEN SMITH *and* CATHERINE MILLER



*Honor and many
thanks to
EILEEN SMITH
for a job well done...
with grace and talent*

Eileen Smith retired from the COHI Board of Directors in June 2014 after serving for 5 years as the Regional Representative for the Southwest Region. Eileen says, "I treasure the time I served as a member of the COHI Board of Directors and the time I continue to serve as a Community of Hope Lay Pastoral Caregiver."

Eileen played a vital role in the final stages of the COHI Curriculum revision. She was handed the Curriculum Revisions by various board members and reviewed and edited by checking grammar, spelling, verb tense, punctuation and format of citations to insure consistency throughout the modules. She conformed headers and footers for each module in the Lay Pastoral Caregiver's Notebook and Facilitator's Manual, conformed the use of bullet points and indentations, conformed citations to publications in footnotes and bibliographies, conformed pagination to insure that the facilitator and student were on "the same page." She also revised each Facilitator's Guide to reflect the material in the updated module.

This is a real model of "Motivational Spiritual Gifts." Eileen started her journey growing up in Rockaway Park, New York, (located on the western tip of Long Island) where she attended parochial schools and then worked several years in Manhattan as a secretary. Later she attended the University of North Carolina and then moved to Dallas, Texas in 1976. She worked as a paralegal in civil litigation after earning a Legal Assistant Certificate at SMU in 1982. As a paralegal, she spent many hours reviewing and editing briefs and other legal documents.

In 1990, Eileen became a member of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas. She reviews and edits the Sunday bulletins and the Dean's weekly newsletter. The Dean refers to her as "eagle eyes". In May 2005 she completed the Community of Hope training and has served as the COHI Training Facilitator there for the last 4 years. In 2009 she succeeded Susan Yeang Cole as COHI Regional Representative for the Southwest Region on the COHI Board of Directors. Eileen recommended that Catherine Miller be elected by the board to fill her vacated position.

*A warm welcome to
CATHERINE MILLER,
the lady with a story*



"I was a 12 year old missionary kid living in Iran. I remember the Black Friday Massacre, September 8th, 1978. I remember militants throwing Molotov cocktails over our school walls as they tried to storm the compound. I remember huddling in the middle of the soccer field with my 6th grade classmates waiting for things to die down so the school administrators could get us safely home. I remember a failed attempt by our bus driver to get us home and being attacked by militants who tried to topple our bus, breaking windows and firing shots. I remember my brother throwing me to the bus floor and laying his body on top of mine. I remember being transported home later that evening in armored military tanks. I remember standing on our family rooftop listening to the sounds of machine guns and bombs going off and watching Teheran burn. I remember our family car being spray-painted with "Go Home Americans – We will Kill You." I remember seeing pictures of blindfolded, executed men plastered on the cover of the Kayhan daily newspaper. On December 31st, 1978, I remember my parents getting the call from the American Embassy that we were being evacuated the next day. I remember leaving my dad behind not knowing if I would ever see him again.

For a number of years, I didn't remember. I spent a large part of my teen and early adult years living with anxiety/depression issues and anorexia. In my mid twenties, I was diagnosed with severe posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). I started grief and trauma counseling. As I continued to "show up," I began to understand that my anorexia was not about not eating and over exercising; it was about numbing the pain and memories. I began to understand that I needed to GRIEVE the abrupt end to my childhood. What happened to me when I decided to do my "work" was slow, slow healing. I was encouraged in counseling to tell my story, and tell it again and again until my loss became more undeniable and more real. For me, attending a support group was a vital step in helping me realize I was not alone in my grief and loss. Initially, my story was long, including many small details. Over time, my story shortened, became more cohesive and I eventually found peace and hope for my future."

(continued)




Used the COHI Video Modules at your Circle of Care?

It has been three years since our COH training. Since then our lay chaplains give of themselves, to listen and be present, to share the love of Christ with our shut-ins and others. When the on-line training modules became available, our Circle of Care decided to seize the opportunity to view and discuss a module at each monthly COC meeting. Now that we have been living Benedictine spirituality and doing our pastoral care ministry for three years, we have experiences and stories to share enriching each of us in our own way. Using the on-line training modules opens the door for sharing and open discussions, a source of strengthening ourselves as we continue our spiritual journey and the work God has in store for each of us through pastoral care ministry.

*Cynthia Oliphant, Lay Chaplain
Faith Presbyterian Church, Baytown, TX*

Happy Thanksgiving!

Remember to check your COHI website for the latest news and updates:
www.cohinternational.org

Plan ahead and save the date for our
 **COHI Annual Conference:**
Becoming Community
June 1-3, 2015

Your input to the Newsletter is welcome! Especially news from your center, upcoming classes and retreats, articles about moments close to the heart and how Benedictine Spirituality has changed your life.
Next deadline: January 15, 2015

Catherine's Story (Continued)

Catherine's father (Bob Pryor) did survive and the family moved to California where Rev. Pryor became senior pastor at First Presbyterian church in Santa Barbara. Catherine finished her education in California and soon after met her husband Matt. Skipping forward 25 years, Catherine, Matt and their two teenage children (Pryor, 18 and Caroline, 15) live in Dallas.

Catherine says that she began her formal "spiritual journey" after some major setbacks over a period of five years. One was a breast cancer diagnosis at the age of 39. When she discovered COH and Benedictine Spirituality two years ago, she was at a point where she was ready to "listen" and be "open" to God working in her life.

Three years ago, Catherine was asked to start an official grief ministry at Good Shepherd. To learn more about grief, Catherine took a grief group facilitator training course by Dr. Alan Wolfelt (in Ft. Collins, CO). Dr. Wolfelt is perhaps best known for his model of "companioning" versus "treating" mourners; Dr. Wolfelt is committed to helping people mourn well so they can live and love well. Catherine is working on a grief and loss certification through Dr. Wolfelt's Center in Ft. Collins, Co.

Catherine finds synchronicity in Dr. Wolfelt's companioning tenets and Good Shepherd's Community of Hope ministry. Community of Hope's mission is to create Christian communities of lay, volunteer pastoral caregivers united in prayer, shaped in Benedictine spirituality and equipped for and serving in pastoral care ministries. The belief is that, as we work on our spiritual walk with God and become healthier Christians, we are better able to serve and companion others in their grief and loss.

As Director of Pastoral Programs for Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Dallas, Catherine facilitated their first Community of Hope Training this year and formed the "Good Grief" program. There are three different grief groups at Good Shepherd: *Grief Group for Loss of Spouse*, *Grief Group for Loss of a Child* and *Grief Group for Children and Teens Grieving the Loss of a Loved one*.

Catherine is a wonderful model when it comes to finding one's motivational spiritual gifts. Through the help of professionals and support of others, Catherine found her way from being one who needed a great amount of caregiving to one who is not only a very capable caregiver but also a leader and teacher of pastoral caregivers. As to Benedictine Spirituality, Catherine says "this way of living has become the cornerstone for my everyday walk. People say I am different. My days seem more manageable, my affect is calmer, I try to enjoy more Sabbath moments and look for God in all I do. I like knowing that this way of living is a "practice" and I will never get it perfect. I am so grateful for the Community of Hope experience and the way Benedictine spirituality continues to guide me."