



Rooted and growing in the light of God's love.

THE WEST VIRGINIA INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUALITY

1601 Virginia Street East, Charleston, West Virginia, 25311
304.345.0926 (main) 304.345.8206 (fax)

Email: wviscr@aol.com

Website: www.wvis.org

Facebook: The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality

NEWS FROM WVIS

2021 #1

Message from our Executive Director

Sister Carole A. Riley, CDP, Ph.D.

Dear WVIS Friends:

Happy 2021! As you will read, our theme for 2021 is *Living into Change*.

Although change addresses our external surroundings, and material things, I want to use the description of Ted Dunn who encourages five aspects to move from change to deep change transformation. **CHANGING** or transformation is a process of growth in vision, self-awareness. To move from change to transformation:

We first practice mindfulness and welcome the stranger, shifting our consciousness and restoring the dignity of difference.

Second, we reclaim our inner voice where we create a space to be hospitable to our very soul.

Third, we move to the womb of our becoming, living amidst a world of hurt, we reconcile, seek forgiveness, make amends, heal our wounds and restore trust.

Fourth, we act our way to a new way of being and become students in the 'new normal.'

Fifth, listening to our deepest longing, we engage new partners in mission, gather our wisdom from the past and weave together a dream of changing that serves.



*Awaken your spirit of adventure
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk
Soon you will be at home in this new rhythm
For your soul senses the life that awaits you.
(from O'Donohue, 2008, pg. 14)*

Sister Carole Riley CDP

Can you help?

WVIS receives many gifts listed on our 'needs' list each month. Thank you for your generosity. We currently have needs for:

Gift cards for Lowes foods
Case White Copy Paper
Stamps and Specialty Paper
Light bulbs

Contributions toward lawn care, heating bill, other utilities
Food storage containers that can be frozen and not break
Case of white dinner napkins
Facial tissues for bedrooms

Most of these items are available through Amazon. If you have an Amazon account, you can purchase and ship directly to WVIS.

Message from our Board President

Rev. David S. Lake

Pastor, First United Methodist Church
Waynesburg, PA
dslake2000@gmail.com



Psalm 46:1-3

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

Happy New Year! Have you ever been so ready for a new year?

Yet most of us are very slow to change and even resist change. Years ago, I heard the statement: When dealing with change, go as slow as the Holy Spirit will allow you. Yes, most of us drag our heels when dealing with change. Yet change is all around us: day to night, seasons of the year, we grow older every day, our weight fluctuates, our hair changes color, grows or disappears. Yes, creation all around us is changing every day! To live is to change, to be alive is to change.

Now I will admit that not all change is good...just look at all the changes we had to make in 2020! But I also know that to grow is to change. And, as we enter this new year, it feels like a great time to ask questions, evaluate and make changes in our daily lives. Where does God want me to be? What do I need to do to get there?

As we live into the year 2021, may we also live into the changes God has in store for us and continue to transform into what we were created to be.

In Christ,

Rev. David Lake

RETREATS / PROGRAMS AT WVIS

Weekly Programs at WVIS via Zoom

Third Monday: Healing Service 6 - 7 pm
Third Tuesday: Merton Chapter 7 - 9 pm
First & Third Tuesday: G.R.A.S.P. 6 - 8 pm
Wednesdays: 11th Step Contemplative Prayer 7 pm
Thursdays: Contemplative Prayer 5 pm
Thursdays: Women's AA Group 5:30 pm

To learn more, email: wviscr@aol.com

Ignatian Exercises

If you feel called to make the 30-day Exercises of St. Ignatius in its 10-month format, please contact the director of your choice:

Robert Sylvester: bsyl@msn.com
Donna Becher: donna.becher@gmail.com
Rev. Meredith Hutchinson: Mercomp@aol.com

Sr. Molly Maloney, OSF: wvissrmolly@aol.com
Margaret Nagum: chesedpeg@gmail.com
Sr. Carole Riley: wviscr@aol.com

Almost Heaven Retreats 2021

In the midst of this pandemic, you can still make a retreat and stay safe. To meet the needs of individuals who are yearning for quiet and prayer in this challenging time, consider this option...

The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality
is offering individually directed retreats by:
ZOOM OR FACETIME

Retreats can be scheduled from April 1 - August 15, 2021. For more information, either call: (412) 901-4259 or e-mail: wviscr@aol.com. Donation for your retreat will be negotiated with your spiritual director.

From Baptism to Boomer

One of my first insights into change came from my mother who after losing her husband went from depending on a loving partner and provider to raising six kids on her own. She lived into this unwelcome change, at first with the resistance of grief and nightly shots of whiskey, and then with grace and spirit.

Momentous events (voluntary and involuntary) have spurred changes in my life too—marriage, motherhood, grandmotherhood, divorce; migrations in health, wealth, geography, relationships, jobs; and psychological and sociocultural dislocations. Change has been my foe and ally. Learning to let go of what was and appreciate what is becoming, including myself, have been upending but also transforming. I bless the scars and wrinkles of experience but wouldn't refuse some photoshopping.

Living into change involves loss and renewal, decay and ripening. The seasons teach me this. Other change is unnatural and not meant to be—witness planetary destruction. Change is embedded in human experience. We rise up from the streets crying out for structural change and from the pews demanding institutional reform.

Jesus continues to call to us, “Repent!” And gives us the grace to do so. That's what we do in spiritual direction—help directees discern God's invitation to change one's heart with the aid of the Spirit. And, as the saying goes, transformed people transform people.



Pat Grebe is a WVIS Associate Spiritual Director

In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus

1 Thessalonians 5:18

For all of us, the past year has been a time of great change, much of it painful, unpleasant, and in some cases, heartbreaking. My mom died in April. Family and friends got sick, some seriously. One family friend died. I too had some medical issues. My grieving, widowed father gave up his home of 50 years, moving to independent living. I've not been able to hug my children this past year. I haven't joined my parish community for Mass in ten months.

In all circumstances give thanks? Seriously, Lord?

Yes. Seriously. We are not asked to redefine our painful experiences; we are asked to look for the grace and blessings the Lord gives us even in our most painful moments. So where is the grace in times of great change? For me, I am aware that my mother was never in pain, and never had to leave home. She died surrounded by love, my father and me at her side the whole time. Technology allowed my brother to see her and speak with her the night before she died, even though he lives across the globe. Grace. Blessings. Though I couldn't celebrate Christmas with my parish this past year, I was with the community by the live-streamed celebration, and people who've been home-bound for years now join more closely with our parish through that same live-stream. Grace. Blessings. On particularly bad days, the grace might be something as simple as a soft pillow or a cup of hot tea.

We are told to give thanks in all circumstances, to look for grace and blessings in all circumstances because we trust in God's deep, abiding, and intimate love for us. We know we are beloved, and we give thanks. Always. In all circumstances.

Where in this past year of great change has there been grace for you?



Peg Nagem is a WVIS Associate Spiritual Director

Reflection, Prayers, & Poems

Lean on ME - Reflections

by Susie Pace, Reverend Marykaye Jacquet,
and Bob Harrison

Lean on ME was released on Friday, December 18, 2020 in both electronic and printed versions as the newest collection of reflections and prayers on the WVIS Webpage under "Resources."

God's call to us is to Lean on God (ME) in all aspects of our life. This book contains 30 reflections and prayers, representing the work of 30 West Virginia authors.

February 2021 is the 35th Anniversary of Black History Month in the United States. It is also the 100th Anniversary when Carter G. Woodson returned to West Virginia to write a series of articles asking that Black History as well as all minority histories be included in U.S. History Books. For his advocacy, Dr. Woodson became known as the "Father of Black History Month," thus, in essence, making West Virginia the birthplace of Black History Month in the U.S.

The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality is committed to interfaith collaboration. Under the leadership of Sister Carole Riley, CDP, PhD., WVIS Executive Director; and Reverend Roberta Smith, President of the Charleston Black Ministerial Alliance, a collaborative interfaith partnership was formed to promote diversity, inclusion, and equality with the publication of *Lean on ME*. The release date of this publication was designed in hopes it might be used to plan Black History Month Celebrations in West Virginia in February 2021.

To order your copy of this resource (\$10 including postage), call the office at 304-345-0926 or e-mail your request to: wvisreg@aol.com.

Living Into Change: The Circle of Life

Learn more at <http://wvis.org/whats-happening-at-wvis/>



March 13, 2021 via Zoom

To Live With The Spirit

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a listener.
It is to keep the vigil of mystery,
earthless and still.
One leans to catch the stirring of the Spirit,
strange as the wind's will.

The soul that walks where the wind of the Spirit blows
turns like a wandering weather-vane toward love.
It may lament like Job or Jeremiah,
echo the wounded hart, the mateless dove.
It may rejoice in spaciousness of meadow
that emulates the freedom of the sky.

Always it walks in waylessness, unknowing;
it has cast down forever from its hand
the compass of the whither and the why.

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a lover.
It is becoming love, and like to Him
toward Whom we strain with metaphors of creatures:
fire-sweep and water-rush and the wind's whim.
The soul is all activity, all silence;
and though it surges Godward to its goal,
it holds, as moving earth holds sleeping noonday,
the peace that is the listening of the soul.

*Rev. Bill Petro, M.A. is a Spiritual Director
and Supervisor. frbpetro42@gmail.com
This month Fr. Bill offers us poetry by the
late Carmelite nun Jessica Powers, aka
Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit.*



Creation Cares...

Little things you can do to make a big difference!

As winter rolls in, days are shorter and you're spending more time inside. Change out your light bulbs to LEDs, which use MUCH less energy than CFLs or the old-fashioned incandescent bulbs.

"There are three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor, and with the earth itself!" - Pope Francis in *Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*



*Creation Cares is offered by Donna Becher,
WVIS Associate Spiritual Director*

WVIS Continues to Grow Community

December's commissioning of five new Associate Directors of Programming was a milestone in a year-long effort to clarify what it means to be a WVIS Satellite. As one of the five commissioned via Zoom on December 3, I was surprised at how moving the ceremony was for me and how concrete my call had become. What I felt was exactly what had surfaced in our first meeting in November 2019: a deeper intentionality, a firmer commitment, and the grace to live it out.

Satellites support the mission and vision of WVIS under the direction of the Executive Director through a discerned call that is commissioned in ritual. The title for a leader of a satellite, Associate Director of Programming embodies the deep mutual commitment between WVIS and the satellite leaders. Associate Directors of Programming develop and lead spiritual direction programs in their area and may offer them to the entire WVIS community as a way of enriching offerings and inviting more people to participate in spiritual direction, workshops, and the training programs.

WVIS' new Satellite locations include:

- Cindy Neely – Chapel Hill, NC
- Elaine Soper – Toledo, Ohio
- Sr. Ritamary Schulz – Southern WV & New Haven, CT
- Paula Osborne – Berkeley Springs, WV
- Liz Deal – Huntington, WV
- Charlie Boll – Charleston, WV

Our new Associate Directors of Programming describe their new role as “stirring a deep sense of gratitude...a new and joyful sense of being connected to WVIS...a solemn call to provide spiritual direction and a sense of being united with others from WVIS who are ministering in different parts of the country...”

For me, I echo each of these sentiments and I'm grateful that even in this year of social and physical distance, WVIS continues to embody a strong sense of community.



Liz Deal is an Associate Spiritual Director and an Associate Director of Programming affiliated with WVIS.

Be an Instrument of Godly Change

Reflection: Hebrews 13:9, Psalm 9:10, 2nd Timothy 2:21

The world is so ready and in need of change.

Yet we can't help but wonder what kind of change it will be when it finally comes. While many welcome change others may want more of the same. The truth of the matter is whether we call the change good or bad, whenever change comes we have to live with it and adjust accordingly.

The adjustment we make may very well be to become an instrument for change no matter how long it takes.

What makes change livable is our faith and belief in a sovereign God who changes not. Because of this belief we can live with whatever change comes our way knowing that God will see us through no matter what we face in life.

The song writer reminds us to “Build on things eternal and hold to God's unchanging hand.” For God is the only constant that we can depend on and God promises to never leave nor forsake us. This ought to encourage us as we live into change knowing that we can count on God.

The question is, can God count on you?

God wants to use you as an instrument for Godly change, advancing the kingdom of God. Make yourself available for the Master's use.

*Rev. Dr. Michael A. Poke Sr.
WVIS Associate Spiritual Director
Pastor Saint Paul MBC, St. Albans, WV
michaelpokesr@gmail.com*



Creating Healthy Pastoral Teams

Learn more at <http://wvis.org/whats-happening-at-wvis/>

Stronger Together Creating Healthy Pastoral Teams



**If your pastoral team needs better
Communication—Focus—Unity—Goals
Renewal—Prayer**

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