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GROWING IN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD: AN IMMERSION EXPERIENCE

AN ONLINE SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOUNDATIONAL RETREAT

DATES

Jan. 15, 22, 29, Feb. 5, 12, and 19, 2021, 12:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern synchronous meetings

OVERVIEW

During the online Immersion retreat, time is spent in four areas: academic, communal, personal, and practical. Another important facet is the opportunity to reflect on one's spiritual journey in an intentional way through guided meditations, prayer, reflection, and journaling. While this class is open to all who wish to grow in deeper relationship with God, it also serves as the foundational course required for participants in the Certificate in Spiritual Formation program. All are welcome to participate; if you complete the required work, you can later make a decision about whether to pursue the certificate.

The Immersion experience will provide a safe place on a risky journey to more fully experience God's presence. This time of retreat encourages laughter, fellowship, recreation, and rest with other Christians sharing together in Scripture, prayer, reflection, and worship while offering academic and practical learning through lectures, reading, and discussion. Although the entire retreat will be online, we are assured that the Spirit will be with us during each session and for the in-home work of each participant.

Objectives

- Learn about different kinds of spirituality in Christian history, i.e., Old Testament, New Testament, Monastic, and Reformed.
- Explore a variety of prayer practices, i.e., Centering Prayer, *Lectio Divina*, etc.
- Spend contemplative time in spiritual companionship, journaling, and worship regarding your own spiritual journey.
- Participate in spiritual direction with the instructor(s).

SCHEDULE

The retreat will be structured as follows for each week. On the final Friday afternoon session, we will extend time together until 3:30 p.m. ET for worship and communion:

- Sunday evenings: Delivery of new pre-recorded class content and blog questions. *Access to this material is at your convenience.*
- Wednesday mornings: Delivery of additional handouts as necessary. *Access to this material is at your convenience.*
- Friday afternoons: Time together with the instructors from 12:00-3:00 p.m. ET via Zoom. Fixed time for interactive time.

Links for the class space and the Zoom sessions will be provided to registrants in the second week of January 2021.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

If you are taking this class for personal enrichment, you are encouraged to read the books, but it is not a requirement for participation. For those enrolled in the Certificate Program for Spiritual Formation, please read the required books (listed below) prior to your arrival. A one-two paragraph reflection on each required text will be due the first week of class.

Required

An Invitation To A Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation, revised and expanded edition, M. Robert Mulholland Jr., InterVarsity Press, 2016

Common Prayer: A Litany for Ordinary Radicals, Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, and Enuma Okoro, Zondervan, 2010. - **No reflection paragraph required.** This book is not intended to be read in full before the class meets; it is required because it will be used daily during the class (and hopefully after the class ends).

The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality, Ronald Rolheiser, Doubleday, 1999

Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Our Lives to the Awareness of God, Tilden Edwards, HarperOne, 1995

Recommended

Thirsty for God: A Brief History of Christian Spirituality, 3rd ed., Bradley Holt, Augsburg Fortress, 2017

Into the Silent Land: A Guide to the Christian Practice of Contemplation, Martin Laird, Oxford University Press, 2006

INSTRUCTORS

Mary Lynn Callahan is a spiritual director both for Samaritan Counseling Center and in private practice. She recently retired as director of spiritual life ministries at East Liberty Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh and is an honorably retired PC(USA) pastor. Mary Lynn has a certificate in spiritual direction from The Shalem Institute in Washington, D.C. and an M.Div. from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

B.J. Woodworth is currently the director of spiritual life ministries at East Liberty Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh after serving more than 10 years as the former lead pastor of Open Door, a PC(USA) missional church community in Pittsburgh's East End. He is a graduate of Westminster College and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and did campus ministry at Bellefield Presbyterian Church and the University of Pittsburgh from 1992-2003. B.J. received a certificate in spiritual transformation from the Transforming Center in Wheaton, Ill. He is devoted to the monastic traditions and incorporates them into his spiritual practices, reading, and beer brewing.

REGISTRATION



Registration fee: \$325 Registration deadline: Jan. 5, 2021

Modest scholarship funds are available; email [Click to view e-mail](#) to request information.

QUESTIONS

E-mail [Click to view e-mail](#) or call 412-924-1345.

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