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THE MARK

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ATTENDING

ATTENDING

BY PETER HAAS

Jacob Needleman reminds us that “the quality of [a person’s] attention is key to the meaning of our lives and the possible growth of our being ... this is because *I am my attention.*”

Similarly, Ian McGilchrist teaches that “attention is not just another function alongside other cognitive functions. Attention changes what kind of things come into being for us: in that way attention changes the world.” Let’s explore this world-changing, being-growing, heart-opening gift and practice called attention and attending.

Embedded in the verb *attending*, there are several insights and notions that emerge.

First, see the word *attention*. Attending is a conscious and caring way by which we use our attention. We can use our attention in many ways – focused or scattered; concentrated or distracted; self-absorbed or other-aware.

Second, see also the word *tend* or *tending*. This is most compelling, since it deeply connects our conscious field of perception and expression with the notion of external care

and caring, not just care of self, but also more importantly, care of and for others, for plants, pets, animals, trees, flowers, for all things living and created on this planet and, more expansively, for all of creation and the cosmos.

Third, see the word *end*. This unveils the notion of aim and wish. To what *end* are we living? What is it that we wish? How do we live our life? What is our guiding purpose? In contrast to random living and getting carried along by the crowd or whims of the cultural moment, what do you give your attention to and to what end? Fourth Way student and artist William Segal wrote that, “energy follows attention; where I put my attention there follows a flow of force, and where there’s an inner presence accompanying what is expressed, power is added.” Over the course of our lifetime, this energy, flow and force helps us complete our aims and more consciously move through the Octaves of life.

Here is another way to see the invitation to *attending*. Let’s explore it through the lens of the three lines

of the Work of Inner Christianity.

First Line—Attending to Your Work

The core energy of attending is the emotional quality of care. To care for oneself is to keep watch over one’s life. Commit to the practice of self-observation. Care for which emotions you express to others, and also how those emotions are expressed. To care is to value. To value is to practice. To practice is to be transformed. To be transformed is to serve the world and ease the suffering of all. Care and tend your practice. Life says: Do what you want. Wisdom says: *Keep your practice and your practice will keep you.*

Second Line—Attending Together

Here we see an expanded care for others, especially to care for our brothers and sisters in our spiritual community, and our friends in the Work. Attending to these, caring for these is to wish for their highest good. Bearing their unpleasant manifestations, and remembering that we are here to Work on ourselves, and no one or nothing else. This frees us from the

impulse to change something or someone. There is a deep energetic difference between the urge or compulsion to change someone to fit our preferences and the Will to Work.

Third Line—Attending to the Work

As we grow in knowledge, being and understanding, we contribute to the ever unfolding tapestry that is the Work. We play our part in tending to the tradition and sharing the Work by living it out in our day to day lives. One way of nurturing valuation for the Work is by attending to the history of our Work lineage. Feel into your time-body and notice these connections.

Next summer, 2022, marks the 100 year anniversary of G.I. Gurdjieff's acquiring the Chateau du Prieuré in Fontainebleau, France and the start of the most well-known public teaching and writing period of Gurdjieff's consequential life.

This Summer marks 100 years since Gurdjieff and his family left Constantinople and arrived in Berlin, Germany, finally escaping to the West, having survived the first World War. Little did

Gurdjieff know that in the short span of a year he would be settled in Fontainebleau.

In 1921, Gurdjieff would also meet two men who would later become significant heirs to his teaching, and meaningful teachers and authors to us, A.R. Orage and J.G. Bennett. So too in 1921, a young Dr. Maurice Nicoll would attend his first evening lecture given by a man named P.D. Ouspensky, at the time, Gurdjieff's primary student. Nicoll returned home that evening and told his wife, "You must come and hear Ouspensky. He is the only man who has ever answered my questions." Nicoll soon met Ouspensky in person and one year later, in the summer of 1922, Nicoll and his family would join Gurdjieff at the Chateau du Prieuré to work and study with the master.

Also, consider this: ideas and people we now take as authorities were just coalescing less than a century ago. As recent as just 70 years ago, most of the Fourth Way books we now cherish and take for granted, had yet to be published. This makes The Church of Conscious Harmony and especially

The Journey School a continuing embodiment of a living tradition that is both ancient and new. That means that all the modern written material on the Fourth Way came into being on this planet within the last 60 or 70 years.

These historical details are mentioned because when we lose touch with our lineage, we can tend to overlook the fact that the stream of Esoteric Christianity taught by Gurdjieff (which he termed the Fourth Way) emerged just a mere century ago! Many of us were born while Gurdjieff was still alive. Most of us in our community were born within one to three decades after Gurdjieff's death. Taking the long view of millennia, we are the blessed ones who comprise and contribute to the first- and second-generation witnesses of the Fourth Way teachings.

Our practice of attending to the Work, caring for the Work in our own lives as we care for one another in community, and giving our directed attention more and more to understanding the depth and breadth of the teachings is a most meaningful aim and end to live toward. Enjoy the journey! 



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BOOK LOOK



Bob Hunter's, *The Attention Paradox*, is one of the most accessible books in the Fourth Way literature that deals with the important Work practice of directed attention. Hunter provides key insights that help understand the distinctions between fascination, divided attention and Self-Remembering, and the role of identification in our inability to practice directed, focused attention. Mr. Gurdjieff's earliest teaching in St. Petersburg included the aphorism, "In order really to observe oneself one must first of all *remember oneself*." Key to it all is the wisdom that "the division of attention... is a characteristic feature of Self-Remembering."



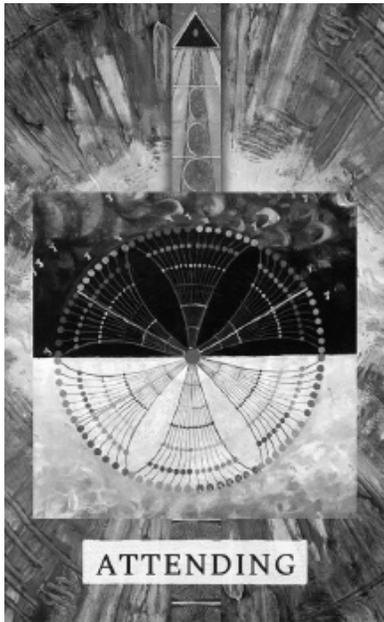
Though Henry David Thoreau's lovely essay *On Walking* is a classic, a recent follow up on the practice and spirituality of walking is Graham B. Usher's *The Way Under Our Feet*. Usher is a priest in the Norfolk region of England, famous for its Weaver's Way walking paths that meander ancient sheep paths for a hundred miles through farm fields, forests, villages, leading in the end to Cromer by the Sea, where the sheep would be sold or sheared. These pathways are now public and walking them can be a kind of meditative prayer. Shall we say a kind of *Pedi Divina*. ☉

GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE, GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Fr. Thomas Keating's *Open Mind, Open Heart* recommends reading this spiritual journey principle three times in the method of Lectio Divina.

GUIDELINE 42

What Jesus proposed to his disciples as the Way is his own example: the forgiveness of everything and everyone and the service of others in their needs. "Love one another as I have loved you."



Consecrate us in the Truth. Your word is Truth. John 17:17

ANNUAL AIM: TRUTH OPENS THE EYES OF OUR HEARTS

ATTENDING BY BRYAN SWAN

The purification of the emotions
begins with work on
the self-emotions
arising from the false personality.
... We have a quite wrong sense
of ourselves,
believing in our merit,
believing that we can
do good from ourselves,
that we are conscious,
that we have Will and so on.
All this makes the emotional life
little short of disastrous.

Maurice Nicoll, *Commentaries*,
“The Cognitive Power of Emotions,”
December 30, 1944

*I will ... gather you
and bring you back. ...
I will cleanse you.
I will give you a new heart,
and a new spirit
I will put within you.
Ezekiel 36:24-26*

If the Emotional Centre were purified of negative emotions
and one ceased to be identified with oneself,
one would be able to see more deeply into one's own life
and into the lives of others —
the center would then work with much higher hydrogens
and one would start to become conscious in higher centers.

A student of Dr. Nicoll,
Commentaries, “The Cognitive Power of Emotions,” December 30, 1944

My spiritual journey started
in earnest almost nine years ago
when my wife became pregnant
with our first child. At that point,
through a series of negative events,
my old ways of doing things would
not suffice for the task of being a
parent. I felt defeated and needed
to let go of my old ways and the
habits that brought me so much
pleasure and pain if I were to have
any chance of being a good father.
I had to seek the help of a Higher
Power. I didn't know at the time
that God was cracking me open and
offering me a new and beautiful life

in sobriety. My life moving forward
would be dependent on this Source
of Strength and I would be required
to embark on a lifelong journey of
attending, growing and expanding
this relationship.

The birth of my son opened up
undiscovered love in my heart and
forever changed me for the better.
What a gift and blessing. After
five years of this new lifestyle, I
knew that I would need to expand
my spiritual horizons to have any
chance of continuing to grow and
live up to the challenges being
presented to me. The pressure of

being a new father and embarking on a new career were overwhelming. I had been participating in a spiritual organization, a local Amma Satsang that emphasizes love and compassion to all beings. Upon speaking with one of the group's organizers about other spiritual offerings in the Austin area, he recommended The Church of Conscious Harmony.

I attended CCH for the first time in the spring of 2017 and have been coming ever since. I was drawn to the energy right away and wanted to come back for more. However, I was feeling a little lost as there were many classes being offered, but unsure in which order to take them. Meanwhile, a book was recommended to me in the bookstore as a "good first book" to read on the church's teachings. It was Fr. Thomas Keating's *Open Mind, Open Heart*. It took hold of me right away and I was immediately drawn to Keating's approachable style of teaching.

Having never meditated "in Christ" before, I discovered the gift of silence and returning to the sacred word when my attention was drifting. I was particularly drawn to Keating's concept of the "core of inner goodness." This was good news and gave me continued hope.

Tim Cook was still the minister at CCH and was preparing for his retirement. I remember his intensity

and his infectious smile. His style of delivering the Sunday message was seemingly rambunctious at times, which I liked. I remember having the sense of gold in the air (and also within) on several occasions, which I now believe to be the Holy Spirit energy. I loved it when he would say things like the gospels quicken our spirits. It often felt as if Jesus had taken off in a UFO and was embarking on a space journey. This felt different than any other church I had ever attended.

In the beginning, my Centering Prayer was very visual. Keating says that our meditations should not be a light show. However, mine was just that and again, I liked it. I remember having inner visions of exquisite tapestries, molten hot iron being forged, sparks mixed with occasional swirling geometric patterns, stars, and constellations. Often, I have had the experience of subtle color hues and patterns show up during Lectio Divina and have also experienced holographic imagery upon hearing the Transfiguration. With all that being said, this has quieted down very much over time. We are a contemplative church, but it seems that God knew I needed some fireworks to draw me in deeper. Maybe experiencing a Springtime of the Spirit is part of the reason I'm still around.

Before Tim retired, I met with him for spiritual guidance. We

decided that the best place for me to start getting integrated would be to join a Seva team. He was right. I still participate in this selfless service on Sunday mornings when the Seva team intentionally prepares the church grounds and sanctuary for our community worship. After completing all the core curriculum classes, I became a member of CCH. Through participation in the Work of Inner Christianity class and The Journey School, I continue to be challenged to expand my consciousness. I have learned that one does not have to be identified with harmful thoughts and feelings that are based in fear and not fruitful. With growing faith, I've learned to trust in God's plan for me, and that I have a right not to be negative. The practice of Centering Prayer helps me slow down and be more aware that God has made us heirs to His Kingdom. The Work helps me uncritically self-observe and use tools to free myself from destructive and harmful thoughts and allows me to love others better.

In a final meeting with Tim, I expressed concern over his leaving, and he said, "Don't worry; the church is full of Godly people." This fell on disbelief, but I have come to find that statement to be very true. Peter Haas has done a remarkable job taking over the role as church minister. I am often moved by not only his depth and level of understanding, but also his

honesty and ability to incorporate real life situations into his teachings, which help make them more relatable. The gold is still present. I have witnessed so many different members lead a service or instruct a class with incredible knowledge of the subject matter. And, we have so many talented musicians in the community. I've heard the most beautiful Celtic a cappella, a shockingly good Easter Taizé choir, a beautiful harp performance that seemingly transformed the Eucharist and sanctuary into a wind-up figurine music box from another dimension. In one word: perfection.

The past several years have brought me and my family many blessings. I am very grateful that I have a place to bring my family that feeds us spiritually and literally. Our family loved participating in Sunday morning brunch (before Covid-19), and my kids called it "two breakfast day." It was such a great way to integrate into the community and get to know other members of the congregation. I trust in the Godly Play children's program and believe that seeds are being planted in my children's spirits for the future. I look forward to experiencing Sunday morning community fellowship, retreats, Lama road trips, the Glorious Impossible Christmas plays, and men's gatherings to name a few – a limitless load of gold.

To have hope and believe that change is possible is to be Born Again (this is the Good News). Die to the old self and become something new. As the mathematician and historian Jacob Bronowski said, "The richness of human life is that we have many lives; we live the events that do not happen (and some that cannot) as vividly as those that do; and if thereby we die a thousand deaths, that is the price we pay for living a thousand lives."

In seeing that most of my difficulties and sufferings are the cause of being attached to an outcome, whenever I am feeling disturbed, there is a part of me that is not trusting in God's plan and purpose for my life. How often I want to believe that I know what's best for me, and I overlook God's handiwork. But then remember: *Lord, you are our father. We are the clay, you are the potter, we are all the work of your hand.* Isaiah 64:8

Like the love I have for my children, I now believe that God has that same love for me as His child. He created me and is a part of me. Deep down beneath the layers of personality, opinions, and preferences lies an unshakable truth of God's love that centers my being. May God continue to shape me into what he would have me be and take away the parts that prevent me from experiencing joy, love and harmony. Teach me to be a giver more than

a taker.

Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

As most members of our community attest, we are so fortunate to have a church like this in Austin. God continues to reveal Himself to us and leads us into a bright future. It's humbling to know I didn't have to search for God's kingdom; we have been in it all along. Through attending and prayer, God continues to open my heart to the Truth and free me from the Lie of Separation and useless acting out from fear. Thank God for all those who have come before us and paved the way for what we now enjoy. And bless all those who have been around for a while, and who continue to hold the torch and guide our community with attention, awareness and grace. ☸

ELDER WISDOM: HONORING OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

THE GRACE OF AGEING BY ANN C. KIRK

“Nature herself teaches us that age demands dignity and honor. The older the redwoods, the more majestic. The older wines and cheeses are, the more they are praised and honored for taste. Should it not hold true that the older a man, the more he is to be appreciated by others. I am convinced that young people are missing one of the greatest opportunities available when they do not get to know the elderly and associate with them. All too soon these towering pillars of faith and wisdom will pass from our midst and the loss will be tremendous.” Unknown

Can you imagine a little girl about two feet tall, skinny with straight blond hair, and searching brown eyes that were drinking in the world? She began labeling things, people and events as good, better and best; then trying to reconcile it with tugs from the heart and wanting to embrace it all. She learned from overboard experiences to be cautious after exposing too much of herself. But now, I know it was God’s grace to “see through my heart” that created young traumas. Some people and

places made deep imprints over the decades to form today’s “me”—the over-the-hill, elderly person, grandmother and gal that Tim Cook calls Annie.

Let me start by introducing you to my God-given mentors, my maternal grandparents, who perhaps by today’s standards were dogmatic and firm; yet they were excellent role models for me. Their enjoyment of a simple lifestyle, modeling basic values, and expressing genuine love and support of family, provided a strong grounding in love and reverence for God and all life. My grandmother taught me to sew, my grandfather sometimes played cards with me, and both modeled how to sit meditatively in a rocking chair on the porch and let the present moment be all that matters. Neither liked to chatter, occasionally we would listen to a radio if we had batteries for it or read by a kerosene lamp. Early bedtimes encouraged one to awaken to welcome a beautiful sunrise. What I took away from them was a close love and respect for ageing adults.

Now I live in a comfortable apartment at a senior living center not far from The Church of Conscious Harmony. Considerable downsizing

was needed when my husband, John, and I moved to our apartment in the independent living building 13 years ago. We missed our privacy, personal routines and necessary duties to maintain our lives. Yet, wisely, we took several trips our first year there, and it began to truly be home after each return.

In the second year, we invited all the residents to attend a meeting for Contemplative Prayer. Barbara Cook helped establish the group. We introduced the background and concepts, showed the first series of Fr. Thomas Keating’s videos on Centering Prayer, and included the Welcoming Prayer. Our gatherings were meaningful; some inquired, visited, and tasted, but did not become committed. John and I continued. By the grace of God, six faithful prayer friends joined me weekly in my apartment for about nine years. After opening with twenty minutes in silence, I led a scripture reading in the *Lectio Divina* practice, and we shared any concerns in closing. A senior living center is often called “the waiting room for God,” so there are frequent losses and serious illnesses to remember in daily prayer.

We had five years together in our apartment before John's Alzheimer's disease progressed and he moved to the Memory Support in the adjoining building.

On an Easter Sunday morning a few months after this separation, I started out on an early walk. Starting up the steep hill, the sun was rising. My mood was sad. Then halfway to the top, I was encompassed in a brilliant golden sunlight. I now believe this to be like death ... walking into God's glory. Nearing the crest I burst into laughter, the joy could not be contained within. As I continued drinking in the beauty of another day, my body and soul responded to the freshness of the morning. I reflected on Easters of the past and how each memory had strengthened my faith for the year ahead. I began looking for signs and lessons that day to guide me through life's changes. To my joy and surprise never doubt God's sense of humor an armadillo crossed the road ahead of me. He looked as though he owned the world. A favorite phrase of self-remembering came to mind, "God is in everything." I see God's care and presence especially in our wonderful staff at my senior center. They make our community thrive and treat each resident with respect and dignity. I've observed warm friendliness and a caring attitude develop among the staff and our residents, even though we may be forgetful, impatient or demanding. Perhaps being free of

household responsibilities allows us residents to remember ourselves as Fr. Keating advises in the book *Reflections on the Unknowable*:

"Old age is the time to do nothing in order to be more and more taken over—body, soul and spirit—by this incredible love that is always with us ... (It) has to be uncovered by a certain amount of discipline, by the trials of life, and trust and self-surrender to the immediate presence of God."

The immediate presence of God was felt the morning that John died. I had been reading Psalm 108 in *Lectio Divina* to him. After the fourth reading of the psalm, the "resting in (*contemplatio*)" phase of the scripture reading, I realized he had slipped away. For some time my daughter and I stayed present with his spirit, and I am so grateful to have shared this with him. The treasured memories come to me in unexpected moments – some with tears, most with joy, and a few with big laughs.

As human beings, we could wish to recognize other people as ourselves whether they are of a different race, color, culture, young or old. Some of us shy away from older adults because they may be needy or have lost their looks and physical abilities. I'm learning to be open and interested in new members in our residential community. Some

are gracious and delightful; others may be set in their ways, opinionated or just plain crabby. Still I find that their life stories and adventures give me a chance to grow in wisdom. I realize that we older adults can become childlike, relish silly humor and appreciate good news. Given the opportunity, my thoughts or suggestions are to listen to our stories, not the events but the realizations we have uncovered for ourselves. They may seem simple, boring or silly. Yet our stories may give you the courage to do as Oscar Wilde suggested, "Be yourself. Everyone else is taken."

As I live these senior years, I continue to discern what is of God: what nourishes my aim to love and be love, knowing that my generation grew up in a time of more silence and less divided attention. I believe this was a gift for us grey-haired, life-worn persons, enabling us to develop resilience, understanding and hope. We wish to pass these basic spiritual realities on to all to help heal our world.

Perhaps we could gather with the young, younger, and youngest to listen to each others needs and desires, opening to a vow of a Holy Spirit compromise, asking God for guidance for the next step, and then the next one. Ever listening, opening, waiting, and remembering God's first word is silence ... a grace that resonates in us all, young and old. ☺

My Father is still working, and I also am working. John 5:17

LIVING THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY IN DAILY LIFE

ATTENDING TO FORGIVENESS BY NATHAN JONES

Work Idea: The Work does not ask or insist that we forgive. The Work merely points out the process and illustrates the path through which forgiving can happen: through self-observation, we are able to see ourselves; flaws and flowers. By observing the various cranky, greedy, petty, talkative, boastful, etc. parts of us (different ‘I’s) we can better understand who and what we truly are. Having seen our various sides, when we encounter the same in others it is not distasteful, negative, shameful or otherwise. In fact, it is abundantly normal. Every person I have ever interacted with had some degree of these ‘I’s. We are all the same. By seeing it in me, I have no problem with it in you. Further, I certainly can’t hold some behavior against you and create internal accounts if I have clearly and repeatedly observed the same inclination, if not action, in me. Through observing it in me, I can let it go in you. Another way of saying this is I can cancel your debt, at least as far as I have observed the same behavior in myself. The

Greek word that has been translated as forgiven, *aphiemi*, conveys the basic idea to acquit, to discharge, to let go, to dissolve a legal bond, to cancel one’s debt. It refers to the act of putting something away or setting it aside. It is not an emotional or theoretical process. It is far more practical and logical.

Work Source: “Now it amounts to this—namely, if I become conscious of all and everything in myself, I could not be violent about any unpleasant manifestation in another, for I would see it also in myself. I would see myself in others and others in myself ... To say one forgives another an injury or insult is not merely self-deception but also spiritual arrogance. It is as if one thought one could do. No, the only way is through a slow development of consciousness of what is in one by long self-observation, which will shatter one’s pet idea of oneself, but will release one—and others whom one had imprisoned in one’s hate and violence.” Maurice Nicoll, *Commentaries*, pp. 1586-1587

Application: Aim to catch yourself deliberating on the negative manifestation of another. Have you observed this behavior in yourself? Have you not gossiped nor coveted, lied nor lusted?

Further Resource: Consider that The Prayer said: “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” It is a proportional request. “Give to me the same that I have given.” If I have not taken the time, paid with energy and attention, and observed it in myself, I will be unable to see it and let it go in another. Turned internally, it expresses that we will be able to let go in direct proportion to that which we have observed in ourselves. ☸

2021 ANNUAL AIM READING

EYE OF THE HEART
BY CYNTHIA BOURGEAULT

OUR MONTHLY PRACTICE: WALKING

Rumi said there are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground. One way is walking in nature. With each step, it's as if our feet kneel to the earth and kiss it. This is the special grace of walking, the gift of being striders of spirit on this beautiful earth.

Strider, or Aragorn, from *The Lord of the Rings*, inspired a poem with the memorable line: not all who wander are lost. Sometimes just walking is the best way to disappear into the present moment – free from all the pressing demands and obligations daily life delivers. There is a deep connection with walking in nature and the spiritual life. In fact, the very word “saunter,” literally means to search for the *Sainte Terre*, that is, the Holy Land. It turns out that every step we take, we tread upon holy land. All our wanderings and walking can be re-imagined with a sacred intention and attention. That is the heart of this month's community practice – to be present with each step. To feel deeply in the weight of the body as we walk. To breath slowly and walk ever slower – to look; to behold; to be. In this way, discover how praying can be walking and walking, praying.

Walking is also a good way to practice divided attention; to pay attention to oneself and to external sensations, such as the way your feet feel on the earth; the sound of birds; the look of the sky; the color of the grass. Being attentive as we walk is a practice of divided attention that can birth further moments of conscious union with nature, self and God. Enjoy the journey! ☺

JULY SERMON THEMES REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

July 4	The Weak Force	2 Corinthians 7-10
July 11	Stay Until You Leave	Mark 6:7-13
July 18	Two for One: The Great Exchange	Ephesians 2:13-18
July 25	To the Mountain Alone	John 6:1-15

JULY CALENDAR

For more details, visit consciousharmony.org or call 512-347-9673

SPECIAL EVENTS

Half-Day Online Centering Prayer Retreat
Jul 10 1-4pm Register online

5-Day Overnight Centering Prayer Retreat
Jul 23-27 at Cedarbrake in Belton TX
\$570 single room Register online

MONTHLY

Caritas Donations
1st Sundays
Bring non-perishables for Caritas
or please consider making a donation of food
or money directly to caritasofaustin.org

WEEKLY

Sundays
*Centering Prayer & Lectio Divina 8-9am
*Intercessory Prayer 9am
†Worship Service 10-11:30am
†Youth Program (pre-K-12) 10-11:30am
†Fellowship 11:30am

Wednesdays
†Contemplative Worship Service 6:30-7:15pm

Thursdays
*The Journey School Class 7-8:30pm

Saturdays
*Scriptorium 11am
*Compline 9-9:15pm

DAILY

*Centering Prayer Service 7-7:35am

*Please join these services, groups, and classes via online video conferencing. Contact the website for accessible links and more information.
†Open for in-person at CCH



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*Blessed is the one whose help is from You;
in his heart he has prepared to ascend by steps
in the valley of tears, in the place which has been set.*

Psalm 84:6-7



THE ASCENT OF THE PURE OF HEART

Since happiness is nothing other than the enjoyment of the highest good and since the highest good is above, no one can be made happy unless he rise above himself, not by an ascent of the body, but of the heart. But we cannot rise above ourselves unless a higher power lifts us up.... Divine aid is available to those who seek it from their hearts, humbly and devoutly; ... in this valley of tears, through fervent prayer. Prayer, then, is the mother and source of the ascent.
St. Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*

Our identity is so penetrated and suffused and transformed and glorified, that there is nothing but Christ.
No motive but Christ.
No love but Christ.

Thomas Keating, *The Habit of Heartfulness*

