

Revision with Right Onward Vision Spiritual Renewal Retreats

2009-2010

The Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey



*Dr. Elisabeth Koenig present the retreat focused on
Basic Spirituality*

Basic Spirituality: An Invitation of Christian Spiritual Teaching: How God Loves, Transforms, and Makes People Whole –

Comments From Attendees:

This retreat was a balance between the spiritual and the practical, the solitary and the communal, the historical and the modern. It provided techniques, suggestions, and disciplines to become more open to the Spirit of God while being attentive to acting on that reinvigorated spirituality. Each address was an opportunity to learn from and be inspired and transformed by those who have “shown by their actions that their relationship with Jesus was the most important experience of their lives.” Through her encyclopedic knowledge and wonderful clarity, Elizabeth Koenig made the disciplines understandable and appealing. I found myself saying, “I’d like to try that practice.” It certainly was time well spent. ~ Margy Hughes

Another View:

This is to thank both you and St George's for our day with Elisabeth Koenig. Over the period of the past thirty years I have made one or two retreats/year in convents, monasteries, retreat centers and parish churches. I have made them with Desmond Tutu and Thomas Keating.

Our day today with Elisabeth was as inspiring and affirming as any of them. Your facilities (I'm an architect) are splendid, your hospitality everything it could have been, and Elisabeth's program one that both awakened and empowered. The day was a gift to all who were present. Thank you for it! ~ Jim McCulloh

And Another:

It was such an encouragement to sit in a room with 30 or 40 people who were also interested in spiritual growth. Thanks for facilitating. Please keep my address on your list for future workshops. ~ Maureen Kilroy

Retreats Sponsored by the Right Onward Vision Committee of the Diocese of New Jersey. Contact us at right_onward@yahoo.com or see our Spiritual Renewal website for more retreats and events at www.newjersey.anglican.org/vision/2009/index.html



Participants – more than 40! – were actively engaged in listening and commenting, as well as enjoying sessions of quiet time. ... and a delicious luncheon courtesy of our hosts, St. George's, Rumson

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*Liturgical
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Special Notice!

Save the date!

Advent Retreat
December 3-4,
2010 at The
Convent of St.
John the
Baptist,
Mendham, New
Jersey

Thanks to all
contributors
and retreat
participants!

URBAN MINISTRY RETREAT

*"Sir, we wish to see Jesus"
(John 12:21, NSRV)*

Urban Ministry - what is it?
Why is it relevant to the Episcopal
Church? What is the logic in
maintaining churches in urban
communities, especially where
attendance has dwindled and the
financial burden is heavy? How
can we outreach more effectively
in the community? How do we
reach children and what can we
offer them? How do we connect
urban and suburban churches,
especially our similarities?

These were just some of the core questions being asked and which helped to shape our discussions throughout the day. The area surrounding St. Paul's was pulsating with energy - a new federal courthouse and post office, the presence of two major universities, the new hospital building of an already-established nationally recognized trauma center, the soon-to-be medical clinic at St. Wilfrid's, the weekly Sunday Evensong at St. Paul's and the beautifully renovated sanctuary of St. Paul's Church. The homeless intermingled with those determined to complete their Saturday errands. In many ways, the urban arena presents the hard challenges of living out our Baptismal Covenant. Why is the Church here? Simply, the answer is "This is where Jesus commands us to be". We are to be among people who very much need our presence in their lives. We serve this need through many diverse and creative outreach efforts, by maintaining a healthy spiritual presence and by raising up leaders from the community (so that the "served" become servants).

Our meditational exercise centered on the text of the Gospel of St. John (12:20-26). We are reminded that for many that we minister to, we are the face of Jesus. In discerning our call to urban ministry, we are constantly aware of the need to renew



*Participants at the Urban Ministry
Retreat day show their enthusiasm!*

ourselves through introspection and self-development. The day was over far too quickly but each of us went away energized with new information, new contacts and new ideas to try. ~ Deacon Sharon Sutton

More Thoughts... I found the Retreat to be both informational and inspirational. In addition to the questions with which we came, I also enjoyed the format of breaking into smaller groups to discuss how to address various aspects of urban ministry, and later, how scripture helps reinforce us how to find our direction as we strive to follow the ways Christ has taught us. When the day was over, I left invigorated, feeling that I had made new friends, not only for myself, but also for my parish at St. Michael's, to hold in fellowship and also as resources to consult on new ways to serve the needs of our urban neighborhood, and how to most effectively pursue this ministry. ~ Shawn Fay

Prayers and Promises

Annette Buchanan, Chair of the Right Onward Vision Committee, and The Rev. Marty Gutwein, Rector, St. Paul's, Camden, stepped in to lead the day's activities when guest speaker The Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson fell ill. Thankfully, Canon Wilson recovered quickly and is now back at work. Thanks to our hosts at St. Paul's, Camden and local EMTs!



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MUSIC RETREAT –

TRINITY CATHEDRAL

Spiritual Growth through Music: Chestnuts and Macadamias

On January 8th, I attended a seminar offered by the Right Onward Visioning Committee given by the Rev. Phillip Carr-Jones. The Reverend Philip Carr-Jones currently serves as the rector of Church of the Holy Spirit, Lebanon. Among other things he is a member of both the Right Onward Visioning and Liturgy Commissions of the diocese.

I had been at the previous seminar offered by the Visioning Committee and there was a schedule in the folder that showed that the next seminar would be about "music" and "spirituality". It was called "Spiritual Growth through Music: Chestnuts and Macadamias". I was about to embark in January on a new position back at the church that I had been going to for years as their music minister. So, I was hoping that this seminar would "charge me up" before I started.

When I entered the seminar space, there were quite a few people who later I discovered were from all over the Diocese. The seminar started in a very unusual way, which was that Rev. Phil had us all pick out our favorite Christmas carol and then on the count of 1-2-3 we were to all start to sing the first verse of the carol we picked out. Of course we all ended singing our one verse at different times. It was amazing! I imagined it to be like when the apostles were gifted by the Spirit with the talent of speaking in tongues. As weird as it seemed is as marvelous that it was. I knew I was in for a very interesting day!



This was a one-day immersion in the Holy Spirit through song, singing, music, and hymnody. A generous variety of music from all ages, eras, cultures, and creeds was experienced through singing. It was astounding how easy it was to see the many different modes of worship there can be through music.

We discovered that "surprise" is an aspect of worship that in general, Episcopalians do not like too much. It is better to make them aware of it in advance so that they can feel more comfortable with it. Try practicing it with them before they have to actually sing it. We found out that "tradition" simply is an "innovation" that stuck. In other words, at some point people didn't like "Amazing Grace" because it was the "new" hymn! So, now if you are "balking" at some of the newest Christian Rock music, watch out because, down the road, it may wind up in the next Hymnal.

Carr-Jones explained that there needs to be a balance between "known" music and "fresh" music. Why? Because of the age and taste range of all the people who attend services in our churches. And that the aspect of keeping things "fresh" requires regular review of the music that we are using in our worship services. That there is a difference between a hymn and a song. A Hymn is used to "praise", "petition" and or "thank" God, Son or Holy Spirit while the other tells us a story. We sang and compared both the familiar "chestnuts" (the "good old hymns") and the lesser-known "macadamias" and thoroughly enjoyed the day. Thanks to Rev. Phil, I am re-charged as I go into my new position with a much better understanding of what will bring our fellow Episcopalians into a closer experience of God's presence.

God Bless and remember, He who sings, prays twice!

Jim Mc Connell