



**Franciscan
Spirituality Center**

Dedicated to anyone seeking God, meaning and wholeness.

VOLUME 34 • NUMBER 3

FALL 2026

At the Center

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Community Acupuncture
- Living With Chronic Illness Support Group
- Grief and Loss in the Workplace
- Calm Parenting, Confident Kids, Stronger Families
- At-Home Death Care Workshop

Veterans and active-duty service members receive 15% off programs and retreats.
Use the discount code **MILITARY** when registering.



We welcome all who seek spiritual renewal, personal and professional growth, healing, community and connection.

The Franciscan Spirituality Center is located in the heart of scenic La Crosse, Wisconsin, sharing space with St. Rose Convent and next to Mayo Clinic Health System and Viterbo University. Guests may choose to stay in one of our 32 private bedrooms or three woodland hermitages. Other amenities include eight meeting rooms, a bookstore, a lending library and accessible parking. The FSC is within walking distance of the Mississippi River, hiking trails and a vibrant downtown.



Your generous financial support helps sustain our mission. Here are ways to give:

- Drop off or mail a check to: Franciscan Spirituality Center, 920 Market St., La Crosse, WI 54601
- Make a secure, online donation at www.FSCenter.org/donate.
- Become a *Spirited Friends* monthly donor; call 608-791-5295 to learn more.



The Franciscan Spirituality Center respectfully acknowledges that our building occupies the unceded ancestral and traditional land of the Ho-Chunk people. As our staff works to better understand the impact of colonialism on Indigenous people, we seek opportunities for relationship-building, growth and healing.

At the Center newsletter is published four times a year on earth-friendly paper with a higher recycled content.

Franciscan Spirituality Center

920 Market St., La Crosse, WI 54601
608-791-5295
www.FSCenter.org | FSCenter@fspa.org

Identity

The Franciscan Spirituality Center is a sacred place that welcomes everyone. We are rooted in the Gospels and sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

Mission

The Franciscan Spirituality Center is dedicated to supporting anyone in their search for God, meaning and wholeness.

We live this mission because we believe:

In each of us lives the Sacred.

We need each other to recognize and honor that part of ourselves.

Responding to spiritual hunger is necessary for growth, healing and peace.

As we grow in wholeness, we contribute to the healing of all creation.

Core Values

In keeping with the tradition of our Franciscan founders, we hold these core values:

Sacredness: Believe that in every person and all creation lives the Sacred.

Respect: Acknowledge the dignity, diversity and worth of each person as a unique image of God.

Community: Through prayer, empathy and sharing, create a safe, peaceful place.

Hospitality: Welcome all with compassion, acceptance and celebration.

Professionalism: Commit to competence, quality, trust and personal spiritual development.

What We Do

The Franciscan Spirituality Center guides and directs processes for prayer and offers personal presence to anyone on their sacred journey as co-creators of a just and peaceful world. The FSC offers individual and group spiritual direction, guided and preached retreats, daylong programs and events. Staff is available for off-site workshops, presentations and programs.



facebook.com/FSCenterLaCrosse



instagram.com/franciscanspiritualitycenter



youtube.com/@franciscanspiritualitycenter



atthecenterreflections.blogspot.com

Embracing the season of transition



Fall is always a good reminder that things change. With the turning of the leaves and the transition from warm to cool, we are reminded that change can be both beautiful and, at times, unwanted or difficult. Here at the Franciscan Spirituality Center, we have experienced change with staffing and roles. You'll see in this newsletter that we have said goodbye to a few staff members and also have welcomed new staff and board members. It seems

that world events, the political world, our local community and even our own lives experience change sometimes in such a rapid pace that our heads spin.

Our Franciscan roots teach us that while life situations and circumstances may change, the presence of the Holy never changes. At each staff meeting, we pray the St. Francis Prayer. One of my favorite lines is, "Where there is despair, hope." We are not meant to face change alone. Like the homepage of our website states, the FSC is a place that offers community, connection and compassionate listening. We are meant to journey alongside one another so that, ultimately, hope shines through.

You'll notice many of our offerings this fall are structured as a way of accompaniment. People often seek out the Center during times of change, loss or transition. You can connect with a spiritual director, attend a program or retreat, sign up for community acupuncture or simply sit in our social room or lending library to enjoy a time of peace and rest. Wherever you are in a season of change, know that you are always welcome here at the FSC!

Peace and all good,

Jean Pagliaro

Jean Pagliaro, FSC Director

FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY CENTER

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Steve Spilde
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Cathie Boerboom, RGS
Spiritual Director



Karna Marks
Spiritual Director



Stacey Kalas
Communications &
Marketing Coordinator



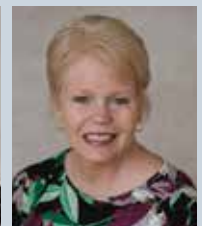
Julie Helgerson
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FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY CENTER PARTNERS



Chelle Belland
Partner Spiritual Director



Gabriela Caballero-
Moersfelder
Partner Spiritual Director



Ann Walsvik
SDPP Associate



Alison Hendley, OSB
Partner Spiritual Director



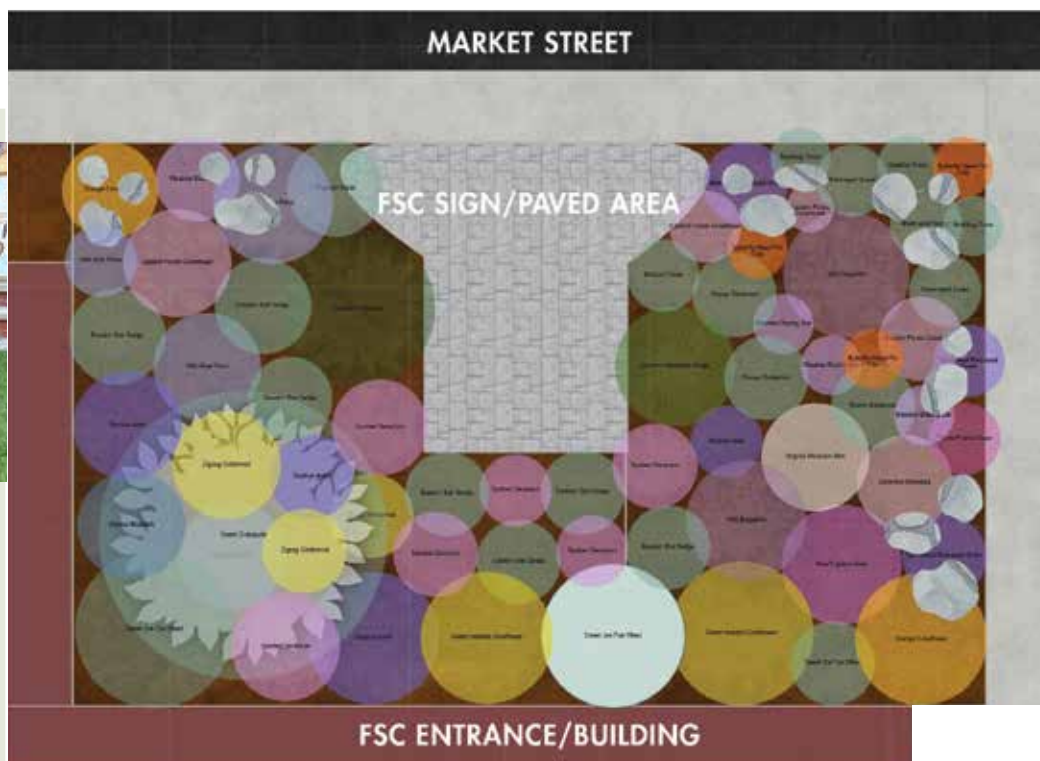
Sarah Hennessey, FSPA
Partner Spiritual Director



Help us plant a pollinator garden

As we live more fully into our Franciscan roots and care for creation, we are thrilled to announce that the FSC soon will have a pollinator garden! It will be located at the front of our building, surrounding the FSC sign, and will consist of native plants. Our vision is that this will be a space of beauty as we honor St. Francis of Assisi's legacy of radical, spiritual reverence for nature.

Leah Jakusz, FSPA ecological assistant and WisCorps volunteer, designed our garden. She's been an invaluable and inspirational resource as we make this project a reality.



THERE ARE TWO WAYS FOR YOU TO PARTNER WITH US ON THIS PROJECT:

- 1. VOLUNTEER PLANTING DAYS:** Please stay tuned for announcements on when those days will happen. We anticipate late summer or early fall. Please contact the FSC at fscenter@fspa.org if you'd like to be notified directly about planting days.
- 2. ADOPT-A-PLANT:** Our goal is to have approximately 400 native plants, and each plant costs about \$5. If you'd like to contribute, you can drop off or mail a check to 920 Market St., La Crosse, WI 54610 or use our text-to-give option (text GARDEN to 608-292-2999) or scan this QR code.

YOUR GIFT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!



WHAT WE PLAN TO PLANT:

Wild Blue Phlox
 Eastern Star Sedge
 Skyblue Aster
 Orange Coneflower
 Purple Prairie Clover
 Sweet Joe-Pye-Weed
 Showy Goldenrod
 Virginia Mountain Mint
 Wild Bergamot
 Narrowleaf Blue-Eyed Grass
 New England Aster
 Missouri Violet
 Zigzag Goldenrod
 Canada Anemone
 Green-Headed Coneflower
 Meadow Blazing Star
 Black-Eyed Susan
 Virginia Bluebells
 Common Milkweed
 Eastern Purple Coneflower
 Sweet Crabapple
 Eastern Woodland Sedge
 Spotted Geranium
 Butterfly Weed for Clay
 Nodding Onion

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

We now offer Community Acupuncture.

Acupuncture is a Chinese medicine practice in which trained practitioners insert thin, sterile needles through the skin at strategic points on one's body. It can be helpful for managing pain, minimizing nausea and digestive issues, and calming the nervous system.

A community setting makes acupuncture more affordable and accessible, allowing us to serve as many people as possible. Some people also feel more comfortable in a group setting. Friends and family members can attend at the same time. Patients remain fully clothed the entire time.



MEET OUR PRACTITIONER

Michael Kalebich has been practicing acupuncture since 2016. After graduating from the Midwest College of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine in 2015, and initially beginning his career in Lawrence, Kansas, he has happily been living and working in La Crosse since

December 2017. His appreciation of how effective acupuncture can be for any number of conditions stems both from his experience having successfully treated many patients in practice and from having been a patient himself. Originally from Chicago, Michael's first experience with Chinese medicine was at age 15, after having been diagnosed with Crohn's disease. He was introduced to a practitioner working in Chicago, Dr. Wu, and the treatment he received was so effective so quickly that even Michael's biomedical doctors asked him, "What did you do?" Michael strives to bring that level of effective, compassionate care to all of the patients he works with while practicing acupuncture.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Acupuncture is a very safe, reliable treatment that has been practiced all over the world for nearly 2,000 years. Community Acupuncture is a way to practice acupuncture that enables the acupuncturist and the treatment environment to be as healing and supportive for the patient as possible. All someone needs to have a positive experience with acupuncture is an open mind, and sleeves and pant legs that can be rolled up easily.



Make an Appointment

TO GET STARTED, PLEASE VISIT
WWW.FSCENTER.ORG/ACUPUNCTURE

- Appointments are available between 3:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.
- Each session is 30 minutes.
- Limited to 6 people per session.
- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Sliding scale fee: \$20-\$55 (pay what you can).



A NOTE ABOUT ONLINE REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION: We offer a mix of in-person and virtual programs.

If you register online, you will receive a confirmation email and receipt. If you do not receive this, please check your spam/junk folder or a secondary email address that you may have used. If it's not there, please call 608-791-5295 to verify that your registration was successfully completed.

Before the program, you will receive a courtesy email with instructions and, if it's a virtual gathering, the Zoom link. If you have not received this link within 24 hours of the program start, please call our office at 608-791-5295 or email fscenter@fspa.org. Our office closes at 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and typically is not staffed on weekends, so it is especially important to make sure you have your Zoom link prior to evening and weekend programs.

WEEKLY GROUPS

DEPRESSED ANONYMOUS (IN-PERSON)

EVERY MONDAY • 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Investment: Freewill offering

Registration is not required. Attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits.

This is a 12-step group for those dealing with depression to generate positive energies, form friendships and find support. If you are interested in participating, please call Gayle at 608-406-7990.



CENTERING PRAYER (ZOOM)



EVERY TUESDAY • 2:30-3 p.m.

Facilitator: Marcia Bentley

Investment: Free

Do you enjoy practicing Centering Prayer (Christian meditation) but wish you could do it with a group sometimes?

Or are you curious to try it but don't know where to begin? Feel free to join our free, virtual drop-in group. There's no obligation to attend every week; simply join us when you wish. We spend the first five minutes in conversation or reviewing the four simple guidelines for Centering Prayer. We then spend 20 minutes in silent prayer together.

You will receive the Zoom link upon registration.

Marcia Bentley is a spiritual director in Madison, Wisconsin, and is a former staff member of the Franciscan Spirituality Center. She can be reached at marciabentley@msn.com.



MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS, CONNECTION AND HOPE SUPPORT GROUP (IN-PERSON)

EVERY THURSDAY • 4-5:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Therese Ann Roellich

Investment: Free

Registration is not required. Attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits.

For more information, please call Therese at 608-386-2965 or email therese.recovery.resources@gmail.com.

This group is for anyone seeking mental health wellness, connection and hope. We gather weekly to listen to, and learn from, each other. We'll also share educational information about mental health. This group is based on the premise that it is a safe space, where what is shared is considered confidential. No one is required to speak or share their story. You can simply choose to listen if that feels best.

Therese Ann Roellich is the facilitator of the group, along with other support people. Therese is trained as a peer support specialist with the state of Wisconsin. She has personal lived-experience, being in recovery with both mental health conditions and substance-use addiction. Therese has spent many years advocating for those living with addictions, mental health conditions and experiencing homelessness.



GROUPS THAT MEET AT THE FSC (IN-PERSON)

Saturday Morning Men's Group meets to discuss a current book related to spirituality from 9-11 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month. For more information, please call Joe Bodnar at 608-461-1836.

Conversations That Matter is a men's group that provides the opportunity to dialogue with other men on issues that matter in their lives. This group meets on the first and third Thursday and the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

If you are interested in joining this group, please call 608-791-5295 for more information.



MONTHLY DROP-IN PROGRAMS

Prayer of Julian of Norwich:
*God, of your goodness,
 give me yourself,
 for you are enough for me.
 Only in you I have all.*

COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION (IN-PERSON)



SEPTEMBER 2, 16, 30; OCTOBER 7, 21; NOVEMBER 4, 18

First and third Wednesday of the month, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Robert Lynn

Investment: Suggested donation of \$3 benefits the FSC

Registration is not necessary; drop-ins are welcome.

Christianity has a deep tradition of silent prayer in the form of contemplation or meditation. This community setting will practice Christian meditation in the tradition of John Main, OSB, learning to quiet the mind and open one's heart to divine presence. If you are new to meditation, this is a gentle place to start. If you have an established meditation practice, deepen your practice by sharing it in community. We honor the variety of traditions and streams of meditation practice that you might use. Followers of Thomas Merton will find a home here.

Robert Lynn is a graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary with additional studies at Nashotah House. He is a novice in the Benedictine Oblates and serves as a guest homilist at various regional churches.

MEDITATION FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH (ZOOM)

SEPTEMBER 3, OCTOBER 1, NOVEMBER 5

First Thursday of the month, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rebecca Kaldunski

Investment: Freewill offering (payable online)

Registration deadline: September 2/September 30/November 4

Meditation is proven to reduce stress and promote relaxation. All are welcome to join us for a time of rejuvenation. We'll start with a guided meditation that includes relaxed breathing, a body scan and a visualization. Afterward, we will have a brief discussion. Gatherings are on Zoom; you are invited to attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits.

Rebecca Kaldunski has maintained a personal meditation practice since 2022, using mindfulness and meditation to help navigate

life's challenges and cultivate greater balance, resilience and inner peace. Inspired by nature, contemplative practices and personal growth, she guides participants through simple meditation experiences that encourage grounding, self-compassion and emotional wellness.



BUDDHISM: MEDITATION AND SKILLFUL LIVING (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 8, OCTOBER 13, NOVEMBER 10

Second Tuesday of the month, 6-7:15 p.m.

Facilitators: Frank Mauss
and Robert Lynn

Investment: Suggested donation of \$5 benefits the Franciscan Spirituality Center

Registration is not required.

Attend any and all sessions as your schedule permits.



There are many schools and traditions of Buddhism. Within those traditions are basic principles and wisdom teachings that serve as a guide for skillful living. Along with the teachings of Buddhism, meditation is a core practice. Each session will begin with a period of silent meditation, followed by a brief discussion of Buddhist teachings and personal reflection.

Frank Mauss has maintained a meditation practice for more than 30 years and is lay-ordained at Ruymonji Monastery. Bringing mindfulness into the ups and downs of life is an important part of his practice.

Robert Lynn is a graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary with additional studies at Nashotah House. He is a novice in the Benedictine Oblates and serves as a guest homilist at various regional churches. He is lay-ordained at Ruymonji Monastery.



FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 10, OCTOBER 8, NOVEMBER 12

Second Thursday of the month, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Facilitator: ADRC/FSC staff

Investment: Free

Registration is not required. Attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits.

This support group is open to ALL family caregivers and is a partnership between the Aging and Disability Resource Center of La Crosse County and the Franciscan Spirituality Center. The focus is on reducing the stress of family caregivers, not on a specific diagnosis. Meet other family caregivers and share the caregiving journey.

For more information, please contact
 Kristine Meyer at
 608-386-0922 or
 kmeyer@lacrossecounty.org.



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information about these upcoming programs and events.



2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

LIVING WITH MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT (IN-PERSON)



SEPTEMBER 10, OCTOBER 8, NOVEMBER 12
Second Thursday of the month, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Kelsey Flock

Investment: Free

Registration is required; call Kelsey at 608-386-0767.



This free, monthly group offers connection and conversation for individuals experiencing mild cognitive impairment (MCI) due to a neurocognitive degenerative disease. Sessions include open discussion, education and practical tips for living well and maintaining independence. This group is facilitated by a local dementia care specialist from the Aging and Disability Resource Center of La Crosse and is for individuals with MCI only; care partners do not attend. However, a free, no-registration-required *Caregiver Support Group* happens at the same time.

New participants: Pre-screen conversation is required before your first group to ensure a positive experience for everyone; please call in advance to allow sufficient time for scheduling.

Kelsey Flock, BS, CTRS, is a dementia care specialist at the La Crosse County Aging & Disability Resource Center, where she supports individuals living with dementia, empowers family caregivers and fosters dementia-friendly community initiatives. With a background in recreation therapy and experience across long-term care, mental health and higher education, Kelsey blends brain science and creativity to make complex information accessible. She is passionate about helping people live well with dementia and finding joy alongside them on their journeys.

LISTENING TOGETHER:

A MONTHLY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 14, OCTOBER 12, NOVEMBER 9
Second Monday of the month, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Laurie Swan and Julie Helgersen

Investment: Free

Registration is not required. Attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits.

This group provides a safe place for those who are experiencing grief to share their stories. Grieving comes with a variety of emotions that may arise with the immediate loss of a loved one or can even surface years later. You'll have an opportunity to process your unique experience while receiving the comfort and compassion of others who understand.

Laurie Swan has journeyed through her own grief experiences and is passionate about providing space for others to come together in their own grief process. She is the FSC's office manager.

Julie Helgersen is a certified grief educator through David Kessler and a graduate of the FSC's Spiritual Direction Preparation Program. She is the FSC's program and retreat coordinator.



DRUMMING CIRCLE (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 24, OCTOBER 8, NOVEMBER 12 • Thursday, 6-8 p.m.

Facilitator: Myquawn Bailey Sr.

Investment: Freewill offering

Registration deadline: September 21
October 5/November 9



Come to any or all sessions; registration is required.

Join us for an evening of rhythm and community. These sessions are designed to introduce the La Crosse community to drum culture in a way that moves the spirit and relaxes the mind. No drumming experience is necessary. Feel free to bring your own drum or use one of the variety of provided drums.

Myquawn Bailey Sr., MS, is the founder of Drum Iowa, a therapeutic drumming initiative designed to increase awareness of mindful, community-based drumming across Iowa. Based in Waterloo, Iowa, he facilitates drum events for diverse populations, including nursing homes, memory care centers, art centers and community organizations. Originally from Waterloo, Myquawn was first exposed to drum culture as a young boy in his family church. Percussion has always moved him and relaxed his spirit. It wasn't until many years later, during his time in Egypt, that he was introduced to hand drumming. Upon his return to the U.S. in 2015, Myquawn began working with at-risk youth in residential treatment settings. Using his background in psychology and behavioral studies, he developed a behavior-focused curriculum aimed at helping young people understand cognitive distortion through drumming.

OPEN WRITING CIRCLE (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 5, NOVEMBER 2 (no September session)
First Monday of the month, 6-8 p.m.

Investment: Freewill offering

Registration is not required. Attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits.

Do you love to write? All are welcome to meet with others who enjoy writing in an atmosphere of respect and acceptance. Based on Natalie Goldberg's basic principles of writing practice, we will write and listen. No critiques, no judgment. Sharing what you write is always optional. This is not a class and not about learning "how to write." The goal is to set free the writer within you through simply practicing writing. No experience is necessary; just bring an open mind, a fast-writing pen and a plain spiral notebook. Feel free to bring your own snack and/or beverage.



A SPECIAL PROGRAM TO SUPPORT VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING FOR MILITARY/VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

ZOOM OPTION

SEPTEMBER 3-4 • Thursday-Friday, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. each day

Presenters: Penny Carlson and Chris Carlson

Registration deadline: August 20

Registration link for virtual training: <https://starfishfound.networkforgood.com/events/102686-virtual-mental-health-first-aid-military-veterans-and-their-families>

IN-PERSON OPTION

SEPTEMBER 19 • Saturday, 8:15 a.m.-5:15 p.m.

Presenters: Rob Hilliard and Shawn Farr

Registration deadline: September 1

Registration link for in-person training: <https://starfishfound.networkforgood.com/events/102684-lacrosse-mental-health-first-aid-military-veterans-and-their-families>

Note: Registration is not through the FSC. Please use the provided links.

Investment:

- Free for WI resident veterans and their immediate family members
- \$35 for certified peer specialist
- \$50 for general public/civilian

Mental Health First Aid is a training that equips participants with the skills to recognize and respond to signs of mental-health and substance-use challenges. Designed for service members, veterans, military families and those who support them, this interactive program explores military/veteran-specific risk and protective factors, reduces stigma and helps individuals connect others with appropriate care and resources. Participants will gain practical tools to assess risk, listen nonjudgmentally, provide support and encourage professional help when needed. The tools learned will be helpful in challenging conversations with anyone. Veterans, family members, community supporters—and the general community—are welcome.

Professionals will receive 8.5 CEHs for participating in this program.

ZOOM PRESENTERS:



Penny Carlson serves as a Department of the Army Civilian at Fort McCoy in Wisconsin and has more than 14 years of military advocacy experience. She is dedicated to raising awareness about the prevalence of sexual violence and the need for trauma-informed care. She also works to educate others on the multiple challenges of mental health and to reduce the stigma of seeking resources and living the highest quality of life possible.

Chris Carlson serves as an Army Civilian Prevention Specialist at Fort McCoy. He has served in a variety of leadership roles throughout his career and is enthusiastic about reducing mental health stigma and treating everyone with dignity and respect.



IN-PERSON PRESENTERS:



Rob Hilliard is a Mental Health First Aid instructor and longtime advocate for veteran wellness. He helped launch the Whole Health Program within the Veterans Administration and served on the National Veterans Whole Health Task Force from 2018–2020. He has held numerous leadership roles supporting veterans, including Wisconsin Disabled American Veterans department commander, Wisconsin DAV benefits protection team leader and executive board member for Step of Faith K9 and several VA-affiliated committees. His work includes opening a therapeutic golf program for veterans at the Tomah VA Medical Center and helping redesign national DAV training programs for commanders and adjutants.

Shawn Farr is a passionate advocate for veteran wellness and a certified Mental Health First Aid instructor who has dedicated his life to supporting those who serve. With a distinguished 22-year career in the U.S. Army spanning both active and reserve service, Shawn understands the unique pressures faced by military personnel. Since 2017, he has been a trusted pillar of support within command structures, standing by soldiers through difficult family situations and providing direct, critical intervention during times of crisis. Now serving as a Department of the Army Civilian, Shawn continues to leverage his extensive experience to advocate for service members, bridging the gap between struggle and survival with empathy, resources and hands-on guidance.





2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

PROGRAMS AND RETREATS

SIX-WEEK SERIES

LOOKING FOR GREATER INSIGHT INTO AGING (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 2, 16, 30; OCTOBER 14, 28;
NOVEMBER 11 • Wednesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Facilitators: Rose Elsbernd, FSPA, and Cathie Boerboom, RGS

Investment: \$125 for entire series

Registration deadline: August 24

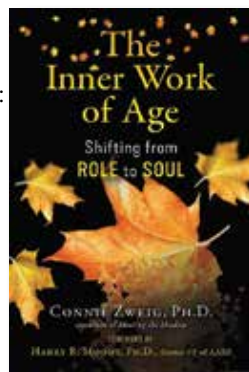
Copies of "The Inner Work of Age: Shifting From Role to Soul" by Connie Zweig are available for purchase in our Sophia Bookstore.

If you are looking for greater insight into aging, we invite you to join us for lively discussions

regarding the joys and challenges of becoming an elder. We'll use the book "The Inner Work of Age: Shifting From Role to Soul" by Connie Zweig for guidance on expanding spiritual development and your connection with self, others and all of creation. This six-part series is for people who are retired or will be soon. Each session will cover different chapters of the book. Each chapter contains relevant and relatable stories. As stated on the book's cover: "With extended longevity comes the opportunity for extended personal growth and spiritual development. You have the chance to leave behind past roles, shift from work in the outer world to inner work with the soul, and become authentically who you are."

Rose Elsbernd is a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration with a long history in the ministry of spiritual direction and retreat ministry. She's a former FSC staff member and continues to volunteer with us.

Cathie Boerboom is a Good Shepherd Sister and a trained spiritual director on staff at the FSC.



FOUR-WEEK SERIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENNEAGRAM (ZOOM)

SEPTEMBER 8, 15, 22, 29 • Tuesday, 6:30-8 p.m.

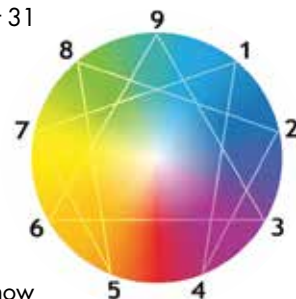
Presenter: Marci Madary

Investment: \$100 for entire series, includes online assessment

Registration deadline: August 31



The Enneagram is a powerful tool for understanding ourselves and others, and refers to nine different personality styles (the Greek word "ennea" means nine). The style we favor affects what we see as important and how we act in our relationships. In this introduction to the Enneagram, you will learn about the gifts and challenges of your personality style, how to grow beyond your default way of doing things and how to better understand people with other styles. You'll have the opportunity to complete an online assessment to help begin your process of discovery. This series, offered through Zoom videoconferencing, is ideal for people new to the Enneagram or who would like a refresher.



Marci Madary is a nationally certified Enneagram teacher through the Palmer/Daniels school in the narrative tradition. She has taught the Enneagram in a variety of settings as well as worked one-on-one with individuals, using the Enneagram to help them understand themselves and interpersonal dynamics. Marci is also a spiritual director and facilitator. With a doctorate of ministry, she works in the area of spirituality and has a passion for poetry.



THREE-SESSION SERIES

CHRONIC ILLNESS CIRCLE (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 10, OCTOBER 8,
NOVEMBER 12
Thursday, 5:30-7 p.m.

Facilitator: Julie Helgerson

Investment: \$30 for entire series, includes book

Registration deadline:
August 31



Living with a chronic illness can be difficult and at times feel isolating. This support group offers a welcoming and compassionate space to connect with others who understand the physical, emotional and spiritual impacts of navigating life with chronic illness. With the guidance of the book "Tend to Your Spirit: Mindful Living With Chronic Illness"



by Julianne Lepp and Florence Caplow (included in your registration), participants will have an opportunity for group conversation, reflection and support. Please plan to attend all three sessions in this series.

Support for this program is provided by the Mary Kathryn Fogarty, FSPA, Scholarship Fund.

Julie Helgerson is the FSC's program and retreat coordinator, a graduate of the Spiritual Direction Preparation Program and a Certified Grief Educator. She can share her own personal experiences and challenges of living with a chronic illness.



SINGING BOWLS MEDITATION (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 14, OCTOBER 19 • Monday, 5:30-7 p.m.

Presenter: Joan Filla

Investment: Suggested donation of \$10 (payable at the door or online)

Registration deadline: September 11/October 16

Tibetan singing bowls produce sounds that invite deep states of relaxation, enhancing the ability to meditate and enter expanded states of consciousness. The sounds and vibrations can create a sense of grounding that facilitates a connection to the deepest parts of our being. Join us for an evening of exploration and renewal in the presence of ageless bell sounds. You are invited to wear comfortable clothes, as you will be able to sit or lie on the floor as you prefer. Questions and hands-on experience with the bowls will be offered at the end of the session.

Joan Filla, M.D., is a local physician who was introduced to Tibetan singing bowls while recovering from the trauma of her past. Singing bowls and meditation became an integral part of her healing journey, and she hopes to share these powerful tools with others.

THREE-WEEK SERIES

BOOK STUDY: LIFE AFTER DOOM (ZOOM)

SEPTEMBER 14, 28; OCTOBER 12 • Monday, 6-7:30 p.m.



Facilitator: Steve Spilde

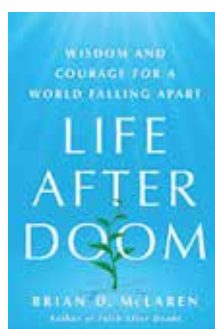
Investment: \$20 for entire series (book not included)

Registration deadline: September 7

Do you feel like the world is on fire? If so, join us for a group study of author, speaker, activist and public theologian Brian D. McLaren's most recent book, "Life After Doom: Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart." As described on the book jacket: "Blending insights from philosophers, poets, scientists and theologians, 'Life After Doom' explores the complexity of hope, the necessity of grief and the need for new ways of thinking, becoming and belonging in turbulent times. If you want to help yourself, your family and the communities to which you belong to find courage and resilience for the deeply challenging times that are upon us, this is the book you need right now."

Please purchase "Life After Doom" on your own; copies are available in our Sophia Bookstore.

Steve Spilde is the associate director and a trained spiritual director on staff at the FSC.



INTRODUCTION TO ZENTANGLE® (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)



SEPTEMBER 15 • Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.

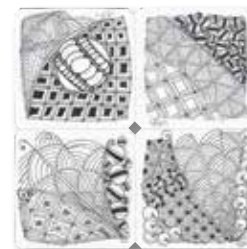
Repeated on **SEPTEMBER 19** • Saturday, 9-11 a.m.

Presenter: Christine Isham

Investment:

• **IN-PERSON:** \$35, includes supplies

• **ZOOM:** \$30 (see supply list below)



Registration deadline: September 7/September 14

The Zentangle® Method is a fun, easy-to-learn art form that focuses the mind, much like meditation. We will tangle together step by step as we learn the basics and several patterns using lines, curves, orbs, s-curves and dots. Through these simple repetitive pen strokes, you will connect with the still, small voice to find a sense of calm and inner peace. Participants will learn the basic skills of The Zentangle® Method and create original works of abstract art. No matter what your level of artistic abilities, you can tangle! Participants will take away knowledge of new tangle patterns, a completed tile and inspiration for future tangling.

Zoom participants will want to purchase the following supplies:

black Micron PN pen, graphite pencil, tortillon/smudger, mixed-media paper (medium grain, 98 lb.) cut to 3.5-inch squares OR standard Zentangle tiles. Supplies can be purchased at zentangle.com or art supply stores.

The Rev. Christine Isham has been tangling for more than 20 years and became a Certified Zentangle® Teacher in 2023. She was introduced to this spiritual practice when she was on retreat with other clergy women at a Benedictine monastery. She has been meditating through tangling and teaching tangling ever since. Christine works as a chaplain in Winona with LifeSpark Senior Living. She and her wife live in Holmen and are volunteer puppy raisers for Canine Companions.

WHAT IS A DEATH DOULA? (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 17 • Thursday, 5:30-7 p.m.



Presenter: Susan Nesbit

Investment: \$10

Registration deadline: September 8

This presentation is designed for the general public as well as medical and hospice providers to explore how a death doula (aka end-of-life doula) can provide emotional, spiritual and practical support to individuals and their families before and after death. We'll also explore how doula care complements medical, hospice and pastoral support. The focus will be on understanding options rather than skill-building or certification. If becoming a death doula is something you have considered, this is a great opportunity to learn more before taking the next step.

Susan Nesbit of La Farge, Wisconsin, is an end-of-life doula, hospice volunteer, educator and advocate for home funerals and green burial. She is a co-founder of the Threshold Care Circle and the Driftless Green Burial Alliance, and has spent two decades helping individuals and families navigate death, dying and grief with compassion and confidence. Her training includes certification through the Conscious Dying Institute and advanced studies in the Sacred Art of Living and Dying, including a two-year Anam Cara apprenticeship.





2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*



ICONOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: PROPHET JONAH AND THE WHALE (IN-PERSON)

SEPTEMBER 21-26 • Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
and Saturday, 9-10 a.m.



Instructor: Phil Zimmerman

Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$700, includes private bedroom Sunday through Friday nights, all meals and all supplies
- **COMMUTER:** \$575, includes lunch and dinner Monday through Friday and all supplies

Overnight guests may check in Sunday between 5-7 p.m.

Registration deadline: September 6

Both a meaningful prayer practice and a technical art form, iconography traces its history to the beginning of Christianity. Icons are often referred to as “windows into heaven” and continue to be venerated by Orthodox Christians and others. Noted American iconographer Phil Zimmerman will guide participants step by step through the process of “writing” or painting an icon in the Byzantine style, following ancient guidelines and techniques while using modern artist’s materials (acrylic paints, gessoed board, gold leaf). All materials and supplies are included. By the end of the week, students will have a beautifully completed icon varnished and ready to display.

While previous iconography experience is not necessary, it is helpful to have a basic understanding of painting and color mixing.

Please note: Class may extend into the evening hours on Friday for varnishing.

Phil Zimmerman is the owner of St. John of Damascus Icon Studio in Pennsylvania, having studied iconography with Richard Osacky (the late Bishop Job, OCA Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest). Phil has created hundreds of religious icons for churches and private collectors throughout the world and has taught more than 2,000 students, some of whom have become noted iconographers themselves. Phil has offered retreats at the Franciscan Spirituality Center since 2001.



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information about these upcoming programs and events.

FOUR-WEEK SERIES

TANGLING A LABYRINTH: ZENTANGLE®-INSPIRED ART (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

SEPTEMBER 22, 29; OCTOBER 6, 13

Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.

Presenter: Christine Isham

Investment:

- **IN-PERSON:** \$120 for entire series, includes supplies
- **ZOOM:** \$110 for entire series (see supply list below)

Registration deadline: September 14

Note: *Introduction to Zentangle®* (page 9) provides the foundation for tangling offerings and is an ideal starting point for new students. Completion of an introductory or prior class is recommended but not required.

Labyrinths date back at least 4,000 years and have been found all over the world in many different cultures. A labyrinth has a single uninterrupted path that leads to the center and then back out again. It is designed to foster contemplation or spiritual exploration. Zentangle® is a meditative art form where you draw structured, repetitive patterns to create abstract images. Its also fosters a sense of inner peace. During this series, we will tangle various patterns on a five-circuit labyrinth in the Chartres tradition, focusing on a section of the path each week. We’ll cover our finished work with sealer to create an individual finder-labyrinth that can be used at any time for meditation and relaxation.

A labyrinth outline of about 7 inches will be provided for students.

Zoom participants will want to purchase the following supplies: black Micron 01 and 03 pens, Uniball Signo Gel Impact (1.0mm) in gold, graphite pencil, tortillon/smudger, pastel chalk pencil (any color), mixed media paper (medium grain, 98 lb.), Mod Podge, foam craft brush.

The Rev. Christine Isham has been tangling for more than 20 years. She works as a chaplain in Winona with LifeSpark Senior Living.



FOUR-WEEK SERIES

DREAM WORK (ZOOM)

SEPTEMBER 23; OCTOBER 7, 21; NOVEMBER 4

Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Cathie Boerboom, RGS

Investment: \$60 for entire series

Registration deadline: September 18

Dreams are gifts to help us learn more about ourselves; sometimes, they can help guide us as we make decisions in life. During this virtual series, you will learn about the importance of dreams as well as methods to help you understand your dreams. As we explore dream work, we will use dreams of the people in the group along with samples of dreams from others.

Cathie Boerboom, RGS, is a trained spiritual director on staff at the FSC.



WARRIOR TO SOUL MATE RETREAT FOR VETERANS (IN-PERSON)**OCTOBER 2-4** • Friday–Saturday, 6-9 p.m. and Sunday, 9 a.m.–noon**Presenters:** Garin Forsberg and Holly Myers**Investment:** Free for veterans enrolled at the Tomah VA**Registration deadline:** September 21

Limited bedroom space available; enroll early!



Offered in collaboration with the Tomah VA Medical Center, this weekend retreat is designed to be a restorative, relationship-centered experience for military veterans and their partners. We'll create a welcoming space for couples to pause, reconnect and strengthen their bond through guided activities and shared experiences. Couples will

focus on building healthy coping skills, enhancing communication and deepening trust. Through intentional time together, they'll explore ways to navigate challenges, foster resilience and renew their shared vision for the future, and will leave with practical tools to support lasting relationship health and a renewed sense of partnership. Many also experience reduced stress and anxiety.

Note: The retreat is open to veterans enrolled at the Tomah VA who attend with a spouse or partner. Past participants have attended this retreat as a pre-marriage opportunity. Participation requires completion of an intake process. Upon registration, your information will be shared with the Tomah VA to complete this step. You may contact your VA Provider or Tomah VA Chaplain Service for more information: 1-800-872-8662 or 608-372-3971, ext. 66054.

Garin Forsberg is a board-certified chaplain who has served at the Tomah VA Medical Center since February 2024. He provides spiritual and pastoral support to veterans receiving care for mental and behavioral health, family life and relationships, and substance abuse. He also is an Army veteran, husband and father of two girls.

Holly Myers is a health and wellness coach with the Tomah VA Medical Center. She is passionate about working with veterans to live their best life by empowering them with the tools and resources to meet their specific health goals. What brings Holly a sense of joy and happiness outside of work is spending time with her husband, 9-year-old son and golden retriever, and traveling, especially to places with beaches.

HOW TO REGISTER

HOW TO REGISTER: Go online to www.FSCenter.org. Payment for most events is due at the time of registration. To pay a portion now and the balance two weeks prior to the event, please register by phone at 608-791-5295.

DEPOSITS: If indicated, the deposit is due at the time of registration and will be applied to the total fee. The balance is due two weeks before the start of the event.

REFUND POLICY: If you cancel at least 48 hours before the start time of the event, we will refund your payment. Deposits are not refundable.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: If you would like to attend a program but cannot manage the entire investment, please call Laurie Swan, FSC office manager, at 608-791-5279. We are committed to serving all on their spiritual journey and will hold your request in confidence.

GRIEF AND LOSS IN THE WORKPLACE: FINDING MEANING, RESILIENCE AND RENEWAL (IN-PERSON)**OCTOBER 7** • Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.**Presenters:** Jodi Vandenberg-Daves and Erica G. Srinivasan**Investment:** \$50, includes lunch

We are able to offer a discounted rate of \$35 to anyone who would like financial help to attend. Please enter the code GRIEF30 when you register online or call 608-791-5295.

Registration deadline: September 28

Work is one of the primary places where adults experience identity, purpose, community and a sense of contribution. When loss occurs in the workplace—through layoffs, burnout, moral injury, discrimination, program cuts, health changes or transitions we did not choose—it can profoundly disrupt our sense of meaning and wholeness.

This workshop is not focused on grief in relation to death and bereavement. Rather, it invites us to name and honor forms of grief in the workplace that often go unrecognized: the loss of identity, community, confidence, vocation or connection to a mission that once felt life-giving. Grounded in grief theory, reflective practice and spiritual inquiry, the session creates a compassionate space to explore how work-related loss affects the inner life, as well as how meaning, resilience and growth can emerge alongside grief.

Special attention is given to losses that are “disenfranchised”: losses that often are not socially validated, such as losing part of oneself, losing faith in an institution or losing a sense of purpose after organizational change.

Jodi Vandenberg-Daves is the author of “Leading With Courage: A Career-Long Guide for Idealistic Women” and “Modern Motherhood: An American History.” She is a nationally recognized scholar with more than 20 years in higher education and DEI leadership. Through her company, JVD Consulting, she helps strengthen workplace cultures and empowers leaders to claim clarity and courage at all stages of career, with an emphasis on values, social impact and creating inclusive communities.

Erica G. Srinivasan is an associate professor of psychology at University of Wisconsin–La Crosse, where she also serves as the director for the Center for Grief and Death Education and is co-chair for the Gerontology Emphasis. Additionally, she is the lead instructor in the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Grief Support Specialist Certificate Program. She conducts research on grief and loss, medical-in-dying, dementia and death education. She has a passion for normalizing conversations about death and grief, which serves as a foundation for all of her professional work.





2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

PARENTING WITH PURPOSE: CHAOS TO CALM, CONFLICT TO CONNECTION (IN-PERSON)



OCTOBER 10 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon

Presenter: Jim Castellano

Investment: \$50

We are able to offer a discounted rate of \$35 to anyone who would like financial help to attend. Please enter the code PARENT30 when you register online or call 608-791-5295.

Registration deadline: September 28

Are you tired of daily power struggles, endless negotiations and feeling like you're always the "bad person"? Imagine a home where your child listens the first time, takes responsibility for their actions and grows into a confident, independent thinker, all while strengthening your bond. Parenting doesn't have to be exhausting; let us show you how to parent smarter, not harder. Start your journey toward confident parenting and happier families! This interactive practical parenting workshop equips parents with simple, effective strategies to reduce conflict, improve communication and build cooperation at home. As children grow, they naturally test limits, experience big emotions and struggle with routines, often leading to daily frustration and power struggles. Parents will learn how to respond to common challenges such as defiance, emotional outbursts, listening issues and routine resistance in ways that build responsibility, independence and emotional resilience rather than ongoing conflict.

Youth ages 6-13 are welcome to come to the FSC during the workshop and participate in supervised activities. Space is limited to 10; there is no additional cost. Please let us know if you are bringing children when you register.

Jim Castellano is a certified professional life coach with more than 40 years of healthcare, leadership and coaching experience. He specializes in parent coaching that helps families navigate challenges such as emotional regulation, power struggles, communication breakdowns and consistency with expectations. Blending his background in nursing, health promotion, psychology and leadership development, Jim equips parents with practical, compassionate strategies to build stronger relationships, reduce conflict and create calmer, more connected homes.



THE MOSAIC OF ME: WORKING IN COLLAGE/MIXED MEDIA (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 16-17 • Friday, 6:30-9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Presenter: Barbara Papamarcos

Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$200, includes private bedroom, breakfast and lunch on Saturday, and supplies
- **COMMUTER:** \$120, includes lunch on Saturday and supplies

Registration deadline: October 5

Collage and mixed media become a sacred practice during this creative expression retreat. You will be gently guided to explore layering, texture and visual storytelling to create a personal mosaic that reflects your inner landscape. Writing, painting, color, collage, deep listening and small-group sharing are the heartbeat of the weekend. We'll also spend time in reflection, diving into the internal "mosaics" that make each person wonderfully made. This is a space for vibrant expression and spiritual growth. No prior art experience is required. Whether you attend with a friend, a family member or arrive solo, come prepared to get creative and grow.

Note: Please bring favorite pens, a notebook and clothes that can get dirty.

Barbara Papamarcos is an educator and retreat facilitator who uses art as a powerful tool to unlock and expand the way she thinks, feels and connects. Barbara creates safe, welcoming spaces for people to explore their stories, their voice and their divine inspiration. A devoted mother to two grown children and loving companion to her dog, Luna, she invites others find solace and connection through visual expression.



CONNECT WITH COURAGE: A 75-MINUTE COURAGE & RENEWAL® EXPERIENCE (ZOOM)



OCTOBER 12

Monday, 6-7:15 p.m.

Presenters: Mary Louise Peters and Amy Christianson

Investment: Free

Registration deadline: October 5



CENTER for
**COURAGE &
RENEWAL**

This virtual Courage & Renewal® experience is a welcoming space to tap back into personal renewal. If the Courage & Renewal approach is new to you, this is an opportunity to have a small taste of exploring personal renewal through story, music, poetry and self-reflection. A brief question-and-answer session will follow.

Mary Louise Peters is a Courage & Renewal® facilitator, providing retreats and renewal experiences since 2010. She has worked as an educator and consultant at local, state and national levels to improve early childhood and special education for children and families, teaching practices and conditions for staff, and state educational systems.

Amy Christianson is a practitioner who has completed the Courage & Renewal® Practicum Program. She has been a participant in a number of seasonal and Circle of Trust® retreats, and her background includes educational leadership, organizational change and working with diverse populations.

See page 16 for related retreat.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENNEAGRAM (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 16 • Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

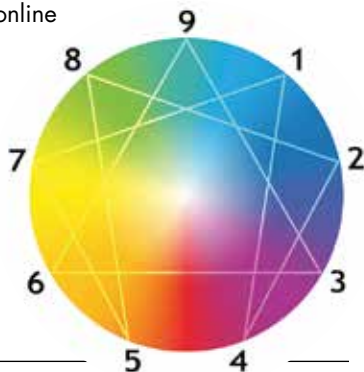


Presenter: Marci Madary

Investment: \$100, includes lunch and online assessment

Registration deadline: September 28

The Enneagram is a powerful tool for understanding ourselves and others, and refers to nine different personality styles (the Greek word “ennea” means nine). The style we favor affects what we see as important and how we act in our relationships. In this introduction to the Enneagram, you will learn about the gifts and challenges of your personality style, how to grow beyond your default way of doing things and how to better understand people with other styles. This workshop is ideal for people new to the Enneagram or who would like a refresher. Before the session, you will have the opportunity to complete an online assessment to help you identify your Enneagram style. We will review the basics of the Enneagram system and help you understand what your number means.



THE ENNEAGRAM: APPRECIATING YOUR LIGHT AND SHADOW (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 16-17 • Friday, 6:30-9 p.m.
and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



Presenter: Marci Madary

Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$190, includes private bedroom, breakfast and lunch on Saturday
- **COMMUTER:** \$110, includes lunch on Saturday

Registration deadline: September 28

Through the lens of the Enneagram personality-typing system, we will consider both the giftedness of each type as well as the growth edges. Defense mechanisms, centers of intelligence, vice and virtue will be explored with balance and compassion. Shine a light on your shadow and learn how to embrace it.

Note: If you don't already know your type/number, you'll want to register for and attend *Introduction to the Enneagram* before the start of the retreat.

Marci Madary is a nationally certified Enneagram teacher through the Palmer/Daniels school in the narrative tradition. She has taught the Enneagram in a variety of settings as well as worked one-on-one with individuals, using the Enneagram to help them understand themselves and interpersonal dynamics. Marci is also a spiritual director and facilitator. With a doctorate of ministry, she works in the area of spirituality and has a passion for poetry.

 Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information about these upcoming programs and events.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF WORLDS: BOOK LAUNCH EVENT (IN-PERSON)



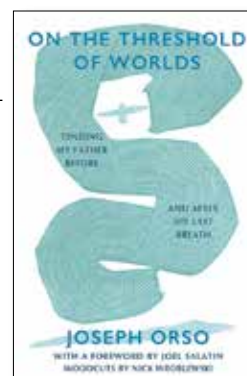
OCTOBER 22 • Thursday, 6-8 p.m.

Author: Joseph Orso

Investment: Free

Registration deadline: October 20

Joseph will read excerpts from his book and facilitate a discussion at 6 p.m. Books will be available to purchase during the event, and refreshments will be provided.



When a loved one comes to the threshold of their existence, and their last breath nears, who will tend their body? Who will wash them, pray with them, sit vigil with them? These questions, like this book, are at once practical and mythical. In telling the story of his father's journey with early-Alzheimer's, of his final breaths and how family and friends tended his body afterward without help from the funeral industry, Joseph Orso inspires the reader through elemental, illuminated grief. In a world that has forgotten our basic responsibilities to each other, "On the Threshold of Worlds" is a tale for a time of remembering. In a techno-obsessed age that sees suffering and death as glitches, this book invites readers into an age made holy again by the work of human hands. Exploring both personal and cultural loss of meaning, it makes a case that tending a beloved's body after death is an ancient inheritance, essential for remembering what we are as human beings.

Joseph Orso lives with his family near the West Fork of the Kickapoo River in Wisconsin, where they tend a garden, chickens and sheep. He is a former staff member of the FSC. Learn more at josephorso.com.

COGNITIVE YOGA MINI-RETREAT (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 24 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon

Presenter: Bernice Olson-Pollack

Investment: \$35, includes yogurt bar and beverages

Registration deadline: October 12

Join us for a vibrant morning of yoga and discussion.

A consistent practice can offer a comprehensive approach toward enhancing the dynamic well-being of both mind and body. The intentional movements enable us to move steadily and safely into postures as we consciously breathe and bring attention to the present moment. A simple meditation of embracing stillness helps to absorb the calming energy generated from the practice. This focused effort encourages greater cognitive function, including attention, memory and stress reduction. A commitment to a life that includes yoga on a regular basis can be particularly effective for enhancing mental flexibility and clarity.

Beginners are welcome!

Bernice Olson-Pollack has a Master in Science in Community Counseling and is a 200-hour YogaFit-trained instructor.





2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*



TENDING TO OUR DEAD: AN AT-HOME DEATH CARE WORKSHOP (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 24 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Presenters: Maks Kopish and Ashely Kiehnau

Tiered pricing: \$125 | \$150 | \$175 (lunch is included)

Please offer at the highest level your budget will allow. We value your presence; if these suggested fees present a hardship, please call 608-791-5295 for a confidential scholarship.

Registration deadline: October 12

Until the latter part of the 19th century, most people were born and died in their own homes.

When they were born, their family cared for them; when they died, their family cared for them. Dying, like birthing, was integrated into living. Caring for those who had died was not only the last act of love, it was the first step toward healing. This workshop will give you the information and hands-on practice you need to care for a loved one who has died. You'll learn how to safely and respectfully tend to the body of the deceased, meet legal requirements and carry out a home- or family-directed funeral with or without the services of a funeral director. Topics will include advance planning, required paperwork, care of the body, creating sacred space and home vigils, family-direct cremation and green burial options.

The Rev. Maks Sandor Kopish is a death doula, ordained interfaith minister and eco-chaplain. Their ministry focuses on healing the primal wound of separation-mindset by inviting humanity into conscious remembrance of our place and role within the great web of life. Maks is taught by Indigenous educators, soil, fungi, trees and the wondrous cycles of nature; they are passionate about reawakening people to the mycelial threads of kinship that weave us together as a human family with an ancient lineage interwoven with all the rest of creation.

Ashely Kiehnau works as a therapeutic mentor in southwest Wisconsin, offering in-home, nature-based and somatic support for clients seeking coping skills, healing and connection. After the death of her mother in 2009, and feeling unsupported by the experience that followed, Ashely began a deeper journey into grief work and supportive death care. She is passionate about educating and empowering others to reflect on their own end-of-life wishes, make informed choices and approach death and dying with greater openness and intention.



WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION? (ZOOM)

OCTOBER 27 • Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.



Facilitators: Chelle Belland and Cathie Boerboom, RGS

Investment: Free

Registration deadline: October 19



Spiritual direction is a contemplative practice in which a trained guide listens carefully and compassionately as you describe the milestones, detours and questions of your unique spiritual journey, helping you discover your inner wisdom. During this virtual introduction, trained spiritual directors will describe the process and answer any questions you may have. If you have never experienced spiritual direction, this will be an easy way to learn more before you make an appointment or commitment.

Cathie Boerboom, RGS, is a Good Shepherd Sister and a spiritual director on staff at the FSC.

Chelle Belland is a trained spiritual director who partners with the FSC and has a background in mental-health therapy.



SIX-WEEK SERIES

DIVORCE RECOVERY (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 27; NOVEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24; DECEMBER 1
Tuesday, 5:30-7 p.m.



Facilitator: Julie Helgersen

Investment: \$100 for entire series

We are able to offer a discounted rate of \$50 to anyone who would like financial help to attend. Please enter the code DIVORCE50 when you register online or call 608-791-5295.

Registration deadline: October 21

This series is for those who have been through divorce, separation or the end of a long-term romantic relationship within the past three years. The challenging emotions that accompany divorce and separation can be overwhelming. Share your experiences, receive support from others and explore a path for healing. We will learn practices based in self-compassion to help you rebuild your life and form new loving relationships.



Julie Helgersen is the FSC's program and retreat coordinator, a graduate of the Spiritual Direction Preparation Program and a Certified Grief Educator. She can share her own personal experiences of going through the Divorce Recovery program.



12-SESSION SERIES

THE REGULATED PATH: LEARNING TO REGULATE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM (ZOOM)

OCTOBER 26, 29; NOVEMBER 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 19, 23, 26, 30; DECEMBER 3 • Monday and Thursday, 5:30-6:15 p.m.



Presenter: Leah Tanke

Investment: \$125 for entire series

Registration deadline: October 12

Learn simple, science-based tools to regulate your nervous system and support your physical, mental and spiritual well-being. In this group, you'll practice becoming an active, compassionate operator of your nervous system, reconnecting with your inner wisdom and innate capacity for balance. Through brief embodied practices, we'll cultivate more ease, resilience, presence and joy in daily life. Expect short practices during sessions and just 5 minutes a day on your own. These gentle tools support lasting calm, a deeper sense of connection and a return to wholeness.

Leah Tanke has worked in the mental health field for 20 years, and her passion for this work grew out of her own healing journey, where nervous system regulation finally brought real and lasting change. For the past two years, she has been part of Trauma Healing Accelerated, guiding people through online programs in nervous system regulation and trauma healing. She also offers these programs in person in the La Crosse area.

FOUR-WEEK SERIES

A CREATIVE IMMERSION WITH CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

OCTOBER 29; NOVEMBER 5, 12, 19 • Thursday, 5:30-7 p.m.



Presenter: Ally Markotich

Investment: \$80, supplies not included

Registration deadline: October 19

Let the words of St. Francis' Canticle of the Creatures ignite your sacred imagination. During this four-week creative immersion, we'll explore relationships with Brother Sun, Sister Mother Earth, Brother Wind and Sister Water. Each week, Ally will guide you with prayerful, creative prompts to open your personal imagery and listen for personal insights for each of these elements. This will be both a playful time of expression and a deep, soulful practice. Together, in community, we'll honor all of creation and give thanks for the gift of connection. No art experience is necessary; only a willing heart!

Materials needed: Mixed media sketchbook, 7-by-10-inch or larger, pencil, black permanent marker, watercolors and brushes or your favorite color medium, gold acrylic paint (optional) and journal or writing paper

Ally Markotich is an artist and poet who creates from a place of heart to spark sacred imagination, prayerful possibility and relationship with the Sacred Feminine. With playful approach and rich depth, she teaches accessible ways to navigate one's inner world via simple creative prompts. She is the author of "Soul Kindling: Ignite Your Sacred, Creative Heart." Learn more at www.soulkindling.com and follow along with her colorful musings on Substack (The Illuminated She).



BREATH, BODY, BOWLS (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 29 • Thursday, 5:30-7 p.m.

Presenters: Joan Filla and Bernice Olson-Pollack

Investment: \$20

Registration deadline: October 26

Integrate conscious breathwork and restorative movements while being bathed in the soothing sounds and vibrations of Tibetan singing bowls. The body is a vessel of all life experiences and personal stories. Movement therapy deepens your relationship with your physical, mental and emotional well-being. Qigong is a movement therapy that dates back thousands of years and is rooted in ancient Chinese medicine. Qigong brings awareness to the breath, postural alignment and intention to optimize energy flow throughout the body. The sound of Tibetan singing bowls vibrationally harmonize to promote deep relaxation on both sides of the brain.



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information about these upcoming programs and events.



2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

EMBODIED PRACTICE: AN INTRODUCTION TO BIOSPIRITUALITY (IN-PERSON)

OCTOBER 30-31 • Friday, 6:30-9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



Presenters: Kami Pohl and Jeff Dols

Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$190, includes private bedroom, breakfast and lunch on Saturday
- **COMMUTER:** \$110, includes lunch on Saturday

Registration deadline: October 19



BioSpiritual Focusing is an experiential, body-centered practice of inner awareness that involves noticing, being with the felt sense and nurturing what comes next. BSF offers a way to tap into your inner wisdom and open yourself to the possibility of spiritual transformation. This experiential retreat offers a basic understanding of BSF

and introduces the art of companioning others through this embodied practice. Participants will focus on developing BSF as a personal spiritual practice. This retreat is also open to therapists, behavioral health specialists and teachers, who may find this practice helpful.

Kami Pohl is a spiritual director and contemplative who serves as an adjunct director at the Benedictine Center of St. Paul's Monastery, specializing in deep listening and facilitating personal spiritual growth. She received her training as a spiritual director from the Franciscan Spirituality Center and advanced training in BioSpiritual Focusing from the BioSpiritual Institute. Kami has a master's degree in human resource development from the University of Minnesota and diverse professional experience, including roles as director of community engagement at a church, classroom teacher and organizational development consultant.

Jeff Dols serves as one of the oblate co-directors at St. Paul's Monastery in Minnesota. Jeff has experience in both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. At St. Paul's Monastery, he has served as director of mission advancement and interim director of the Benedictine Center. He also previously served as director of the Franciscan Spirituality Center. Jeff has a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's degree in servant leadership from Viterbo University.



LOOK FORWARD TO MONDAYS!

"The postings from *Reflections From the Center* seem to shock me into awareness more frequently. Thanks for these gifts." — **Larry B.**

Each Monday, we send a poem, prayer or short essay reflection written by community members to more than 3,000 email subscribers. If you'd enjoy having these free inspirational gems land in your inbox, please visit www.FSCenter.org and click on the blue "Join Our List" button.



EXPLORING JOY AND GRATITUDE: A COURAGE & RENEWAL® RETREAT (IN-PERSON)

NOVEMBER 6-7 • Friday, 6:30-9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Presenters: Mary Louise Peters and Amy Christianson

Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$190, includes private bedroom, breakfast and lunch on Saturday
- **COMMUTER:** \$110, includes lunch on Saturday

Registration deadline: October 26

Courage & Renewal® work aligns with Franciscan values of service, peace and justice, dignity of every person, community, contemplation and gratitude. With courage, we are able to more fully live with individual integrity and authenticity in our relationships. Through individual written reflection and group interaction, you will have opportunities and time to recognize how you are living with courage. Our time together will include silence, guided discussion and experiences with poetry, wisdom tradition essays and art. Claim time for your own personal renewal while strengthening a sense of community with those present.

There will be opportunities to experience the practices of the Courage & Renewal® approach to:

- Revitalize your commitment to the core values that give meaning to your life and work.
- Learn reflective practices to become more self-aware and intentional.
- Discover a discernment process to reach clarity around deeper questions of identity and integrity.
- Expand your capacity to build trustworthy and authentic relationships.
- Improve your ability to listen openly and be present.
- Continue to find truth and healing in your own life and relationships.



We invite you to more Courage & Renewal retreats in 2027 focused on exploring the values of St. Francis. Attend any or all as your schedule permits.

FEBRUARY 5-6: EXPLORING SIMPLICITY AND SERVICE

APRIL 30-MAY 1: EXPLORING CONTEMPLATION AND COMMUNITY

See page 12 for presenter bios.

HOW TO CARRY WHAT CAN'T BE FIXED GRIEF RETREAT (IN-PERSON)

NOVEMBER 13-14 • Friday, 6:30-9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



Presenters: Jean Pagliaro and Julie Helgerson

Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$205, includes private bedroom, breakfast and lunch on Saturday, and journal
- **COMMUTER:** \$115, includes lunch on Saturday and journal

Registration deadline: November 2



Reading the book ahead of time is helpful but not required. Each participant will receive a free copy of the journal.

Drawing on wisdom from Megan Devine's breakout book, "It's OK That You're Not OK: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand" and subsequent journal, "How to Carry What Can't Be Fixed," this retreat offers a compassionate and gentle space for those experiencing grief. Together, we will explore ways to honor grief, release unrealistic expectations about "moving on" and discover practices that help us carry what cannot be fixed. Through reflection, discussion and quiet time, participants will be invited to meet themselves with greater kindness, understanding and hope.



Jean Pagliaro is the director of the FSC. She has a bachelor's degree in social work and a Master of Divinity degree. Her ministry experiences and focuses include mental health crisis response, hospital chaplaincy, grief care and programming that offers support to families.

Julie Helgerson is the FSC's program and retreat coordinator. She also is a Certified Grief Educator through David Kessler and a graduate of the FSC's Spiritual Direction Preparation Program.



CENTERING PRAYER AND LECTIO DIVINA RETREAT (IN-PERSON)

NOVEMBER 20-22 • Friday, 6:30-9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.



Presenter: Gwen Pickering

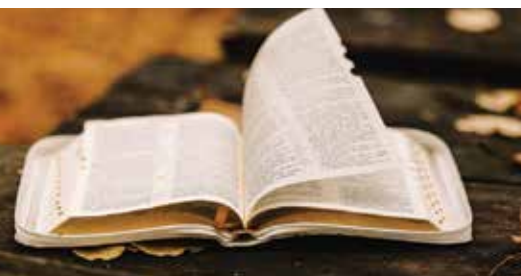
Investment:

- **OVERNIGHT:** \$295, includes private bedroom for two nights; breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday; breakfast and lunch on Sunday
- **COMMUTER:** \$135, includes lunch and dinner on Saturday, lunch on Sunday

Registration deadline: November 9

Experience a time of profound silence and praying with scripture as you enter into a deeper relationship with God and self. This retreat blends a rhythm of centering prayer, Lectio Divina and group reflection. There will be several 20-minute sits, group Lectio Divina sessions, an optional video and personal time to walk, pray in the chapel, spend time in the art room or simply rest. All are welcome, regardless of whether you are just beginning these practices or have already been deeply formed by them.

Gwen Pickering has been practicing Centering Prayer for more than 20 years. She is grateful for the way this prayer has brought her closer to the Divine and led to deep inner healing. To be able to share this transformational prayer with others, she became a commissioned presenter through Contemplative Outreach. A decade ago, she heard God call her to share Lectio Divina. In that holy moment, she knew she was called to be a spiritual director. When she is doing spiritual direction and leading retreats, her soul feels like she is at home.



BLACK ASH BASKET WEAVING WORKSHOP (IN-PERSON/OFF-SITE)

NOVEMBER 21 • Saturday, 1-3 p.m.

Presenter: Kimberly Crowley

Investment: \$95, includes supplies

Registration deadline: November 9

Note: This event takes place at La Crosse Youth and Learning Center, 724 Main St., La Crosse



All are welcome to learn how black ash is harvested and prepared before making your own small black ash basket under the guidance of Kimberly Crowley.

If you'd like to learn more about Kimberly's work, this is a link to a Discover Wisconsin video: Weaving Tradition: Ho-Chunk Nation's Basket Makers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmoYmewXOK8>

Description from the video: **Kimberly Crowley's** story embodies the resilience of a timeless craft. As a Ho-Chunk Nation basket weaver, she carries on a family legacy that has supported generations, from her grandmother's hands to her own. Despite the threat to black ash trees from invasive species, Crowley continues to weave beauty from these ancient woods, preserving a cherished tradition that is both art and survival.

SAVE THE DATE

The Franciscan Spirituality Center will have a booth at this year's Pride in the Park event, noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, September 5, at Riverside Park in La Crosse. This is part of our ongoing Franciscan mission of outreach and welcome. Please stop by to say hello and invite others!





2026 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

SILENT DIRECTED RETREATS (IN-PERSON)

A silent directed retreat is an invitation to deepen your connection to the Sacred and to your inner wisdom through solitude, silence, prayer and compassionate listening. You will have a private, comfortable bedroom, delicious meals and sessions with a spiritual director who will listen to you and your unfolding story. Your days will be open for time in quiet spaces for reflection, with options for attending liturgy, praying in the chapel and creating art.

Add an overnight stay before or after your retreat for \$75 per night. If you would prefer to stay in a hermitage, please call 608-791-5295 to check availability.

Note: These retreats begin with a gathering of all participants.



CHOOSE FROM ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

SEPTEMBER 18-20

Friday, 2 p.m.–Sunday, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Dawn Schweizer

Registration deadline: September 8

Limited to 3 participants.

Two nights' stay, all meals and three spiritual direction sessions are included.

OCTOBER 11-16

Sunday, 1 p.m.–Friday, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Chelle Belland

Registration deadline: September 28

Limited to 3 participants.

Five nights' stay, all meals and six spiritual direction sessions are included.

OCTOBER 23-25

Friday, 2 p.m.–Sunday, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Chelle Belland

Registration deadline: October 12

Limited to 3 participants.

Two nights' stay, all meals and three spiritual direction sessions are included.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

INVESTMENT:



Chelle Belland is a trained spiritual director with a mental-health therapy background.



Dawn Schweizer is a spiritual director from Iowa and a graduate of the FSC's Spiritual Direction Preparation Program.

TIER A: \$400 (three-day) \$800 (six-day) | Covers full program costs plus offsets facility expenses and support staff. This tier helps to support the long-range sustainability of the program and the FSC.

TIER B: \$375 (three-day) \$775 (six-day) | Covers basic expenses and a portion of staff time. This is the break-even point for the FSC to offer this program.

TIER C: \$262 (three-day) \$542 (six-day) | Thanks to funding from our generous donors, we can offer a subsidized payment amount for those who need additional support.

You also are welcome to call 608-791-5295 to arrange a customized retreat with a spiritual director based on your unique needs and schedule.

STAFF NEWS

Welcome, Michelle!

There's a new friendly face at our front desk. Please help us welcome **Michelle Hemp** to the FSC team. Michelle joined our staff in June 2026 as our new administrative assistant. Bringing more than 40 years of customer service experience, she has a genuine passion for serving and helping others. We've enjoyed getting to know her better, and we know all of you will, too!

"From the moment I walked in the door, I knew this was a special place," she said. "I genuinely feel honored to be part of the team." Michelle has jumped right into her new role, and we appreciate her engaging manner, attention to detail and willingness to learn.

"It is rare to find a place where each person shares a devotion toward a common goal. The Franciscan Spirituality Center is that place," Michelle said. "Even though I have only been here a short time, I look forward to coming to work each day and being part of this meaningful mission."

Michelle has called the La Crosse area home her entire life. She is married to Brian, and together they have one son, Sam, who is married to Katie. When she's not at work, Michelle treasures spending time with her family, including their two dogs and grand dog, Winston.



BODY | MOVEMENT CLASSES

CHAIR YOGA (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

Six-week session: SEPTEMBER 8, 15, 22, 29; OCTOBER 6, 13
Six-week session: OCTOBER 20, 27; NOVEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24

Tuesday, 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Instructor: Amber Moesch

Investment: \$60 for each six-week session

Registration deadline: September 7/October 19

This style of yoga provides a safe approach to improved strength, balance and flexibility. Each class includes a gentle flow of seated stretches, standing poses and balance exercises. You will need a chair for modifications and balance support. The last 15 minutes of each class will include stretching exercises.

Amber Moesch loves sharing the movement and poses of yoga as a way to practice mindfulness. By helping her students link movements and breath with awareness, she creates classes that wake up the body and quiet the mind. Amber draws on her many years of experience and training in yoga and restorative exercise to create classes that are tailored to the students who show up.



SLOW FLOW YOGA (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

Six-week session: SEPTEMBER 9, 16, 23, 30; OCTOBER 7, 14
Six-week session: OCTOBER 21, 28; NOVEMBER 4, 11, 18, 25

Wednesday, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Instructor: Bernice Olson-Pollack

Investment: \$60 for each six-week session

Registration deadline: September 8/October 20

A simple definition of the word “yoga” means “to yoke or unite.” An intentional and consistent yoga practice promotes a healthier connection between the body, mind and spirit. This union brings forth a greater sense of physical and emotional balance. Slow Flow Yoga is designed to guide the participant steadily from one aligned posture (asana) into another. It is an accessible style of fluid movements that encourages you to calmly focus on your body, to breathe consciously and to remain in the present moment. Meditation at the end of a yoga session can improve mental clarity and concentration, relax the mind and develop a sustainable feeling of calm.

Bernice Olson-Pollack has a Master in Science in Community Counseling and is a 200-hour YogaFit-trained instructor and American Council on Exercise certified personal trainer. She provides a slow and steadily moving style of teaching that offers a comfortable yet quietly challenging yoga practice for her participants.



PLEASE NOTE: You are welcome to attend any and all sessions; they do not necessarily build on each other. Start and stop as you wish!

QIGONG: A TIME-PROVEN PRACTICE FOR OVERALL BALANCE AND HEALTH (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

Six-week session: SEPTEMBER 15, 22, 29; OCTOBER 6, 13, 20

Six-week session: OCTOBER 27; NOVEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24; DECEMBER 1

Tuesday, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Instructor: Pennie Pries

Investment: \$60 for each six-week session

Registration deadline: September 14/October 26

The fundamental principle of qigong (pronounced CHEE-gung) is that everything in the universe is a form of energy, including every cell in our body. “Qi” means “life-force energy” and “gong” means “skill, or to work with,” so the integrated mind-body practice of qigong means “to skillfully work with your life-force energy.” This ancient practice uses simple movements, mindful breathing, stretching, energy activation and intention to balance your entire being (mind, body, spirit and emotion). It helps to calm your nervous system, support healing of your internal organs, enhance circulation and build resiliency.

No experience is necessary. Every six-week session has a new focus or theme, balancing basic core principles with new information and movements. All exercises can be done seated or modified to accommodate physical challenges or medical restrictions. The recorded practice is available to be experienced repeatedly, as your weekly schedule allows. This encourages routine movement for emotional calm, better health and increased vitality.

Note: Pennie lives in Rochester, Minnesota, so she typically leads the first class of each series in person at the FSC and the remaining classes via Zoom. Participants may meet at the FSC for the entire series.

Pennie Pries is a Tier I Lee Holden Certified Qi Gong instructor with a background of teaching, coaching, Silent Counseling, ThetaHealing and real-life experiences, including health challenges. She leads qigong classes at the FSC and online through her business, Energy Shifts with Pennie, and teaches two exercise classes per week for the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program. She also works on an individual basis for deeper emotional clearing and tailored movement practices to meet specific physical/health challenges. Pennie has presented at workshops and retreats for the FSC, family gatherings, quilting groups and other venues.



Blessings on your retirement, Kathy!

It's fitting that Kathy Holman's birthday falls on the summer solstice as she brought her sunny disposition and light to our front desk for the past six years.

Kathy's last day as our administrative assistant/receptionist was June 19. We wish her peace and all good in a well-deserved retirement!

Kathy joined the Franciscan Spirituality Center staff on August 31, 2020, in the midst of COVID restrictions and a major renovation at St. Rose Convent and the FSC. Her desk was set up at our temporary location at River Crossing Square, but she quickly got to know our guests and our registration system, seamlessly making the transition back to 920 Market St. in fall 2021.

Before joining our team, she worked in customer service, food service management and human resources. Deeply committed to her Catholic faith, Kathy often shared inspirational prayers during our staff meetings.

We asked Kathy what she enjoyed most about working at the FSC. Her reply: "Hands down, the guests who enter our doors. Regardless of why they are here—

for retreat, programs or spiritual direction—I can sense their feeling of warmth and safety. These walls hold so much grace that it permeates one's senses. I notice when guests come for a private retreat, they may seem rushed or tired or low on energy. Then when they turn in their keys, I am so touched to witness their transformation to peace. There are some guests who form tight bonds with others from the same program and keep in touch through coffee, book groups or attending other programs together... Last, but not least, I love the FSPA community! They are all so kind and generous with their support of the FSC. There has never been a doubt in my mind that they champion our mission and truly care about all of us."

And what she would miss the most. "Very simply and humbly, I will miss my co-workers, the sisters and the wonderful people I have met along the way," she said. "It has been a true blessing that God gave me the opportunity to complete this chapter of my life in such a wonderful place like the FSC and FSPA. Blessings to you all!"



FSC BOARD NEWS

Welcome, Sister Corrina Thomas!

The newest member of our board is a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration who is smart, creative and deeply committed to inner transformation and healing.

Based in Chicago, **Corrina Thomas, FSPA**, recently served as the novice director for FSPA and the InterCongregational Collaborative Novitiate, companioning candidates for religious life as they integrate their spirituality, study and ministry. She has stepped aside from this ministry and is scanning the horizon for her "what's next." Sister Corrina is also a trained spiritual director who holds three master's degrees and a Doctor of Ministry. She started her religious ministry as a teacher for Media Literacy and Pastoral Communication. She then worked as the program director at two spirituality centers, where in addition to planning programs, she conducted her own workshops, retreats, spiritual direction and maintained the website. Sister Corrina also worked with survivors of human trafficking as the wellness coordinator.

This year, she has started leading groups of pilgrims through Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs. A couple of our staff members first got to know her well in 2015 when they

were all pilgrims, journeying together to Rome and Assisi, Italy, through that same program. This is where they first learned of her ministry in St. Paul, Minnesota, working with people who had experienced abuse, addiction, sexual exploitation, relationship violence and other forms of trauma. Her passion for helping others inspired our own yearly retreat for survivors.

In accepting our invitation to the join board, Sister Corrina pointed to the ways the FSC's mission resonates with her own passion, experiences and commitment to Gospel and Franciscan values.

We couldn't be more excited to learn from her! "I hope to bring a spirit of collaboration, thoughtful discernment and a commitment to stewardship and hospitality that supports the long-term vitality of the FSC," she said. "I believe the governance rooted in prayer, reflection and shared wisdom can help guide the Center in responding to the spiritual needs of our time while remaining faithful to its Franciscan roots."



Best wishes to Sister Sarah in her new ministry!

If she weren't staying involved as a partner spiritual director and supervisor in our Spiritual Direction Preparation Program, we'd be even more upset at the news that **Sarah Hennessey, FSPA**, left our staff in early July for a new position within her religious order.

Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Leadership appointed her as FSPA's new candidate and novice minister. We can't imagine a better person to journey with women considering joining FSPA as vowed religious sisters, but we'll definitely miss Sarah's wisdom, warmth and compassion. Luckily, her office will just be on the other end of St. Rose Complex so we can still meet her for lunch and conversation.

Sister Sarah was raised as a Quaker in the South. She joined FSPA in 2002, professed her first vows in 2005 and made her final vows in 2011. Prior to joining the FSC staff in August 2019, she served on our board of directors. She is bilingual (Spanish), has a Master of Arts degree in theology from University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, and is a graduate of SDPP.

She's been an invaluable teammate in her roles as spiritual director, SDPP core team member and program presenter. Many of her programs and retreats focused on joy, grief and Franciscan themes. Two of her popular Zoom offerings were *Meditation for Emotional Health* and *Poetry Café*.

She is empathetic and passionate about many causes. She is deep, thoughtful and kind. She tells great stories and is known to break out in spontaneous song. It's been our profound honor to work with her.

We asked Sarah what she would miss most about being on staff at the FSC. Her reply: "I love the deep community formed at the FSC. It seems even if I am doing a one-hour Zoom program on a light topic, by the end of the hour, we are all family. In retreats, programs and spiritual direction, we create space to know each other. We discover the surprises of the divine and go into the world more courageously. I am excited that I will continue as a partner spiritual director and a supervisor in the SDPP program."

And what she is most excited about her new position. "I will journey with women from the time they officially enter the congregation until they profess first vows," she explained. "This three- to four-year process is a crucial time of discernment, exploration and deepening in religious life. The women who are coming today are phenomenal! They are on fire with passion for God, relationships and justice. I cannot wait to journey with them."





Franciscan Spirituality Center

FSPA • 912 Market Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

A retreat is a gift to yourself

You've likely heard the phrase, "you can't pour water from an empty bucket." We recognize self-care may seem like a luxury for some, but it is a fundamental necessity for maintaining physical, mental and emotional well-being. This is especially true for caregivers, but we all need a sacred pause once in a while to prevent burnout, reduce stress and increase resilience.

We are committed to making retreats accessible and affordable. If cost is a barrier, please call our office at 608-791-5295 and ask for a scholarship. There are no forms to fill out, and your request will be kept confidential. If time is an issue, please note that many of our retreats are Friday evening through Saturday afternoon. Our support groups, meditation sessions and healthy body movement classes meet for just one to two hours. Give yourself the gift of retreat. The benefits will continue long after you return home and have a ripple effect in the world.

HERMITAGES: We maintain three single-occupancy cabins just outside of La Crosse at St. Joseph Ridge for those who would like to make a private or directed nature-based retreat. Please visit www.FSCenter.org or call 608-791-5295 for more information.



MEETING ROOMS: Whether you are leading a training session, council meeting, staff retreat, support group or book club, the right environment makes a difference. We have eight distinctive meeting rooms that can be rented for as little as two hours or for the whole day. If your group is looking to make a longer retreat, ask about reserving our bedroom space.



COMING THIS WINTER



BREATH, BODY, BOWLS

DECEMBER 3 | Joan Filla and Bernice Olson-Pollack

ST. NICHOLAS CELEBRATION

DECEMBER 4 | FSC staff

QIGONG RETREAT

DECEMBER 11-12 | Pennie Pries

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS

JANUARY 8 | FSC staff

NAVIGATING LIFE TRANSITIONS

JANUARY 15-16 | Shannon Evans

ONE WORD RETREAT

JANUARY 22-23 | Mary Holtorf and Kristen Shipler

TENDING YOUR GRIEF WITH GENTLENESS AND CREATIVITY

FEBRUARY 12-13 | Karna Marks and Georgina Kingsley

THE GOSPEL OF MARK LENTEN SERIES

FEBRUARY 16, 23; MARCH 2, 9 | John McHugh

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