

September/October 2024

Prairiewoods

A FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

transcending

DUALISM

DOCTRINE

*Healing What
Divides Us*

Second in our series exploring the characteristics of ecological spirituality is an examination of dualism versus non-dualism. First, what does *dualism* mean?

Dualism (noun)

1. a theory that considers reality to consist of two irreducible (cannot be reduced or simplified) elements or modes
2. a doctrine that the universe is under the dominion of two opposing principles, one of which is good and the other evil
3. a view of human beings as constituted of two irreducible (cannot be reduced or simplified) elements (such as matter and spirit)

—Merriam-Webster Dictionary online

According to Richard Rohr, dualistic thinking creates a system of false choices and too-simple contraries. Picture being in the chair at the eye doctor's office and answering, "Which lens is clearer, 1 or 2?" That is dualism in its simplest form. We have been trained to choose "this *or* that." Our world is locked onto dualism as a way of organizing ourselves and how we understand the "rules" of living. We humans seek safety in boundaries and certainties and often choose sides. Every generation has learned the painful lesson that little is certain in life and the "answers" are more complex than we had hoped. Ironically, leaning into non-dualism and a more expansive view is the antidote to division. The limitations of dualistic thinking "cannot process things like infinity, mystery, God, grace, suffering, sexuality, death or love" (Richard Rohr, Center for Action and Contemplation, Jan. 28, 2017). What if we employed a "wider lens" to the world?

What happens when we apply a dualistic mindset to ourselves? When we think of ourselves as separate containers of mind, body and spirit? We experience dissonance (inconsistencies between our beliefs and actions) and suffering. The truth is that we are an integrated and inseparable whole. We are a compilation of multiple dimensions that weave together uniquely in each person.

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"To turn the tide toward flourishing, we need new ways to address spiritual longings. We need spiritual innovation."

—Sacred Design Lab

The outcome of ecological spirituality is measured by mutual flourishing and an ongoing evolutionary becoming. This premise applies to humans and all of creation. We who believe in ecological spirituality believe in the ongoing creativity that enlivens all of us.

Prairiewoods has been engaged in fostering evolutionary becoming and mutual flourishing since before the doors even opened in 1996. It began with the sisters walking the land to sense what was emerging. They tuned in to the cry of the land and the needs of the community and responded by building a place to heal, renew and awaken. Inspired by their Franciscan roots, they created a space that would nourish the essential connections between self, others, Earth and our Creator.


What does this evolutionary becoming look like? It is by its very nature expansive and forward looking. Its energy derives from curiosity, anticipation and faith in potential. For Prairiewoods the place and Prairiewoods the people—it looks like discerning and investing our gifts. We are exploring, listening, weaving and welcoming. We are conscious of our past, present and future all at once.

"The universal human is one who is connected through the heart to the whole of life, attuned to the deeper intelligence of nature and called forth irresistibly by spirit to creatively express [their] gifts in the evolution of self and the world."

—Barbara Marx Hubbard

Evolutionary becoming is not passive. It is a co-creative process full of possibility. I feel that energy here at Prairiewoods. This fall we will engage in an evolutionary planning retreat. We will gather all that we have learned and all that we believe the universe is asking of us. Then we will begin to outline the road map for our continued "becoming." Our greatest desire is to rise to the call and invest our gifts exuberantly in the service of mutual flourishing.

Peace and all good,


Leslie A. Wright



Prairiewoods is an ecospirituality retreat and conference center in the Franciscan tradition. It is a nonprofit ministry sponsored by Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Mission: Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center is a sacred space where people of all faiths and cultures are invited to explore and nurture their relationships with the Source of All Being, Earth, Self and Others with an increasing awareness of the story of the Universe.

The Prairiewoods staff collaborates to publish this newsletter bimonthly. Content, except where otherwise noted, is created by our staff in consultation and with care to offer a uniquely Prairiewoods perspective.

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What happens when we separate people into groups? We create one-dimensional profiles of people when the truth of them is more beautiful, varied and complex. The iceberg of identity is often used in diversity training to help people move beyond the surface appearances of difference.

Looking at the iceberg, how many dimensions of your identity can you name? What might you learn if you explored these dimensions with others? Prairiewoods' founders, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, call us to be people committed to building bridges of relationship and celebrating unity in diversity. There is in all of us a yearning for belonging and connection. When we act on this and find opportunities to explore our points of intersection, it improves our sense of wellbeing. It reduces our sense of isolation.

"In a quantum universe, where everything is entangled, connectedness, not the clarity of separation, really matters."

—Diarmuid O'Murchu, *Ecological Spirituality*, p. 4

How can we move away from segmentation and our tendency toward a scientific deconstruction of our world? We cannot exist without Earth and the other members of the ecosystem(s) of which we are a part. What if we change the word *entangled*, which sounds messy and uncomfortable, to *enfolded*. That word brings to mind a sense of embrace within the arms of all creation. That is the actual quality of our existence. Embraced and woven into the very fabric of life.

Ecological spirituality maintains that there can be no separation from the Creator. There is no sacred versus secular. The Creator spirit is part of the energy, the breath and the matter that forms us. So if our notions of separateness are in fact false, how can we "widen our lens"?

As individuals, we can deepen our practice of contemplation and mindful attention. Douglas E. Christie suggests that "the simple act of gazing, of paying attention—one of the most ancient and enduring ways of understanding contemplative practice—can open up a space in the soul, a space in which the world may live and move in us."

Turning Toward vs. Turning on

There are numerous examples of people coming together to build bridges of relationship and celebrate human complexity. A Danish TV station created a video

IDENTITY ICEBERG

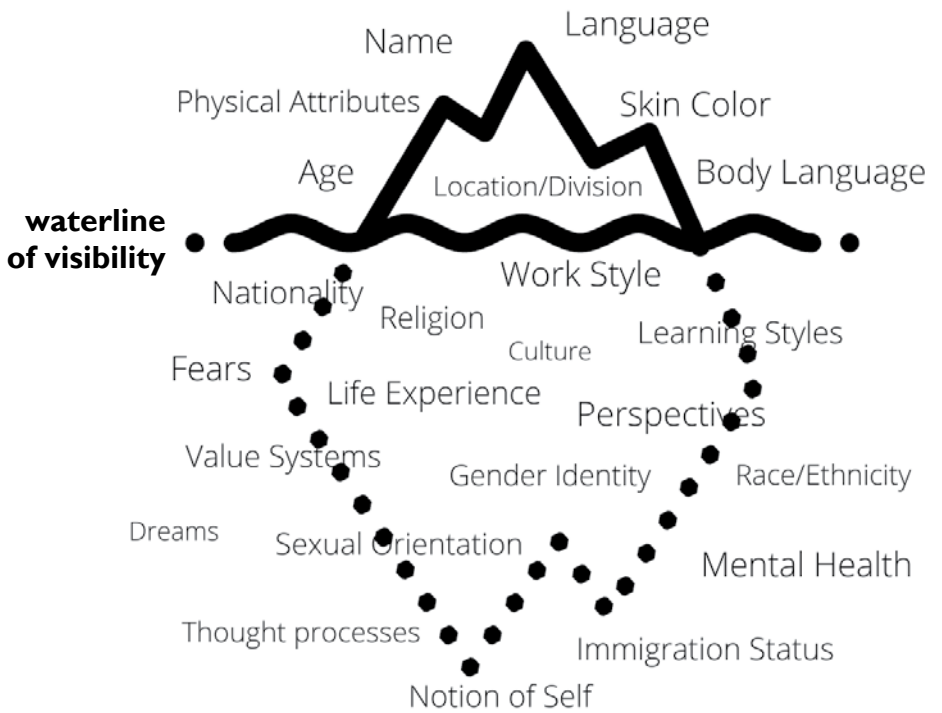


diagram by ThinkHuman

called "All We Share" several years ago to explore these unseen connections. The filmmakers brought together groups of people thought to be distinctly different from each other and asked simple questions, such as "Who among you is a stepparent?" "Who believes in life after death?" "Who is in love?" The results are surprising and inspiring. (Watch it at www.youtube.com/watch?v=jD8tjhVOITc&list=WL&index=1.)

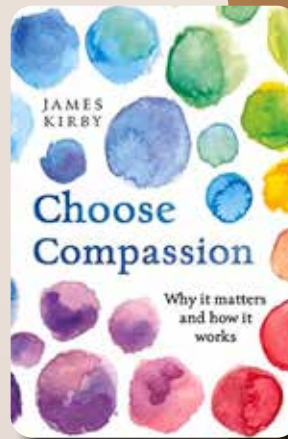
Building bridges of relationship doesn't have to be contentious. Nor does it require a film crew. We don't have to start with the hard questions. The National Public Housing Museum created a toolkit called 36 Questions for Civic Love (www.nphm.org/civiclove). Participants take turns asking each other a series of questions. The design encourages sharing and, perhaps more importantly, listening with curiosity. Questions include "What's your favorite kitchen smell?" and "Can you keep a plant alive?"

This is another rich example of people working on ways for us to connect and belong to each other versus creating separation and isolation. In every case, the transformation and healing are the result of *compassionate* and curious questions that arise from within every individual. A loving, compassionate gaze. This gift is first given to us by our Creator, which we in turn are called to share with each other. What will be possible when we seek to know versus categorize, convert or condemn? This shift will help us to make great strides toward a resilient, creative and hopeful unity.

Compassion: Healing Our Divides

Practicing compassion helps us heal our divisions and cross boundaries of difference. At Prairiewoods we strive to offer accessible resources for people to use in their journey of self discovery and spiritual renewal. The topic of compassion becomes more and more important as we think about our relationships and how we engage with those around us.

Recently, Rev. Jean Sullivan, Prairiewoods' Outreach, Engagement & Hospitality Coordinator, was invited to participate in the Mind & Life Summer Research Institute held in Garrison, New York. It was a week-long coming together of academics studying the personal and social impact of contemplative practices and those engaging in and educating people about those practices. The theme was Awakening Compassion During Times of Division.



Compassion is a sensitivity to suffering in yourself and others, with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it.

James N. Kirby, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and the codirector of the Compassionate Mind Research Group at the University of Queensland. His book *Choose Compassion: Why It Matters and How It Works* introduces us to the topic of compassion. Compassion, while built into all of us, is like a muscle. Healthy compassion requires intention and practice. Compassion features two basic processes: turning attention toward suffering and feeling motivated to do something about it.

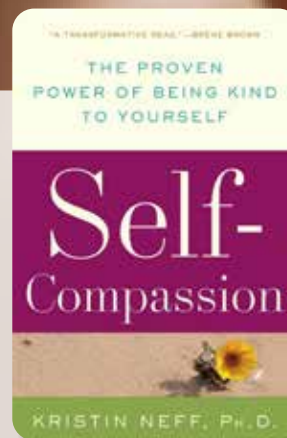
Research reveals three common ways we experience compassion: through self compassion, compassion for others and the act of receiving compassion from others. Together these experiences reinforce one another: when we open ourselves to be compassionate to others, we are reminded that we too need and deserve compassion. When that compassion is offered to us we are more willing to accept it gracefully and with gratitude.

Self Compassion

The capacity to express compassion for others does not guarantee compassion for self. And vice versa. Both need to be cultivated with intention. But without self compassion, we may not possess the resilience to offer compassion to others. According to Kristen Neff, associate professor of educational psychology at the University of Texas in Austin:

“One way to describe what it feels like to embody tender self-compassion is loving, connected presence, corresponding to kindness, common humanity and mindfulness. When we embrace our pain with kindness, we feel loving. When we remember our common humanity, we feel connected. When we’re mindful of our pain, we’re present. With loving, connected presence, our pain becomes bearable and begins to transform.”

A practice she recommends is to write a love letter to yourself. Note all the things you love about yourself. It will feel a little disorienting at first, yet after the first few sentences you will find that the tender compassion you offer to others is also available within.



“Our world needs a compassion revolution, and we need it now.”
—Dalai Lama

Compassion for Others

Compassion for others means we have developed our ability to be sensitive to signals of suffering, and we are motivated both to act and to ensure we do not cause suffering ourselves. If you would like to expand your sense of compassion for others, you may want to try *The*

Compassion Shift. It is an initiative of Emory University’s Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics to promote human flourishing and advance a global culture of compassion through a research-based approach to the cultivation of compassion.

You can engage with the program online. It includes explanations of how we can expand our understanding of compassion *and* how we can use daily mindfulness practices to become more compassionate. Explore what it’s about at compassionshift.emory.edu. It will be worth your time!

Compassion restores connections and helps us to act. Healthy compassion is built on a foundation of mindfulness. From mindful awareness grows the ability to shift perspectives and encounter more expansive possibilities.

Join us for a mindfulness experience to nurture your compassion:

- Silent Mindfulness Meditation Retreat, Friday, Nov. 1–Sunday, Nov. 3 (p. 7)
- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Series, Tuesdays, Sept. 10–Oct. 29 (p. 8)
- Mindfulness at Prairiewoods (MAP), Mondays (p. 8)



Receiving Compassion

Research on the three ways we experience compassion demonstrates that receiving compassion is the most difficult for many of us. Receiving compassion and accepting help from others are reminders that we are not meant to live this life in isolation and demonstrates our vulnerability and humanness. Allowing yourself to receive compassion from another person says to the world: *I know I can’t do this alone. I appreciate your kindness.*

Here at Prairiewoods, we offer spiritual direction, the practice of meeting with a trained listener who actively and compassionately listens to the questions and concerns on your heart. Within that relationship, you have the opportunity to live your way into the answers and come away stronger. (Please see p. 11.)

For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Pathways of Peace: Food as Relationship—Autumn Table Retreat (in person)

Friday, Sept. 6, 6:30 p.m.—Saturday, Sept. 7, 4 p.m.

Facilitators: Christina Campbell & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Harvest is just beginning!

Nurturing body and spirit, autumn harvest foods play a significant role in fostering peace at personal, community and global levels. Drawing on wisdom of mystics, saints and poets, let's honor the abundance of nature and how these foods provide an opportunity to transform our relationship with food at the individual, community and global levels. Come celebrate and reflect on new ways of connecting with how our food is grown and why this matters for personal and planetary health.

Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Friday lodging, and Saturday breakfast and lunch

Commuter Fee: \$95 includes presentations and Saturday lunch



The Book of Nature: The Astonishing Beauty of God's First Sacred Text Retreat (hybrid)

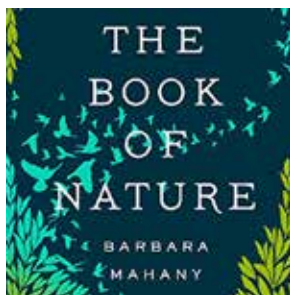
Wednesdays, Sept. 11, Sept. 25, Oct. 9 & Oct. 16; 6–7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Barbara Mahany (author will attend via Zoom)

The Book of Nature: The

Astonishing Beauty of God's First Sacred Text, by Barbara Mahany, is a deep-dive into an ancient and timeless theology that sees all creation as “theophany,” a lens through which to catch a glimpse of the sacred, be it in the dappplings of sunlight, the percussions of storm or the susurrations of prairie grasses playing with the wind. At its core, it's a book about seeing and a book about reading. And it weaves threads from all religions, drawing especially from ancient Celtic and Jewish traditions where the natural world is the lens through which the sacred is perceived and illuminated. It's been written that *The Book of Nature* is “a field guide into the depths of your holiest places.” Over the course of four weeks, we will read and engage with Barbara's book and with our own “pages” from the Book of Nature that is inscribed in all of creation.

Commuter Fee: \$100 for the four-week series



Diarmuid O'Murchu returns!

Ecological Spirituality: New Horizons for the 21st Century Retreat (hybrid)

Wednesday, Sept. 25–Friday, Sept. 27, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. daily

Facilitator: Diarmuid O'Murchu (author will attend via Zoom)

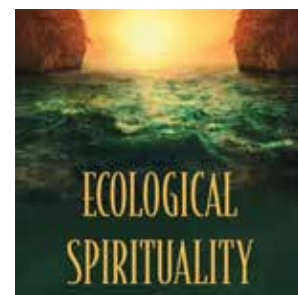
Most of us are not aware of the fact that we live within the context of a world-view (a way of being in the world and understanding it). Thanks to new scientific insights of the 20th century, our sense of the world has expanded enormously. For over 50 years now, we have been inspired by geologist Thomas Berry and others on the pioneering work of the New Universe Story. How to ground that vision—ecologically and spiritually—remains a formidable challenge, the aspects of which will be

explored in this retreat/workshop. Come spend the mornings with us as we welcome Diarmuid O'Murchu online from Ireland. Spend the afternoon and evenings in reflection at Prairiewoods or in your own home.

Fee: \$230 includes Wednesday and Thursday lodging and Wednesday lunch through Friday lunch

Commuter Fee: \$150 includes three morning presentations and daily lunch

Online Fee: \$100 includes three morning presentations



Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL) 17 Retreat (in person)

Fridays, monthly beginning Sept. 27, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. (9 a.m.–3 p.m. in September & May)

Facilitators: Ann Jackson, PBVM; & Leslie Schwarting

Do you long for GOD? Do you desire time to reflect on your spiritual path and the movement of the Spirit within your life? Do you wish to enrich your spiritual experience through monthly prayer and reflection? Would you like a framework in which to explore and pray your “heart's desire”? Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL) is a nine-month retreat based on the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius explored a number of different kinds of prayer in creating the Exercises. He recognized that emotions and feelings in addition to the intellect help us to sense the movement of the Spirit in our lives. The Exercises develop dispositions of the heart for prayer, which then become part of daily life. Retreatants in SEEL become increasingly aware of the presence of and activity of God in all things. They learn to discern that movement of God in their lives and in the world and to integrate meditation, contemplation and action. We invite you to commit to one hour of prayer each day for nine months, at least one monthly meeting with a spiritual director and nine monthly Friday sessions (Sept. 27, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Dec. 13, Jan. 3, Feb. 7, March 7, April 4 and May 9). This retreat is best suited for those who have or are interested in establishing a discipline of regular personal prayer, have experience sharing their spiritual journey with others, and are called and committed to deepening personal faith.

Fee: \$450 (payable in September or in monthly installments of \$50) plus monthly spiritual direction sessions paid separately



Digital Detox: An Unplugged Experience (in person)

Friday, Sept. 27, 6 p.m.–Sunday, Sept. 29, 11 a.m.

Facilitator: Leslie Schwarting

Depending on the data source, Americans spend between 4–7 HOURS daily on their phones. This doesn't account for time in front of computers and other devices. In this mini silent retreat, we invite



you to cut the cord for a weekend. Reconnect to your inner thoughts and your Divine Nature. Enjoy peaceful silence for an unscheduled weekend of quiet. Walk the trails, read, be creative, spend time on the labyrinth and participate in optional spiritual direction sessions. We invite you to see what emerges from a dedicated time of silence and reflection.

Fee: \$255 includes lodging, all Saturday meals and Sunday breakfast (*Lodgers only, please.*)

The Power of Silence: October Silent Directed Retreat (in person)

Sunday, Oct. 6, 4 p.m.–Saturday, Oct. 12, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Eric Evans; Ann Jackson, PBVM; Leslie Schwarting; & Lucille Winnike, FSPA

What's the deepest silence you've ever known? Silent Directed Retreats offer opportunities to enter into deep silence to sense what it feels like to awaken a quiet and palpable connection with the Source of All Being. Each day you will receive ongoing direction as you and a professionally-trained spiritual director intentionally listen to the movement of the Source of All Being in your heart. Silence assists you to get in touch with feelings, thoughts and actions as you reflect, meditate, pray and rest. Silence deepens the capacity to sense the movement of the Source of All Being within the whole of your life. Sharing with a professional may bring you clarity and deepen your commitment and accountability to the direction of your life. We try to hold any outside stimulation to a minimum so that everything supports your journey within. Optional reflective activities such as artwork, yoga and singing bowl meditation are available throughout the week.

Fee: \$525 includes lodging, meals and spiritual direction (*Partial scholarships are available. Lodgers only, please.*)



Cultivating Love & Trust in Times of Change Retreat (in person)

Friday, Oct. 25, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 27, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Karen Hering

Change is rumbling in the ground beneath our feet. Growing conflicts, major elections and shifting weather patterns—as well as turns in our personal lives—all remind us that we are living in stormy transformative times of uncertainty. We need one another in new ways, and we need renewed capacities for love and trust. This is for all who wish to gather on the cusp of change to deepen our understandings and practices of giving and receiving a liberating love, of becoming trustworthy and trusting others, and of gaining skills to strengthen and sustain relationships we can rely on in the midst of change. We'll draw from the wisdom of bell hooks, James Baldwin, Sharon Salzberg and others, engaging guided reflection with writing, silence, conversation and embodied practices. The retreat will offer an experience and exploration of joy, creativity, love and trust.

Fee: \$255 includes presentations, Friday and Saturday lodging, and Saturday breakfast through Sunday lunch

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Silent Mindfulness Meditation Retreat (in person)

Friday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Nov. 3, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

As Jon Kabat-Zinn writes in *Full Catastrophe Living*, "Life unfolds in moments. The healing power of mindfulness lies in living each one as fully as we can." Mindfulness is the awareness that knows what is happening in the present moment as it is happening. It shapes a wise and compassionate relationship with and response to experience as it unfolds moment by moment. As Joseph Goldstein writes in *A Heart Full of Peace*, "Mindfulness is the quality and power of mind that is deeply aware of what's happening—without commentary and without interference ... keeping us connected to brushing our teeth or having a cup of tea." Scientific research shows that mindfulness can positively affect stress resilience, physical and mental health, the ability to sustain attention, self-regulation of emotions, interpersonal skills, and general well-being and happiness. Come cultivate mindfulness in silence through sitting meditation, walking meditation, mindful movement and mindful eating with time for instructions, questions and discussion.

Fee: \$255 includes presentations, Friday and Saturday lodging, and Saturday breakfast through Sunday lunch

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



The Cup of Our Life Retreat (in person)

Saturday, Nov. 9, 9 a.m.–Sunday, Nov. 10, 11 a.m.

Facilitator: Pastor Amy Eisenmann

How do you find your cup of life these days? Empty? Overflowing? Somewhere in between? Cups come in all colors, styles and sizes, and we invite you to bring a favorite cup from home as we learn together and experience what it might be like to take time to refill our own cup of life. Focusing on themes found within Joyce Rupp's book *The Cup of our Life: A Guide for Spiritual Growth* and using a combination of mediums like journaling, labyrinth walking, artistic expression and conversation, our hope is that you will leave this retreat more aware of who you are and how you might find refreshment in your daily journey. Experience a renewed appreciation for the ups and downs of life and head home with tools and tips of renewal to carry on the practice of filling your own cup.

Fee: \$175 includes sessions, Saturday night lodging, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday breakfast

Commuter Fee: \$95 includes sessions and Saturday lunch and dinner



Save the Date!

Pathways of Peace: Food as Relationship—Winter Table Retreat (in person) with Christina Campbell & Ann Jackson, PBVM, Nov. 8–9

Winter's Wisdom, Rest & Renewal: A Solstice & Advent Retreat (in person) with Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel, Dec. 13–15

Peaceful Energy for Renewing the Earth (hybrid)

Wednesday, Sept. 18, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Dr. Erin Lothes

Dr. Erin Lothes will highlight the critical importance for transitioning rapidly to renewable, peaceful energy and explore energy justice. She will provide a theological framework for caring for our common home, Earth, with insights and resources from *Laudato Si'* and other aspects of the Christian tradition. Dr. Lothes will share practical ways to engage communities in this great work as they call for change. Erin Lothes, PhD, is a Catholic theologian and author of *Inspired Sustainability: Planting Seeds for Action and The Paradox of Christian Sacrifice: The Loss of Self, The Gift of Self*. This is a program of the Tri-State Network, a coalition of congregations of women religious in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin who focus on peace, justice and spirituality. Join by Zoom or in person, Fee: \$10

Echoes of the Equinox Concert (in person)

Saturday, Sept. 21, 7–9 p.m.

Facilitators: Jonny Lipford, Timothy J.P. Gomez, Jon Norris & Laina Pilkenton

Join us for an unforgettable evening! Aligning with the autumn equinox, this concert features the melodious artistry of Timothy J.P. Gomez, Jonny Lipford, Jon Norris and Laina Pilkenton. It promises to transport you through a soundscape of Native American flute, djembe and other healing instruments. Allow the serene harmonies and rhythmic beats to guide you on a journey of relaxation and spiritual rejuvenation, celebrating balance and harmony as day and night become equal. This family-friendly concert will be held outside, weather permitting. Please register by the previous day. Fee: \$15 includes one drink ticket, free for kids 12 and under (Additional wine, beer and non-alcoholic drinks available for \$5.)

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Information Sessions: Wednesday, Aug. 28, or Tuesday, Sept. 3, 7–8 p.m. (Zoom)

Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, Sept. 10–Oct. 29, 5:30–8 p.m. (in person)

Retreat Day: Sunday, Oct. 20, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m. (in person)

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is the power of mind to be deeply aware of what's happening—without commentary or interference. Research reveals numerous benefits to the nervous system, emotions and general wellbeing. Over eight weeks, this series will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal meditation practices and informal integrative practices. It consists of a two-and-a-half-hour class each week over eight weeks with one extended six-and-a-half-hour class. If you want to participate, please attend one of the free information sessions.

Fee: Free for information sessions, \$400 for eight-week series (*Those working for a nonprofit may register for just \$100!*)

Day of Self Renewal (in person)

Thursdays, Sept. 5 & Oct. 3; &

Mondays, Sept. 9 & Oct. 14;

8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Jean Sullivan

Find rest and relaxation for mind, body and spirit! This tranquil day features your choice of two services, group guided meditation, singing bowl meditation, a private guest room, a fresh lunch, and access to the labyrinth and all that Prairiewoods has to offer. (Services may include massage, head and shoulder massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, qigong, forest therapy, yoga or chair yoga.) Registration, a nonrefundable/nontransferable deposit of \$50 and your top three service choices are required eight days in advance.

Fee: \$110 includes two services, guided meditation, singing bowls, private guest room and lunch (or \$95 without a private guest room)

Nature & Forest Therapy Experiences (in person)

Afternoon Nature & Forest Therapy:

Mondays, Sept. 9 & Oct. 14, 2:30–3:45 p.m.

Forest Bathing with the Full Moon:

Tuesday, Sept. 17, 6:30–8:30 p.m.; &

Thursday, Oct. 17, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Emelia Sautter

Join certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide Emelia Sautter and the land for a walk with the natural world. Experience Forest Therapy, a sensory-

focused practice that invites us to slow down and be present with self and the natural world around us. According to the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy, "Forest Therapy is a practice that supports health and wellness through guided immersion in forests and other environments to promote the well-being of both people and the land." This is a trauma informed practice, and all are welcome. This is not exercise or hiking; it is a slow, sensory walk with the land. Registration is required by the previous day.

Fee: \$15 for afternoon sessions, \$20 for longer evening sessions

Mindfulness at Prairiewoods (MAP) (in person)

Mondays, Sept. 9–Oct. 28, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Ian Montgomery

Join a weekly gathering of meditators who share the simple goal of sitting together. This is not a class on mindfulness but an open time to sit and meditate in silence together. There is no instruction or formal talk. All disciplines are welcome. We begin with a few words to help us settle and then sit in silence for 30 minutes. Registration is not necessary.

Fee: Suggested donation of \$5

On the Cusp of Change (Zoom)

Tuesdays, Sept. 10 & Oct. 8, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Karen Hering

How can we pause to make sense of our changing world and better understand our choices in living with change, whether personal or global? This series takes a deeper dive into Karen Hering's book *Trusting Change*, exploring how to engage our memory and imagination when encountering the uncertainties of the present day. Karen leads these online sessions of embodied practices, guided reflection and conversation with a specific focus on how to make change more trustworthy. On Sept. 10, we'll talk about claiming companions. On Oct. 8, we'll discuss moving on.

Fee: \$15 per session

Micro-Retreat on Forgiveness (in person)

Wednesday, Sept. 11, 5:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Leslie Schwarting

Whether you carry little hurts or have experienced significant trauma, forgiveness can be a powerful tool in your healing journey. Interestingly, we often aren't skilled at forgiveness. It's

something we assume we know how to do! Come together to explore the power of forgiveness. While in the community of others, we will learn different tools and practices of forgiveness to take with us on our life journeys.

Fee: \$35 includes dinner

Exploring Spiritual Direction/ Companioning Informational Session (hybrid)

Thursday, Sept. 12, 4:15–5:15 p.m.

Facilitators: Leslie Schwarting & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Spiritual direction/spiritual companionship is a time-honored conversation between two people. Through it, one person consults a spiritually experienced and trained listener about the ways in which the Source of All Being (God, Divine, Love, Universe, Holy, Buddha, Allah ...) may be moving in their life. It crosses all ancient spiritual traditions. Its aim is to empower us to explore a deeper experience of Source of All Being through the experienced and compassionate company of another human. The benefits include articulating experiences of the Divine, exploring spiritual practices and resources, engaging in discernment and exploring spiritual questions. Come learn more about this incredible resource!

Fee: Free

Gathering to Remember (in person)

Tuesday, Sept. 17, 6–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Leslie Schwarting

This service will remember and celebrate your loved ones who have died over the past year. Let's gather to share stories and remember together how important it is to connect with the spiritual energy and legacy of our loved ones. Please join us for this prayerful memorial for family and friends who have transitioned to new life. You are invited to bring a picture or symbol of your loved ones to be used during the service. It will be held around a bonfire outside, weather permitting. Light refreshments will be served. Please register by Sept. 16.

Fee: Free

YOLO (Your Other Lunch Option) (in person)

**Wednesdays, Sept. 18 & Oct. 16,
11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.**

Facilitators: Ali Yoka & Derek Doan

Tired of the same old lunch places? Let's renew our bodies and refresh our

spirits in a beautiful setting! Join us for YOLO (*Your Other Lunch Option*)—a lunch choice celebrating wholesome, fresh food made from scratch by our chefs. We dine in a community setting with friends we bring with us or new friends we meet over a delicious themed lunch. Registration is required by the previous Friday.

Fee: \$15 per lunch

Dream Workshop Series (in person)

**Wednesdays; Sept. 18, Sept. 25,
Oct. 2 & Oct. 9; 1–3 p.m.**

Facilitator: Karen Sindelar

Dreams can open us into our inner landscape and help us grow spiritually. Working and playing with dreams can bring transformation and inner healing. This series will expose you to a Jungian approach to deciphering dreams. You will be prepared to work with your dreams individually or in a group and be eligible to join a monthly Dream Group (such as the one that begins Nov. 6).

Fee: \$100 for four-week series

Say Good: An Evening with Ashlee Eiland (Zoom)

Thursday, Oct. 10, 5:30–7 p.m.

Facilitators: Ashlee Eiland & Jean Pagliaro

Knowing when to speak truth to those we know and to communities can be difficult. Speaking up can feel intimidating. How do we trust ourselves to know when to say something and how to say it? Join us for a virtual evening with Ashlee Eiland, author of *Say Good: Speaking Across Hot Topics, Complex Relationships, and Tense Situations*. She will teach us about a four-part discernment process that includes having passion, accountability, influence and relationship. The session will include group discussion as well as time for questions. It is a collaboration between Prairiewoods, the Franciscan Spirituality Center and Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center. Please register by Oct. 8.

Fee: \$20

Seasonal Tree Rock Painting (in person)

Saturday, Oct. 19, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Facilitator: Andi Lewis

At different times in life and even various times within the same year, we may find ourselves in different seasons of the heart. In this contemplative and creative workshop, we will read passages from John O'Donohue's book *Anam Cara* to help us discern which season of

the heart we are in. Then we will delve into that season and express our emotions through painting on smooth



rocks. We will use a paint brush and fine dotting tools to create a beautiful, one-of-a-kind seasonal tree. This is a fun, relaxing process that can be done by anyone but may be too contemplative for young children. This class is aimed at both those who have painted rock mandalas and those who are totally new to rock painting.

Fee: \$15 includes rocks and art supplies

Living Our Faith at Work & Having Fun Doing It (in person)

Tuesday, Oct. 29, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Facilitator: Tom C. Petersen

Living out our Christian faith in the rough-and-tumble modern workplace can be a challenge. Between bad bosses, conniving coworkers and impossible deadlines, it's easy for the crises of our workday to push our faith to the side. But wouldn't work be better if we could bring our faith to work and apply it throughout the day? This session looks at the role of faith in our work, and the role of work in our faith. We'll talk about how to live a more fully spiritual life at work and how to find the humor and give ourselves grace when we feel like we're falling short. The session includes group discussion, sharing best (and worst) experiences, and resource recommendations for a refreshing new look at work and faith. It will be led by Tom C. Petersen, author of *Thank God it's Monday (?): Balancing Work and Faith While Keeping Your Sense of Humor*.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch

Save the Date!

Holiday Bazaar will be held on **Saturday, Nov. 23!** This festive event will help you jump-start your holiday shopping and get in the spirit of the season! It features hundreds of handcrafted items made by local artists. Visit www.Prairiewoods.org for details.

Ongoing Programs

Thelen-Benson Christophany Group (hybrid)
first Wednesdays, Sept. 4 & Oct. 2, 3–4:30 p.m. or
5:15–6:45 p.m.

Gather in community, recognizing that we have the opportunity to co-create the universe and participate in the energy of evolution.

Fee: Free-will offering

Metta Yoga (in person)

Mondays & Thursdays; Sept. 5–Oct. 31; 9:30–10:30 a.m.,
10:45–11:45 a.m. (chair yoga) & 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Experience the healing powers of meditative yoga.

Fee: \$120 for eleven-punch card, \$72 for six-punch card or \$15 for single class

Into the Oneness: Qigong for Energy, Equanimity & Peace (in person)

Thursdays, Sept. 5 & Oct. 10, 12:45–1:35 p.m.

Participate in a gentle, accessible class through meditative, healing energy and compassion-based standing movement, breath work, visualization and acupressure.

Fee: \$12 per session

Healing Sound Bath & Yogic Sleep (in person)

Thursday, Sept. 5, 1:45–2:30 p.m.

Rebalance mind, body and spirit through the soothing, penetrating power of healing sound and vibration via singing bowls and then drop into deepest levels of relaxation and peace through yogic sleep.

Fee: \$10

Go Deeper Thursdays (Zoom)

Thursdays, Sept. 5–Oct. 31, 4–5 p.m.

Join this online community exploration and deepening of spiritual topics.

Fee: Free-will offering

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton (Zoom)

first & third Thursdays; Sept. 5, Sept. 19, Oct. 3 & Oct. 17;
7–8:30 p.m.

Practice contemplative living to respond to everyday experiences with greater awareness of our connections.

Fee: Free-will offering

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony (in person)

Saturdays, Sept. 7 & Oct. 19, 4–7 p.m. (setup begins at
2:30, ceremony starts at 4)

Join us for a traditional ceremony focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing in which we sit in a domed lodge around heated stones.

Fee: Suggested donation of \$10 to Prairiewoods for materials

Drum Circle (in person)

Sunday, Sept. 8, 2–4 p.m.; & Saturday, Oct. 12, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Drum Iowa

Join Drum Iowa and Prairiewoods for a lively outdoor drum circle (weather permitting). Bring your drums or use ours!

Fee: Suggested donation of \$10 (but this is a free event for all to enjoy)

Singing Bowl Prayer (in person)

Mondays, Sept. 9 & Oct. 14, 12:45–1:30 p.m.; & Thursday,
Oct. 3, 1:45–2:30 p.m.

Let the resonant sounds of Himalayan and crystal singing bowls relax the entire body and create a pathway for clearer connection with the divine.

Fee: \$10

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers (in person)

second Tuesdays, Sept. 10 & Oct. 8 (meeting at Oakland
Road Hy-Vee food court on Oct. 8), 9:30–11:30 a.m.; &
fourth Wednesdays, Sept. 25 & Oct. 23, 6–8 p.m.

Practice knitting and stitching as we create items for charity. All are welcome!

Fee: Free

Evening Centering Prayer (in person)

second & fourth Tuesdays; Sept. 10, Sept. 24, Oct. 8 &
Oct. 22; 5:30–7 p.m.

Practice a contemplative form of prayer to help deepen your relationship with God or Source of All Being.

Fee: Free-will offering

Soul Care: Creative Arts Grief Support Groups (in person)

Family-Centered Soul Care (for children and the adults
who support them): second Wednesdays, Sept. 11 & Oct. 9,
 5:30–7 p.m.

Soul Care for Adults: third Wednesdays, Sept. 18 & Oct. 16,
 5:30–7 p.m.

Take time to connect with others in grief and engage the creative spark with monthly grief support groups open to anyone grieving loss through death.

Fee: Free includes all art supplies

Men Exploring Faith (hybrid)

second & fourth Thursdays; Sept. 12, Sept. 26 & Oct. 24
(not meeting Oct. 10); 4–5:30 p.m.

Join with a group of reflective men in honest conversation about life changes.

Fee: Free-will offering

Going Inward with Sounds & Vibrations (in person)

Mondays; Sept. 16, Oct. 7 & Oct. 21; 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Experience sound, stillness, playfulness and relaxation through the enigmatic vibrations of Himalayan and crystal singing bowls.

Fee: \$12 per session

Recurring Automatic Donations

We're happy to announce that you can now set up recurring automatic donations to Prairiewoods using either your credit card or an ACH transfer through your bank. Simply visit our website by scanning the QR code or visiting www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate. Then choose either credit card or ACH transfer and select a frequency that works best for you.



Amazon Wish List

If you're looking to support Prairiewoods in a different way, we recently created a short wish list on Amazon. We'd love your help in securing these items to help make our guests' stays more comfortable. Scan the QR code or visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate for an up-to-date wish list with links. Thanks so much for your continued support!

Learn about Spiritual Direction

Prairiewoods has four spiritual directors on staff who offer one-on-one spiritual direction. Spiritual direction has been part of Christian and non-Christian traditions from their very beginnings. It provides people with companionship on a spiritual journey. Spiritual direction might be ideal for you if you want to:

- find wholeness and balance in life and connect with God, Allah, Tao, Universe or however you may refer to the Source of All Being
- sense the integration of that Spirit within your daily life
- explore our true nature as human beings

Typically, spiritual direction sessions are one hour long and occur monthly and/or during a directed retreat of any length.

A spiritual director or companion is a trained listener and questioner, a guide for your soul. Topics for discussion and discernment are determined by you, the directee. A director does not give you answers or steer you in any one direction. Rather, a spiritual director asks questions that help you focus on the sense of direction that is already inside you. Together, you listen to how God or the Source of All Being is at work in your life.

As a directee, you may choose to reflect on:

- events from your past
- life in the moment
- your vision for the future
- your desires, hopes and dreams
- your longing to grow spiritually

In choosing to participate in spiritual direction, you may begin to gain clarity and contentment with the direction of your life.

The first session is without cost or obligation. Future appointments cost \$50–\$60 per hour, though no one is turned away because of inability to pay. To begin meeting with any spiritual director, contact Ann Jackson, PBVM, at 319-395-6700, ext. 203, or ajackson@prairiewoods.org or contact the spiritual director with whom you would like to meet.

Meet the Prairiewoods Spiritual Directors

Joann Gehling, FSPA, is one of Prairiewoods' foundresses and has been on staff since it opened in 1996. She is available for spiritual direction, counseling, hosting retreats and healing touch spiritual ministry. Sister Joann has a doctorate in ministry with a concentration in feminist theology and psychology. Joann can be reached at jgehling@prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700, ext. 204.

Ann Jackson, PBVM, is Prairiewoods' coordinator of spiritual services. Blending love of nature, literature, leadership and spirituality, Sister Ann delights in listening with others to the energy of Spirit stirring creativity, passion, discernment and service. She enjoys offering spiritual direction and facilitation to individuals and groups. Ann can be reached at ajackson@prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700, ext. 203.

Leslie Schwarting serves as a full-time spiritual director and retreat facilitator. A wife, mother of three adult women and former hospital executive, Leslie completed her spiritual direction certification to tend to the souls of others on this journey of life. Leslie has extensive experience in leading large teams, developing organizational engagement strategies, improving processes and connecting deeply to those around her. She loves to create space for her directees and support them as they explore what their hearts crave, identify where opportunities for healing are, contemplate the rich questions of our lives, and grow closer to God, the Earth, oneself and others. Leslie can be reached at lschwarting@prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700, ext. 215.

Lucille Winnike, FSPA, ministers as a retreat director and spiritual director. Earlier ministries include teaching and administration in Catholic schools, as well as administration within her community. Sister Lucille has a master's degree in mathematics from Notre Dame University, where she later did further studies in spirituality and interned as a spiritual director. She says, "Many persons who come here experience the richness and healing powers of Prairiewoods itself, of Mother Earth, of God. It is my privilege to meet with some of those people." Lucille can be reached at lwinnike@prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700, ext. 221.



We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money and other gifts to Prairiewoods! For a complete, up-to-date list of donors and volunteers, please visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate.



Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center
120 E Boyson Rd
Hiawatha IA 52233

Help Us Update Our Records

You may send this by mail, email ecospirit@prairiewoods.org or call **319-395-6700**. If mailed, please include this address label.

- Please send your mailings electronically to _____.
- Please take us off your mailing list.
- Please note the address change.
- We receive duplicate mailings; please send only one to this address.

Are you on social media? Find "Prairiewoods FSC" on:



Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, Sept. 29, 1–3 p.m.

Join us for outdoor fun for people and pets! Gather your family, your friends and your favorite animal companions and head to the annual Blessing of the Animals at Prairiewoods! Please bring your pets on leashes or in carriers, their clean-up bags, and lawn chairs or blankets. We'll have this free event rain or shine, and it will be moved indoors if there's inclement weather.

- 1:15: A parade with people and pets
- 1:30: Blessings by Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, and Rev. Jean Sullivan
- Cedar Valley Humane Society will be on site passing out information and collecting donations. They'll gratefully accept cash donations, dish soap, HE liquid laundry detergent, baby wipes, or 1-gallon or 2-gallon Ziplock bags. For a complete list of their needs, visit www.CVHumane.org/wish-list.

We hope you and your beloved animals will join us for this fun, free event!

