



The Source

Spring 2011

Newsletter of the Spiritual Life Center

Volume 22 - Number Two

Open Circle Closes: Thank You to our Volunteers

~ Mary Blume

Ecclesiastes reminds us that “to everything there is a season and a time” and popular culture celebrates that “time flies when you’re having fun.” How true both are! About twenty-five years ago when the Center was still quite young, a number of women volunteered their services to help in a variety of ways: hand-addressing, cataloging the library, for gatherings, advertising our events in their parishes, supporting events and programs, making phone calls, praying -- whatever they could do for the fledgling organization that they believed in and wanted to nurture. In gratitude for the gift of their time and talents, I offered a monthly morning of reflection, and what evolved from that has been more than any of us could have imagined.

Part way along our journey together we decided that we needed a name. The choice of The Open Circle reflected our shared commitment to welcoming anyone who cared to join us, and the awareness that some come for a time, while some stay. While the topic changed monthly, what did not change was the shared desire to grow in love, authenticity, compassion, understanding and wisdom. We have laughed, cried, comforted, sown and reaped, been silent and spoken, loved and raged. We have told our stories, here, where they were safe and revered. We have shared the wisdom of our lives, the core of our faith, our deepest questions and our ponderings about the journey. We have grown together and have known the richness of relationships many hope for but seldom find. This is what it means to be a blessing for one another.



Members of our Open Circle who gathered for a farewell in May 2011

The time has come to close the door on this chapter. Twenty-five years is a long time and our numbers have dwindled to a precious few. We have said many good byes through the years. Some have died or moved or arrived at an age or stage where travel is difficult.

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Leadership Team

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Pastoral Discernment Leader

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Administrative & Financial Leader

Sarah Annis
Events & Program Cultivation Leader

Andrée Grafstein
Internship Coordinator

Rose Petronella
Pathways Coordinator

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Mission

The Spiritual Life Center is a community born of faith, gathered in Love and led by the Spirit to seek oneness with the Mystery that is God.

We are called to tend the Holy in the souls of individuals, groups, and the world by cooperating with God to invite and nurture, equip and sustain, heal and transform, through the ministry of spiritual direction.

Cathy's Corner...

Traditionally this spring issue of The Source contains the Annual Report of the Spiritual Life Center and comments and reflections from staff and board members. You will find that in these pages as expected.

In the midst of economic challenges, shifting population and relocating to a new facility, life goes on and all continue to be faithful to our mission. We are very grateful for the participation and support of so many that make this possible.

Cathy's Corner gives me the opportunity this year to reflect back – not only on one year, but on twenty years of being committed to the Spiritual Life Center community and its mission. I have found inspiration once again in the poetry of Mary Oliver. Her poem "Gratitude" is a reflection on her own life and in it she asks a series of questions. It is like an examen of consciousness and her responses are unique to her life on Cape Cod and her extraordinary ability to notice and give voice to her experience.

I have taken to heart some of her questions and offer my own responses of deep gratitude.

What did you notice?

When I first arrived at the SLC, I noticed that people here know how to listen and to be silent. There was a calm and a peacefulness in the atmosphere. As time went on, I noticed that we love to gather around a table – and eat and talk about food and wine.

What did you hear?

Oh, I heard stories – in all their diversity and nuances. Stories in whispers and cries, in shouts and pleas; stories accompanied by lament and praise and gratitude; stories holding hopes and dreams and possibilities.

What astonished you?

The unique and personal ways God shows up in people's lives continue to astonish me – every day. As do the conversations that occur in the hall, over coffee and tea, within the privacy of spiritual direction and supervision. Mostly what astonishes me is that I get to do this time and time again!

What was most tender?

The births and the deaths, the illness and the departures – and the care and compassion of the SLC community as we are formed into a living embodiment of our mission statement – We are a community born of faith, gathered in love, and led by the Spirit.

What was most wonderful?

The people – all those who have participated in the creation of the SLC and its continuing evolution – the board and committees, the staff and participants in the programs, the countless volunteers, the generous donors, the ambassadors who spread the word about who we are and what we do. The relationships that have been formed and developed and sustained will continue to bring me life.

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A Note from our Newest Board President

It has been said that change always comes bearing gifts, but it is hard to anticipate the good news when we consider the simultaneous loss of our Pastoral Discernment Leader Cathy Murtha and our Board of Directors President Joanne White.

For myself, I appreciate the gift and the honor of succeeding Joanne as President. She has brought her formidable leadership and managerial skills to this role, enhanced by spirituality and a passion for our mission.

Our priority at this time is to find a successor to Cathy as Pastoral Discernment Leader. You have probably received the email version of our job posting. That information has also been provided to various faith communities, colleges, spiritual direction centers, etc. in an unprecedented publicity outreach. Spiritual Directors International will also publish our advertisement in the June issue of *Presence*.

We scheduled candidate interviews starting Friday, May 13 (good thing we're not superstitious!) and we hope to have selected at least three finalists for the Board's consideration at their July 21 meeting. Meanwhile, we would greatly appreciate your prayers and support as we move through this discernment process.

We've had our share of changes in the past year: location and leaders. I feel very excited to be a part of the continuation and expansion of our work. Your support, your expectations, and your feedback are essential to our inclusive community. These suggestions can be expressed to me or any board member at board@spiritlifectr.org.

Pamela Morrison-Wolf
~ Board President

Cathy's Corner... *Continued*

And the celebrations – both large and small – of transitions, anniversaries, new opportunities, new homes to inhabit with our spirit. As well as those more ordinary moments of welcoming new groups and sending off those who have completed the Internship, Pathways, or Supervision and Enrichment programs. Rejoicing when major milestones are reached.

What did you think was happening?

Well, sometimes I wasn't too sure! I sensed that over the years something new and unique was being revealed. We were being called to a greater depth and breadth. We were being challenged to cooperate with God in the transformation of the world. We are still on the way – walking together with the Spirit.

It is with deep gratitude that I step down from the position as Pastoral Discernment Leader. I believe I have grown in wisdom, age and grace among you and hope it has been a mutual exchange. You will remain in my heart as a rare and unexpected gift for these twenty years of my life. I trust that the One who has begun the good work in you – individually and as the SLC community – will continue to bless and guide you.

Deep Peace,

Cathleen Murtha, DW
Pastoral Discernment Leader

The Spiritual Life Center
is looking to start a
Prayer/Meditation
Group.

Interested in
participating?

Interested in leading?

Contact Sarah

programs@spiritlifectr.org

Cathleen Murtha, DW, A Life Lived in Transformation

-- As shared with Joanne T. White

Cathleen Murtha was the sixth of ten children born into an Irish-Catholic family in Brooklyn, NY. She lived in an Italian-Jewish neighborhood where retail shops and churches were within walking distance. Her family was very connected to the church; she attended Catholic schools in Brooklyn until graduating from high school.

One of the first transformative times in her life was when she was a 14 year-old. Scoliosis, sideways curvature of her spine, became noticeable. She was admitted to a children's orthopedics hospital where she spent nine months; for seven of those nine, she was in a body cast to help straighten the curvature. Her education continued with tutors, and she became an avid reader. While in the hospital, Cathy came to know a four year old girl, Joanie, who was blind and had other physical complications. "Joanie always woke up singing 'la.las'; and she had more problems than mine," she said. From Joanie she learned: "We can't change what happens to us, but we can change our attitude."

Upon her discharge from the hospital, and because she had scoliosis, Cathy was given the opportunity to attend a small high school with Daughters of Wisdom as her teachers. When she graduated, she entered the community of the Daughters of Wisdom (DW) and attended a college they had established in Litchfield. She also took courses at St. John's College in New York. When asked why she joined the DW, she said, "To become a nun was not unusual then; I wanted to help people and be connected to God. I always wanted to be about the things of God." In 2012, she will celebrate her Jubilee, 50 years of service to and membership in that Community!

Under the persuasive pressure of her college instructors, Cathy became a high school social studies teacher. She said with a wry smile, "I grew to like it, even though I did not want to be a teacher." While teaching, she remained at her high school Alma Mater until it dissolved in 1970. What was next?

Cathy, with four other DWs (two nurses, a teacher and a school psychologist), were "missioned" to Appalachia to serve those less fortunate than they. Only 2% of West Virginia's population was Roman Catholic. She began working as a Pastoral Associate in a parish with a membership of 125. She soon became

a member of Church Women United. This was her introduction to ecumenism, as religious education and worship services were all ecumenical. Nine years in Appalachia were time of transformation for Cathy. When asked what she learned by serving there, she replied: "First, I learned that God was way bigger than the Catholic church; second, I realized how important Nature was...I fell in love with the stark mountains and the beauty of the changing seasons; and third, I became sensitive to Justice and what justice meant on a larger scale. Caring for the land and the environment, caring for one another and caring for our connection to the Holy became so much more important. It was hard for me to leave...I became an adult there." Cathy found Wisdom in West Virginia.

During the summers of her last four years in Appalachia, Cathy came to Connecticut and studied at St. Joseph College, earning her MA in Pastoral Ministry. When she left West Virginia, she had 25 employment possibilities in CT! She chose St. Gertrude's in Windsor where she served from 1979 to 1988. She talks of it being a small parish with people who were open and generous. She worked with them like an associate pastor, in Christian education and pastoral care.

After leaving St. Gertrude's, she worked for the Hartford Archdiocese in the Pastoral Department for small Christian Communities. Their mission is to promote and support small Christian communities through Scripture sharing and the integration of faith and justice. Two years later, she joined St. Helena's in West Hartford and served as a parish associate for four years.

While at St. Helena's, she began the two-year Spiritual Direction Internship at the Spiritual Life Center, then located at St. Thomas Seminary. "I was there, but I didn't feel 'called' to the ministry of spiritual direction. However, another transformation occurred when she completed the Internship. By then, she had accumulated ten directees who wanted to be with her while they explored their relationships with God. She knew then that her work as a Spiritual Director was a "call." How does she define this call? "My 'call' was knowing within me a deep desire to be with people in spiritual direction. I found freedom in journeying with them, and I found my best self.

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Voices from the Pathways of Spirituality Program

Each of the four units of the Pathways program offers a new theme to support participants on their unique spiritual journeys. In January, ten participants and a facilitation team of three began Unit II with its focus on Relationship with the Divine. Topics such as Beliefs and Sacred Texts, Synchronicity and Mysticism, Authenticity, and Science and Spirituality have been explored and spiritual practices such as Mandala making, Lectio Divina, and walking meditation have been experienced. In this newsletter, we'd like to share with you the voices and perspectives of some of those involved in the program.



Pathways participants and team, Spring 2011

Ruth Hertel, Participant: Pathways of Spirituality is for me, the labyrinth of my spiritual journey. It has offered me the opportunity to explore the vastness of my faith and the depth of my soul, while I continue to explore the center of my being. Pathways has exposed me to a diverse appetizer-size array of opportunities. The instructors are honest, caring and informative. Pathways offers us new ways to praise, communicate and experience the Divine Creator, I call God.

Each Monday, my heart is connected to, and seems to beat with, a group of individuals, who, like me, are on a quest for truth. Together we ebb and flow with the tide, finding strength, comfort and friendship along the way; taking what we need and leaving the rest for another day, another time, or maybe never at all; sharing new ways of prayer and connections with body mind and spirit. I have found great joy and peace on my Pathways Journey. I am filled with gratitude to all those involved and a renewed passion for my faith and desire to connect to Spirit all ways.

Jocelyn Hannahs, Participant: Participation in the Pathways of Spirituality program at the SLC has added a new and different dimension to my spiritual journey. To seek, question, articulate, share, and listen with others on a regular basis, following a guided program designed to deepen one's personal spiritual journey, is unique and tremendously enriching. The facilitation of the Pathways program by three generous, caring, and dedicated leaders, along with the program structure and setting, provides room for each participant's unique spiritual experiences and journey. Each one of us in the Pathways program has the room, safety, and comfort to be where we are on the paths we are traveling. This room for the diversity among us provides an additional richness to the program itself, which explores numerous traditions, practices, and facets of spiritual journeys and spiritual life. The Pathways program provides place, space, and resources for spiritual growth that complements my other spiritual practices and traditions, and provides a richness and diversity that is unique and not found elsewhere.

Joe Colletti, Facilitation Team: Throughout the six Units of the Pathways program that I have been part of, the most significant and inspirational events have been those when program participants have experienced breakthroughs in their understanding or experience of the ways that the Divine moves in their lives. Such experiences are so powerful and life changing. I am also consistently encouraged by the willingness of the participants to share the depths of their spiritual journeys with each other – in its darkness as well as its light, with its tears and laughter. It has clearly demonstrated the power of sharing within a supportive community of fellow spiritual seekers. In addition, the small and large group discussions that are part of every session provide me the opportunity to learn as much as I share with the class. The old saying “if you really want to learn something, try teaching it” certainly applies with the Pathways program. But for me, the Pathways program has been more than just an intellectual endeavor, however. It is also an ongoing invitation to go deeper in my own relationship with the Divine, to develop more spiritual discipline in my own life and to follow through in service to others. All these gifts are what make the Pathways program so special and the blessing that it is for me.

For more information on our Pathways of Spirituality program, go to www.spiritlifectr.org

2011 Living Spirit Awards

On April 11, over eighty people gathered at Tower Ridge Country Club in Simsbury for an evening of entertainment, delicious food, stimulating conversation, and lively bidding. But their main purpose for gathering was to honor this year's recipients of the Spiritual Life Center's Living Spirit Awards – Robert Henderson and Marcus McKinney of the Pastoral Counseling Training Program at Saint Francis Hospital and Jana Pivacek-Cole.

Dr. Marcus McKinney is a licensed psychotherapist and Baptist minister who has served on the staff of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center since 1984. He is

Director of Pastoral Counseling and Community Outreach and Director of the Curtis D. Robinson Men's Health Institute. An Assistant Professor in Psychiatry at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and a practicing pastoral counselor, Dr. McKinney also serves as a Governor appointee to the State Board of Mental Health & Addiction Services. Dr. McKinney developed the Pastoral Counseling Training Program in 1999 and has seen 6,000 individuals receive training through the Saint Francis Academy for Clinical Pastoral Training.

Reverend Dr. Robert S. Henderson has been a faculty member of the Saint Francis Academy for Clinical pastoral training since its beginning in 1999. A Jungian pastoral psychotherapist and licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, he was the founding director of the pastoral Counseling Center from 1978-2009. He and his wife Janis are co-authors of a three-volume book, Living with Jung: Interviews with Jungian Analysts.

Jana Pivacek-Cole is an international performer, as well as a voice and acting teacher. She maintains a full performance schedule while teaching group and private voice lessons. She has also

written, taught, and directed musical performances to serve as benefits in which her students participate. She parallels her life with ministries of healing, care of the elderly, and pastoral counseling. A member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Tariffville, she has served on the Healing Commission for fourteen years. Jana has received eighty hours of accreditations from the Pastoral Counseling Courses at Saint Francis Hospital and in May of 2010 graduated from the Spiritual Direction internship program at the Spiritual Life Center.

Also honored that evening was outgoing Board President Joanne White, who is leaving the position after six years. Joanne was presented with the only official pair of Spiritual Life Center Socks!



2011 Honorees: Dr. Marcus McKinney, Jana Pivacek-Cole and Rev. Dr. Robert Henderson with Cathy Murtha, DW and Joanne White

Save the date
for next year's
Living Spirit
Awards

Monday
May 14, 2012



Joanne White and Cathy Murtha, DW with the SLC socks

Our 12th Internship Class

Thinking About Applying for the Fall 2012 Spiritual Direction Internship?

It seems so soon to be receiving inquiries for the Fall 2012 Internship in Spiritual Direction, but that's what's already beginning to happen! If you or someone you know might be interested in learning more about the Internship, please call the Center and arrange for a "get to know you" meeting. This meeting would provide an opportunity for you to have a conversation with a member of the Team about the content and requirements of the program.

Applicants typically come from all walks of life and have diverse faith, work and ministry experiences. Those who best prepared already have ongoing monthly spiritual direction for themselves in advance of the Internship. In addition to a candidate being in spiritual direction for a year, we look for men and women grounded in a faith tradition, faithful to a practice of prayer/meditation, engaged in some form of ministry and sensing a call to the ministry of spiritual direction.

Feel welcome to call and chat about this two year training opportunity in Spiritual Direction!

For more information regarding our Internship Program go to www.spiritlifectr.org



Have you noticed our flowers blooming near the elevator entrance?

A big thank you to Pamela Morrison-Wolf, who took time to transplant our perennials from the little white house to our newest location in West Hartford when we moved in August 2010. The flowers were originally planted for us by Linda Gebhart.

You Can Make A Difference!

Did you know that it is possible to increase your income, lower your taxes, build a greater inheritance for your heirs and leave a lasting legacy to the Spiritual Life Center....all at the same time? The 2010 Tax Relief Act has created opportunities to achieve each of these objectives.

The Spiritual Life Center is prepared to assist you (thru your attorney or accountant) in setting up the appropriate documents. If you are interested in learning more about how to do this please call the Spiritual Life Center.

It all begins with a conversation -- Call today. (860) 243-2374

Open Circle Closes ~ by Mary Blume *(continued from front page)*

There is an ache with each closing, but there is also profound gratitude for all we have been to each other... and to the Center. For not only have we offered our support time and talent, we have prayed each month for the intentions of the Center, for our benefactors and for our friends. You have all been a part of our Open Circle.

We gathered for the last time in mid-May to remember and celebrate these many years. We have "grown up" together, and our hearts filled with joy and gratitude as we remembered the conversations we've shared and the work we've done. And our hearts ached as we realized that something wonderful must end. Bittersweet. But we thank God for all that has been and proclaim "Yes" for what lies ahead, knowing we'll carry one another and these memories in our hearts. My deepest thanks goes to each of you for all the ways you've given so deeply of yourselves.

We give our heartfelt thanks to all of the women who have joined our Open Circle over the years - for all of their assistance, support and prayers.

Open Circle Volunteers

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Zim Anthony | Olga Marieni |
| Mary Bello, CSJ | Fran McEdwards |
| Kay Bombara | Pat McGee |
| Dot Boyle | Patricia Minford |
| Joanne D'Aprile | Anna Mae Molyneux |
| Matilda D'Esopo | Barbara Morkan |
| Julie Dickson | Caryl Muller |
| Kathleen Docimo | Dee Pacukonas |
| Gloria Dougherty | Linda Pellino |
| Pamela Ellerton | Carmen Pinette |
| Ruth Farley | Jeannine Pinette |
| Marie Grace Freese | Linda Powers |
| Martha Gavin | Judy Reck |
| Maureen Grossi | Rosemary Reynolds |
| Lois Hannon | Mary Ellen Sciarrino |
| Mary Ellen Higgison | Virginia Scolo |
| Sue Hines | Jeannine Socolosky |
| Madeline Janzer | Virginia St. Armand |
| Mary Ann Kalinowski | Gail Stanwick |
| Mary Kunycky | Ellen Sullivan |
| Rita Mary Lashenske | Yvonne Thibodeau |
| Claire Mary Lattal | Judith VanValkenburg |
| Jean Lowery | Kathleen Watroba |
| Ethel Lyman | Peggy Weaver |



Open Circle volunteers, 2006

Join us in these words from a prayer written by Doris Davis in the beginning of our time together: "Please continue to bless the Spiritual Life Center, Lord, and anoint the hearts of all who come seeking your love and wisdom so that they may draw closer to you and be enabled to share your love and concern for others."

Open Circle volunteers at St. Thomas Seminary



Cathleen Murtha, DW *(continued from page 4)*

What's my best self? It's to have a sense that there's an alignment between God's desire and my desire for being with people while they strive to deepen their relationships with the Holy. I find freedom, joy, a challenge and deep peace in this work." What also became clear to her was the role spiritual direction played in fostering the transformation of individuals, groups and the world. "Wisdom dwells with experience." Proverbs 8:12.

In 1992, Cathy became part of the staff and then a leader of the Internship program. Working with core staff members like Mary Costello, RSM, and Mary Blume, she passed her wisdom on to at least 165 participants, including me. How very fortunate are we!! She became Executive Director of the Center in 1999. With the staff and Board of Directors, she fostered the Center's growth with its expanding ecumenical and inter-faith work, first with its independent move to Bloomfield and last year to Holy Family Retreat and Conference Center in West Hartford. An ambassador for the Center, she leads programs and retreats for other organizations. She especially likes leading week-long directed retreats, all focused on helping others see how God has been and is active in their lives and how they are being called to respond.

In the fall of 2009, Cathy was diagnosed with breast cancer. She was told that it was not life-threatening, but it could be life-changing. When asked if the diagnosis and the 33 subsequent days of radiology treatment changed the way she wanted to live her life, she became very pensive and replied, "Well, that... and knowing that I have more of my life behind me than in front of me now did cause me to ponder a line from Mary Oliver: 'Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?' I want to live more graciously, more gratefully, and I don't want to feel driven." She enjoys her long walks almost every day at Elizabeth Park, the West Hartford reservoirs, or the grounds at Holy Family. Her observation of things in nature and the people around her is well-tuned. Take a walk in Elizabeth Park with Cathy, and she'll show you the oldest rose garden, an ancient Sycamore tree, the vegetable and herb gardens, the multi-colored dahlias and songbirds in flight against the royal blue sky (her favorite color is "royal blue, with vibrancy"). Her favorite flower? She quickly smiled and said, "There's nothing like watching an amaryllis grow." She has brought them to Taize so all can share their beauty, while listening to "Dona Nobis Pacem," played on the cello (her favorite musical sound).

This change in Cathy coincided with trips to the peaceful, holy Isle of Iona where she is nourished by being with the ecumenical, Celtic lay community who integrate spirituality and justice. In between the years she has journeyed with groups to Iona, she's been with members of the Daughters of Wisdom international community at their mother house in France, developing and sharing wisdom spirituality. It was not unexpected that Cathy was chosen to be a new member of the Leadership Team for the Daughters of Wisdom in the United States last October. She travels to New York for monthly meetings with that Team.

These more recent occurrences were part of her discernment process that led to her decision to resign from her position of Pastoral Discernment Leader/ Executive Director this year. Her calm, caring and compassionate presence will still be with us as she continues to provide spiritual direction and supervision at the Center, while actively working to plan for the future of the 2000 members of the Daughters of Wisdom internationally.

Of her time with the Center she says, "It's been a blessing to be in this Spiritual Life Center community for 20 years. I cherish the people with whom I've worked and with whom I've had thought-provoking conversations and developed rich relationships."

As she looks at the present and the future, what is her greatest fear? She thoughtfully and purposefully stated, "The division of rich and poor. The rigidity of ideology and the fundamentalism of too many of our worship places that obscure the fact that we really are one and that all of life is connected." And her greatest hope? "That we come to the realization that we are all one... that all of life is seamless....that there is a cycle of growth, decline, death and rebirth. If we live with a consciousness of this, we will find deep peace. I truly hope enough of us are awake to hang in on this long journey."

Cathleen Murtha, Daughter of Wisdom, we so greatly value and cherish the years of your life you have shared with us in so many varied ways. We thank you for embodying the Center's Mission as you have faithfully tended "... the Holy in the souls of individuals, groups, and the world by cooperating with God to invite and nurture, equip and sustain, heal and transform, through the ministry of spiritual direction." Deep peace be with you as you continue on your life's journey, "walking together with the Spirit," all the way.

Transitions

"For see, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of 'pruning the vines' has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." Song of Solomon 2: 11-12.

I am astonished this spring by the multiple transitions in my yard, from the fragile white snowdrops and hardy purple crocuses to the sun-drenched forsythia to the orange and golden daffodils and vibrant red and purple tulips to the sweet-smelling lily of the valley, flowering pink dogwood and fragrant lilacs to the scarlet azaleas and now the golden iris, star daylilies and violet rhododendron. One after the other, they delight my senses. Today, in anticipation, I planted a summer blue delphinium and crimson star petunias!

Transition also occurred this spring with the Center's Board of Directors. After much discernment and six blessed years of serving as President, I resigned to make way for new leadership. The Mission Effectiveness Committee worked quickly and diligently to find my replacement. In March, the Board elected Pamela Morrison-Wolf as President and Sara Jane Munshower as Vice President. Rosemary Reynolds and Richard Watson continue as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. The entire Board is very strong at this point of transition. I am deeply grateful to have had the opportunity to serve the Center with a group of talented and compassionate people who all have the Center's best interests at heart. I thank all of you for your efforts and support of the Center and its devoted staff, especially as we transitioned to our new location. You will see me around as I continue to be a spiritual companion to many and a supervisor of interns, as we continue our faith journeys, "Walking Together with the Spirit." I leave you with a blessing I learned at our seminar on LovingKindness: *May you be free from fear; may you be free from compulsion; may you be blessed with love; may you be blessed with peace.*

In gratitude,
Joanne T. White

We need your feedback!

On program evaluations, there have been requests for group spiritual direction. Are you interested in joining a group OR learning to lead a group? Please contact Sarah

programs@spiritlifectr.org

Rabbi Rami Shapiro presented a program on LovingKindness on May 21, 2011. The program was enjoyed by all who attended: "Rami's storytelling, humor and compassion -- Excellent!" "One of the best presenters..." Don't miss your chance to listen to Rabbi Rami Shapiro when we are fortunate enough to schedule him again!



Treasurer's Report for the Year 2010

By just looking at the numbers for 2010, you might think the financial picture for the Spiritual Life Center rather bleak. The costs associated with our move from Bloomfield to West Hartford, coupled with the loss of a substantial grant, contributed to a huge bump in our road. However, that was last year, and, thankfully, our numbers for 2011 are up considerably. The big picture for 2010 is illustrated by the accompanying diagrams, but here are some of the details:

Income Categories

The results of Fundraising (a broad title for several categories, but mainly the Annual Appeal and Awards Dinner) were disappointing, largely due to the loss of a \$10,000 grant that was anticipated and budgeted for, but not awarded. The granting organization has redirected its funds to other efforts, for which the Center no longer qualifies. This left the Annual Appeal \$22,574 short of its goal. On the other hand, the Awards Dinner nearly doubled expectations.

Our Programs category ended close to budget, thanks to Sarah Annis and Diane Reynolds, to whom we are constantly grateful for their many talents.

Our Internship program, Pathways, and Spiritual Direction categories all missed budget projections. As a result overall budgeted income fell short by \$20,011.

Expense Categories

Helping to offset income shortages, most general expenses were trimmed of excesses, with ten of thirteen categories holding below budget figures. Office Equipment/Supplies, Development, and Programs were three areas of higher than budgeted expenses. The costs of moving - \$7,174 - were not anticipated at budget-making time in 2009. This, plus the loss of the expected grant, contributed to our net loss of \$17,775 for 2010.

Cash Position

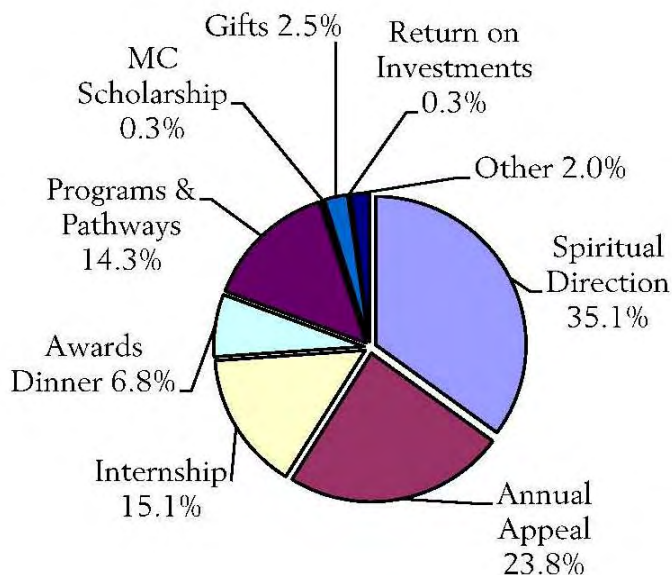
As would be expected, our cash position fell considerably in 2010. From January 31 to December 31, our funds slipped from \$75,175 to \$53,491 - a loss of \$21,684.

Some Notes for 2011

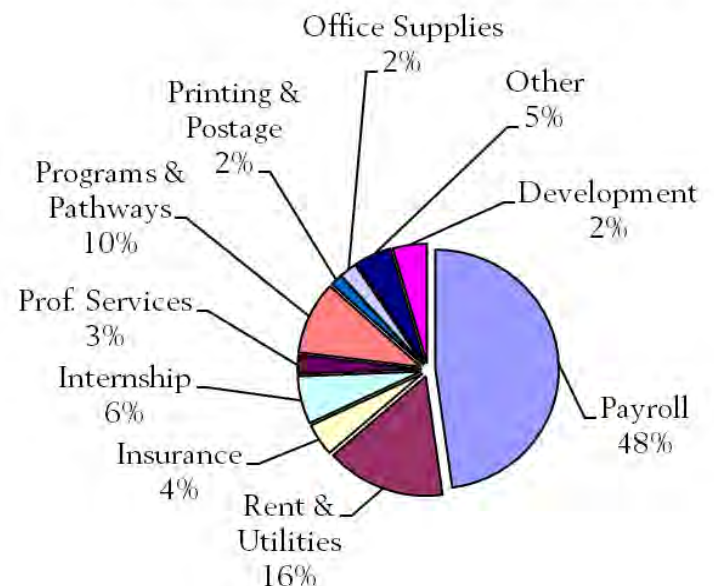
In this tight economy we continue to budget very conservatively and remain vigilant as good stewards of our funds. A nascent Development Committee will be encouraging our community and friends to consider some form of "advanced giving" (bequests from wills, insurance, appreciated securities, real-estate, IRA distributions, etc.). Such gifts, placed in an endowment fund, would solidify our sometimes tenuous cash position, ensuring our future growth and ability to provide superior services to the community.

~Richard Watson, Treasurer

Income Items as a % of the Whole



Expense Items as a % of the Whole



List of 2010 Spiritual Life Center Donors

We are delighted to express our gratitude to the individuals and organizations that gave a donation to the Spiritual Life Center during the 2010 calendar year. As with any list, errors are made, always an unfortunate thing. If you find that your name has been omitted or spelled incorrectly, please contact the Spiritual Life Center so we can ensure it does not happen again. We will be publishing any additions or changes in our next newsletter.

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 Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery
 Smooth Sounds
 South Congregational Church
 Touch of Class Consignment
 Tower Ridge County Club
 United Way of Central
 & Northeastern CT
 Way of the Spacious Heart
 Wellness Massage Therapy

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 & Guy Wolf
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A Time for Community

It is also a time to remember all those who help make the continued ministry of the Center possible. Our Open Circle Volunteers help to prepare our mailings and meet monthly to pray for our Center. Our Associate Spiritual Directors see directees and donate the fees for their services to the Center. Our committee members and other volunteers help us plan events such as the Living Spirit Awards Dinner, maintain our library, ensure we have healthy and happy plant life around the Center, and offer their expertise in many areas. We take this time to say thank you to all in our community that help to keep our Center's ministry alive and thriving.

Open Circle Volunteers

(See page 8)

Spiritual Directors

Chickie Amberg
 Nora Anthony *
 Eduardo Barrios
 Denise Bartlett
 Joseph Bartok
 Sherri Bedingfield
 Theresa Bellacosa
 Mary Blume *
 JoAnn Bourquard *
 Mary Brasel
 Rev. Oscar Brockmeyer *
 Candace Cassin
 Louise Colletti *
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 Mary Garofalo
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 Joseph Harrison-Becker
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 Rev. Susan Iazard *
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 Susan Jorgensen *
 Patricia Joy
 Shoshannah Kay
 Agnes Kiely, RSM
 Janice Lautier
 John Lemega
 Meg Lynam
 Rev. Donna Manocchio
 Joseph Marsan
 Robert McNally
 Joanne Moran *
 Pamela Morrison-Wolf
 Sara Jane Munshower
 Cathleen Murtha, DW *
 Suzanne Nolan
 David Oat
 Suzanne O'Brien

Robert O'Connor
 Rev. Alice O'Donovan
 Rose Petronella *
 Pat Piano
 David Picone
 Peter Rogers
 Melina Rudman
 Patricia Schmidt, DW *
 Rebecca Scruton
 Kathleen Sinnamon
 Toni Smith
 Patricia Snyder
 Roselle Terry
 Rev. Richard Watson
 Joanne White *
 Trudi White
 Deborah Windish
 Liz Woods

*** Supervisors**

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 & Other Help**

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 Sarah Annis
 Eduardo Barrios
 Trish Barrios
 Elaine Betoncourt, CSJ
 Dave Blume
 Mary Blume
 Courtney Bourns
 Mary Brasel
 Geordie Campbell
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 Deborah Pallatto-Fontaine
 Rose Petronella
 Diane Reynolds
 Rosemary Reynolds
 Melina Rudman
 Mary Sciarrino
 Suzanne Stier
 Hope Valiska
 Kathleen Watroba
 Richard Watson
 Joanne White
 Guy Wolf

We also express our sincere gratitude to Fr. David Cinquegrani, CP, Dr. Brandon Nappi and all the Holy Family staff for being so accommodating and welcoming as we moved to West Hartford in August 2010.



SUMMER EDITION 2011 Programs

Spiritual Life Center * 303 Tunxis Road * West Hartford, CT 06107 * (860) 243-2374 * www.spiritlifectr.org



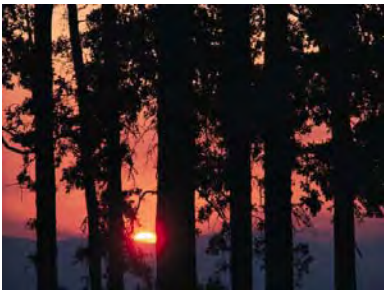
Celebrating Cathleen Murtha, DW
Thursday, June 9, 2011 5-7 pm
Holy Family Retreat Center Conference Room,
RSVP June 2, 2011

After twenty years, the last 12 as Executive Director and Pastoral Discernment Leader, Cathleen Murtha, DW, will be leaving the Center Staff. Please join us at a reception to celebrate all of her gifts to the Center. She will be honored at a special program from 6-6:30.



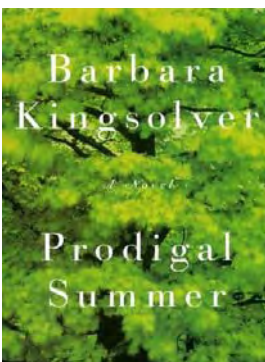
Outdoor Yoga
Saturday, June 11, 2011, 10:30-12 pm
Spiritual Life Center *
Facilitator: Nancy Murray
Offering: \$15-20

Celebrate Spring with some inspiring outdoor yoga! Come renew your spirit and enjoy the beauty of nature with this Kripalu yoga class. Practicing yoga outside, we will focus on our connection to nature and to the larger world. This class will include yoga postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation and will be appropriate for all levels, including beginners. In addition to strengthening the body, yoga can help relieve stress, improve health and provide a path for deepening your relationship to spirit. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring a towel or yoga mat to practice on if you have one. * We will meet outside the Spiritual Life Center's entrance then move to the location we will be practicing in.



Come Celebrate the Summer 'Soulstice'
Tuesday, June 21, 2011, 6:30-8:00 pm
Spiritual Life Center *
Facilitators: Cathleen Murtha, DW & Rev. Sara Jane Munshower
Free Will Offering

Come and experience the beautiful outdoor Labyrinth on the grounds of our location at Holy Family Retreat and Conference Center. June 21st marks the turning of earth with the longest day of the year. Throughout human history, our ancestors celebrated this day as a significant passage in their own personal lives as well. Take time out for your soul as we enter into the beautiful summer season.



Midsummer's Readers
Tuesday, July 26, 6-8 pm
Spiritual Life Center
Facilitator: Rev. Sara Jane Munshower
Offering: \$10-15

Mid-summer Readers are invited for a conversation on Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer* and to walk the labyrinth/grounds of the Holy Family Retreat Center at your leisure. You are welcome to brown bag your dinner. Beverages and dessert will be provided.



Save the Dates: Fall 2011

Programs

Spiritual Life Center * 303 Tunxis Road * West Hartford, CT 06107 * (860) 243-2374 * www.spiritlifectr.org

Stay Tuned for More Details of these Upcoming Programs!



READING IN FAITH (traditions)

The first Wednesday of each Month, 11- 1:00 pm
September 1, 2011, October 5, 2011, November 2, 2011 & December 7, 2011
January 4, 2012, February 1, 2012, March 7, 2012, April 4, 2012
Spiritual Life Center *
Facilitator: Rev. Sara Jane Munshower
A book group reading books across faith traditions.



Fall Yoga Retreat

Saturday, September 17, 2011, 9-12pm
Holy Family Public Chapel
Facilitator: Nancy Murray



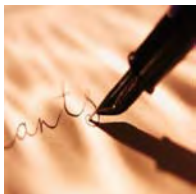
Awakening the Dreamer

Saturday, October 1, 2011 9-3:00 pm, lunch included
Spiritual Life Center
Facilitators: Elaine Lengyel, Chris Robedee and Melina Rudman



Boxes and Birds, Our Annual Tree for the Wadsworth Athenaeum's Festival of Trees

October 4, 2011
Spiritual Life Center
Facilitator: Rev. Sara Jane Munshower



Starting Our Own Red Book

Thursday, October 6, 2011, 6-8:00 pm
Spiritual Life Center
Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Robert Henderson



INTERPLAY: Praying with the Body (Fall In-Service)

Monday, October 31, 2011
Holy Family Conference Room
Facilitator: Lisa Laing



Radical Love: The Spirituality of Dorothy Day

Thursday, November 17, 2011
Spiritual Life Center
Facilitator: Debbie Pallatto—Fontaine