

APC Connections

Volume 6, Issue 11

August 2014

Upcoming Events

- Aug. 3 — Out-reach meets 12:15
- Aug. 10—Session meets 12:15 PM
- Aug. 17— 9:30 AM Farewell breakfast for Jay
- Aug. 24 — Service of Ordination and Installation 12 PM



Inside this issue:

Upcoming Events	3
Mark Your Calendar	4
Ushers/Greeters Birthdays	5

Pastor's Page

“The simplest spiritual discipline is some degree of solitude and silence. But it's the hardest, because none of us want to be with someone we don't love. Besides that, we invariably feel bored with ourselves, and all of our loneliness comes to the surface.

We won't have the courage to go into that terrifying place without Love to protect us and lead us, without the light and love of God overriding our own self-doubt. Such silence is the most spacious and empowering technique in the world, yet it's not a technique at all. It's precisely the refusal of all technique.” — Richard Rohr, *Radical Grace: Daily Meditations* by Richard Rohr

Friends,

Little did I know that when I started the RUAH School of Spiritual Guidance two years ago that I would learn how to love doing nothing. And even more surprisingly, the more I have been able to empty myself of all distractions, the closer I get to really sensing God's presence. Cultivating the spiritual discipline of solitude and silence *seems* like it would be easy. But it isn't easy at all. I struggled at first with even 20 minutes of silence. What do you even think about? How do you not get bored or uncomfortable? Wasn't I supposed to fill my head with prayerful words? The world needs prayer for specific things, right? The world needs me to learn stuff and take

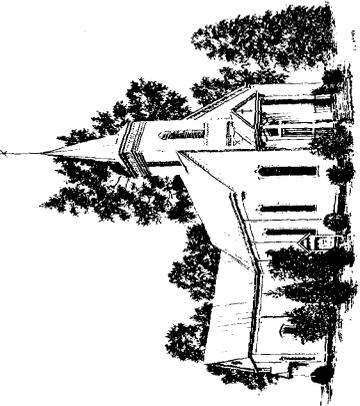
(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

action. But a required part of the course is silence, silent prayer with each gathering, and silent retreats on our own. The hope is that the participants will develop the capacity for internal silence as well as experiencing external silence. How would I ever learn to separate myself from the constant chatter of my own thoughts?

It took me awhile to get comfortable with the concept. But now, when I go to Richmond Hill, an hour of silence goes very quickly, and often leaves me craving for more. There are so many distractions in our world, ones that I really even like. I'm not all that different from the dog in the movie, "Up" that chatters on and on until mid-sentence when he hears a noise, cocks his head and goes, "Squirrel?" We are living in a constant stream of input, and we leave precious little time for processing, or simply for letting go altogether.

The mystics have always known that silence is really important to the spiritual life. In fact, monasteries and convents require significant degrees of silence in the midst of community. It is so radically counter-cultural that at first, we might find it off-putting. How can being quiet contribute to care and concern for the outside world? It can seem selfish or just plain weird. We do a lot of talking in our world, even in the church, so what about time for listening? What about time for emptying ourselves and being filled by the Love of God?

I know I was taught, encouraged even, from early on to fill every minute of my time, and that filling has seemed to go at an even faster pace as I have grown into mid-adulthood. Rest is considered on equal par with sloth, and they are not the same thing. I wish that I could make a silence requirement sometimes – 20 minutes at first, then on to an hour, and maybe even a day. Teaching "silence" is probably the hardest thing to do. One has to experience it to understand the love and joy that can be present there. Our world can be very, very LOUD. But the quiet is a wonderful gift you can give yourself to reconnect with God and to learn to love yourself.

I pray for you to know the beauty that comes from silence and solitude – not so that you will be cut off from the world – but so that you will feel more graciously and gratefully a part of it.

God's Peace, Pastor Kerra

"We cannot put ourselves directly in the presence of God if we do not practice internal and external silence."
 "In silence we will find new energy and unity. Silence gives us a new outlook on everything."
 —Mother Teresa, *In the Heart of the World*

Usher and Greeter Schedule

	GREETERS	USHERS	COMMUNION ELDERS	COMMUNION PREP	LITURGIST	FLOWERS
8/3/14	K. Cole	J. Aderhold, G. Arey	J. Aderhold, K. Dorgan, B. Mathes, E. Simpson	S. Huff		Coddington
8/10/14	K. Pugh	J. Aderhold, K. Pugh	<i>REMEMBER, If you cannot serve, please find a replacement and leave a message on the office phone, 798-5543.</i>			Young
8/17/14	R. DuPriest	K. Dorgan, R. DuPriest				Bryan
8/24/14	B. Shea	D. & D. Coddington, D. & P. Dunn				
8/31/14	E. Shea	T. Blair, K. Cole, V. Neeley, G. Young				
9/7/14	E. Simpson	L. Allison, S. Henderson	L. Allison, Do-reen C., K. Pugh, M. Summerson	K. Basilio		Basilio



Happy Birthday to: August

- 9 Clyde Johnson
- 10 Roger Cole
- 13 Dave Coddington
- 18 Ron Bryan
- 24 Ella Mae Simpson

Remember to like us on
Facebook

and to check out our website

www.ashlandpresbyterian.org

where you can find Pastor Kerra's weekly Sermons, APC's monthly newsletters, upcoming monthly scheduled events, and much more!

Mark Your Calendars Now!



**Sunday,
September 7, 2014**
Watch for further details!

Presbyterian Women



PW will celebrate a new year of Bible study on **Tuesday, Sept. 9**, with a covered dish luncheon in Lancaster Hall at **11 AM**. Judy Aderhold will once again lead us in a challenging look at 2 Corinthians, "Reconciling Paul." Watch the September newsletter for any further information.— Doreen Coddington

SAVE THE DATE!

*Friday-Saturday,
November 14-15, 2014*



*The Ash Grove at Richmond Hill
Everyday Creative Spirituality ... Everyday*

With speaker - The Rev. Carol Gathagan, from Altoona, Pennsylvania
Watch future newsletters for more information!



We are needed again!

If you can help provide food for the workers at the St. James the Less Free Clinic, please let me know. Our night will be **Wednesday, August 6**; drop off at St. James before 5:30 PM. They need finger food for 20: sandwiches, pizza, fried chicken, fruit or vegetable trays, cookies. Thanks for your help! Ginger Young

Come Celebrate Jay!

It's hard to believe but Jay's time with us, as our intern, is coming to a close. Come thank him for all his work and his contributions to Ashland Presbyterian Church over the Summer.

Sunday, August 17 at 9:30 a.m.
Farewell Breakfast in Lancaster Hall

Watch for further details in your Sunday bulletins!



Adult Sunday School

Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in Lancaster Hall



Join us Sunday, August 3 and 10 as we continue our study of Mark with our summer intern Jay Pi. There will be **no** class held on Sunday, August 17 due to our Farewell Breakfast for Jay.

Pastor Kerra will teach class on August 24 and 31 on Spiritual Practices:

- August 24 — Spiritual Disciplines for everyday life
- August 31 — Practicing Silence and Solitude

Service of Ordination and Installation

Sunday, August 24 during morning worship

For newly elected officers Judy Aderhold, Karen Hasbrouck, and Julie Tate

