



## Work Group Proposal Form

From the Bylaws, “The Church of Conscious Harmony exists for the sole purpose of facilitating the spiritual journey for people who want to make God-devotion the center of their lives”. To this end, in addition to the regularly-scheduled core classes (e.g., Lessons in Truth, Simple Explanations of Work Ideas, new member classes, the Gospel & Work class, etc.), a new form of small group spiritual enrichment is encouraged. “Work groups,” are small (generally 7-12 people), self-directed, semester oriented and focused on a particular topic or practice related to the two foundations of the Church: the Christian contemplative tradition and the Work of Inner Christianity.

The aim of work groups is to provide participants with transforming spiritual enrichment, inspiring love of God and love of neighbor.

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**Work Group Title:** Enlightened Eldering

**Meeting day/time:** Tues 6:30-8pm

**Duration:** Sept 5 - Nov 26

**Purpose or specific aim of Work Group:**

- 1- To explore the God-given opportunities inherent in the natural process of aging and dying and to become aware of how our culture thwarts this natural process
- 2- To affirm the much needed gifts we each can offer as elders and in our dying.
- 3- To determine specific efforts we each can make on behalf of all  
-to create a personal aim and consider the efforts needed for manifestation.

**Sources for content or practice:** DVDs, YouTube, live presenters, individual readings and viewings from various sources, group discussion.

**Outline and timeline for study and/or practice:**

The group format consists of 3 segments, each devoted to one of the Work group aims.

Each segment will consist of 3 meetings:

Meeting 1-AV presentation of DVD or YouTube – (May be open to non-group members by invitation)

Meeting 2- Live presenter knowledgeable in the topic-Q&A period (May be open to non-group members by invitation)

Meeting 3-Group discussion (group members only): Enrichment -Weekly emails with related viewings and readings as optional enrichment (for group members only) and questions for reflection. Sources will be from those listed below and also Bernadette Roberts, Richard Rohr, Cynthia Bourgeault, Tomberg, Dali Lama, scripture.+?

## Segment 1

Sept – “Radical Kenosis” - the inevitable diminishment of our faculties during aging and dying is the Divine plan for radical kenosis but is feared and denied by our death phobic culture.

- Week 1 Sept 5 – DVD or YouTube – Being Mortal (Fronline/Netflix)

“You don’t have to spend much time with the elderly or those with terminal illness to see how often medicine fails the people it is supposed to help. The waning days of our lives are given over to treatments that addle our brains and sap our bodies for a sliver’s chance of benefit. They are spent in institutions...where regimented, anonymous routines cut us off from all the things that matter to us in life. Our reluctance to honestly examine the experience of aging and dying has increased the harm...Lacking a coherent view of how people might live successfully all the way to their very end, we have allowed our fates to be controlled by the imperatives of medicine, technology, and strangers.” Being Mortal by Atul Gawande

- Week 2 Sept 12 – Deanna Cochran, RN, EOL Doula, Mentor and Educator Founder, Quality of Life Care, LLC; Deanna is devoting her life to building bridges and visioning creative alternatives to the current systems for serving illness, dying, death and beyond. She has 17 yrs of practical experience in the field.
- Week 3 Sept 19 - group discussion based on the two previous meetings and weekly email enrichments
- Wk 4 – Break

## Segment 2

Oct – “Enlightened Eldering/Feeding the Body of Christ” - what do we owe for the privilege of a human birth to God, our loved ones, all of humanity and to the Earth?

“When surrounded by fear, contradiction, betrayal; when the “fight or flight” alarm bells are going off in your head and everything inside you wants to brace and defend itself, the infallible way to extricate yourself and reclaim your home ...is simply to freely release whatever you are holding onto-including, if it comes to this, life itself...The most daring gamble of Jesus’ trajectory of pure love may just be to show us that self-emptying is not the *means* to something else; the act is itself the full expression of its meaning and instantly brings into being “a new creation; the integral wholeness of Love manifested in the particularity of a human heart.” The Tradition of Centering Prayer by Cynthia Bourgeault

- Week 1 Oct 3 - DVD or YouTube—TBD-Stephen Jenkinson, Thomas Keating, YouTube Ilia Delio, Charles Eisenstein
- Week 2-Oct 10-guest presenter –TBD
- Week 3-Oct 17- group discussion based on previous meetings and weekly email enrichments
- Week 4-Oct 24-optional meeting for group discussion
- Week 5-Oct 31 – break

## Segment 3

Nov – “Contemplation AND Action” – putting our affairs in order: realizing our contingency, what is there for us each personally and collectively to complete in terms of relationships, finances, legalities, spirituality?

- Week 1 Nov 7 – DVD A Family Undertaking (or other)
- Week 2 Nov 14 - Guest presenter - Funeral Consumers Alliance of Central Texas
- Week 3 Nov 21 - Break

- Week 4 – Nov 28 - Group discussion, prepare for completion and celebration

Late Nov/Early Dec (date TBD)-Death over Dinner Celebration held at CCH– open to non-group members by invitation.

Prerequisites for participants: One year's practice of Centering Prayer

**Facilitator's Name:** Judith August, Bonita Griffith (assistant to the facilitators-Connie Randolph)

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