



Living Hope

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Together with faith and love, hope is one of the theological virtues—the virtues of God. That means that hope is where God dwells. Paul, in the letter to the Colossians, reminds us that the mystery of God is “Christ in you” which is described as “the hope of glory.” We sometimes speak of hope “as if” something will happen. But, in the letter to the Hebrews we read, “faith is being sure of what we hope for.” Here hope is not an “if,” it is faith’s “sure thing.” What does this mean?

As believers in Christ, we are becoming one with Christ. We say with John the Baptist, “he must increase and I must decrease.” This is transformation. Our becoming, *as long as it tends toward affirm-*

ing the will of God, will require us to release control of our selves, relinquish our right to exist as self-directed beings and become vessels for the indwelling God. Just as Jesus was divine and human, so our destiny is to be human and full of the divine. This is how we become like or *one with* Christ.

Our hopes make us aware of the divine space in us where the Christ lives. Your deepest hope, conformed to God’s will, is the place where God lives in you. In his prayer for the world Christians at Ephesus, Paul astonishes us with his wish that we be “filled with all the fullness of God.” In God, all of the cosmos is ordered and held in power. If I

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New Volunteer Coordinator

Gayle Johnson has been selected as our new Volunteer Coordinator. Gayle brings understanding of and enthusiasm for the vision of The Hermitage. Her skills are of the highest caliber for engaging in networking, matching volunteers with appropriate tasks and organizing projects. Her spiritual practices include solitude, silence and regular retreat. A recent retreat experience at The Hermitage elicited these words from

her, “I especially appreciated the simplicity, the silence, the ‘unstructured structure,’ and the pervasive sense that we have all that we need in each moment.” We welcome Gayle and her dedication to the retreat experience to serve as our Volunteer Coordinator. If you would like to be a volunteer for any of our regular or seasonal needs, some of which are listed at left, let us know, Gayle wants to meet you.

Current Volunteer Opportunities

- Weekend Host—includes preparing meals
- Woodcutter/splitter
- Interior Painter
- Carpenter—finishing the new apartment
- Plumber—finishing the new apartment
- Cleaner—could be a regular commitment

Hunger and Thirst for Justice: An Exploration of Fasting

Be the fullness now

“Look at this cup that can hold the ocean.” -Rumi

Look at this heart that can hold God.

Look at this life that can be Love.

What is potential but completion trapped in Time and Space?

Why not be now what surely will come, later?

Why not show grace to the graceless one;

hold on to one who has slipped your grasp?

What was is as real as what will be, now.

The wave hitting the shore does not disown the sea.

The moon still reflects the sun's light at midday.

Be the fullness now and see how you smile.

-Naomi R. Wenger

To *Hunger and Thirst for Justice* is the theme for this year's **Lenten Quiet Day Retreat**. Using scripture and our own experiences, we will explore the spiritual practice of fasting. Jesus' instructions to those whose fast compels us to consider how we fast, when we fast and why we fast. This exploration is for both practitioners of fasting and those who do not fast but are interested in learning more.

The prophet Isaiah helps us to understand fasting as that which produces Light in the world, protection from temptation and the heightening of our spiritual senses. (Isa. 58:1-12)

Join us for a day of quiet reflection on either Wednesday, March 16 or Saturday March 26 from 9 am until 3 pm. Given the focus for the quiet day, there will be no meal but bread and water will be available for each guest.

The suggested donation for the day retreat is \$50. We accept what you are able to give. Please plan to join us regardless of your ability to pay. To register contact us: thehermitage@juno.com or 269-244-8696. Rooms may also be available for extending your retreat before or after the day of reflection. If you would like to stay overnight, call us: 269-244-8696.

Elsie Lehman, Hermitage Volunteer and Friend

Elsie Landis Lehman, 92, died at Landis Homes, Lancaster County, PA on January 13, 2011. She was known for her love and affection for family and friends, an ability to connect with people of all ages, and her delight in good conversation.

From 1986 to 1991, Elsie served The

Hermitage as cook, housekeeper, and friend to guests of The Hermitage. Many of you remember Elsie's good cheer, wit, and kindness to stray cats.

A memorial service was held on February 12, 2011. Elsie's family requests that donations in her memory be made to the Caring Fund of Landis Homes, 1001

Gene Herr Recovers

In early November 2010, Gene Herr, former Hermitage Director, was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Subsequently, he had surgery to remove the tumor. His words as he was prepped for the procedure were, "I feel such peace."

The tumor proved to be cancerous and Gene has been undergoing radiation and

chemotherapy treatments over the last several weeks. The treatments are now complete. Gene reports that he is recuperating, spending much of his days resting or asleep. He is grateful for his wife Mary's presence as well as the community of supporters surrounding them at this time. Your prayers and notes are welcome.

Contact the Herrs:
708 Normandy Road
Newton, KS 67114

Stations of the Cross *Walk*

During Holy Week, April 17-23, a *Stations of the Cross* walk will be set up through the wooded trails. Walkers pick up a guide book from the Ken Hanby Center hallway and follow the meditations from station-to-station. The walk is just over one mile in length over hilly terrain.

Past participants have come by themselves or in groups. Individual walkers are welcome from sunrise to sunset. Groups planning to walk together should call ahead to arrange a time, 269-244-8696.

The Stations of the Cross began as a Medieval devotion encouraging medita-

tion on each of several stages of Jesus' final journey to Golgotha. Each stop on our walk has been located to give a specific sense of place; a vantage point from which to see beyond the surroundings into an imagination of the events of the *via crucis* (way of the cross) and beyond that into a spiritual reality available because of these events. Like praying with icons, this is not meant to be a picture of what *is*, but rather a window into the spiritual realities to which these stations point. Our prayer is that participants find themselves walking with Jesus on the way of triumph through tragedy.

Thank You...

We are grateful for all the ways our benefactors sustain the Hermitage mission to provide a way and a place to pray. Last November, we were blessed by five days of labor in the new apartment from Jeff and Joe of Osterink Woodworking. They added a unique feature to the space using old boards from St. Joseph's barn for wainscoting

and trim. We also received gifts of furniture, area rugs, and a refrigerator for the apartment from various donors.

Kevin Dreidger continues to bless us with his expertise in the library. Rich Yeckly, Judy Somers and Larry Somers are monthly volunteers who fill quiet but necessary roles.

Wounded Lover Retreat

The Indiana-Michigan M.A.L.E.s (Men as Learners and Elders) group is holding a men's retreat at The Hermitage May 13-15, *Wounded Lover: Pursuing Sexual Wholeness*.

The retreat is an opportunity for men to make the connection between the spiritual and sexual realities of our human experience. It is a safe place where the

shadow of our sexuality can be brought into the light. And it is a call for us to seek God's grace, healing and love for our woundedness as lovers.

The cost for the retreat from Friday evening through Sunday afternoon is \$135 (\$35 deposit by May 1). Contact us for more information, 269-244-8696 or www.hermitagecommunity.org.

hermitage calendar

March

13 Taizé Evensong
7:00 pm

16 Lent Quiet Day:
Hunger and Thirst for Justice,
9-3

26 Lent Quiet Day:
Hunger and Thirst for Justice,
9-3

April

10 Taizé Evensong
7:00 pm

17-23 Stations of the Cross Walk

May

8 Taizé Evensong
7:00 pm

13-15 Wounded Lover Mens Retreat

June

12 Taizé Evensong
7:00 pm

July

10 Taizé Evensong
7:00 pm

August

5-6 Feast of the Transfiguration

NO TAIZÉ IN AUGUST

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FIND US ON THE WEB!
www.hermitagecommunity.org

JOIN US FOR TAIZÉ EVENSONG
✻
SECOND SUNDAYS AT SEVEN

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am the locus of that fullness, I bear not only the potential but also the completeness that God desires for me and the whole created order. (see “Be the fullness now” on p. 2)

Our work as followers of Christ, is to

become increasingly aware of and conform to this place of God’s fullness and work in us. Hope is not for the future, it is for living now. *You* are the living hope of God in the world because you are where God dwells. —Naomi R. Wenger

Retreating at The Hermitage



Creating an environment
of attentiveness to God

The Hermitage has been serving the needs of those who are called by Jesus to “come away and rest awhile” for over 25 years. Our mission is:

—*To be a prayer community, available as a place of spiritual formation where scripture, silence, nature, group experiences, and personal companionship are cultivated elements of retreat.*

—*To provide a guesthouse away from daily tasks where pastors and other pilgrims can deepen their call and relationship with God,*

be refreshed in their whole person and be revitalized by the presence and promise of Christ. (from The Hermitage Rule)
We are here to welcome you.

Resident Community: David & Naomi Wenger, *co-directors*

Board of Directors: Mary Asmonga-Knapp, Darrin Compagner, Allan Martling, Natala Mohl, Cheryl Nakata, Biff Weidman, David Wenger, Naomi Wenger