



SHALEM  
INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

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TRANSFORMATION IN LOVE

# Prophetic Contemplation: Love that Transcends Impasse

By Margaret Benefiel

*Shalem's Executive Director*

As I begin my reflections on “the state of Shalem” this year, I’d like to start by reading the description of this year’s Shalem Society theme:

*“What is the prophetic calling of a contemplative today?”*

*We are living in a time beset by losses. The loss of life due to the Covid-19 pandemic is staggering. We notice the loss of civility and respect for each other and for the truth in the daily news. As the world rapidly changes, we can experience economic and institutional changes as losses of what had given security and confidence. The grief for these losses can be felt deeply within the mind, heart and soul, and turn to anxiety as we worry about our lives and the future. Will I have a place in this uncertain future?*

*Fueling our anxiety is a pervasive sense that the usual tools for addressing social ills are stuck. Political tribalism and white supremacy are among the many forces paralyzing communal life today.*

*In times like these, it can be tempting to give in to despair, to cling tighter to our corner of the world, and to erect barriers. Even for contemplatives, prayerful detachment can become willful dissociation. And yet. . . we know better.*

*As much as we may forget or deny, amid all the turbulence and strife, the Holy One is with us, here in this present moment. The contemplative way calls us to practice being compassionately present in each moment to our grief and anxieties, as we lovingly support others in doing the same. It’s then that we can listen more deeply.*

*What does God want us to know about God in these times? How might that knowledge move us to authentic presence and action, and help us transcend the impasses of our day? Contemplation invites us to step in with love – not to check out. It is prophetic contemplatives especially who call us in, encourage us to hope and trust in God when it is hardest to do so. As contemplative leaders, how are we called to be today’s prophets?”*

So, focusing now on the state of Shalem, how is Shalem called to prophetic contemplation?

First, Shalem has been working on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for some time now, including working on program design and reading lists, making programs more accessible to people of color and younger people, and inviting younger people and people of color into leadership roles in programs and on the board. The Shalem Contemplatives of Color created a list of resources for program directors and will continue to help Shalem expand its horizons.

Second, for the past year and a half, Shalem’s Vision Coalition, named by the Executive Committee of the board after the spring 2021 board/staff retreat, has been holding listening sessions and working on what we’re calling Vision 2025, which will be considered by the board at the November board meeting. While Shalem’s mission will remain the same (“to nurture contemplative living and leadership”), the Vision Coalition is proposing, after much prayer and discernment, a vision, guiding principles, and focus areas. The purpose of the guiding principles and focus areas is to help Shalem’s mission become incarnate in this time and place, guiding our ministry for the next three years. We will publicize Vision 2025 once it is approved by the board. Stay tuned!

Third, under the able leadership of Shalem board member Westina Matthews, Shalem grads are contributing to a book called Soul Food, to commemorate Shalem’s 50th anniversary next year. It will focus on such themes as social justice, gender and sexuality, embodiment, the environment, and the arts. Some of you have already sent in submissions for this book, and for that we are most grateful. Soul Food will be released in the Fall of 2023.



As we seek to be faithful as prophetic contemplatives, how do we exercise contemplative leadership? This is a question I have been pondering recently as challenges have come my way.

I recently read Tilden Edwards' new memoir, "Life Woven in Sacred Time." As Shalem's founder and its first executive director (for 27 years!), Tilden reflects, among other things, on what it was like to lead a contemplative organization. As Shalem's current executive director, I reflect on what in his experience resonates with my experience. The impermanence of human planning stands out and shimmers for me.

Tilden reminds me that contemplative leadership is full of surprise, humility, humor, awe, and surrender. These things serve to remind me that our best human plans can be upended in a moment. He tells stories of establishing programs, not knowing which would continue to thrive and which would fade away. He recounts fundraising experiences: 1) Certain that the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation would not fund Shalem's two grant proposals after the impassive visitor from the Fund departed, he was amazed to learn that they decided to fund both proposals fully; 2) Another year, they had to reduce staff and expenses when they fell significantly short in raising the money they thought they needed.

My own experience mirrors Tilden's. For example, when the pandemic hit and we had to cancel programs, all our careful planning became irrelevant. I had to come to a point of acknowledging "if we perish, we perish." At the same time I did my best, with the board and staff, to discern what steps to take to meet the challenges at hand. When it became clear that some programs could thrive and even grow on Zoom, we knew that God still had work for Shalem to do. We survived and thrived.

When staff changes due to retirement, graduate programs, and other opportunities occurred, I had to trust that the way would open for the right staff to come along to do the work that Shalem was called to do.

When doors closed that I thought would open, I had to reassess what I thought Shalem was called to, listening for God's voice in the midst of the many voices clamoring for my attention.

Now we are facing another major crossroad at Shalem. Our program enrollment has grown, largely thanks to two things: first, the pandemic teaching us that we could complement our in-person offerings with programs on Zoom, and second, the scholarship funds now available for Shalem long-term programs due to the Wider World Initiative, to which so many of you pledged and donated so generously. At the same time that our program enrollment has grown, we are extremely short-staffed. And we learned recently that we will face a shortfall in income, unless we can make up the difference, of \$53,000 in this fiscal year because of people who have been regular donors who can't give or can't give as much this year.

What is God saying here? Is the invitation for Shalem to step back and offer less just when it seemed God was inviting us to grow? Should we cut programs just as they are growing? Alternatively, is the invitation to find new sources of income? If so, where will those come from? I pray daily that God will show us the way forward. And that as we are in this time of uncertainty and an overstretched staff, that God will protect the staff from burnout.

I ask for your prayers and for your discernment about what you might be called to contribute, both financially and in other ways, at this major crossroad for Shalem.

Prophetic contemplation, then, for Shalem right now, involves listening for the new while staying grounded in God, living faithfully into discerned vision, and opening our hands and saying, "God, what are you inviting us into now?" as we face our financial challenges.

I covet your prayers and am deeply grateful to be on this journey with you all.

# Vision and Grounded Humility on the Way

By Jackson Droney

*Shalem's Director of Operations and Online Learning*

*"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."  
-James 2:17*

This is not my favorite verse of the Bible. The notion that our works are what make or break our faith doesn't reflect an interpretation of a God that loves us regardless of what we do. And yet, I do think that love of God and love of neighbor through contemplation does in fact move us, moves me, towards action. My works don't make my faith, but rather they can – I hope – reflect it.

Earlier this year, Shalem Board member Patience Robbins reminded the board and staff of something that Rose Mary Dougherty often used to say: God is present, God is active, and God is loving. Indeed, I think we are called to be the same.

Perhaps we can play with this verse and imagine another word in lieu of "works." Faith without vision, is dead. What does it mean to have vision? Quite literally, vision relates to the human sense of sight, what we visually perceive around us. This can enable us to respond. Spiritually, to have vision means to perceive – to discern – our present reality, what the Holy is up to, and how we might be led by the Spirit in our lives and in our community to action. It's about listening perhaps more than it is about seeing. Moreover, spiritual vision relies on all of our spiritual senses as well as our physical ones, and it further relies on our experiences, interpretations, and understandings. Spiritual vision leverages our wisdom, and in my experience it almost always is enhanced when done with others.

Over the past year a group of board members, program staff, and office staff at Shalem have been steering a process to discern Shalem's vision for the next few years.

It began with a retreat in July 2021, and continued in the fall and winter with ten listening sessions involving various parts of the Shalem community. The Executive Committee and full board have been involved throughout the process, and the work will continue through the end of 2022.

This discernment has invited us to reflect on what Shalem has meant to us individually and the impact it has had on our lives and the lives of others. It's also invited us to dream big about Shalem's future. We've been able to share what we love about Shalem now, and imagine how our love and God's love might spur Shalem going forward. I have felt honored to listen and participate in this process.

Nearly 50 years ago, Tilden Edwards' spiritual vision, shared by his fellow contemplative comrades, led to Shalem's founding. And in the five decades since, leaders on the board and staff have continued to listen, dream, and act to nurture contemplative life and leadership. The words we've used to describe what we do have changed over time. The programs have evolved. We've tried things, continued some, let some things go. And as we enter Shalem's sixth decade, we don't know exactly how this contemplative community will evolve next. History suggests there will be change, and that can be cause for hope as well as grief.

However, as finely tuned as our spiritual senses may be, we are not God. To be healthy, I believe spiritual vision must be accompanied with grounded humility. If faith without vision is dead, then certainly faith without humility isn't faith at all.

We are moved by our love for God, each other, and Shalem to boldly articulate a vision for Shalem's future through 2025. And as we do so, we know that the Holy will show up in ways we can't foresee.



*Photo Credit: NASA*

We can do our best to anticipate the path forward, and we know that things will become clearer as we take steps. We actively, lovingly, and presently take those steps together.

Over the past year, Brenda Bertrand and I, along with registrar Chris Jeffrey, prepared for Shalem's first pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago in Spain. We spent many hours preparing for all that could happen, and there were many variables to consider, including Covid travel regulations, physical training, and many logistical details. This required vision to predict what information and resources our fellow pilgrims might need. It also required humility since we couldn't possibly predict or plan for everything that could happen, and some of what we planned or anticipated would not go as we thought. During my own physical preparation in April, I sprained my ankle and was off my feet for a few weeks. Grounded humility, indeed!

As much as you can set spiritual intentions and make logistical plans for the Camino, a pilgrim's journey is not something that can be scripted from start to finish. There is a saying about the Camino that a pilgrim shared with me: The Camino doesn't give you what you want. It gives you what you need.

This is not to say that planning – and honing one's vision – is not worth it. You cannot receive what the Camino gives you if you haven't adequately prepared. Rather, the preparation may be for something other than what you initially anticipated. I brought my own spiritual intentions to the pilgrimage, and spent months physically preparing, sprained ankle notwithstanding. But what I received on the Way was not what I anticipated.

As leaders at Shalem articulate our hopes and dreams of Shalem's future, I pray that we may remain active, loving, and present to the Holy's invitation for this season of our life together. And I pray that as we're led by the Spirit down the path, our works – our love manifest – stay humble, grounded and adaptive.

One last thing . . . this past year also coincided with the launch of NASA's new James Webb Space Telescope. The images from that telescope are already changing how we understand our universe. What a glorious vision of God's creation these photos lift us towards. What grounded humility they also inspire.



## Leaning Back into Love

By Tilden Edwards

*Shalem's Founder and Senior Fellow*

When we mentally lean back into our deepest home, what do we find there? We can give that placeless place many names; I think the fullest name we can give it is love.

Hal David and Burt Bacharach's popular lyrics were born of that awareness: "What the world needs now, is love sweet love; it's the only thing that there's just too little of." Pause your reading of this essay for a moment and sing that song, out loud if possible. If you don't know it, find it online. Sing it over and over....What does it do to your consciousness?

For me, it births a deep yearning for the preeminence of love in the life of the world. Love in its fullness is inclusive of everything we encounter. In her book of essays, *Upstream* (2019), Mary Oliver asks, "Do you think there is anything not attached by its unbreakable cord to everything else?" When I recognize such inclusive belonging, I can sense reality as multiple mirrors that reflect one another.

That awareness shapes the ground for love—a realization that we share the same holy compassionate Light that birthed us. Such love is not a mental concept; it's our heart's intuitive awareness. My heart's desire is to be lovingly present to what is, heart to heart: loving the divine Beloved in whose image I am made; loving my neighbor; loving the Earth in all its mystery; loving myself; loving my hope for love to prevail in a world beset by divisions and conflicts.

My desire also is that love enfold hatred into love's acceptance of our human condition with all of its fears and hopes—love that trusts that we ultimately belong together in one body of creation; that we come from the breath of the same Creator. I feel the pain in those who have not known love: without love we are left with raw power, with its bitter fruits of oppressive domination over others,

and desire to destroy rather than to reconcile with perceived enemies.

At Shalem, as spiritual directors and leaders of contemplative prayer groups, we provide space for people to realize and embrace the holy light of our mysterious loving Creator, closer to us than our breath. We seek to lean back together into the mysterious Love that is, heart to heart, and listen. Sometimes nothing is heard, and yet that nothing can be a reminder that God is no thing; God is the personal name we give to the deepest, intimate Mystery that is, the Real One who empties us of our inadequate domestications of that name and sinks us deeper into the great free Love that simply is. That's the reason I like to spell God "G-d," where the space between the letters recognizes the eternal, intimate, holy mystery. I think this echoes the revealed Hebrew biblical name for God as "Yahweh." That is a name that cannot be translated, yet it is a revelation of the creative loving Presence to whom we owe our lives.

May that astounding and vulnerable great Love continue to nourish us all! Let's lean back into it, breathing love into us now and breathing it out to the world we live in. Do this again and again, at every circumstance of our lives.



# Nurturing the Art of Contemplative Spiritual Guidance

By Phillip Stephens

*Director of Shalem's Nurturing the Call: Spiritual Guidance Program*

As the director of Shalem's Spiritual Guidance Program, I encounter frequent inquiries concerning our program's "method" for nurturing those called to this ministry. The following reflection is the most current distillation of my responses to these inquiries.

From David Kettle's "Western Culture in Gospel Context," contemplation within the Christian tradition is understood as "the practice of attending wholly to the mystery of God." Contemplative Spiritual Guidance within this tradition is a ministry of prayer involving a spiritual directee, a guide, and God, wherein directees seek to discern the Holy Spirit's invitations for their spiritual journeys. From Han de Wit's "Contemplative Psychology," as the Holy Spirit is the actual guide within these prayerful encounters, the discernment of the Spirit's invitations involves "a first-person form of knowing that possesses intimacy and directness, as it is both based on and the fruit of here and now awareness of one's unveiled experience of reality, which includes a direct and nonconceptual experience of one's own existence." Esther Meek, in "A Little Manual for Knowing," invites a pilgrimage for such knowing characterized by loving encounter, pledging transformation, inviting dance, and indwelling Shalom – a Grace-filled voyage of discovery congruent with the ones encountered within the contemplative tradition of Shalem's Spiritual Guidance Program.

Reflecting upon Meek's description of knowing, the refrain from one of my favorite hymns emerges into consciousness: "Where charity and love are, there is God." The refrain comes to mind because I experience the ministry of Contemplative Spiritual Guidance as a manifestation of Love. I marvel at how within each session I spend with a directee,

the Holy Spirit draws us into a loving encounter with the Holy Trinity. There, we commune from the heart to the point of mutual transcendence. The communion looks and feels like agape, the love that flows from the heart of God through the Incarnation into our space/time continuum where we encounter God in the very being of one another.

When I consider the lives of those within the Christian tradition embodying such loving encounters, I am drawn to the Desert Mothers and Fathers, the prototypes for Contemplative Spiritual Guidance. Within the depths of their being, they pledged themselves to God's transforming love through an encounter with one another. Although they were not big on talking, they were big on loving communion. When they opened their hearts to God for the other, the other appears to have been a primary conduit of the Word of God within the encounter. Outlined by Benedicta Ward in "The Sayings of the Desert Fathers," the story of Abba Lot and Abba Joseph comes to mind:

Abba Lot went to see Abba Joseph and said to him, "Abba, as far as I can I say my little office, I fast a little, I pray and meditate, I live in peace and as far as I can, I purify my thoughts. What else can I do?" Then the old man stood up and stretched his hands towards heaven. His fingers became like ten lamps of fire and he said to him, "If you will, you can become all flame."

Within the encounter, Joseph hears the voice of God calling from the depths of Lot's heart expressing a desire to become more visibly incarnate. Experiencing the voice of God through Lot, Joseph allows his own heart, ignited by God's love, to burst into flame. Only then does he dare speak, fanning the spark within his companion.

I see a parallel between the story of the Abbas and sitting with a directee being nurtured within Shalem's Spiritual Guidance Program. As the Spirit moves to open our hearts in prayer, we listen for the Divine voice calling from the depths of their hearts desiring a more intimate relationship with the Ground of Being, in all being. As we prayerfully listen for clues within this intimate dance, the Spirit nudges our hearts to stand with their needs in the midst of the Holy Mystery we call God - not with an intent to solve problems or find answers, but to share invitations and wonderings for their journeys as revealed through our encounters. The Spirit invites us into the mysterious dance of intercession (from the Latin, "inter" plus "cedere," meaning "to stand among or between"). On the days we are especially blessed, we are drawn through intercession into the Prayer of Presence – a deep opening to experiencing all being simultaneously as we are blessed to share the healing power of God's love pouring reciprocally through our mutually receptive hearts.

The above reflections reveal an experience of Contemplative Spiritual Guidance to be a marriage of the traditional Western academy and the Ground of Being. It is a marriage incarnated and experienced through all being, characterized by loving encounter, pledging transformation, inviting dance, and indwelling Shalom. Honoring the covenant of this marriage, we are continually invited when accompanying our directees to open our hearts to the transfiguring and all-transforming love of Christ. Bishop Frank Griswold states that this love obliges us "to leave the security of our various... states of certitude that are often forms of bondage... and launch out into the wilderness with no clear sense of destination." Without disrespecting the iconic methods and techniques of the more intellectual conceptual realm, as spiritual directors, we are invited to guide our directees into the experiential realm of Divine Mystery, responding to and through the spirit of God. Since each directee is unique, the possible responses to these experiences are many. We are continually invited to trust in the assurance of the Spirit's desire to transform our human frailties into opportunities for the outpouring of God's infinite, life-giving Love.



# Making Silent Space for Healing: Uvalde Reflections

By Sarah Forti

*Co-Director of Crossing the Threshold*

*James 1:2-4, “My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

Many of us are familiar with the opening lines of James 1, where we are invited to meet trials and suffering with joy; however, we must bring a degree of caution when approaching the trauma responses found within scripture. We can find freedom in the invitation of the text, or we can limit the space that we give to our suffering self, cutting our healing short and moving prematurely into a joy that we are not prepared to receive.

Nik and I experienced infertility when we were first married, and we were referred to a fertility clinic. When we became pregnant it felt like a miracle, and we were not prepared in any way for the possibility that we would lose that baby. There was no shortcut to joy; it was a terrible process both physically and emotionally. Moving on felt like losing twice. The grieving process is long and awkward, and it can leave us wondering what to do. When we hear about devastating losses, such as the mass shooting that claimed the lives of nineteen children and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas, we feel the weight of that tremendous loss, but we don't know what to do with it.

The Hebrew people had a ritual to create space for suffering and healing. This is why in the book of Job, Job's friends sat with him in silence for seven days following his trauma. They were joining him in his grief, rather than prematurely fixing or rushing him through it. After the ritual silence was over, Job needed to process his pain and questions. He needed to remain in that uncomfortable space, but rather than listening to the invitation, Job's friends made things significantly worse by trying to fix it.



How are we listening to the invitations that rise up in uncomfortable spaces?

How is God inviting us to respond in ways other than fixing or cutting the process short?

This integration of vulnerable prayerful listening while bravely holding space is an integral part of the Shalem community, and we integrate this practice into many Shalem programs. Some invitational prayers from our Group Spiritual Direction workshop are, “God, what is your deep desire?” and “What do I need to let go of to hear and join in God’s prayer?”.

In the face of unspeakable tragedy, these prayers can be an act processing our own experience, but they can also be an act of love and protest. We can choose to believe that God is still present, and that God’s intentions towards us are unthwarted by human brokenness. A personal loss can make the path feel too narrow to walk, so that there is always the fear of falling off entirely. God’s presence can create space for the possibility of generosity, being led to spaces that are wide enough to stand upon. It could be that God leads us to breathe deeply. It could be that God leads us to weep. It could be that God leads us to ask hard questions. It could be that we find freedom in the invitation of the text. For example, how might we read scripture differently if we approached it as a God-given friend who has “been there”?



“Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.” In the Book of Lamentations, Daughter Jerusalem is a God-given friend who has been there.

“Truly the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me. I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest; but trouble comes.” Job is a God-given friend who has been there.

“A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.” Rachel is a God-given friend who has been there.

These Biblical witnesses can walk alongside us, helping to create a wide and generous path as we respond to trials and suffering. They can model for us the way that spiritual community provides a place for all of us to stand. How are we called to be God-given friends, creating a wide and generous path for the voices and processes of those around us?

May we be willing to linger in uncomfortable spaces, finding freedom in the invitation, and entrusting the joy to God who holds space for all in love and care.

- Lamentations 1:12-13<sup>1</sup>
- Job 3:25-26<sup>2</sup>
- Jeremiah 31:15<sup>3</sup>



# A Triad of Presence Living from the Spiritual Heart

By Winston Charles  
*Shalem Adjunct Faculty*

At the core of Shalem Wisdom is the mantra: Lean back into the Spiritual Heart. The movement flowing around and through this core invitation into wholeness includes such constituent dimensions as noticing, letting go, relaxing, sensing, listening deeply with the ears of the Heart, discerning, leaning forward with compassion and courage and creativity. The movement as a whole is so encompassing that the richness of its interior dynamic will never be exhausted, yielding openings and spaciousness, liberation and transformation, to all who persistently follow in this way, which is the way of Jesus.

One of the cornucopia of spiritual practices that frees us from mechanistic reactivity, inhibiting fullness of life and love, is the triad of gratitude-compassion-humility. You might notice that these three resonate with what Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians (5:22-23) calls “the fruit of the Spirit.” However, the list is not exhaustive by any means. Paul points to heavenly realities with spiritual energies flowing through Jesus as he lived his life, embodying these into the world. Just so, ours is to do the same: to embody these heavenly energies into the world through our own actions and words, our thoughts and our prayers. Through these, we do indeed follow in the way of Jesus, not for gain or profit but for love and learning – learning how to be and become the fullness of who we already are in the Heart of the Beloved.

This triad of gratitude-compassion-humility provides one way to open to the movement of the Spirit in us and through us for the sake of the world.

Gratitude is a gateway to holy presence: presence to the Presence, presence to one’s self, presence to others and to the whole of creation. So much of our lives is lived in auto-drive. This is not to deny that good can come out of these actions, but only to say that, as long as we live on auto-drive, we are not making ourselves available to discovering (i.e., “un-covering”) the beautiful and unique people that we are. To taste deeply of this gift of God, we must STOP! Stop barreling forth on auto-drive. Stop and notice what is really going on. Stop and – yes – lean back into the Spiritual Heart.

Gratitude provides a way to step into the rich waters of spiritual wholeness. You can test this out for yourself. Indeed, you must test it out for yourself if this is going to have any authenticity for you. The next time you notice that you are living life in reactivity, in auto-drive, stop and lean into gratitude. Give thanks for the person who is irritating you or who seems threatening or whom you deem less than you. Give thanks for her or him as a child of God, as a person with their own wisdom, as one whom we only know in part and wish to know in full. Or, as you are hurrying to the next goal or task on your to-do list, stop and – as Mary Oliver so succinctly puts it – “walk slowly, and bow often” – giving thanks for the beauty of this world, this cosmos, of which you are a tiny but totally significant part. See if you can sense a shift in your body, an opening, a spaciousness.

Then, returning to that irritating person, whom you are now holding in gratitude, see if you can sense in your body compassion rising up for him or her. See if you can sense an opening that does not deny reality but embraces a deeper reality born of the Spirit who holds us all.





Gratitude and compassion prepare the ground for discernment. They free us from mechanistic reactivity, affirming the safe ground that holds our own preciousness and powers as well as our sorrows and hurts. Now, we lean back into the Spiritual Heart and begin to sense glimmers of discernment about how we are to be and act in this moment, knowing that all are held in the Presence of the Holy One, trusting that the Beloved is with us always so that we might discern step by step what may be right and good so to do. In courage with creativity, we move forward in love – love for ourselves, love for the other, love for the Beloved.

A new sense of humility may be opening, a humility that holds two interrelated realities as one. On the one hand, humility reminds us that neither are we the greatest things since sliced bread nor do we need to be. There is nothing to defend with blind fierceness. We are but a wee bit in the cosmic flow in which we are privileged to be a unique and precious part. For this, we sense gratitude and compassion for ourselves. In a complementary way, humility holds that part of our giftedness in which we do indeed have agency to discern what is ours to do and courage and compassion to act with creativity, grounded in being present to the Holy Presence always – one step at a time. These two dimensions of humility are active realities, true at the same time in complementary and unitive movement.



Leaning into the triad of gratitude, compassion, and humility not only opens new possibilities and potential for living a vital and dynamic life but also leads to a deeper and deeper understanding of both the blocks and the openings for fuller and more faithful living marked by joy and – yes – gratitude. Perhaps this was the hidden truth in Paul's invitation in his first letter to the Thessalonians (5:18) when he encourages to, "Give thanks in all things." Gratitude opens us to the possibility of living life from a deeper place within, from the Spiritual Heart, wherein the Spirit of the Holy One and our own unique human spirit are in ever-deepening mutual indwelling.



# If Not Now, When?

By Fay Acker & Westina Matthews

*Co-director of Crossing the Threshold and Shalem Board Member (Fay),  
Shalem Board Member (Westina)*

The 2022 lecturer for the Gerald May Seminar was the Most Reverend Michael B. Curry who leads the U.S.-based Episcopal Church as Presiding Bishop. As the 27th Presiding Bishop, he is the first person of color to serve in this role and champions a message of love and unity at a time of deep divisions in the country and in the world.

During the second highest attendance of the Gerald May Seminar, Curry said more than once, “I am not a contemplative.” Yet, there was a moment when he broke out in song with “There Is a Balm in Gilead,” a traditional African American hymn. Without hesitation, those of us who were in the audience began to join in.

Increasingly, those who have interpreted contemplation as looking at something thoughtfully for a long time in silence have come to appreciate that, for some, contemplation is an embodied experience that can occasionally take place against the backdrop of organized sound. And, if contemplation – as Benedictine nun Joan Chittister writes -- “breaks us open to ourselves,” then our breaking spontaneously into song during the lecture was a contemplative moment.

This past year, the Program Committee gave careful attention to discerning Shalem’s call to live into diversity, equity and inclusion, especially as it relates to our programs. With the support of Margaret Benefiel, Executive Director, and a blessing from the Shalem board, the Program Committee has journeyed with the program directors, staff, and board to engage in courageous conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Diversity and inclusion incorporate all of the elements that make individuals unique from one another, and while there are infinite differences in humans, most of us subconsciously define diversity by gender, race, and age, and narrow the focus to retention and recruitment. For this Program Committee endeavor, we encouraged one another to think expansively as we plan for the Shalem of the future, the Shalem that is becoming.

At Shalem, we say, “we’re seeking to live the contemplative life” or “we are contemplatives.” But perhaps we might also ask ourselves, “Who is the ‘we?’” Working and reflecting on the “we” is Shalem’s ongoing commitment.





As Shalem board members who serve on the Program Committee—and as African American women—we volunteered to organize an online gathering of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) who had participated in Shalem programs over time. On September 25, 2021, 46 people who have participated in Shalem programs and identify as BIPOC came together for an online gathering. Although Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are still woefully underrepresented in Shalem programs, the greatest surprise for those attending the gathering was that far more People of Color had participated in Shalem programs than many of us expected.

Through further research, we have identified to date approximately 100 People of Color who've participated in Shalem's various programs in recent years. This does not include Shalem's Korean programs, the South African cohort (except for one person we've identified), and the Cuban pilgrimage cohort (except for one person who participated in the gathering). We're continuing to seek that data.

The intent has been to connect with Shalem BIPOC participants; identify resources helpful to communities of color; and offer support to those Shalem participants who are serving BIPOC individuals or communities. This need has been especially critical given the ongoing racial injustices, traumatic experiences, and racial and economic inequities made even more evident during the pandemic.

Following the gathering, we distributed a survey to the attendees as well as other Contemplatives of Color associated with Shalem. Natalie Cone (YALLI, class of 2020) designed the survey and, subsequently, organized and collated the survey results. We know engagement with diverse communities is an important goal for Shalem, and we know more work needs to be done. In addition to others, two recommendations in particular have emerged from this work:

- *We at Shalem must engage more People of Color as thought and conversation partners, facilitators and leaders of Shalem programs;*
- *Shalem must continue to do the transformative work of addressing issues of race and justice and preparing its program participants to pay greater attention to those issues with the people and communities they serve.*

These are in keeping with the wisdom of Micah 6:8: “O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (NRSV)

Shalem has an excellent opportunity to support all of its participants in connecting their contemplative work with issues of race and justice. This connection is important to support the leadership of participants serving in a world that needs those trained by Shalem to be deeply grounded and spiritually courageous. Addressing the issues of equity, inclusion, and diversity helps to remove barriers between individuals and communities, and leads to transformation. The Divine Source invites all of us to draw on that Deep Well of Love. Now is the time to say “Yes!” to that invitation and to broaden the traditional understanding of what it means to be a contemplative in a diverse world.

Now is the time to hold tenderly that precious contemplative moment: “There Is a Balm in Gilead.”





# Adventures in Leadership: from Sarge to Servant

By Susan Etherton

*President of Shalem's Board of Directors*

*For a Leader*

May you have the grace and wisdom  
To act kindly, learning  
To distinguish between what is  
Personal and what is not.

May you be hospitable to criticism.

May you never put yourself at  
the center of things.

May you act not from  
arrogance but out of service.

May you work on yourself,  
Building up and refining the  
ways of your mind.

May those who work for you know  
You see and respect them.

May you learn to cultivate the art of  
presence.  
In order to engage with those who meet you.

When someone fails or disappoints you,  
May the graciousness with which you engage  
Be their stairway to renewal and refinement.

May you treasure the gifts of the mind  
Through reading and creative thinking  
So that you continue as a servant of the frontier

Where the new will draw its enrichment from the old,  
And may you never become a functionary.

May you know the wisdom of deep listening,  
The healing of wholesome words,  
The encouragement of the appreciative gaze,  
The decorum of held dignity,  
The springtime edge of the bleak question.



May you have a mind that loves frontiers  
So that you can evoke the bright fields  
That lie beyond the view of the regular eye.

May you have good friends  
To mirror your blind spots.

May leadership be for you  
A true adventure of growth.

John O'Donohue, from his book, *To Bless the Space Between Us*, Penguin Random House, 2008.  
[www.johndonohue.com](http://www.johndonohue.com)

Born on September 1, the second child but first of four girls, a Virgo, an ENFJ on the Myers-Briggs and, by adolescence, 5' 10" tall, leading was in my nature! From an early age, my siblings dubbed me "Sarge;" I ran for Student Council President in high school, and was first chair of the flute section in the orchestra. Later, after marriage and children, I was elected President of the PTA. Most recently I spent over 10 years leading our congregation through the sale and redevelopment of the church property for affordable housing. Leadership was one of my gifts and I embraced it.

At 65 years old, though, I thought I might be done with taking on new leadership roles. Wasn't it time to step back and rest? Why was I being called to enroll in the Soul of Leadership program? Was there really anything new for me to learn? Still, the idea of the course intrigued me, and I signed up two days before it began.

In the last months of leading the redevelopment project, I felt invited to shift from a long-term, primary leadership role to make space for the leadership of our new pastor. That transition was a major challenge for me. What I knew intellectually was very different from how I felt, and I felt yanked from the "center of things." My wounded pride was always ready to surface. In addition, while I knew that the pandemic was no individual's fault, I felt abruptly pushed into the narrowness of virtual communication, a change that felt like personal diminishment.

The first residency of Soul of Leadership, with break-out sessions, dyads, triads, and practice exercises, offered a safe place to explore my experience of this changing leadership role. I also began to see how being a contemplative leader supported that shift. I was able to unpack and reflect on what was happening within me, and I welcomed the insights from classmates.

After the first residency, we were assigned to Clearness Committees to meet monthly to continue to explore the leadership challenges we each were experiencing. We honored one another with deep listening and the wisdom that came forth from it. We experienced the "healing of wholesome words" as receivers and as givers. We found the synchronicity in our trials. We became good friends and relied on the love and care of each other to shed light on and mirror our blind spots. The Clearness Committee became one of the seminal features of the Soul of Leadership program for me.

From *Leading from the Emerging Future* (Scharmer and Kaufer) through *Immunity to Change* (Lahey and Kegan), I was introduced to readings that expanded my understanding of leadership. I could imagine being a "servant of the frontier," drawing enrichment from the old to shape the new. I was challenged to continue to be transformed as a person and a leader, not to assume that I was "done." And perhaps most significantly, I came to understand that leadership is best actualized through communal discernment. "Leadership," Scharmer and Kaufer observe, "is a distributed or collective capacity in a system, not just something that individuals do. Leadership is about the capacity of the whole system to sense and actualize the future that wants to emerge."

Nine months into the Soul of Leadership program, I was elected President of the Board of Directors for Shalem. It was a role I had not imagined for myself but a role for which God was preparing me. The program grounded and equipped me to lead the board of a beloved organization from a newly discovered place and newfound perspective – as a servant.

John O'Donohue's blessing, *For a Leader*, was a part of my opening and I had no idea how prophetic this invitation would be.



# My Contemplative Life Journey

By Gene Foehl  
*Shalem Board Member*

My understanding of contemplation has been primarily formed by and through my relationships with the people associated with Shalem and my journey towards a more prayerful and spiritual life. In my final Spiritual Guidance Program paper I led off with the following paragraph:

“The most helpful dimensions of the Shalem Spiritual Guidance Program for my personal spiritual formation and ministry of spiritual companionship to date are the seeking to further develop my personal relationship with God, my prayer life, recognizing and appreciating the gifts of diversity in the world, accepting positions and conduct which differ from my own, a greater willingness to live in the present moment, and being comfortable in knowing that I need not understand or know everything while at the same time experiencing a greater willingness to walk in faith in all aspects of life.”

Yes, it is a run-on sentence, but so is the thought and feeling behind it. It continues to be refreshing to observe all being welcome without judgment in Shalem, as the Spirit works in each one of us to accomplish God’s will.





# Reweaving Soul and Earth on the Edge of Loss

By Leah Rampy

*Shalem Adjunct Faculty for Pilgrimages and Programs*

I watch my husband drawing closer to the cliff edge as the opaque fury of pounding waves disrupts turquoise pools of trapped water. Jagged basalt runs from the cliffside to the icy ocean 30 feet below. Tiny daisies rim the green bank to the point it drops sharply away. Rugged land, restless sea and endless sky meet here to form a vista of beauty-upon-beauty on this wild Hebridean island. The fear I hear in the sharp warning of our guide is echoed in my own hammering heart. After leading us around his home isle of Harris/Lewis for two days, he imagines losing a tourist; what I imagine must be suppressed.

I'm afraid of heights. I've always been sharply uneasy, my stomach flipping, when my husband or our children wander to the edge of an overlook to gaze into the distance or peer into the depths below. To my chagrin and despite my warnings, they do this often.

I understand the call of edges; I feel it too. An even more dramatic view of the horizon, the revelation of beauty and terror in the depths, can only be experienced by drawing closer. The seduction of edges is offset for me by the stronger fear of plunging over the bank. So, I hang back.

But there's not always a choice: we all live on the edge these days. So much of what was once beautifully and vibrantly abundant has been greatly diminished or has disappeared in our lifetime: wide swaths of Eastern hemlocks, multitudes of lightning bugs in the summer nights, monarch butterflies feasting on milkweed along the roadside, great flocks of songbirds offering a dawn chorus, frogs, elm trees, sanderlings, bats, manatee, whales, sage grouse. The list goes on.

We are living at the edge of loss. It's unclear if we can – or if we will even try – to slow our momentum toward the abyss. Already tragic loss is assured; apocalyptic loss is likely.



And yet, edges have always been places of possibility, fecundity, and flourishing. Places where ecosystems transition from one to another are important ecologically as a source of rich biodiversity. When the transition from one ecosystem to another is abrupt, it is called an ecotone, a completely different region. From forest to grassland, from flood plain to marsh, ecotones create stress for the beings that can only live in one ecosystem and yet reside there – an incredible opportunity for diversity, adaptation or, ultimately, extinction, new possibility or great loss..

Edges where land and sea, earth and sky, forests and plains converge are often referred to in the Celtic tradition as “thin places,” places where there is only the smallest separation between earth and heaven. Past and present are a breath away. We realize that sacred and matter are one. Everything belongs, and communion with the Divine is realized. Beauty, awe, wonder, and joy live on the edges – as do heartbreaking loss and intense grief.

Poised on the edge of loss, there is no hanging back, though every instinct may prompt us to do so. The edge has come to us. Huge boulders have already fallen from the cliff; only with our eyes squeezed tightly shut or our hearts deliberately hardened can we miss the unfolding tragedies.

Yet we have a choice about how we live on the edge. We can extend a hand to steady others on the precipice. We can sing, tell stories, love each other, be grateful for what we have, and take in the soft beauty of the wildflowers around us. This we can do for all the time we have left. And because we cannot know what will ultimately come to pass, we can seek to transform to more vibrant and dedicated edge species, diverse and creative, reweaving communities of deep connection, vision, and soul, offering wisdom to future generations who may someday help to rebuild what they can for love of all life.

The Spirit is always inviting us to engage in the soul work of reweaving connections and kinship. For four and a half billion years, our planet has been evolving into abundant, beautiful, frightening, disturbing, and diverse life in a cosmos that’s been evolving for nearly 14 billion years. Whether we know it or not, whether we claim it or not, we are all one; we are nature and nature is us. If we continue to allow the threads that bind us to fray, all beings are bereft.

Together we can face the sorrow inherent in these frayed connections and begin reweaving the fabric of kinship. The contemplative path beckons us to Love greater than we can imagine. Practices of tuning our senses, opening to gratitude and reciprocity, bearing witness and lamentation – all are needed for these times. So, too, are courageous and committed spiritual hearts, willing to listen and respond to the call of Wisdom in this broken, beautiful, holy world.





# Cross-Training for Life

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By Dawn Peck

*Shalem Board Member*

The very first bird call of the morning reaches somewhere deep within my sleeping subconsciousness, pulls me up out of sleep, and invites me into awareness of our natural world. The daily patterns of life are simultaneously predictable and always new. Who is the first bird to call today, ushering in the rising sun like a rooster, but a bit more subtle? It is reassuring to know that, even without chickens, there is a morning herald outside. This in-between time, of awakening and relishing, but not yet opening the door fully to the demands of the day, is precious. These are the moments when peace can be palpable, when the world and its rhythms can almost make sense, when the awareness of the reality of Divine Presence sometimes reassuringly enters. Moving into the day from these beginnings is a gift. Feathering, as we say when bringing people out of silence during a retreat, can happen here too.

These simple and wonderful routines of rising, taking out the dog, and making the first cup of coffee are treasures. Just stepping out the door into the newness of day is spellbinding. Subtle changes in light, breeze perhaps, morning smells, and awareness of the waking of others near and far bring a sense of expectation as to what this day might bring. The awareness of possibilities enters before the list-created-previously begins to shape the day.

Most mornings, a (relatively) fast walk around the neighborhood calls to me. Venturing out, I feel such freedom – to move and to relish in the freedom of my own thoughts. At times I am very tuned in to my environment. Other times I am “lost” in thoughts, events, worries, and recent interactions with others. At times, wonderings about many things surface and seem to morph into what might be called a walking prayer. This vacillating between inner and outer awareness is just something to be noticed.

One such morning when I am deeply pondering while keeping a steady gait, an approaching car slows down a lot and clearly intentionally. Mild red flags pop into my awareness, the driver pulls up right next to me and rolls down his window. It is very early, barely light; no one else is around. A hint of wariness crosses my mind. “Sneak up on her,” he suggests, and with his head he motions to the other side of the road. His car makes no noise as it inches forward and away from me. Then I see “her.” The tiniest, most beautiful spotted fawn just a few feet away from me. How could I not have seen her?! My few moments of still, eye-contact-filled interaction with this tiny little one became a gift this day. This gift pulled me out of my weighty ponderings and into awareness of the precious early morning moments for the rest of my walk.

This is actually a form of cross-training. These opportunities to walk, whether it be on a street in town (as in the above story) or deep in wilderness, are always training for other situations and other times. They offer a chance to practice being in the present moment. We practice this awareness so that, especially during chaotic and confusing times, we can remember. We also learn, while walking, to see a bit more clearly how our actions impact others. I can sense how the way I walk (fast, slow, attentive, inattentive, quietly, loudly, on the path, off the path, eyes gazing down, eyes gazing around, eyes gazing up) makes a difference. If this makes a difference while walking in isolation, how much more of a difference might these little changes make as I am walking down a crowded city sidewalk? I am cross-training while I walk. Cross-training for life.



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As our pandemic world has shifted and morphed and continues to do so, I am appreciative of this cross-training in a way not apparent to me previously. I am more appreciative of each person I see throughout the day. Within me comes a little acknowledgement of each person – with a sense of “Oh, you too. You, like me, have come through the worst of this pandemic alive.” And, I wonder, “What grief has passed through you during the past 2 ½ years?”. Somehow, this pandemic has created a comradery, acknowledged or not, of all who live now.

None would say this pandemic is a good thing. However, I am reminded, creation is not a one-time, static event. Creation is ongoing. God continues to be present, active, and working for good. God is working for good, even now. We have learned a lot during this pandemic. May our learnings help humanity move forward in a loving and caring way, for ALL. May we each continue to practice awareness of living in the present moment, awareness of and responding to the nudging of Spirit. May we each notice the small and big ways in which God is working for good, even now. May we support each other in this endeavor. Therein lies hope for our world.



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 Linda Trageser  
 Barbara Troxell  
 Ostein Truitt  
 Debra Tucci Twigg  
 Margaret Tucker  
 Elizabeth Tuckermanty  
 Clair Ullmann  
 Mary van Balen  
 Robert Vaughn  
 Barbara Vellmerck-Halpern  
 Elaine Voci  
 Betty Voigt  
 Nancy Wagner  
 Kit Wallingford  
 Cynthia Walter  
 Sue Walters  
 Liz Ward  
 Joana Wardell  
 Gail Watkins  
 George Watson, Jr.  
 Mary Webb  
 Nancy Weir  
 Sharon Weld  
 Nicolette Wellington  
 Linda Wenger  
 Tonya Wenger  
 Rachel Wheeler  
 Dorothy Whiston  
 Monica Whitaker  
 Ruth White  
 Peter & Lindsay White  
 Cathy Whitmire  
 Suzanne Wilcox  
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 Sarah Willie-LeBreton  
 Emily Wilmer  
 Beth Wilson  
 Sandra Wilson  
 Connie Wilson  
 Juli Wilson-Black  
 Peter Wiltshire  
 Janet Wolf  
 Richard Wood  
 Christine Wood  
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 Katherine K. Wyrill  
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 Teresa Yerkes  
 Louise Young  
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 Katie Young  
 M. Irene Zahm  
 Kelsey Zimmerman  
 Katie Zimmerman



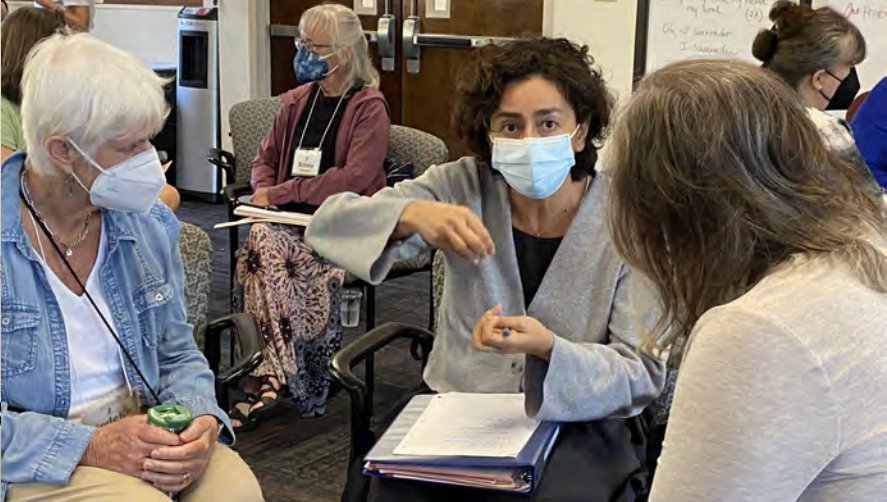


## Tribute Gifts FY 21/22

Given By:	In Honor of:
Anonymous.....	Rev. Dr. Winston Charles
David Schlafer & Margaret Tucker.....	Carole Crumley
John Holden & Mary Beaudoin.....	Patience Robbins
Ridgeway Addison.....	Glenn Hinson
Nicholas P. Amato.....	Marshall Craver
Margaret Benefiel.....	Julie Pennington-Russell
Margaret Benefiel.....	Kerri Saucier
Margaret Bramley.....	Kerri Saucier
Debra Brewin-Wilson.....	Liz Ward
Tina Brown-Eckart.....	Patricia Kirby
Judith Brown-Leigh.....	P.J. Gibson
Nancy Corson & Howard Carter.....	Our parents
Sallie & Peter Chatfield.....	Beloved Friends
Kathleen Cook.....	Liz Ward
Mary Coveney.....	Elaine Dent
Randy Crossman.....	Northwest United Baptist Church Family
Tricia De Beer.....	Rachel Hosmer
Jacq DeCarlo.....	Margaret Benefiel
John Denham.....	Jean Denton
Susan Dillon.....	Kerri Saucier
Susan Dillon.....	Paul Purta
Nancy Elder-Wilfrid.....	Tilden Edwards
The Executive Committee.....	Gene and Suzanne Foehl
Mary Jane Fay.....	Ben B. Fay
Anne A. Findlay-Chamberlain.....	Jane McEwen
Renshaw Fortier.....	Rodney Dean
Patricia Franklin.....	Margaret Benefiel
Patricia Franklin.....	Joanna Macy
Elaine Gaetani.....	Ethne J. Gray
Karen Getman.....	Margaret Benefiel
David Gray.....	Bill Dietrich
Christina & William Grossman.....	Jean Sweeney
Fereshteh Hale.....	Simple Presence daily practice
Fereshteh Hale.....	Shalem Society
Carol Ingells.....	Tilden Edwards
Linda Kapurch.....	The Rev. Canon Scott Slater
Jennifer Levine.....	For the continued work of introducing people to the peace, love and comfort of God's presence.

Given By:	In Honor of:
Catherine Loveland.....	Nan Weir
Bruce Lugn.....	David Canada
Tracey Manning.....	Jean Link
Peg Marose.....	Anita Davidson
Monica Maxon.....	Eleanor Abarno
Karen McDonald.....	Liz Ward
Suzanne McGuire.....	Susan Moore
Bill & Sally Meadows.....	Carole Crumley
Susan Moore.....	Margaret Benefiel
Susan Murphy.....	William Moremen
Seth Newman.....	Kerri Saucier
Kathleen O'Neill.....	Susan Etherton
Carlos Pena.....	Monica Maxon
Paul & Judith Purta.....	Susie Dillon
David Rensberger.....	St. Francis of Assisi
Katherine Riggins.....	Clare Openshaw
Laurie Rios.....	Elaine Dent's Small Group Spiritual Direction
Cheryl Robbins.....	Susan Etherton
Rebecca Rothenhoefer.....	Jan McNamee
Kerri Saucier.....	Aryn Davis
June M. Schulte.....	Monica Maxon
Nan Schwappach.....	William Dietrich
Rev. Susan Scott.....	Emily Schwenker
Sandra & Alex Smith.....	Audrey Smith
Helen Spigner.....	David Partington
Wendy Steeves.....	Class of 2017 Spiritual Guidance
Eugene Steuerle.....	Bill Dietrich
Therese A. Taylor-Stinson.....	Susan Etherton
Frances & Peter Thayer.....	Suzanne and Gene Foehl
Barbara Troxell.....	William Moremen
Debra Tucci Twigg.....	DTT
Cynthia Walter.....	Sr. Mary Clark
Liz Ward.....	SGP Staff
Joana Wardell.....	Giotto
Jane Williams.....	Linda Stone Mercer
Beth Wilson.....	Marshall Craver and Liz Ward
Juli Wilson-Black.....	Susan Etherton
Elizabeth Wright.....	Debbie Scott, who leads my Spiritual Direction Group, and is my very dear friend.





## Given By:

## In Memory of:

N. Franklin Adkinson, Jr.....	Rose Mary Dougherty
Shari Ayers.....	Gerald May
Brenda Bertrand.....	Rosalind Bertrand
Linda Bryant.....	Rose Mary Dougherty
Susan Burke.....	Rose Mary Dougherty
Mary Jo Colucci.....	Ernest and Josephine Colucci
Linda Colucci.....	Deborah Michel
Jo Ann English.....	Blake L English
Richard Evans.....	Griffin Huber
Joan Fronc.....	Rose Mary Dougherty
Patricia Geadelmann.....	Ella Campbell and Rose Mary Dougherty
Jehanne Gheith.....	Charlie Felix
Richard Gilbert.....	Rev. Luke Dougherty, OSB
Carol Ingells.....	Jerry May and Rose Mary Dougherty
Marjorie Ann Lueck.....	Rose Mary Dougherty
Herb Martin.....	Gerald May
Barbara Meinert.....	Robert L. Dolan, S.J.
Susan Murphy.....	Gerald May
Darlene Muschett.....	Eloise S. And Harry H. Bowden
Suzanne W. Robinson.....	Ronald Parks Conner
Janet Salbert.....	Betty Dunlop
June M. Schulte.....	Jerry May
Susan Scott.....	Rev. Dr. William T. Scott, Jr.
Lyta Seddig.....	Rose Mary Dougherty
Eugene Steuerle.....	Joan Hickey
George Watson, Jr.....	Nancy Watson
Sarah Willie-LeBreton.....	Charles V. Willie
Janet Wolf.....	Jan Ellen Nunnally

## Shalem's Long-Time Donors

Shalem's ministry has been sustained by many individual donors, especially those who have given faithfully for 10 years or more. Some of our FY2022 Annual Fund Donors have supported Shalem over many years, not just FY2022. We'd like to highlight their faithfulness by including them below with deep gratitude.

### 30 Years and More:

Eleanor & Bob Abarno	Norman Fedderly
N. Franklin Adkinson, Jr.	Phoebe Gilchrist
Tom Adams	Dana Greene
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Susan Bell	David Jamieson
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William Bone	Mimi Jones
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Michael Bucci	Linda Kapurch
Margaret Bullitt-Jonas &	Daniel Klement
Robert Jonas	Verleah Kosloske
Angelique Butler	Lucy Lowenthal
Kathryn Campbell	Eva Martin
Donald Campbell	Monica Maxon
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Merrill & Tim Carrington	W. Taylor Moore
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Carole Crumley	Clare Openshaw
Mary Crummer	Barbara & David Osborne
Kendrea DeLauter	Jean Preslan
Mara Delli Priscoli	Paul & Judith Purta
John Denham	Patience Robbins
Marilyn Derian	Adela Rose
Susan Dillon	Philippa Shepherd
Robert Duggan	Selinda Sheridan
Roderick Dugliss	Joan Stogis
Tilden & Mary Edwards	Jean Sweeney
Judith Favor	Barbara Troxell

Margaret Tucker  
Elizabeth Ward  
Sandra Wilson  
Christine Wood

### 25-29 Years:

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Mary Jo Colucci  
John Danner  
Ann Dean  
Rosemary Dickerson  
Catherine Gibson  
Carol Ingells  
Maureen Jenkins  
Jo Ann Klink  
Carol Leach  
Lois Lindbloom  
Herbert Martin  
Leslie Miller  
Paul Millin  
Catherine Powell  
Mary Ann Rehnke  
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Lyta Seddig  
Carroll Anne Sheppard  
Carol Spangler  
Carol & Mid Squier  
Nancy Strickland



**20-24 Years:**

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 Ann Barry  
 Robert & Tamala Bos  
 Mary Catherine Bunting  
 Gaynell Cronin  
 Sue Czarnetzky  
 Carol Eckerman  
 Karen L. Foley  
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 Sue Gibbons  
 Velma Goodreau  
 Mark Goodwin  
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**15-19 Years:**

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 Margaret Bartel  
 Lillian Burke  
 Susan Burke  
 Jamie Burnett  
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 Lerita Coleman Brown  
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 Karen Day  
 Elaine Dent  
 Raymond E. & Naomi C. Dungan Foundation  
 Susan Eenigenburg  
 Jo Ann English  
 Patricia Geadelman  
 Anne Grizzle  
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 Joan Hatcher  
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 John Holden & Mary Beaudoin  
 Albert Keeney  
 Suzi Kindervatter  
 Elizabeth Kingsman  
 Maureen Kramlinger  
 Marjorie Ann Lueck  
 Bruce Lugn  
 Shirin McArthur  
 Stewart Mehlman  
 Lydia Mercado  
 Darlene Meyers  
 Patricia Mousaw  
 Betty Payne  
 Leah & David Rampy  
 Lisa Richey  
 Jayne Shontell  
 Jo Ann Staebler  
 Eugene Steuerle  
 Phil & Ann Stone

Linda Toia  
 Elizabeth Tuckermanty  
 Nancy Wagner

**10-14 Years:**

Michael Ahern  
 Sanford Alwine  
 Nicholas P. Amato  
 Betsy Anderson  
 Sidat Balgobin  
 Bernard Benson  
 Robert F Brady  
 Joseph Burkart  
 Holly Cameron  
 Sheila Carson  
 Winston Charles  
 Kiok Cho  
 Suzanne & John Clark  
 Joan Conway  
 Anita Davidson  
 Tricia De Beer  
 Kimberly Douglass  
 Jacqueline Dunlavey  
 Ruth Elder  
 Anne Elsbree  
 Susan & Jon Etherton  
 Carol Fitch  
 Robert Gardenhire  
 Evelyn Grander  
 Grace Grant & Dennis Tierney  
 Jackie Halstead  
 Margaret Harris  
 Laurie Hartzell  
 Barton Hellmuth  
 Deborah Howell  
 Deborah Hunley  
 Jack Hutchings  
 Cathy Jay  
 Julia Ketcham

Edward Knight  
 Linda Pierce Knutson  
 Chris Lee-Thompson  
 Teddi Leiden  
 Philip Magaletta  
 J. Frank McNair  
 Sally Meadows  
 Darlene Muschett  
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 Shirley Pearse  
 Dawn Peck  
 Alice Petersen  
 Joy Rains  
 Jane Ritchie  
 Joanna Schuman  
 Jane Sharp  
 Marcus Smucker  
 Brad Snyder  
 James Starr  
 Elizabeth Swenson  
 Linda Trageser  
 Joe Trester  
 Clair Ullmann  
 Barbara Vellmerk-Halpern  
 Nancy Watson  
 Nicolette Wellington



## Shalem Sustainers

Those individuals who support Shalem's ministry through a monthly donation.

Eleanor & Robert Abarno  
David Andrews & Emily Gibson  
William Bone  
O. Robert Brown  
Dennis Cho  
Nicole Anderson Cobb  
Greg & Carole Jackson  
Cochran  
Catherine Cox  
Anne Crosthwait  
Anita Davidson  
Rodney Dean  
Anne-Marie Drew  
Jackson Droney  
Susan & Jon Etherton  
Caroline Goodkind  
Jehanne Gheith  
Fereshteh Hale  
Joan Hatcher  
Carol Ingells  
Michael & Barbara Jupin  
Albert Keeney

Keith Kristich  
Carol Leach  
Leslie Miller  
Dawn Peck  
Barbara Pendergrast  
Richard Plant  
Mary Pulick  
Patience Robbins  
Adela Rose  
Janet Salbert  
June M. Schulte  
Emily Schwenker  
Susan Scott  
Robert S. Seiler, Jr.  
Jane Sharp  
Jessica Smith  
Jo Ann Staebler  
Dinah Stinson  
Alanna Sullivan  
Elizabeth Tuckermanty  
Kit Wallingford  
Nancy Weir  
Katie Zimmerman

## Leadership Circle

Individuals giving gifts of \$5,000 and above

N. Franklin Adkinson, Jr.  
Anonymous  
CeCe & Gerry Balboni  
Margaret Benefiel  
William Bone  
Sallie & Peter Chatfield  
Susan Dillon  
Roderick Dugliss  
Raymond E. and Naomi C. Dungan Foundation

Tilden & Mary Edwards  
Susan & Jon Etherton  
Gene & Suzanne Foehl  
Mark & Brigid Goodwin  
Lois Lindbloom  
Laura Neal  
Pat Petrash  
Scott Rohr  
Elizabeth & Dale Tuckermanty

## Scholarship Gifts

Margaret Benefiel  
Sallie & Peter Chatfield  
Sue Czarnetzky

Jackson Droney  
Carol Ludwig  
Anonymous

## The Shalem Fund

Alix & Donald Park Estate  
Ann Barry Estate  
Betty Dunlop Estate

## Gerald May Memorial Fund

Raymond and Naomi  
Dungan Foundation

## Grants

Center for Action and Contemplation, Inc.  
Imago Dei Fund





# Volunteers and 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:

- Shalem's Board of Directors, who donated their time and talent in many different ways throughout the year.
- Shalem's non-board committee members: Susie Dillon, Amy Dills-Moore, Mark Goodwin, and Heather Strang, who served Shalem through their committee work.
- Susie Dillon for her dedication and hard work with Development.
- Susan Etherton, Dawn Peck, Julie Russell, Anita Davidson, Leslie Roraback, Jon Etherton, Robbin Brent, Valeria Schmidt and Margaret Benefiel whose photographs grace these pages, our website, our monthly eNews, our Facebook page and other places.
- Patience Robbins for her creation and leadership of the weekly Prayers for the World and for others who have helped out with leadership this year: Mary Becker, Nancy Corson Carter, Dana Greene, Dirkje Legerstee and Christina Williams.
- Those who helped with the Gerald May Seminar: The Rev. Karen Brau, Justin Fitch, Karin Seland, Erica Van Lunen, Brenda Bertrand, Erica Aungst, Sharon Glass and Taylor Button.
- Liz Morris for coordinating the prayer leaders for Prayers for Hope & Healing and the following leaders: Liz Morris, Eleanor Abarno, Rod Dugliss, Rich Plant, David Stevens, Kevin Omi, Anita Davidson, Esther Simonson, Dave Emery, Robbie Pinter, Trish Stefanik, Sandras Barnes, Celpha Sands, Jeannie Sweeney, Bob Abarno, Patience Robbins, Carole Crumley, Bill Dietrich, Pat Mousaw, Scotty Landis, Suzanne Ryder, Katy Gaughan.
- Those who provided leadership, hosted, and/or facilitated the daily Simple Presence and Qigong gatherings: Leadership: Anita Davidson, Fereshteh Hale, Rich Plant, Nan Weir. Zoom Hosts: Anita Davidson, David Jadlocki, Francis Miller, Rich Plant, Nan Weir. Qigong Leadership: Rich Plant. Simple Presence Facilitators: Katie Archibald-Woodward, Wendy Brown, Linda Bryant, Winston Charles, Anita Davidson, Tricia DeBeer, Diane DeSieno, Amy Duncan, Steve Duncan, Gene Foehl, Suzanne Foehl, Ellen Fox, Christina Graber Neufeld, Sonya Green, Fereshteh Hale, David Jadlocki, Marilyn Larkin, Geja Laan, Shirley Larson, Francis Miller, Diane Mitchell, Lauren Morton, Mary Pat Mulligan, Sally Nettles, Dawn Peck, Rich Plant, David Robinson, Scott Rohr, Robin Seiler, Keaton Shenk, John Titus, Ostein Truitt and Nan Weir.
- Those who planned the Midwest Region's Advent Silent Retreat: Anita Davidson, Liz Kuhn, Rich Plant, Anne Reed, and Nan Weir.
- Cindi Bryant who helped SGP with peer group placements for the new class.
- Young Adult Life & Leadership Initiative (YALLI) co-directors and mentors: Dawn Peck, Anne Grizzle, Al Keeney, and Carole Crumley.
- Crossing the Threshold (formerly YALLI) mentors: Kit Anderson, Al Keeney, and Carole Crumley.
- Ken Haase, Justin Fitch and Karein Seland who provided Tech and AV support.
- Those who helped to lead the Shalem Contemplatives of Color/BIPOC virtual gathering held in the Fall: Susan Gaeta, Bo Karen Lee, Leonard McMahon, Maritza Mercado Pechin, Marion Osieyo, Ostein Truitt, with a special thanks to Natalie Cone who worked tirelessly to create and analyze the follow up survey.
- Those who keep in contact with, and hold in prayer, recent program participants: Spiritual Guidance Program: Laura Neal, June Schulte, Cindi Bryant, Jan Lugibihl, Velma Rice, Rich Plant, Sharon Glass, Eleanor Abarno, Camille Cappiello, Heather Strang, Rhoda Nary, Jeanie Sweeney, and Susan Etherton. Leading Contemplative Prayer Groups & Retreats Program: Robin Seiler, Judy Walsh-Mellet, Eric Hoheisel, Jane Williams, Julia Morris-Myers, Karin Trail-Johnson, Phil Stone, Sallie Chatfield, Scott Wagoner, and Sue Mercer.
- Those who have shared their original reflections with us through a blog or eNews article: Ann Dean, Leah Rampy, Jackson Droney, Diane DeSieno, Mary van Balen, Craig Hammond, Aryn Davis, Sarah Forti, Margaret Benefiel, Phillip Stephens, Lorie Conway, Joanna Macy, Kimberly McOmber, Christina Williams, Anita Davidson, Glen Vinson, Thomas Adams, Dana Greene, Patience Robbins, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, Emily Kellar, Ani Vidrine, Kathleen Richard.

# Fruit that Will Last: Planned Giving with Shalem

By Carole Crumley

*Shalem Adjunct Faculty for Pilgrimages and Programs*



**Shekinah:** the English translation of a Hebrew word meaning the dwelling of the divine presence of God.

In the spring of 1973, Shalem humbly began with a handful of seekers who came together for a retreat under the leadership of Tilden Edwards. Out of that retreat, a weekly contemplative prayer group began. The holy hunger felt by this group deepened and led them to create Shalem, named for the Hebrew word for wholeness. Who could have imagined that Shalem would be around 50 years later? Yet here we are.

One of the blessings of my life has been a long-time association with Shalem, first as a young adult seeker wanting personal spiritual deepening, then as a priest needing the support of a praying community, also as a board member and part-time staffer and finally as senior program director. What I loved most is the seamless thread of contemplative prayer woven through all aspects of the Institute ---- the board and committee meetings, staff and participant conversations, every written document and all prayer gatherings, activities, discernments and programs. Such intentionality in an organization is beautiful.

Today, I look back with love and wonder at all that God has done through Shalem. It is so much more than we could have asked or imagined 50 years ago. We might say Shalem is a home where God's shekinah has been made real. The reality of God's loving, shining presence has flowed through our lives and leadership, our hearts and minds, and out into the world in countless ways. We have experienced a multitude of blessings in the contemplative programs offered, in books written, love given, guidance shared, pilgrimages led, and in the beautiful work done by Shalem graduates.





Years ago, my late husband Clark Lobenstine and I decided to include a gift to Shalem in our wills. For us, Shalem had been a trusted vessel carrying our hopes for ourselves and our world. We simply wanted to honor what mattered most in our lives and dedicate some of our material resources to the well-being of future generations. It was perhaps the easiest decision we ever made, a simple next step. We didn't know what the future would hold. We only knew that God's ever-creating spirit would be present and that the world would always need a graced

homeland of compassion, wisdom, beauty and love. We prayed that our gift, along with many others, would help to make it so.



## Making a Bequest to Shalem

When you make 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 estate plans, as Carole Crumley has done. In celebration of Shalem's 50-year anniversary in 2023, we have a goal of expanding our Shekinah Society membership to 50+ members. These gifts greatly assist Shalem's ministry in the world and are a special way for a donor's care to extend into the future. Please let us know if you have included a gift to Shalem in your estate plans. We'd like thank you and welcome you as a Shekinah Society member!

## SHALEM'S SHEKINAH SOCIETY

The Shekinah Society is for those individuals who have put Shalem in their estate plans. We give for this special support and care for Shalem's future.

Anonymous  
N. Franklin Adkinson, Jr.  
Margaret Bullitt-Jonas  
Jean Crawford  
Carole Crumley  
John Denham  
Rosemary Dickerson  
Susan Dillon  
Tilden Edwards  
Susan & Jon Etherton  
Alan Evans  
Judith Favor  
Anne Findlay-Chamberlain & D. Rodney Chamberlain  
Suzanne Foehl  
Doris Froelich  
Linda M. Kapurch  
Joann Klink  
Kirby Lewis  
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Monica Maxon

Carl McColman  
Mark & Brigid Goodwin  
Louise E. Miller  
Kathleen Moloney-Tarr  
K. Sheila Noyes  
Linda Allport Neumaier  
Mary-Louise O'Day  
Clare Openshaw  
Laurence Pagnoni  
Paul Purta  
Leah Rampy  
Lisa Richey  
Lyta Seddig  
Betty Stoddard  
Joan Stogis  
Jan Thurston  
Linda Toia  
Nan Weir  
Emily Wilmer  
Sandra Hay Wilson

# Statements of Financial Position and Activities

The Condensed Financial Statements shown below were derived from the reviewed financial statements of the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, Inc, for the years ended June 30, 2021 and June 30, 2022. 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 functional expenses, cash flows, footnote disclosures and the report of our independent accountants, Dunham, Aukamp & Rhodes, PLC, are available for review upon request.

## Condensed Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2022 and 2021

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
CURRENT ASSETS	\$1,356,741	\$1,326,099
INVESTMENTS	1,806,856	1,842,406
FIXED ASSETS	4,056	6,055
CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE (L/T)	19,013	45,675
OTHER ASSETS	<u>13,795</u>	<u>13,795</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$3,200,461</u></b>	<b><u>\$3,234,030</u></b>

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$154,682	\$127,722
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	1,970,218	2,017,491
Temporarily restricted	1,075,561	1,088,817
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>3,045,779</u>	<u>3,106,308</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$3,200,461</u></b>	<b><u>\$3,234,030</u></b>

## Condensed Statement of Activities for Years Ended June 30, 2022 and 2021

<u>REVENUE &amp; SUPPORT</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Programs, contractual work and publications	\$731,464	\$506,457
Contributions	526,356	853,111
Other income	6,072	1,025
Investment income/ (losses)	<u>(261,510)</u>	<u>301,523</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b><u>\$1,002,382</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,662,116</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Programs, including allocated staff compensation	\$706,972	\$526,294
Administration: Staff compensation & benefits	119,559	104,245
Rent and other	99,002	77,400
Fundraising expenses	<u>201,272</u>	<u>111,352</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>\$1,126,805</u></b>	<b><u>\$819,291</u></b>



## Shalem Board of Directors 21-22

Fay C. Acker  
Kiok Cho  
Rhett Engelking  
Susan Etherton  
Gene Foehl  
Westina Matthews  
Laura Neal  
Dawn Peck

Patience Robbins  
Scott Rohr  
Lisa Senuta  
Audrey Cox Smith  
Jessie Smith  
Alanna Sullivan  
Nan Weir  
Sarah Willie-LeBreton  
Katie Zimmerman

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Brenda Bertrand  
Anita-Yvonne (AY) Bryant  
Margie Buchanan-Smith  
Winston B. Charles  
Greg Cochran  
Lerita Coleman Brown  
Lorie Conway  
Joy Celeste Crawford  
Carole Crumley  
Anita Davidson  
Aryn Davis  
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Marlin Good  
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Audrey Cox Smith  
Trish Stefanik  
Phillip Stephens  
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Frances Thayer  
Andrea “Ani” Vidrine  
Liz Ward  
Nan Weir  
Matthew Wright

## Office Information

Shalem Institute  
1226 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20005  
301-897-7334  
Fax: 202-595-0336

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

## Shalem Staff 21-22

**Executive Director**  
Margaret Benefiel

**Program Directors**  
Margaret Benefiel  
Anita-Yvonne (AY) Bryant  
Winston B. Charles  
Lorie Conway  
Aryn Davis  
Sarah Forti  
Emily Johnson Kellar  
Julie Pennington-Russell  
Trish Stefanik  
Phillip Stephens

**Program Administrators**  
Katy Gaughan  
Trish Stefanik

**Director of Operations & Online Learning**  
Jackson Droney

**Director of Development**  
Kerri Saucier

**Director of Technology**  
Ruth Taylor

**Outside Accountant** Laura Caperton

**Bookkeeper**  
Stacy Rancourt

**Registrars**  
Michelle Geuder  
Christine Jeffrey

**Office and Development Coordinator**  
ArDonna D. Hamilton

**Founder & Senior Fellow**  
Tilden H. Edwards, Jr.

## **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 and pilgrimages provide contemplative grounding and the support of a praying community for all aspects of life, whether it be your career, ministry, or personal spiritual practice.

### **Heart Longings: An Invitation to the Contemplative Path**

Eight-month program that invites you to ground in a place of calm and love with the support of community through retreats, monthly gatherings, small group time and spiritual direction.

### **Nurturing the Call: Spiritual Guidance**

Nurturing the Call offers in-depth support for the ministry of one-on-one spiritual direction.

### **Transforming Community: Leading Contemplative Prayer Groups & Retreats**

Transforming Community is designed to equip, encourage and support those called to lead spiritual groups and retreats.

### **Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life & Leadership**

Going Deeper offers support for the spiritual heart of clergy of all denominations and addresses the stressful challenges of a life devoted to pastoral ministry.

### **The Soul of Leadership**

Eighteen-month program for contemplative leadership that helps leaders integrate spiritual heart practices with leadership realities in order to more truly embody their vocational path.

### **Crossing the Threshold: Contemplative Foundations for Emerging Leaders**

Crossing the Threshold is for those who are between the ages of 25-40 and seek a deeper spiritual foundation for their lives.

## **Pilgrimages**

In the Footsteps of St. Francis & St. Clare:  
A Pilgrimage to Assisi  
April 18 – 28, 2023, Italy

Walking the Ramparts: A Pilgrimage with Teresa of Avila  
and John of the Cross  
July 5 – 15, 2023, Spain

On the Camino: Remember, Release and Reimagine  
July 17 – 26, 2023, Spain



**SHALEM**  
INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

shalem.org • info@shalem.org • 301-897-7334