

About Contemplative Outreach of Chicago

Contemplative Outreach of Chicago operates as a branch of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

The organizations share this vision:

“Contemplative Outreach is a spiritual network of individuals and small faith communities committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life through the practice of Centering Prayer. The contemplative dimension of the Gospel manifests itself in an ever-deepening union with the living Christ and the practical caring for others that flows from that relationship.

“Our purpose is to share the method of Centering Prayer and its immediate conceptual background. We also encourage the practice of *Lectio Divina*, particularly its movement into Contemplative Prayer, which a regularly established practice of Centering Prayer facilitates.

“We identify with the Christian Contemplative Heritage. While we are formed by our respective denominations, we are united in our common search for God and the experience of the living Christ through Centering Prayer. We affirm our solidarity with the contemplative dimension of other religions and sacred traditions, with the needs and rights of the whole human family and with all creation.”

Presenter

Margie Tomlinson is on the national faculty committee for Formation for the Contemplative Outreach Service, as well as for An Introduction to Centering Prayer, and on the national faculty committee for intensive retreats for Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. A former coordinator of Contemplative Outreach Chicago, Margie presents workshops on *Lectio Divina* and the Forgiveness Prayer and serves on the staff of Intensive Retreats.

For Futher Information

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An Introduction to Centering Prayer

“Be Still and Know...God”



**Spring Creek
United Church of Christ**

**4500 Spring Creek Rd.,
Rockford, IL 61114**

**Saturday, February 20, 2010
9:30am to 3:30pm**

and

**Six Saturday* mornings
Starting February 27
9:30am to 11:00am**

**There may also be a Tuesday evening option for continuing sessions.*

What is Contemplative Prayer?

We may think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words. But this is only one expression. In the Christian tradition Contemplative Prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being – to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. Through grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing – closer than consciousness itself.

What is Centering Prayer?

Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of Contemplative Prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. It is an attempt to present the teaching of earlier times in an updated form. It is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on other kinds of prayer. It is a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him. The desire for God is God's gift to us.

The source of Centering Prayer, as in all methods leading to Christian Contemplative Prayer, is the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The focus is the deepening of our relationship with the living Christ. It tends to build communities of faith and bond the members together in mutual friendship and love.

Centering Prayer is for all who are seeking a deeper relationship with God.

What is an Introductory Centering Prayer Program?

The Seven Session Centering Prayer Introductory Program consists of a six-hour workshop and six 1½ hour follow through meetings.

Session 1: The Centering Prayer Essentials

During the workshop each participant receives the essential conceptual framework to enter into Centering Prayer as a solitary individual practice. The schedule consists of four presentations with discussion, and two opportunities to experience Centering Prayer in a group setting:

- 1: Prayer as Relationship
- 2: The Centering Prayer Method, and a Centering Prayer period
- 3: Thoughts and the Use of the Sacred Word, and a Centering Prayer period
- 4: Deepening Our Relationship with God

Sessions 2-7: Follow Through Meetings

During the six weekly meetings of 1½ hour each, there will be a 20-minute centering prayer period, 30-minute video created especially for beginners, and discussion of the video and your questions about the practice of Centering Prayer. Also:

Session 2: Prayer in Secret

– a contemporary method

Session 3: The Discipline of Centering Prayer

Session 4: What Centering Prayer Is Not/Is

Session 5: Basic Principles of Centering Prayer

Session 6: Clarification of the Method

Session 7: Three theological Principles of Centering

“But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” (Mt 6:6)

Details for An Introduction to Centering Prayer

Location:

Spring Creek United Church of Christ
4500 Spring Creek Rd.
Rockford, IL 61114

Session 1: Saturday, Feb. 20, 2010
9:30 am to 3:30 pm
Bring a sack lunch
Beverages and snacks provided

Session 2-7: The continuing sessions
Six Saturday mornings,
starting Feb.27 (with a possible Tuesday evening alternative time).

Cost: \$45 for all sessions.
Scholarships available.

Registration:

Please make your check payable to
Contemplative Outreach Chicago and
mail to:

**Centering Prayer
c/o Molly Lovelock
205 E. Hurlbut Ave.
Belvidere, IL 61008**

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Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone: _____

E-mail _____