

In Montrose, Jan. 28 Centering Prayer Workshop

News Release from ...

Al Leigh; 570-278-0205, aleigh37@epix.net

St. Paul's Episcopal Church; Montrose

Centering Prayer is coming back again to Montrose. A Centering Prayer workshop will be held in St. Paul's Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 28, 2007 from 1-6 pm. Last year Dr. Christine Kessen, a professor at Marywood, conducted a workshop on Centering Prayer. She'll be back to reach a new group of interested people. Registration is not needed. Interested people are welcome. There is no charge.

Dr. Kessen was invited in January of 2006 by Rev. Elizabeth Moulton, former rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Montrose, PA. Looking back, Rev. Moulton said, "I always wondered how Christians were to follow the directive to be transformed without the transformation process somehow resembling making New Year's resolutions. Right now, in my life, the most profound process for transformation is simply abiding in the presence of God at a level beyond words and thoughts. It is called Centering Prayer and has been the practice of Jesus' followers from the earliest times."

Following last year's Montrose workshop there were a series of six additional classes to further explain the Centering Prayer (CP) method. Out of those classes a weekly meeting of a local CP group evolved. The group felt that more in the Montrose Area would be interested in a method of prayer that goes back to the earliest church times and consists in "resting in God."

Contemplative Outreach is a group formed twenty years ago to aid Centering prayer. Their pamphlet says, "Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of Contemplative Prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. It is an attempt to present the teaching of earlier times in an updated form. Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on them. It is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. This method of prayer is a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him."

One of the more interesting spin offs of CP has been connecting it to the Eleventh Step of the Twelve Step Process. Use of the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) has been requested by over 500 groups, according to AA World Services. The 11th Step states, "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." It is quite appropriate that these two groups would be in contact and their cooperation fits well within AA's 12 Traditions. Weekend retreats and workshops have been held in 2006 and are scheduled for 2007.

