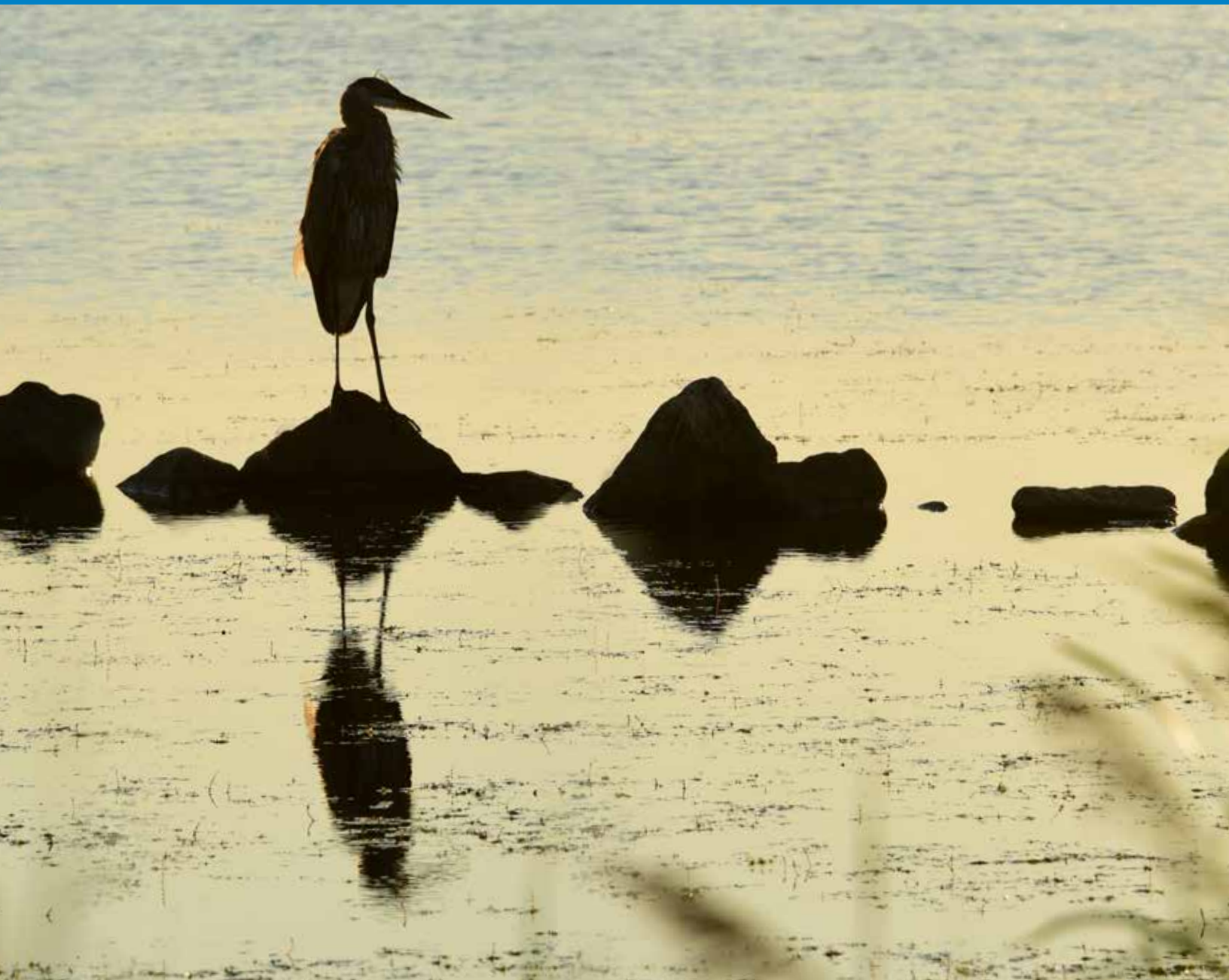


45 YEARS OF CONTEMPLATIVE MINISTRY

JULY 1, 2017 TO JUNE 30, 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



SHALEM
INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

“WHERE LOVE AND CHARITY ARE, THERE GOD IS”

ELIZABETH WARD



UBI CARITAS ET AMOR, DEUS IBI EST:
WHERE LOVE AND CHARITY ARE, THERE GOD IS.

EATING DINNER WITH MY HUSBAND at his assisted living facility reminds me of those beautiful words, that simple song of love, sung so often at Shalem gatherings. Every dinner there invites me to live from my compassionate spiritual heart and provides an opportunity to hold the ego and the rational mind lightly. The residents and care givers also teach me, not surprisingly, that being in a loving community makes it easier to live from this holy place within.

As my husband finds his favorite seat at the end of the long wooden table, I sit close enough to easily cut his meat and any long vegetables without being overly obvious. He is happy that I am near. Across from me sits Miss Cora* with an empty seat next to her for the Care Partner who helps her eat when she is not busy serving food to everyone else. Miss Cora smiles and laughs easily when she is not dozing in her wheelchair. When awake,

she would rather look around and talk than eat, even though it is often unclear what we are talking about. As long as I smile and laugh with her, it does not seem to matter that neither of us knows what we are talking about. The delight of connecting through smiles and mutual appreciation is clear and seems to be more than enough. Somehow this feels like connecting through the compassionate spiritual heart without the usual distraction of the ego or the analytical mind. Somehow this seems like a simple song of love.

When the Care Partner asks Miss Cora how she is doing, Miss Cora sometimes delights us with a comment like, “I’ll tell you when I know.” At other times it can be hard to understand her words or how her words connect to the question. Nevertheless, her smiles abound and laughter usually follows, so co-gent conversation doesn’t really matter. The mood is light and happy, and my husband

smiles and enjoys the sense of belonging in a warm and loving community.

Miss Rita* usually sits beside me with her own Care Partner helping her. She is 98 and dresses exquisitely for every meal. Folks at the table usually compliment her clothes or jewelry as soon as she appears with her walker and safety belt around her waist. Their words are accompanied with expressive hand gestures since Miss Rita can barely hear at all. Somehow everyone feels the connection is made and a sense of delight flows down the table.

Like Miss Cora, however, she smiles easily when waved at and enjoys making facial expressions as a way of engaging in conversation. Like Miss Cora, she seems to enjoy the warm hearted interactions when they happen between the daily challenge of eating her food. Again, the lack of words seems to open

VESSEL OF YOUR LOVE

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Beloved,
Beloving,
may I be a vessel of your love today.
I am flawed and inadequate,
but you have chosen to bear your love
into the world through me.
No matter my shame or fear,
no matter the resistance of others,
let your love shine in me.
To all, the intimate and the stranger,
ally and enemy, welcoming and bristly,
let me convey your love,

for their sake (which is your sake),
not my own.
Not my own skinny passion,
but your deep, life-giving love
flows through me each moment.
May I fill to overflowing
with you
for the sake of the world.
Amen.

Steve is a graduate of
Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life
and Leadership.



the door to heartfelt connections without all of the divisions that can sometimes happen when words are the main concern. Instead, kindness and compassion become the language of connection. Living from the spiritual heart becomes easier.

This is not to say that everyone is always happy and no complaints ever fill the air. Complaints can bounce back and forth down the table upon occasion. Sometimes those more verbally gifted express frustration and disappointment when the daily news reveals yet another beloved way has been changed, especially when the change revises familiar ways of being church. Sometimes they just miss some favorite foods or the special gifts of beloved family members.

Still, the concern for each other is real. It mirrors the loving care they receive from the nurses and Care Partners who so patiently and graciously treat each one with respect

and appreciation. Every day they teach me what it means to honor and enjoy our elders. Each day they teach me about living from the spiritual heart and the simple song of love.

Most of the care givers come from overseas where elders are valued for their wisdom and life experience, and they show this respect in many and varied ways. One will calm someone frustrated by limitations by breaking into a beautiful song in the middle of dinner. Another will speak so tenderly it easily soothes the soul or will bring a specially prepared coffee at exactly the right time. Another will bring the pie and ice cream in a big bowl so it won't spill when eaten. Maybe it means giving a small bag of homemade cookies that can be taken back to a room and enjoyed at leisure.

The care givers seem to live from a sacred call that brings out the best in themselves and those all around them. The residents too share their simple songs of love. Living from their spiritual hearts in a way that creates a beloved community, they show me again and again how to see with the eyes of God.

*No real names are used in this article.

**LIZ IS THE DIRECTOR OF SHALEM'S
NURTURING THE CALL: SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.**

THE PHYSICALITY OF SILENCE

WINSTON B. CHARLES



DURING THE AUGUST RESIDENCY of Shalem's clergy program, I visited Patapsko Valley State Park, just fifteen minutes from Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center. My morning there was part of leaning into the thirty-six-hour silent Sabbath that lies at the heart of each clergy program residency. My wanderings led me down a switchback trail descending to the Patapsko River where I found an ancient boulder on which to sit in silence while watching the waters flow past, hearing the gentle rapids sounding their song just upriver.

As I leaned further back, a new sense of Silence held me. It almost had a physicality to it, embracing me, holding me, allowing me to lay down my "swords and shields" and simply be present in the Holy Presence.

I was not alone as I sat on that age-old rock.

There was the river, the waters of ablution and baptism, flowing past, passing through me. There was the song of the rapids gently singing a rhythm of movement in the stillness. There was the fragrance of wilderness drifting through the air. There was the wildflower with its delicate red blossoms nodding in the breeze. There was the bumble bee, all dressed up in black and yellow, dancing from one flower to another, not the least bit concerned about me.

The Silence held us all as one.

The ancient Greeks posited the existence of *aether* as the breath of the deities. Comparable to the air that mortals breathe, *aether* filled the heavenly realm, the home of gods and goddesses. Plato and then (much more) Aristotle developed this mythological concept into a fifth element (to join the terrestrial elements of earth, water, air and fire) located

in celestial space through which the heavenly bodies moved. As modern science developed, Isaac Newton and others even into the nineteenth century posited various concepts of *aether* as a medium through which gravity or light or electro-magnetic fields flowed. Then Einstein turned the world upside down—or right side up—with his theories of special and general relativity, and the existence of *aether* as a medium was disappeared.

As I considered the Silence, embracing as one the ambling river, the chanting rapids, the ancient boulder, the fire-red blossoms, the nonchalant bumble bee, and me, that ancient concept of *aether* as the breath (*ruach*) of God, as the air of the heavenly realm, as the medium through which forces move and connect arose as perhaps a *metaphor* of the unique quality of Silence that connects us to the Beloved and to one another and to all of creation, for the Silence that embraced me

EVENSONG

Keith Walker

We emerge like the deer
sifting from the trees
to forage in stillness

only when the air
rises, grass-sweet and plush,
in a cool tide

from hidden lowlands
whose touch is so gentle
it opens the unseen

eyes of the body,
eyes that cannot see
by day but know

the shapeless dark
on the other side of things.
Like the phantoms of

deer in the gloaming,
our colors dim to shadows
our margins blur

at the threshold of
the woods crossing into a
vast, intimate night.

At the closing wood's
edge in misting green darkness
you are the birch light.

Keith is a graduate of Shalem's
Nurturing the Call:
Spiritual Guidance Program.

had at least a sense of physicality to it, a different quality of presence, like moving from earthly air to heavenly *aether*. All of this is the language of metaphor, of course, for the Divine Presence is always beyond any type of circumscription.

There was, moreover, a further dimension of this “physicality of Silence.” By the silent Sabbath of the second residency, the clergy present had spent much time together: listening, sharing, praying, sitting in silence. One of the roles of a contemplative leader is to “hold the space,” simply to hold the space of the group—the community—in the very Presence of the Beloved, without words, without petition, without agenda. As I sat on that age-old boulder, I held the space for our group. We were scattered from the state park to the labyrinth to the nap bed to the swimming pool to the woods to the reading

nook, and yet at that moment the *aether* of the Beloved held us together. What a wondrous mystery!

This spiritual connection seems always to come out of the Silence, even when distractions dance on the surface; for the Silence of the Beloved flows quietly and vitally underneath all the joys and challenges of life. Our spiritual practices are in their simplest form training for the opening of our hearts to the Holy Presence that undergirds us and embraces us with love. They take us into the Spiritual Heart, from which we can live our lives in a different key, opening us to fresh ways of perceiving, interpreting, judging, living and loving, into a spaciousness marked by creativity, compassion and courage.

The physicality of Silence leads us deeper and deeper into the “breadth and length and height and depth” of the love of the Beloved that surpasses human understanding so that we might be filled with the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:18-19).

**WINSTON IS THE DIRECTOR OF SHALEM'S
GOING DEEPER: CLERGY SPIRITUAL
LIFE AND LEADERSHIP.**



WAITING IN HOPE

ANN DEAN



A STORY CONTINUES TO LIVE IN ME, a story Jerry May liked recounting, about a little girl crying who says, “I was playing hide and seek and no one came to find me!” “Ah, now I understand,” reflects the rabbi. “God hides and wonders, *Why does no one come to find Me?*”

This story of tears and vulnerability, human and divine, continues to spark my personal reflection and discernment. Where is Love now crying for attention, in me and in the world? How alert am I to Earth’s cry? Going deeper, are tears opening or closing my spiritual heart? Where is the Hidden One waiting to be found? Where am I hiding?

These questions light up as I read the morning news, sit in discernment meetings, companion others in spiritual guid-

ance, lead retreats, walk in the woods, envision new missions for healing. Intensities of anger, frustration, grief and betrayal often arise. They can feel paralyzing and certainly compel prayer. Sometime simply considering even one of these questions sparks fresh tears and a deeper sense of vulnerability.

Vulnerability means being able to be wounded and involves fragility, sorrow and longing. These can sound like negatives to be avoided. Yet there is possibility too because of who God is. God is in the dark and the light, in the known and unknown, as beckoning love. The loving One is ever-present, creatively and actively seeking to bring about the divine dream of justice and healing peace. And because of the nature of love, that eter-

nal Lover is asking for co-participation in fulfilling this dream. The Beloved is vulnerable, too, waiting for our courageous, committed responses.

There is intense energy in longing and pain, in chaos and violence. It is often overwhelming. So what to do with these inner intensities? It helps me to remember that always there is the grace of ongoing revelation and the possibility of transformation. Always there is the possibility of a further word for healing and hope. It helps me to remember that “we swim in mercy as in an endless sea” (Psalm 193:11).

The Beloved offers participation in sacred inner movements of transformation. Sometimes this comes as an alluring deepening of urgency, intercessory prayer

EYES

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Look with your two eyes and see
what is before you.

Observe as you would a beautiful blossom
this person speaking to you.

Now close your eyes and see
with the eyes of your heart
their silent words, their soul,
their light shining.

Now close those eyes and see
with your third eye
everything in them, yourself in them,
God, waiting, becoming.

Steve is a graduate of Shalem's
Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life
and Leadership.



joining with Love's hope. Sometimes this comes as an invitation to release, surrendering paralyzing negative energies to Love's own purpose for healing.

Teilhard de Chardin's writing on suffering has been a great help to me to consider those often paralyzing intensities of feeling and suffering as potential energy: power to be transformed on an essential level and to explore the mystery of suffering as a significant, though difficult, territory for spiritual discernment. When I recognize intensities, such as anger and fear, that feel like blocks to the living Presence, it is possible to reach beneath all that to the deeper place of my trust in Love, the sacred center where there is oneness. There, in that holy place of unitive, contemplative awareness, by the grace of transforming Love, any gripping emotion can simply become potential energy. Knowing that, it is right and good to abandon the whole bundle of knotted negative energy by offering it to God for *any* purpose God chooses. This is an act of devotion, trusting Love's will in tending to the world.

Again and again, I am refreshed through the exhilarating joy of the ever-originating One, the Revealing Source of all Generative Power, so personally and mysteriously operative in the center of my being and every living being. This One is Love, nearer to me and to all living beings than our own breathing. Now I sense that it is not really a matter of hiding and seeking and being found but of knowing that Someone is hidden in every darkness.

Last week, I saw a line in an old hymn, "Rise to adore the mystery of Love." There is something provocative there, perhaps compelling me to another step for deepening trust in Mystery; perhaps a step of simplification. Adore, not seek to understand. Adore, stop asking why. Adore, not have to plan action. The practice of giving the energy of suffering to God for expanding Love's healing energies in the world feels connected to this. This doesn't have to mean taking suffering less seriously; perhaps just trusting more because of reverencing Mystery.

"Trusting more" is often the bottom line for my spiritual journey. And waiting in hope. I wonder if you share the inner beckoning to trust more. Let us wait in hope together, prayerfully engaging suffering as we rise to adore the mystery of Love. And let us be encouraged by these lines by Jessica Powers, a Carmelite poet:

I wait in Mary-darkness, faith's
walled place,

With hope's expectance of nativity...

I come upon Earth's most amazing
knowledge:

Someone is hidden in this dark with me.

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CULTIVATING CONTEMPLATIVE CONVERSATIONS

MARGARET BENEFIEL



IN CONVERSATIONS WITH OUR “CONTEMPLATIVE COUSINS,” both in follow-up discussions since the August 2017 Snowmass gathering where 20 young contemplatives gathered and in other settings, the question often arises, “What method of prayer does Shalem teach? Contemplative Outreach teaches Centering Prayer, World Community for Christian Meditation teaches the John Main method of prayer, what does Shalem teach?”

We tend to answer, “We don’t have just one method we teach. We invite people into a variety of contemplative practices, helping them find what is right for them.” Unfortunately, this sometimes translates as, “We don’t have a core teaching.” As Jessie Smith, Shalem board member and Snowmass participant, pointed out one day in the midst of these conversations, a core contribution that Shalem has made is our listening circles. We not only introduce a variety of individual practices that invite people into contemplative prayer; we also invite

people into the shared practice of deep listening in small groups. Furthermore, not only are our listening circles, peer groups, and spiritual direction groups embedded in our long-term programs, pilgrimages, Society gatherings, and regional settings, we also seek to hold our staff meetings, board meetings, committee meetings, and regional meetings in this way.

When Shalem office staff meet weekly, when long-term program teams meet, when program directors meet, when the Society leadership team meets, when regional conveners and region contemplative leadership teams meet, when the board and committees meet, we seek a contemplative groundedness and deep listening, to one another and to the Spirit in our midst. The wider Shalem community, consisting of Shalem program graduates and others, also introduces contemplative groundedness and deep listening in many other settings. These are contemplative conversations.

Contemplative conversations also happen to form the leading edge of current dialogue about contemplative education. Olen Gunnlaugson, a leading contemplative educator, points out that, in contrast to the softening effect of contemplative conversations, the dominant educational approaches of today have a hardening effect on students. The emphasis on mastering standardized tests, on defeating one’s opponent in debate, on individualism and competition, all form isolated human beings who distrust and fear one another. He argues for this hardening influence to be counteracted by the softening of contemplative conversations, or “intersubjective contemplative approaches,” in his terminology.

As Gunnlaugson points out, for the past 20 years the contemplative education movement has focused on re-integrating individual contemplative practices, or “first person approaches” into teaching and learning. Arguing that education’s dominant third person “objectivist” ap-

ONE THING IS NEEDED

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

*Martha, Martha, you are worried
and distracted by many things;
there is need of only one thing.*

—Luke 10.41-42

There will be the clutter and clatter of pans,
the rumble and jumble of traffic and trains,
the brambles of papers and lists and calls,
the beaten paths, the errands, the chores.
You don't have to rattle and run with them.
You can do one thing at a time.

You can stop
and sit at the feet of the moment,
pay reverent attention to whatever it is,
and listen to the silence beneath the hum,
and simply be
in the presence of the presence.
In all your doing that you surely must do,
you still can just be.
And your being
will become what you do.
In the stillness within the action

sits the Beloved
who is not distracted with many things,
but only wants to sit awhile with you.

Steve is a graduate of Shalem's
Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life
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proaches truncate our humanness and limit learning, contemplative educators have introduced many first-person contemplative practices into the classroom. These include breath-focused meditation, journaling, and contemplative art. While first-person contemplative education has been sorely needed, Gunnlaugson notes that second-person, or intersubjective approaches, have been neglected. He succinctly describes a first-person focus as being *within* us, a third-person focus as perceived to be *outside* us, and a second-person approach as focused on what is *between* us. The second-person approach moves contemplative awareness from *me* to *we*. Contemplative educators are just now beginning to articulate and experiment with second-person practices. I think the wider Shalem community has much to offer here. When the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education held its annual meeting in Amherst, MA, their theme was “Imagining Hu-

mane Institutions.” I offered a session on contemplative structures and processes of humane institutions and found much interest in exploring how we practice contemplative conversations.

I can imagine members of the wider Shalem community leading the way in these conversations. How might we be called to enter these discussions in higher education? Or in elementary or secondary education, where they are also occurring? Or in the workplace? Or in congregations and denominations? Might some be called to write about their experiences with contemplative conversations, perhaps in the *Journal of Contemplative Inquiry* or in *Presence* or in *Contemplative Journal*?

In a world that needs contemplative conversations now more than ever, I invite you to open yourself to God in a spirit of deep contemplative listening. Ask yourself, ask God, “How am I being invited to practice contemplative conversations? How am I being invited to nurture contemplative conversations where I live? How can we encourage one another in our callings to cultivate contemplative conversations in a world that desperately needs them?”

May our contemplative conversations feed our souls and spur us to offer contemplative conversations to our hurting world.

MARGARET IS SHALEM'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

OCEAN OF LIGHT AND LOVE

PATIENCE ROBBINS



In the experience of the Divine Presence that which flows over the ocean of darkness is an infinite ocean of light and love. In the Eternal Now all people become seen in a new way. We enfold them in our love, and we and they are enfolded together within the great Love of God as we know it in Christ.... They aren't just masses of struggling beings, furthering or thwarting our ambitions, or, in far larger numbers, utterly alien to and insulated from us. We become identified with them and suffer when they suffer and rejoice when they rejoice. One might almost say we become cosmic mothers, tenderly caring for all.

(Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*)

I RECENTLY CAME ACROSS the quote above in *Boundless Compassion* by Joyce Rupp. Thomas Kelly, an American Quaker educator, wrote *A Testament of Devotion* in 1941; perhaps you may have read it as it was required in Shalem's long-term programs. Coming across this again, I was very moved by the rich images and phrases, some of which actually came from George Fox, the founder of the Quakers. I will take a few of these images and phrases and reflect on what they might offer us now in 2018 to enrich our prayer and our life in the Divine Presence.

Infinite Ocean of Light and Love: Having just spent a week on retreat by the ocean, I can picture and feel that sense of depth, of power, of endless expanse and of ongoing abundant life. God, the eternal light and love, is flowing and vast, full of life and goodness, shimmering with light. This image nurtures deep trust and peace in me as well as the inner knowing that all shall be well. I recall the time that I was wrestling with something that I couldn't accept, and as I watched the ocean, dolphins began swimming along, up and down the coast, offering what

seemed to me to be a message of love and acceptance. My whole being eased into a "yes" as I joined with the dolphins in this infinite ocean of light and love.

Enfolded Together Within the Great Love of God: This phrase speaks to me of the communion that we know as contemplatives. It seems that this is a huge gift that contemplatives can offer our planet right now: speaking and living the truth that, indeed, we are all interconnected. As both Fox and Kelly knew, we are enfolded together in love. That is our reality, no matter that we resist it, deny it, or are numb to it. Let

AUTUMN

Catherine Smith

Holy One,
May we come to this moment
As though we were a garden
And You the softening rain
As though we were an orchard
And You the swelling fruit
As though we were sand
And You the tide offering herself to the shore.

May we come to this moment
As though we were a body
And You our beating heart.
May we come open,
to be softened, ripened,
filled
by You.

Catherine is a graduate of Transforming Community:
Leading Contemplative Prayer Groups & Retreats.



us proclaim this and long for it to be ever more real in our lives.

We Become Identified with Them and Suffer When They Suffer: This phrase invites us into the experience of interconnection, as we feel the pain and heartache of so many who suffer, people as well as all creation. We weep with the trees as well as the children and parents who are being separated at the border. How important to remain grounded in the infinite ocean of light and love as we hold all of this; we do not need to control, or separate or even understand—just hold all in love and compassion.

Cosmic Mothers, Tenderly Caring for All: What a profound image this offers us. Each of us can become cosmic mothers or loving parents. This reminds me of Meister Eckhart who said that we are all meant to be Mothers of God...for God is always needing to be born. May that image seep into and fill our cells, so that tenderness and compassion may radiate out to all creation.

I invite you to join me in embracing this vision that both George Fox and Thomas Kelly offered—of trust in the Infinite Ocean of Light and Love, enfolded together, suffering and rejoicing with all, and

become cosmic mothers, tenderly caring for all. May we continue to find ways to encourage one another in these dark and uncertain times and draw close to saints, holy people, wisdom figures, mystics—all those, both living and dead, who accompany us, reminding us of what is planted deep in our being.

PATIENCE IS A SHALEM ADJUNCT STAFF MEMBER.

GRIEF AND GIFT

TRISH STEFANIK



AS I WRITE THIS IN MID-AUGUST, I see my beloved birds at the feeder molting, features askew. The piercing drone of the cicadas on the retreat farm where I live is at a constant crescendo. I spy a hint of early color change in the meadow, and I find myself humming the old 60s tune, “To everything, Turn, turn, turn, There is a season, Turn, turn....”

I take a slow, deep breath and close my eyes. There is poignancy in these last weeks of summer. I know that autumn is on its way; I hear another call, Let go, let go, let go...into the mystery of dying and death that is a part of the cycle of life.

I have been living with dying and death close at hand for over a year. Not soon after the turning of the New Year, a longtime friend who was also my housemate and co-founder of a new ministry died after months of diminishment. It seems too often this past year I have felt my heart

drop as so many people I know or hear about are experiencing profound loss. This fall is also the season of both my parents’ passing and a milestone birthday for me, which cause me to pause. In the silence, a worthy companion, I find myself reckoning ever more deeply with the nature and effects of grief.

Sometimes I am agitated, feeling disoriented or numb. In another moment I feel emptiness or am overwhelmed. At times I have experienced an odd peace. Yet I also experience precious appreciation for both the smallest of things and the breadth of life.

Through it all, I am increasingly aware of the significance of presence/Presence. Being truly present to all my emotions, to Mystery, to the natural world, to another person. The kind of awareness that suspends the mind’s tendency to compartmentalize, judge, define or fix, and attunes

to communion. There is simply what is, and it shimmers with ineffable force. In some sense “I” become irrelevant yet at the same time I am never more alive. Everything that matters becomes only one thing.

Let me be clear: I am not minimizing the pain and suffering of loss, especially the loss of a loved one. Grief is a rough road. But in being truly present, as we can, an enduring Presence is made known. I cannot make this happen; it happens on its own time, in its own way. But the deepest part of me reaches knowingly to something always reaching lovingly.

My simple prayer now is, *May I be present; God help me be present.* Present when I am exasperated with the grieving process or the daily news. Present to relationship, cherishing and mending. Present along my walk to the beauty of the sunlight amidst the trees or eye-to-eye with a deer or brushed by a butterfly’s wings. Pres-

PRAYER FOR AN END

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Unfailing heart,
walk with me
on this path not made yet.

Make as you do
of this darkness
evening and morning,
a day.

Let this end
unfold
as you yourself become

and with me
rise anew.

Steve is a graduate of Going Deeper: Clergy
Spiritual Life and Leadership.



ent to the pain and suffering, my own and my neighbor's and those struggling across the globe. Present to the joy that rises from within in the most unexpected places and ways. Present to the work at hand, anything that is right in front of me inviting encounter. Present always to the opportunity to learn and grow in humility and wisdom.

I have always loved the title of Tilden Edwards' book, *Living in the Presence*. Living at one with. I do not wish grief upon anyone, but face to face with loss, a veil is often lifted, revealing Eternal Presence, all-encompassing. Hollowed out by grief, I have found myself more receptive to amazing grace. In every turning, whatever season, the gift is there.

Five years ago I spent a sojourner year in an ecumenical Benedictine community at Holy Wisdom Monastery. I reveled in the liturgy of the hours and the surrounding prairie, and I was immersed in the way of St. Benedict. One of Benedict's instructions is to keep death daily before your eyes. In pondering this, a poem was given that continues to speak to me of that thin veil between life and death and how a contemplative orientation invites us into the blessings always present. *May I be present.*

*I relate to that
which is timeless*

*yet still, situated
in time—birthing,
dying, living today
in ever unfolding*

*mystery
told in the tales
of the trees, each one,
the grasses,
the creatures
of the air and lake,*

*you, me,
the other, all part
of some whole*

*from season to
season.
It's hard to wrap
my mind around;*

*but thank God,
I can pay attention
now, and perhaps
touch heaven
in the wildflowers.*

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AND ADJUNCT STAFF MEMBER.**

COURAGE TO FOLLOW THE CALL

TILDEN EDWARDS



CONTEMPLATIVES PUT A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION

on cultivating an open heart center, and rightfully so. There we find, however erratically and embryonically, our loving communion with the Gracious One. There also we hear whispers of particular callings to collaborate with the Spirit in caring for the well-being of life on Earth. Such caring fosters the kin-dom of heaven.

The callings to care are manifold in what feels like our increasingly perilous times. Sometimes the caring reaches no further than joining our heart with God's compassionate heart, wanting God's mysterious loving light to be empowered in a given situation in whatever way it is needed. Many times the caring asked of us goes beyond such intercessory prayer and involves actions big and small.

Hearing a call, especially in the societal or ecological arena, and *following up* on it, are two different things, as we all know.

Follow up can be especially challenging if the call involves any significant dimension of risk, time consumption, or frustration. Think of Jesus' time of sweating blood in his agonizing prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, when he was faced with the most extreme sacrificial calling. Our less extreme egoic fears can easily click in: fear of upsetting others, rejection, disruption of a stable life. We also can feel self-doubt about our own capacities. Marianne Williamson once said that "our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us."

Recently I've been reminded that we have a physical/psychic resource in us that can aid the special courage, dedication and energy we need sometimes to respond to what our contemplative heart shows us is called for. The reminder came in my reflection on a dream in which I felt a strong, confident place in the center of my

body where I fearlessly accepted whatever was given to see and do. It felt like I was carrying God's strength in me, a sense of "tough love," a deeper, freer, discerning openness and sense of capacity and willingness to act. I realized that this "place" in me was what some Buddhist traditions and some Western energy systems see as the energy center of our bodies. It's found two fingers width below our navels, which in Japanese is called the *kikai* (*ocean of ki energy*) *tanden*. In some Western energy systems it's called the *Lunar Plexus*.

The Hebrew word for heart, "lev," includes the "guts," from which comes the phrase, "you have to have heart." In English we also speak of "having the guts" to do something, in the sense of "bold courage." In Zen (and some other) traditions this place for attention more generally connects with a view of the unitive center of the body and psyche that realizes life whole, beyond dualisms. The full realiza-

MOVING INWARD

Trish Stefanik

Activity swirls around me
I am caught up as a child
curled and tumbling
excited terrified delighted
dizzied for a while not knowing
or thinking where I am
stumbling a bit then
as I untangle and rise
seeking my equilibrium.
My breath leads

to a recollection of myself
and I make a way slowly
to the edge of somewhere
where the deep invites me
out of that very self
yet never so in touch with
my being.

Trish is a Shalem Program Administrator and
Adjunct Staff Member.



tion of that view involves posture, breathing and mental practices, but I am only looking at this center here as it relates to a *quality of strength* in us. It's interesting that in Eastern Orthodox Christian *hesychast* tradition you find a practice of bowing the head toward the physical heart during meditation, and in Hebrew, as I earlier noted, heart includes “the guts.” We can see this “gut” center as the God-given place in us that energizes the moving “feet” of the spiritual heart's call. It can help us walk the talk, walk the calling into action.

Here is a little contemplative exercise that can give you an opportunity to connect with this special center:

Close your eyes and place your hands over your physical heart. Now lean your mind back into your receptive spiritual heart, however you can best do that. Bring to God your openness to be a vessel of divine

social compassion. See if anything is given you about how you are called to be such a vessel at this point in your life. What comes to you may be some kind of compassionate action that you are already involved in and that is being confirmed, or something new may appear. As some such call may show itself, see if it is accompanied by any kind of resistance, e.g., a sense of doubt, or fear of getting involved, or wobbly willingness, or lack of energy. If any such weakening reaction shows up, bring your hands down to your tanden center below your navel. Take in a long, slow breath, and as you slowly exhale your breath into that center, push out your stomach with a sense of confidence in God. Repeat that concentrated breathing a few times until you feel an energetic strength cutting through your resistance to the calling—until you feel a sense of God's loving strength filling you. Offer your own prayer to be guided and sustained in any calling that appeared to you.

Hopefully you feel yourself more ready, willing and energized now to move in whatever direction is called for. When such motivation flags, you can return to the practice.

You may also think of other people with whom you could share consideration of societal callings with you, adding the strength and wisdom that can flow from caring spiritual community. In the volatile, complex, morally and spiritually challenging atmosphere in which we live today, I find myself more than ever moved to meet with others who share a desire to be open and responsive to the Spirit's awakenings in and among us.

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 Sue Gibbons
 Velma Goodreau
 Mark Goodwin
 Al Halverstadt & Susan Weeks
 John Holden & Mary Beaudoin
 Nancy Johnston
 William Kachadorian
 Mansfield & Dianne Kaseman
 Georgia Joan Keep
 Marianne & Dean Lewis
 Catherine Loveland
 Sandra Mackie

Stewart Mehlman
 Gail Meyer
 Leslie Miller
 Patricia Mousaw
 Alice Murray
 Alyce Ostrow
 Gene Pistacchio, OFM
 Ed & Marjorie Poling
 Mary B. Pulick
 Lisa Richey
 Patricia Richter
 June Schulte
 Inez Scott
 Kathy Spaar
 Eugene Steuerle
 Charles Stewart
 Gertrude Summers
 Susie White
 Larry Williams
 Marilyn & Alan Youel

10-14 YEARS

Marlene Anderson
 Margaret Bartel
 Larry Bell
 Kathryn Booth
 Lerita Coleman Brown
 Lillian Burke
 Susan Burke
 Jamie Burnett
 Elizabeth Caemmerer
 Ella Campbell
 Emily Castner
 Suzanne Clark
 Alicia Conklin-Wood
 Marshall Craver
 Clare Crawford-Mason
 Karen Day
 Elaine Dent

Lilyan Dickerson
 Raymond E. & Naomi C. Dungan Foundation
 Susan Eenigenburg
 Jo Ann English
 John Finney
 Anne Grizzle
 Daniel Harris
 Dorothy Harris
 Joan Hatcher
 Patricia Ann Hogan
 Cathy Jay
 Sarah Lutterodt
 Al Keeney
 Suzi Kindervatter
 Brenda Kiser
 Maureen Kramlinger
 Marjorie Ann Lueck
 Bruce Lugn
 Shirin McArthur
 Sally & Bill Meadows
 Lydia Mercado
 Darlene Meyers
 Darlene Muschett
 Betty Payne
 Dawn Peck
 Nan Perkins
 Joy Rains
 Leah & David Rampy
 Sandra F. Selby
 Connie Seraphine
 Jayne Shontell
 Jo Ann Staebler
 Phil & Anne Stone
 Linda & Frank Toia
 Joe Trester
 Elizabeth Tuckermanty
 Nancy Wagner
 Suzanne Dale Wilcox

If you are not on this list of names and feel you should be, please let us know.

SHALEM'S CONTINUING PRESENCE IN THE WORLD

BY SUSAN ETHERTON

ONCE UPON A TIME...

If you're like me, those four little words stir childhood memories of favorite stories—of magic places, of secret longings, of wondrous times. Stories are our way of sharing our lives—both personal and beyond. In the past several years, Shalem has garnered a larger part of my story—the story of my spiritual journey and growth. Shalem and the Shalem community have become foundational in my understanding of God and the expansiveness of God's Great Love. Shalem has helped me embrace a contemplative approach to life, leadership and loving.

For the past several years I have been a member of Shalem's Board of Directors, serving on the Development Committee. As a member of the Development Committee, I have had the privilege of hearing from folks associated with Shalem and listening to their stories—stories of growth, transformation and love. As I understand the work of development, it is about relationships and inviting people to experience and join in ministry in the work one loves. I have seen first-hand the strengthening bond of people in relationship with Shalem—through our long-term programs, through on-line community, and through in-person



JON & SUSAN ETHERTON

gatherings. I love that some of us describe our friends in Shalem as our “people” or our “tribe.” These are relationships deeply grounded in a contemplative understanding of how God calls us to be Love for each other.

The work that Shalem contributes to the world and the people Shalem helps form and transform through the Spirit's presence are desperately needed by our larger world today. The idea that the spirit of Shalem is generously sprinkled throughout our world through folks who have learned and grown from Shalem,

gives me hope. As I dream, I imagine that world being transformed through grace upon grace and blessings poured out of God's abundant Spirit in our shared contemplative living.

That's why Jon and I have named Shalem in our will—to help ensure the continued work and blessing of the gift that is Shalem's influence in the world. We want part of our legacy to be a future where the Love of God is expressed through Shalem's continuing presence in and impact on our world. We want Shalem to be a part of the story the world keeps telling.

SHALEM'S SHEKINAH SOCIETY

THE SHEKINAH SOCIETY IS FOR THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE PUT SHALEM IN THEIR WILLS. WE GIVE FOR THIS SPECIAL SUPPORT AND CARE FOR SHALEM'S FUTURE.

N. Franklin Adkinson, Jr.
Ann Barry
Margaret Bullitt-Jonas
Merrill Ware Carrington
Jean Crawford
John Denham
Rosemary Dickerson
Susan Dillon
Tilden Edwards
Susan & Jon Etherton

Alan Evans
Judith Favor
Doris Froelich
Linda M. Kapurch
Joann Klink
Kirby Lewis
Sandra Mackie
Monica Maxon
Louise E. Miller
Brooke Morrigan

K. Sheila Noyes
Linda Allport Neumaier
Mary-Louise O'Day
Clare Openshaw
Laurence Pagnoni
Don & Alixe Park
Paul Purta
Leah Rampy
Lisa Richey
Lyta Seddig

Betty Stoddard
Joan Stogis
Jan Thurston
Linda & Frank Toia
Nan Weir
Emily Wilmer
Sandra Hay Wilson

MAKING A BEQUEST TO SHALEM

WHEN MAKING YOUR ESTATE PLANS, WE HOPE YOU WILL CONSIDER A GIFT TO SHALEM. WE HAVE BEEN RICHLY BLESSED BY THOSE WHO HAVE REMEMBERED SHALEM IN THEIR WILLS, AS JON AND SUSAN ETHERTON HAVE DONE. THESE GIFTS GREATLY ASSIST SHALEM'S MISSION AND MINISTRY AND ARE A SPECIAL WAY FOR A DONOR'S CARE TO EXTEND INTO THE FUTURE. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE INCLUDED A BEQUEST TO SHALEM IN YOUR ESTATE PLANS. WE'D LIKE TO THANK YOU AND WELCOME YOU AS A SHEKINAH SOCIETY MEMBER!

VOLUNTEERS & IN-KIND DONATIONS

We are grateful to the many individuals who give of their time or donate travel and other expenses to support Shalem's ministry. This year we are especially thankful for:

- ❖ Susan Etherton, Margaret Benefiel, Leah Rampy, and Christy Berghoef, whose photographs grace these pages, our web site, our monthly eNews, our Facebook page and other places.
- ❖ Frank Neville-Hamilton for his continuing help with Shalem's website and database.
- ❖ Lerita Coleman Brown for her inspired leadership and creative expansion of the Online Howard Thurman Day and Clair Ullmann for her assistance in our Online School of Prayer.
- ❖ Sandra Kerka for making Shalem's beautiful Contemplative Voices Award and May 20th Anniversary Celebration program booklets.
- ❖ Shalem's Development Committee (Susan Etherton, Aria Kirkland-Harris, Lisa Senuta, and Jessie Smith) for their special help with the Contemplative Voices Award and the May 20th Anniversary Celebration.
- ❖ Alan Evans for his continuing fundraising wisdom and guidance.
- ❖ Shalem's Board of Directors, who donated their time and talent in many different ways, especially at our Contemplative Voices Award and the May 20th Anniversary Celebration.
- ❖ Shalem's staff who helped at the Contemplative Voices Award and the May 20th Anniversary Celebration, particularly Katy Gaughan for handling so many details so well for the May 20th event.
- ❖ Other volunteers who helped at the May 20th Anniversary Celebration: Bob Abarno, Reese Aguilar, Erica Aungst, Nancy Brody, Ann Dean, Sharon Glass, Ken Haase, Chris Jeffrey, Sarah O'Brien, Chad Senuta, Richie Siford, Mike Weir
- ❖ Shalem's non-Board Committee members, Sarah Kate Fishback and Susan Pullin, who served Shalem through their committee work.
- ❖ Anne Grizzle, who offered her beautiful Bellfry for our group spiritual direction programs.
- ❖ Those who keep in contact with, and hold in prayer, recent program participants: *Spiritual Guidance Program*: Eleanor Abarno, Margaret Benefiel, Camille Cappiello, Anita Davidson, Susan Etherton (coordinator), Sharon Glass, Scott Landis, Rhoda



Nary, Adela Rose, Heather Strang, and Keith Walker. *Leading Contemplative Prayer Groups & Retreats Program*: Sallie Chatfield, Lorie Conway, Linda Longmire, Judy Walsh-Mellett, Kenzie Raulin, and Robin Seiler.

- ❖ Those who have shared their original reflections with us through a blog or eNews article: Tom Adams, Margaret Benefiel, Bryan Berghoef, Kimberly Borin, Winston Charles, Savannah Kate Coffey, Amy Cole, Anita Davidson, Ann Dean, Susan Etherton, Nancy Flinchbaugh, Stuart Higginbotham, Catherine Kerr, Joan Maxwell, Jeff Nelson, Eliza Ramos, Leah Rampy, Jane Sharp, Francie Thayer, Clair Ullmann, Mary van Balen
- ❖ Other individuals who made additional in-kind contributions: Ridgeway Addison, CeCe Balboni, David Canada, Kiok Cho, Greg Cochran, Phil Cover, Joy Crawford, Ann Dean, Bill Dietrich, Tilden Edwards, Susan Etherton, Sid Fowler, Mark Greiner, Marshall Jenkins, Cheryl Notari, Diane Paras, Eileen Quinn, Patience Robbins, Phillip Stephens, Francie Thayer, Liz Ward, Nan Weir, Matthew Wright

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AND ACTIVITIES

THE CONDENSED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS SHOWN BELOW WERE DERIVED FROM THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE SHALEM INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION, INC. THESE CONDENSED STATEMENTS DO NOT INCLUDE ALL DISCLOSURES NORMALLY INCLUDED IN FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES. THE COMPLETE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, INCLUDING STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS, FOOTNOTE DISCLOSURES AND THE REPORT OF OUR INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS, ARONSON LLC, ARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW UPON REQUEST.

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF JUNE 30, 2018 AND 2017

ASSETS	2018	2017
Current Assets	\$ 825,385	\$ 337,061
Investments	677,952	638,417
Fixed Assets	31,526	45,589
Contributions Receivable	90,122	-
Other Assets	13,795	13,795
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1,638,780</u>	<u>1,034,862</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities.	90,525	49,288
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	985,101	921,869
Temporarily restricted	563,154	<u>63,705</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>1,548,255</u>	<u>985,574</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	<u>1,638,780</u>	<u>\$1,034,862</u>

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2018 AND 2017

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	2018	2017
Programs, contractual work and publications.	657,292	\$709,922
Contributions.	900,198	402,032
Other Income.	8,151	13,733
Investment income (losses).	<u>51,380</u>	<u>62,815</u>
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	<u>1,617,021</u>	<u>1,188,502</u>

EXPENSES

Programs, including allocated staff compensation	676,528	749,579
Administration:		
Staff compensation & benefits	59,607	62,110
Rent and other.	229,654	199,107
Fundraising expenses.	<u>88,551</u>	<u>63,262</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES.	<u>1,054,340</u>	<u>1,074,058</u>
Total Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	562,681	114,444
NET ASSETS, Beginning of Year	<u>985,574</u>	<u>871,130</u>
NET ASSETS, End of Year	<u>\$1,548,255</u>	<u>\$985,574</u>

SHALEM BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018

Eleanor Abarno
Winston B. Charles
Greg Cochran
Amy Dills-Moore
Carol Eckerman
Susan Etherton
David Frazelle
Mark Goodwin
Dana Greene

Albert Keeney
Aria Kirkland-Harris
Kim Parker
Scott Rohr
Lisa Senuta
Jane Sharp
Jessie Smith
Ostein Truitt
Nan Weir

SHALEM ADJUNCT STAFF 2017-2018

Ridgeway Addison
Susie Allen
CeCe Balboni
David Canada
Lerita Coleman Brown
Greg Cochran
Phil Cover
Susan Vincent Cox
Marshall Craver
Joy Crawford
Carole Crumley
Jamie Deering
William Dietrich
Sid Fowler
Patricia Franklin
Katy Gaughan
Marlin Good
Anne Grizzle

Jim Hall
Marshall Jenkins
Hong-il Kim
Chuck McCorkle
Tony Mazurkiewicz
Cheryl Notari
Diane Paras
Eileen Quinn
Eliza Ramos
Leah Rampy
Patience Robbins
Emily Schwenker
Trish Stefanik
Phillip Stephens
Frances Thayer
Nancy Weir
Matthew Wright

OFFICE INFORMATION

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Fax: 202-595-0336

Office Hours: Monday to Friday,
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
shalem.org
E-mail: info@shalem.org

SHALEM STAFF 2017-2018

Executive Director

Margaret Benefiel

Program Directors

Margaret Benefiel
Winston Charles
Ann Dean
Hayley O'Connor & Bill Stone
Elizabeth Ward

Program Administrators

Katy Gaughan & Trish Stefanik

Director of Development & Communications

Monica Maxon

Director of Finance

Laura Caperton

Director of Online Learning & Technology

Ruth Taylor

Social Media & Online Learning Support

Bryan Berghoef

Bookkeeper

Pearl Nana-Atoo

Senior Fellow for Spiritual Guidance

Rose Mary Dougherty, SSND

Founder & Senior Fellow

Tilden H. Edwards, Jr.

EDITED BY MONICA MAXON

DESIGN: PEÑA DESIGN, INC.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARGARET BENEFIEL, SUSAN ETHERTON (INCLUDES COVER), AND LEAH RAMPY

SHALEM'S MISSION

TO NURTURE CONTEMPLATIVE LIVING AND LEADERSHIP



SHALEM'S CORE VALUES

AWARENESS THAT GOD IS INTIMATELY PRESENT WITHIN AND AMONG US

REVERENCE FOR THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S PRESENCE

DESIRE FOR SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT IN ALL THINGS

RADICAL WILLINGNESS TO TRUST GOD

RESPECT FOR THE UNIQUE SPIRITUAL PATH OF EACH INDIVIDUAL

RECOGNITION THAT CONTEMPLATIVE LIVING AND LEADERSHIP REQUIRE SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

COMMITMENT TO ACTION IN THE WORLD ARISING FROM A CONTEMPLATIVE ORIENTATION TOWARD LIFE

CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE & LEADERSHIP

SHALEM'S IN-DEPTH PROGRAMS SUPPORT YOUR GOD-GUIDED CAREER,
PERSONAL LIFE AND MINISTRY WITH OTHERS.



NURTURING THE CALL: SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

For those in the ministry of one-to-one spiritual
companioning

GOING DEEPER: CLERGY SPIRITUAL LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

For congregational clergy seeking to nurture their spiritual
heart and leadership

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY: LEADING CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER GROUPS & RETREATS

For those called to lead groups and retreats in churches
and other settings

YOUNG ADULT CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE & LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

For young adults who seek a deeper spiritual
foundation for their lives and leadership

THE SOUL OF LEADERSHIP: ENGLAND & U.S.

For help in integrating spiritual heart practices with
leadership realities



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