



# CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH

SILENCE  
SOLITUDE  
SERVICE

*of Phoenix*

Fall 2009

Dear Community,

Welcome to our late summer reflections on Contemplative Outreach happenings in Arizona. We look forward to summer's ending and to the beginning of a new season in our lives. There are goings and comings, and new opportunities for growth, to bring to your attention. Please see the announcements elsewhere in this newsletter, and make a special effort to join us on the November 14 Gathering Day, SOULSWEPT, facilitated by Rev. Charlie Wherley, C.Ss.R.. Please note also the upcoming Prescott retreat, September 28-October 2 entitled "Intimacy with God: "Is there enough silence for the Word to be heard?" This is a wonderful opportunity for those wanting to experience a silent retreat, especially for first-timers. It is organized by Contemplative Outreach of Prescott and will feature presentations by Robert Johnson, Fr. John Auther and Rusty Swavely .

A major event held since our last newsletter was a formation workshop at Santa Rita Abbey in May. Marge Tomlinson from the national Contemplative Outreach faculty was the facilitator for this effort. (See a review by participant Tina Murray on page 6). Dave Dierig and Rusty Swavely served as interns, and five people attended. Rusty has generously continued her training on another retreat, so that the Arizona community will have its own presenter training capability. She gives an account of her experience on page 3. With three new Introductory Workshop presenters we hope to share Centering Prayer more widely. If you think your church community would benefit from an Introductory Workshop on Centering Prayer, please contact us about arrangements.

Our Phoenix core group has seen considerable change. Now, 20 years past "retirement age," past Coordinator John Corcoran has decided to withdraw from core, in order to devote his energies to ministry within his Scottsdale parish. Dave Dierig, who has done so much locally and nationally to develop 11<sup>th</sup> Step outreach, has left Arizona for a job in Colorado. Aaron Froehlich has moved with his family to join an intentional eco-community in Ithaca, New York, leaving a major gap in our web site and editing capabilities. Past-Coordinator Terese Wagner has found a wonderful job opportunity in the Bay area and

left the Valley. There is news as well on the incoming side. Becky Weinberg, who leads a centering prayer group at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Mesa, has joined the core, along with Brian Teague and Dave and Tina Murray. Becky made the January 2009 intensive retreat, and the other three new core members were part of the formation retreat held in May. The core group, ever changing and ever devoted to supporting Centering Prayer locally, continues to meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at Central United Methodist Church, where new furnishings enhance our meeting space. We invite participation by more members of the community who are interested in helping encourage Centering Prayer.

As we look toward 2010, we point out the two 8-day intensive retreats announced on page 5. The Intensive Retreat includes 3 hours each day devoted to Centering Prayer, and viewing of Thomas Keating videos on the Spiritual Journey. The retreat is done in silence, except for the evening meal. The Post-Intensive Retreat devotes 4 hours daily to Centering Prayer and takes place in deeper silence. The opportunity to take part in the daily prayer and to enjoy the surrounding beauty at Santa Rita Abbey enhances the growth provided by these retreats.

As a reminder, please visit our web site ([www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org)) regularly in order to be aware of coming events.

Finally, enjoy a review of Jill Bolte Taylor's memoir My Stroke of Insight, by Kathy Kramer-Howe on page 7, and you will find a poem by Bob Brooke about transformation on page 8.

May the coming time find your lives enriched, and your opportunities to serve satisfied, as we continue to cherish and share the gift of Centering Prayer.



## What We Do...



The Phoenix chapter shares the mission of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. From time to time it is helpful to reflect on the international organization's Vision Statement. Recently the core community has started listening to this statement utilizing the Lectio Divina method.

*We invite you to do the same.*

## Vision Statement

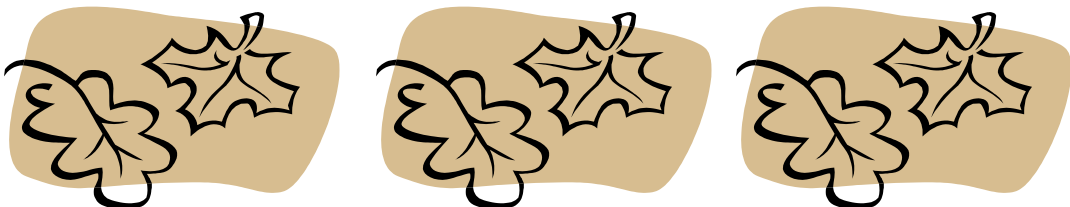
*Contemplative Outreach is a spiritual network of individuals and small faith communities committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life through the practice of Centering Prayer. The contemplative dimension of the Gospel manifests itself in an ever-deepening union with the living Christ and the practical caring for others that flows from that relationship.*

*Our purpose is to share the method of Centering Prayer and its immediate conceptual background. We also encourage the practice of Lectio Divina, particularly its movement into Contemplative Prayer, which a regular and established practice of Centering Prayer facilitates.*

*We identify with the Christian Contemplative Heritage. While we are formed by our respective denominations, we are united in our common search for God and the experience of the living Christ through Centering Prayer. We affirm our solidarity with the contemplative dimension of other religions and sacred traditions, with the needs and rights of the whole human family, and with all creation.*

Please note that an expanded and updated version of the Vision Statement can be found on our website, at [www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org).

“Our purpose is to share the method of Centering Prayer and its immediate conceptual background.”



## Looking for a Volunteer Editor



This newsletter is lovingly prepared by a volunteer twice each year. We are currently looking for an adventurous soul to help with its design and layout. If you have experience and/or interest in graphic design (particularly if it's on a Mac, though all are welcome), and are willing to help for a handful of hours twice each year, please contact Kathy Kramer-Howe at (602) 955-6057, or send us an email at [info@contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org](mailto:info@contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org).

*Thanks and we look forward to hearing from you!*



**Dear Core Members,**

Thank you for your prayers and for financially supporting me when I interned at the Formation Workshop in Denver in June. Training to facilitate these workshops has been something I have wanted to do for some time and am happy and grateful for the opportunity. I love teaching the Centering Prayer Workshop and enjoy working with and helping to train others to do the same. I look forward to serving Contemplative Outreach in Arizona.

In May, I interned at the Formation for Contemplative Outreach Service including Centering Prayer Presenters Training held at Santa Rita Abbey led by Margie Tomlinson. This lasted 5 full days, including a day of retreat, with five participants, 3 staff members and a great cooking team. Anyone could attend as a participant even if he or she did not intend to teach the Introductory Workshop.

In June, I interned at the Formation Training for Presenting Centering Prayer held at the Center for Contemplative Living in Denver led by Sr. Bernadette Teasdale. Father Keating had given Sr. Bernadette permission to run this training in a shorter format of 2 and a half days and it did not include a retreat day. There were 29 participants and 10 staff members. All the participants were recommended by a Coordinator or Contact person to teach the Introductory Workshop.

The experiences were very different and I learned a lot. In the first one, I presented the second of four talks and observed all 5 participants present each talk. We were in a retreat center and having a retreat day was possible. The second Workshop was considered a working workshop and since the Center is not set up to house people it would have been difficult to include a retreat day. Since the second one was shorter, the participants presented only two of the 4 talks and I facilitated two of the small groups. In both workshops I especially enjoyed working with the participants as they gave their talks and was inspired by their enthusiasm for teaching Centering Prayer.

In August, while in California visiting family, I arranged to meet with Marie Howard. She attended the summer meeting of the Formation Staff where Father Keating asked that no Formation Workshops be given for another year. This is to give them time to reevaluate the Formation Workshop to possibly make it simpler. I feel especially grateful that I was able to work and observe the two different formats for the Formation Workshop.

In August, while in California visiting family, I arranged to meet with Marie Howard. She attended the summer meeting of the Formation Staff where Father Keating asked that no Formation Workshops be given for another year. This is to give them time to reevaluate the Formation Workshop to possibly make it simpler. I feel especially grateful that I was able to work and observe the two different formats for the Formation Workshop.

If you are interested in hearing more of my experiences please let me know.

**Rusty Swavely**



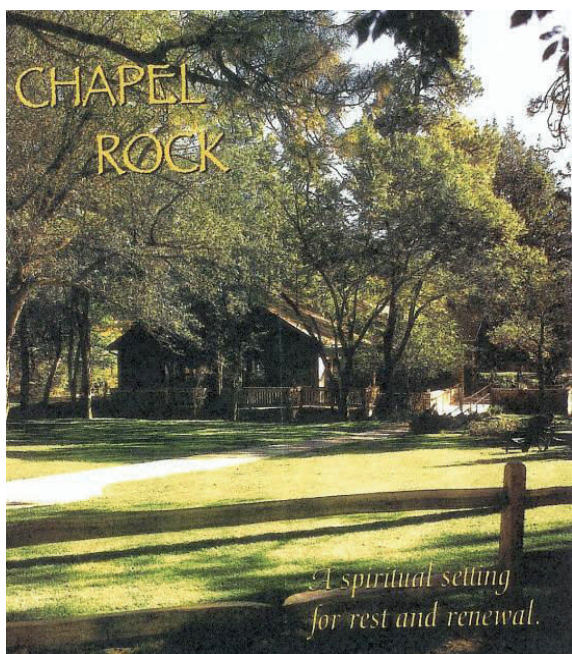
# 2009 Contemplative Prayer Retreat

(For those who have been practicing Centering Prayer for 6 months or more)

Co-Sponsored by Contemplative Outreach groups in Arizona

## Theme: *Intimacy with God*

*“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?” - T.S. Eliot*



**Monday, September 28 (before lunch)**  
**through**  
**Thursday, October 1 (after breakfast)**  
*Chapel Rock Church Conference Center*  
*Prescott, Arizona*

**Cost based on double occupancy:**

**\$235.00 before June 1st**

**\$250.00 after June 1st**

**(Scholarships available)**

**Single supplement: \$20.00 per night**  
*(regular menu with generous veggies)*

**\$50.00 deposit, non-refundable after August 15, 2009**

***Save the date! Reserve early—limited space available!***

**Contact: Sandy Lodewyck at (928) 445-7240 (sandrалodewyck@msn.com)**

-----  
Please reserve my place at the 2009 Contemplative Retreat:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Circle choice: Double or Single

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please note special needs below:

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Ground floor room? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Special Diet? \_\_\_\_\_

Other? \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to “Contemplative Outreach of Phoenix” and mail to Sandy Lodewyck, 5611 Columbine Road, Prescott, AZ 86305-6722





## SANTA RITA ABBEY --- SONOITA, AZ

### 2 Intensive Retreats in 2010:

**8 DAY INTENSIVE:** January 8<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup>

**8 DAY POST INTENSIVE:** January 29<sup>th</sup> – February 6<sup>th</sup>

### **8 DAY INTENSIVE:** January 8<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup>

This retreat is for those who are interested in deepening their centering prayer practice in silence, community prayer and Thomas Keating teachings. The main requirement is a 6-month centering prayer practice.

### **8 DAY POST INTENSIVE:** January 29<sup>th</sup>– February 6<sup>th</sup>

The post intensive retreat is an entrance into total silence with four prayer sessions a day. Requirement: prior attendance at an intensive retreat.

**COST:** \$400.00 for a single room  
\$325.00 for a shared room - *only one room available*

**REGISTRATION:** *Beginning September 15th*  
\$ 100.00 deposit mailed to Jeannie Lashinke at:  
5728 East Orange Blossom  
Phoenix, AZ 85018  
(480) 423-1645  
Email: [lashinske@cox.net](mailto:lashinske@cox.net)

***There are only 7 rooms available.  
The registration deposit secures your room.***

For more information email Mary Leonard ---  
[marywleonard@hotmail.com](mailto:marywleonard@hotmail.com)



## A Review of Formation Training at Santa Rita Abbey in May 2009

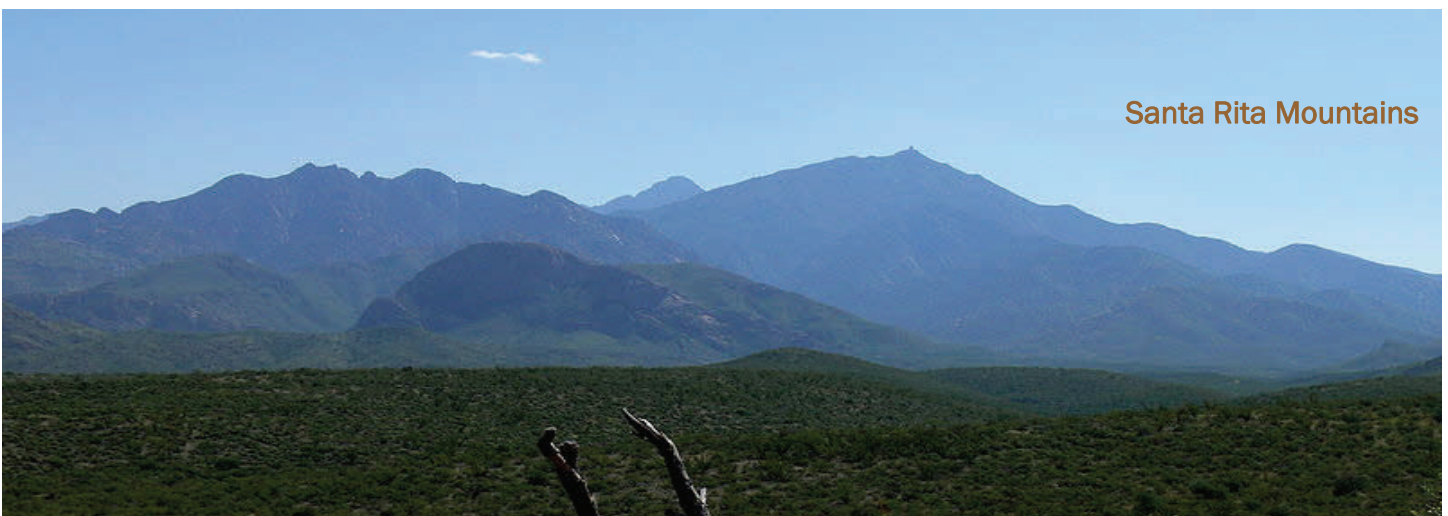
A small intimate group of Centering Prayer practitioners had the opportunity this past May 4<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> to attend a Presenter's Training Formation for Centering Prayer at Santa Rita Abbey. The Cistercian Abbey has a retreat house located in the foothills of the beautiful Santa Rita Mountains near the town of Sonoita, AZ.

We began our journey by meeting Margie Tomlinson, our staff facilitator and Rusty Swavely and Dave Dierig who were assisting as interns. Margie gave a wonderful opening talk about her intention to not teach, but "transmit" the prayer to us, so that we would be better able to eventually do the same within our own communities and to develop a deeper understanding of the essentials of Centering Prayer. There was much sharing of our own experiences and time for questions and answers. Then we were told about the "practicum", where we would each have to present in front of each other and critique each other. I believe we were all a little nervous, but with such a small group, we bonded quickly and

the nervousness was short-lived. After each presentation, we gained a better understanding of how to prepare and less fear in presenting. By reflecting on our own experiences to share as examples in our presentations, we learned to put those experiences into words that more effectively enable us to "transmit" our experiences with Centering Prayer.

During the 6 days, there was also time for silence, reflection and relaxation. In the beautiful chapel with a view of the mountains, we practiced 2- 30 minute periods of Centering Prayer before breakfast and 2-30 minute periods before dinner.

Many thanks to all who led, participated, and especially to those who prepared the wonderful meals. Cathy, Anne, Mary and Phil, we truly enjoyed your cooking as well as the wonderful fellowship. The Formation Training was a wonderful experience and has brought about the formation of two new small groups, one in Mesa, and one in Paradise Valley. It is a joy to be able to share with others in our common desire to deepen our relationship with God.



Santa Rita Mountains





**Saturday, November 14, 2009**

**9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**Central Methodist Church**

**1875 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ**

## **SOULSWEPT**

**Presented by Reverend Charlie Wehrley C.Ss.R.**

THIS WORKSHOP INVITES US TO LISTEN TO GOD SPEAKING TO US IN THE QUIET STILLNESS OF OUR HEARTS AND LEARN TO “REST IN GOD” AND EXPERIENCE HIS GREAT LOVE FOR EACH OF US.

LEARN TO CHOOSE TO JOIN IN THE DANCE OF LIFE

LEARN TO FACE OUR FEELINGS BY SURRENDERING THEM TO GOD, A POWER GREATER THAN WE ARE.

LEARN HOW ANYONE CAN BENEFIT FROM THE 12 STEPS.

LEARN THAT OUR EMOTIONS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES ALLOWING US TO JOIN IN THE DANCE OF LIFE AS GOD INTENDED.

LEARN TO ALLOW GOD AS THE “DIVINE THERAPIST” TO OPEN US TO OUR FEELINGS AND BE SOULSWEPT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, AWAKENING US TO A FAITH THAT LIFTS US INTO THE DANCE OF LIFE.

### **Registration:**

**Email:** [rtorrez@cox.net](mailto:rtorrez@cox.net)

**Online:** [www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach-phoenix.org)

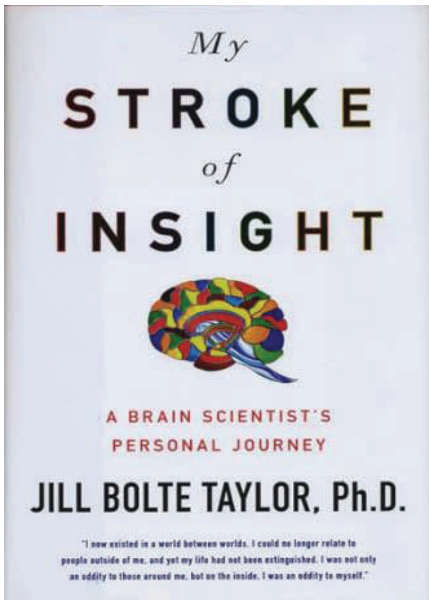
**Phone:** Sister M. Rachel Torrez at 602 771-7818

**Mail:** 8141 N. 16<sup>th</sup> Street #5 Phoenix Arizona 85020

*Refreshments provided. Closing prayer includes short Taize service*  
*Suggested donation is \$15.00 made to Contemplative Outreach of Phoenix*



# My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey



My Stroke of Insight" or "Great Scott, I have this spiritual powerhouse inside my skull and I didn't even know it!"

What would it be like to lose one's "False Self system" overnight? Who would one be? What would one's relationship be with God? This is what confronted brain anatomist Jill Bolte Taylor, then only 37 years old when she suffered a catastrophic brain hemorrhage that destroyed the functions of her left hemisphere. She details this experience in her memoir My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey (2006, Viking Press). With her detailed knowledge of the brain, she was able to reconstruct the destructive cascade that "took off line" the parts of her brain that understand language, mathematics, time, sequencing, separate identities, and personal history. She was left living in her right hemisphere in a blissful state of being in the present, with a sense of being more fluid than solid,

and being part of a One, although her body was grievously disabled. She had to learn again how to walk, read, speak and do the simplest of tasks. Over a painful rehabilitation lasting 8 years, Dr. Taylor regained the functions she previously had. It required great will power and dedication to leave the blissful existence she had enjoyed for several years as a totally right brain person. She was challenged to become the person she had been without losing the spiritual wholeness she now knew to be her birth-right.

As her left brain came back "on line," she wondered if she could regain her former personal history and identity but leave behind the emotionally painful parts. The very question sheds insight on how we can still be "ourselves" as the False Self system breaks down. The links between memories and pain are, after all, just bundles of neurons accustomed to hanging out together. Jill found that weakening these connections was possible, but that it required very active intervention. By shifting awareness into her right brain, she found she could curtail repetitive loops of negative thinking, limit the incessant "stories" and commentaries on what was happening around her, and stop herself from hooking into aversive feelings. No matter how intense a thought and feeling, all it took was to wait 90 seconds for it to clear the body completely. That's about the time it takes to slowly recite the 23th Psalm.

I read this remarkable book during a retreat. With a clarity produced by hours of silence and Centering Prayer, I found Dr. Taylor's insights to be both astounding and liberating. Her unique experience invited me to reflect on how my brain partners with Christ in the Spiritual Journey. As Jill Taylor healed, she experienced a spiritual journey in reverse, one might say. Going from utter oneness with God, she gradually reconstructed a personal identity, a separate self, while retaining her True Self. Understanding the very distinct natures of her two brains both scientifically and subjectively helped her achieve this. God uses the right brain to choose peace, silence and presence; and influences the practical left brain to put into action Christ's work on earth. In seamless partnership, the hemispheres create a distinct self embodying universal compassion and kindness. I highly recommend this inspiring book to those who do Centering Prayer.

by Kathy Kramer-Howe

## UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES OF CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH OF PRESCOTT

Two centering prayer groups continue to meet regularly in the Prescott area, a morning group at Sacred Heart Church and an afternoon group at the home of Justine Mendenhall.

During the last half of 2008, the Sacred Heart group read together Cynthia Bourgeault's book *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*. Although some members of the group found some of the concepts a bit difficult, everyone agreed that reading and discussing it together was a very valuable and growth-promoting experience.

In the first part of 2009, the group will view and discuss the DVD series *The Practices That Bring The Fruits of Centering Prayer Into Daily Life* from Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. Following up on one of the presentations on this DVD, *Lectio Divina Practice* with Fr. Carl Arico, the group will then study the book *Too Deep for Words, Rediscovering Lectio Divina*, by Thelma Hall.

A subset of the Sacred Heart group continues to meet weekly on Wednesday mornings as well. This group has spent the past year reading and discussing the works of St. Teresa of Avila. During the first half of 2009, this endeavor comes to its climax with the study of Teresa's most famous work, *Interior Castle*. As an aid to their understanding of St. Teresa, the group is also using a companion book entitled *Where Lovers Meet: Inside the Interior Castle*, by Susan Muto.

During the last part of 2008, the Thursday afternoon group viewed and discussed the five sessions of Part V of the Spiritual Journey Series from Contemplative Outreach—*Divine Love: The Heart of the Christian Spiritual Journey*. They are now preparing to read and discuss the book *Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life* by Henri Nouwen, Donald McNeill and Douglas Morrison. After completing that, they plan to view the session on *The Welcoming Prayer* from the DVD series *The Practices That Bring The Fruits of Centering Prayer Into Daily Life* from Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.



## THE PLAYGROUND

The neighborhood is changing.

The playground has to go.

Solitude and silence are removing the equipment.

The other kids won't watch me anymore:

no more screams of danger

when I swing so high it almost seems like flying;

no more hugs and handshakes

at the bottom of the steep and scary slide;

no more cheers and clapping

when I wriggle through the openings

to the tip top of the big boy's jungle jim.

The neighborhood has other playgrounds.

There's one not far away.

Solitude and silence

suggest a new encounter:

the playground, now

dismantled of equipment.

—

Bob Brooke

# Centering Prayer Small Groups

Fall 2009

## GLENDALE

Thursday (2nd & 4th) 11:00 a.m.  
St. Louis the King Catholic Church  
4331 W. Maryland Ave, Glendale  
Contact Person: Anne Jacobson (623) 934-7736

## MESA

Mondays (1st and 3rd), 7:00 p.m.  
In private homes  
Contact Person: Mary Ann Yates (480) 962-9817

Mondays (1st and 3rd) 9:30 a.m.  
Saint Mark's Episcopal Church  
Contact Person: Becky Weinberg (480) 924-1442

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.  
Saint Bridget Church  
Contact Person: Lois (480) 833-3365 or  
Rock Fremont (480) 924-9111, ext. 301 or  
rock@stbridget.org

## PARADISE VALLEY

Monday and Thursday 7:45-8:30 a.m.  
Franciscan Renewal Center  
5802 E. Lincoln Drive, Paradise Valley  
Contact Person: Sharon Taszarek (480) 998-2644

Monday 7:00-8:30 p.m. and  
Saturday 9:00-10:30 a.m.  
Saint Barnabas on the Desert  
6715 N. Mockingbird Lane, Paradise Valley  
Contact Person: Ethel Sickert (480) 657-7639

## PHOENIX

Wednesday 9:30-11:00 a.m.  
St. Theresa Church  
5045 E. Thomas Road, Phoenix  
Contact Person: Jeannie Lashinske (480) 423-1645

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 6:45–8:30 p.m.  
3537 W. Shangri La  
Contact Person: Fran Self (602) 978-3039

Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.  
Central United Methodist Church—Chapel of Light  
1875 N. Central Ave.  
Contact Person: Pat Goss (602) 258-8048, ext. 102

## PRESCOTT

Monday - 9:00-10:30 a.m.  
Sacred Heart Church  
Contact Person: Robert Johnson (928) 717-2441

Monday 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
526 Quail Hollow Drive, Prescott  
Contact Person: Justine Mendenhall (928) 778-7727

## RIO VERDE

Saturdays 9:00-10:00 a.m.  
Chapel at St. Dominic Catholic Mission  
Contact Person: Jan Ruggles (480) 471-2192

## SEDONA

Monday (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>) 4:00-6:00 p.m.  
Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church, Sedona  
Contact Person: Harriette Burkhalter (480) 824-1690

Wednesday (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) 9:00-10:30 a.m.  
St. John Vianney Catholic Church, Sedona  
Contact Person: Margaret Swavely (928) 282-2080

Thursday (2nd & 4th) 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
Call for location  
Contact Person: Margaret Swavely (928) 282-2080

## SIERRA VISTA

Wednesdays, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
Our Lady of the Mountain Church  
1425 Yaqui Street, Sierra Vista  
Contact Person: Robert Henning (520) 459-2525

## SUN CITY

Monday 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
10003 W. Pleasant Valley Road, Sun City  
Contact Person: Merl Parker (623) 875-0000

## TEMPE

Wednesday - (Every Other) 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Holy Spirit Parish  
1800 East Libra Drive  
Classroom #1 (the old chapel)  
Contact Person: Jerry Tong (480) 897-7922



## TUBAC

Saturdays, 9:00–10:00 a.m.

In private homes

Contact Person: Barbara W. Gray (520) 825-9877

[SharingTheSong@cs.com](mailto:SharingTheSong@cs.com)

## TUCSON

Mondays, 7:30 p.m. (Evening Vespers at 7PM)

Benedictine Monastery

800 N. Country Club Rd.

Contact Person: Sr. Anita (520) 325-6401

Thursdays, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

St. Phillip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

NE Corner of River & Campbell

Contact Person: Shirley Linder (520)579-0298

Tuesdays, 9:00 - 12:00

St. Francis de Sales

1375 S. Camino Seco

Contact Person: Marie Martin (520) 722-6712

## 12 Step Centering Prayer Groups

### MESA

Wednesdays (1st and 3rd) 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Unity Church of Mesa

2700 E. Southern Ave.

Contact Persons:

Sharon M. (602) 315-8988

Bryan Teague (602) 509-4855  
[bryan.teague1@cox.net](mailto:bryan.teague1@cox.net)

### PARADISE VALLEY

Tuesdays (1st and 3rd) 7:00–8:30 p.m.

St. Barnabas on the Desert Episcopal Church

6715 N. Mockingbird, Scottsdale

Contact Persons:

Tina Murray (602) 793-8021 [tinarm@msn.com](mailto:tinarm@msn.com)

Dave Murray (602) 999-2736  
[dmurray1\\_98@yahoo.com](mailto:dmurray1_98@yahoo.com)

**\* PLEASE CALL THE CONTACT PERSON BEFORE FIRST  
ATTENDING A GROUP \***





Contemplative Outreach, LTD.  
2622 E. Del Rio Dr.  
Tempe, Arizona 85282-4136

\* Return Receipt Requested \*

