

Contemplative Prayer Report, January 2023

We serve to provide a welcoming “gathering place” for those interested in developing a contemplative prayer practice and to support each member’s unique spiritual journey and relationship with God, particularly as it plays out in daily life.

Although there are many forms of contemplative prayer, centering prayer is our main practice. We started in January 2021 and met via Zoom once each week, initially on Sunday evenings, and eventually landing on Thursday evenings. Currently, we are meeting in a hybrid format, with some members at church (Mitchell Hall) and others on Zoom. The meetings last approximately one hour and consists of a short prayer, followed by a 20-minute period of centering prayer. This is followed by a more extended reading (5-10 minutes). The remaining time is then opened up for comments on the reading or individual faith sharing. We close each meeting with a group vocal prayer.

We welcomed a few new members this year, lost a few, and averaged about 5-8 members in attendance each week. We instituted some shared leadership with different members leading meetings, communicating with the group, and opening up the building.

We helped to host a contemplative prayer retreat at Holy Communion in November highlighting a variety of contemplative practices, including walking the labyrinth. It was attended by a good cross-section of parish members and was well received. We are currently reading the book, “Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening” by Cynthia Bourgeault, which is providing both insight and inspiration for our practice.