

## Contemplative service

Mountain View United Methodist Church is offering a contemplative service on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Contemplative (or meditation) services are one of many ways we find healing rest in our spiritual lives. To be contemplative is to experience a relationship with God in the present moment and to be filled with the sustaining love of the Christ. The ultimate goal of contemplative services is to find peace and spiritual wholeness (or shalom) by stepping back from the busyness of our daily lives.

Brother Roger of the Taizé movement wrote:

“From the depths of the human condition a secret aspiration rises up. Caught in the anonymous rhythms of schedules and timetables, men and women of today are implicitly thirsting for the one essential reality: an inner life, signs of the invisible. Nothing is more conducive to a communion with the living God than a meditative common prayer with, as its high point, singing that never ends and that continues in the silence of one’s heart when one is alone again. When the mystery of God becomes tangible through the simple beauty of symbols, when it is not smothered by too many words, then a common prayer, far from exuding monotony and boredom, awakens us to heaven’s joy on earth.”

Prayer is a serene force at work within human beings, stirring them up, changing their hearts, never allowing them to close their eyes in the face of evil, of wars, and of all that threatens the innocents of this world. From it we draw the energy to wage other struggles, to transform the human condition. Prayer, in essence, is communicating with God. Prayer may be either individual or communal and take place in public or in private. It may involve the use of spoken words, song or silence. It is expressing your heart and spending time with the divine presence. It is not a monologue, but a dialogue. We speak to God with our heart and God speaks to our hearts, furthermore God listens to our hearts and we must always listen to the still, small, voice of God. Prayer can be exciting, powerful and fulfilling.

As a community of faith we join together in prayers of thanksgiving, petitioning, and connecting. Jane E. Vennard writes that “Praying congregations are lively places made up of diverse people who are longing to take prayer seriously. In these congregations members want to learn about prayer, wrestle with hard theological questions, and learn from one another. They are offered the opportunity to explore their prayer lives in depth, and their experiences and ideas are listened to with respect. In praying congregations everyone becomes eager and willing to talk about prayer” (*A Praying Congregation*, 2005). This Lenten season we, the people of Mountain View United Methodist Church, are invited to explore what it means to be a praying congregation. Keeping in mind that prayer may take many forms such as walking the labyrinth, making tomalleys, or simply just spending time with one another in small group activities. In the coming months, the committees of Mountain View will share with the congregation the many ways in which prayer is taking place within our church. God to flow within them. As a community we work together to excavate our hearts from the binds of pride, greed, anger and unawareness of our inner spiritual nature.

You are encouraged to come experience a Contemplative Service and see for yourself the power and intimacy of this worship experience. If you have questions about the Contemplative Service, or would like to volunteer to lead a part of the service, please contact Pastor Brian Kroeger at [bkroeger@iliff.edu](mailto:bkroeger@iliff.edu)