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# THE MARK

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WHOLE-MAKING

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# A WHOLENESS IN HAND

BY PETER HAAS

Look at your hands. Notice how each hand is complete in and of itself; and yet combined and intertwined, our two hands become something more whole together than they are apart. For instance, separated, each hand embodies the odd number five. Together, five is transformed into the whole number ten. Joined together, notice also that your hands can do very few things. Indeed, the act of joining one's hands is often the act of prayer, meditation or relaxation. One cannot grasp when one's hands are in union, fingers woven together, and physical violence is significantly limited. This image of union points to the truth that wholeness nurtures peace, and peace nurtures wholeness.

Similarly, joining hands with others is a beautiful expression of wholeness, especially when a group gathers in a prayer circle, joining hands linking individuality to wholeness, multiplicity to unity. The Psalmist sings the praise of such wholeness noting,

*how good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters dwell together in unity.* (Psalm 133.1)

So too does the *Katha Upanishad* articulate this notion of wholeness with precise beauty: "May we light the fire that burns out the ego and enables us to pass from fearful fragmentation to fearless fullness in the changeless whole."

In the book, *Practicing the Presence of People*, Mike Mason describes the hand (either left or right) as a physical symbol, an embodied object lesson, of our spiritual journey with people. A journey that helps us move from fragmentation and division to wholeness. Inspired by Mason's idea, I've expanded the object lesson for our monthly theme around Wholeness and Wholemaking. See if it resonates for you:

The Thumb represents Other People. The thumb cuts across the grain of our hand. Without the opposing thumb, a hand does not work as well. So too with people

and relationships – though they may oppose us at times, they also help us become more whole. The thumb's up gesture conveys the essence of what happens to us in relationship when we move through opposition into love and connection.

The Index Finger represents our Self. The index finger is the strongest and most dexterous of the fingers. It represents our relationship to and with our self. It often points the way – and points to and at others, as if to assert the ego's uniqueness, power, right, desire or individuality. Indeed, in American culture the raised index finger is a symbol for being Number 1. But without the index finger the hand would be significantly hindered. Wholeness requires a you – a self that can respond to others. Recall that Jesus' teaching on the greatest commandment is that we love God and love others *as we love our self*.

The Middle Finger represents Divine Presence. It rises above all the other fingers in stature, inviting us to attention and to remember

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to recognize the presence of God amidst all of life and everyone. This idea is also a whole-making transformation of the ordinary cultural symbol of the raised middle finger – which is grounded in anger, hatred, fear and fragmentation. So perhaps transforming the middle finger is a metaphor for the practice of transforming our negative emotions.

The Ring Finger represents Spiritual Practice. Though ordinarily our weakest finger, the ring finger reminds us that love can grow through spiritual practice, as well as in communion with others. Don't discount weakness; it often becomes an opportunity for Grace. The ring finger reminds us that it's often the "weakest" one that bears the sacred ring. What grace!

The Pinkie represents Friendship. It appears small and vulnerable, but like friendship, the pinkie significantly extends our reach and connects us to others in unexpected and strengthening

ways, transforming our vulnerability into vitality. Though small, it's the pinkie that completes the handshake. Friendship along the spiritual journey is a significant part of our experience of being made more whole in community.

And finally, The Palm represents Love that serves. The palm holds all five fingers together into the wholeness of the hand. The palm enables the unique five fingers to become something more than just the sum of its parts. Without the palm, the fingers can't be a hand. In a similar way, without Love, we can't become whole. Love, like the palm, holds us and others. Without love, we will end up only serving ourselves. Gandhi once said that, "there is enough in the world for everyone's need; there is not enough for everyone's greed." May our hands support this awakening into the sharing from wholeness and liberate us from the taking from fearfulness. May we increasingly be energized not just to hold and take, but to also give and share.

So, take a look at your hands. May this simple analogy and object lesson be a wise yet simple teacher in our day to day wholemaking. May we use it as an elementary tool to help us Remember, especially when we are arguing or gesturing with our hands. Perhaps even when we use our hands unconsciously, disconnected from love or wisdom or moderation. May the symbol of the hands serve us to shift from fragmentation or division into the wholeness of love.

To that end, we close with a wish turned into a prayer, from the book *Centering Prayers: A One Year Daily Companion for Going Deeper into the Love of God*:

And the Spirit Says:

Take my hand and feel the grip of nothing that holds everything with light and moves with grace and slight rhythms.

Take my hand and release

your grip on everything  
else, grasping at nothing but  
surrender.

And in your empty palms  
pressed together at the heart,  
feel the arrival of love's  
warmth as fear and other such  
soul-fevers slip through the  
lattice clasp of wanting desire.

Take the hands of everyone  
else and place them to  
your face, as a blind beggar  
looking for someone long lost;  
remember who you are and  
what all life is for.

I am the hand of God worn  
smooth with loving touches  
caressed in prayer – empty  
always, yet filled with giving.

I am left and right; presence  
and absence; illumination and  
transformation.

I am two hands, building a  
temple for your wishes. I use  
every tear for mortar, every  
laugh for stone.

These hands are ceaseless,  
though never weary. They  
move out over all things as  
wind, wisdom, light, song.

And hold fast with Wholeness  
to you now, always, in right or  
wrong. Amen. ☉

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## GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE, GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Fr. Thomas Keating, in his seminal work  
*Open Mind, Open Heart*,  
lists 42 principles underlying  
the Christian spiritual journey.

Fr. Keating asks that these principles be read according  
to the method of Lectio Divina.

One principle will appear in these pages each month.

### GUIDELINE 9

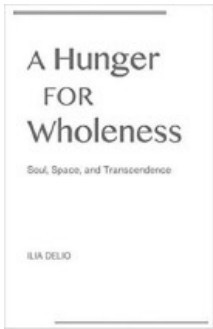
In Baptism,  
the false self is virtually put to death,  
the new self is born,  
and the victory over sin  
won by Jesus through his death and resurrection  
is placed at our disposal.  
Not our uniqueness as persons,  
but our sense of separation from God  
and from others is destroyed  
in the death-dealing and life-giving waters of Baptism.

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## UPCOMING SUNDAY SERMON TEACHING THEMES

October 7	Evolving as Christ in Innocence and Joy
October 14	Evolving as Christ in Patience and Peace
October 21	Evolving as Christ as Servant
October 28	Remembering Bernadette: God and Trinity





## BOOK LOOK

*A Hunger for Wholeness*

Here is a brief and accessible introduction to the writings and ideas of Ilia Delio. If you have ever wished for a primer on her thinking, this is it. Part of its accessibility stems from the fact that it was given as the 2017 Madeleva Lecture in Spirituality at the University of Notre Dame.

In *A Hunger for Wholeness*, Ilia summarizes the essential cosmological ideas of Teilhard de Chardin and puts them into conversation with Jesus, the evolution of humankind and the role of consciousness. As she did when visiting The Church of Conscious Harmony in 2017, Ilia also explores the future of humanity, particularly the role of technology and transhumanism.

Perhaps the most significant chapters of the book for our focus on Evolving as Christ within the community of The Church of Conscious Harmony are Chapter Seven (*Mystics, Mind and Matter*) and Chapter Eight (*Planetization*), where you will find useful wisdom, such as: “As union with the Divine deepens, the mind yields to the power of Love and is transformed by love into a new field of consciousness.” Another term for this field of consciousness might be Wholeness, or even the Mystical Body of Christ.

## COMMUNITY READING FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

*The Work: Esotericism and Christian Psychology*  
by Rebecca Nottingham

We continue to explore Rebecca Nottingham’s insightful and practical book of Work ideas through the lens of the contemplative Christian journey. This book is one of the most accessible introductions to the Work since Maurice Nicoll’s book *Simple Explanation of Work Ideas*. Explore! Enjoy! Evolve!

## CCH BOOKSTORE

### SUGGESTED TITLES FOR OCTOBER WHOLE-MAKING



*A Hunger for Wholeness*  
*Soul, Space, and Transcendence*  
by Ilia Delio



*The Unbearable Wholeness of Being  
God, Evolution, and the Power of Love*  
by Ilia Delio

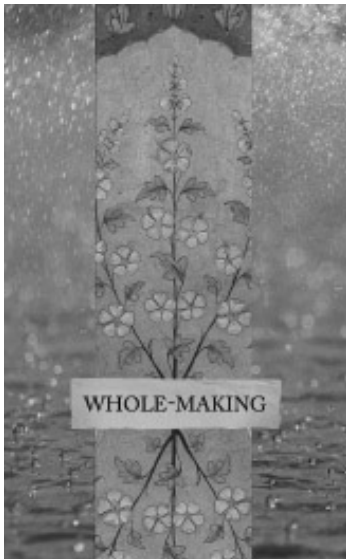


*Belonging to God*  
*Spirituality, Science & a Universal  
Path of Divine Love*  
by William Keepin, PhD



*The Divine Milieu Explained*  
*A Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*  
by Louis M. Savary

BOOKSTORE AND LIBRARY HOURS  
Monday-Friday  
9:00 am-4:00 pm  
Sunday  
One half hour before and after service



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*In Your light, we see light.* Psalm 36:10

## ANNUAL AIM: EVOLVING AS CHRIST

### WHOLE-MAKING AS A JOURNEY

BY JEN COLLINS

New wine must be put into  
new wineskins (Mark 2: 22).

What is the new wine  
in an evolving universe?  
It is the new spirit of ...  
wholemaking that emerged  
in the life of Jesus –  
the dynamism of liberating love ...  
[being] vulnerable in love ...  
an active allowing others  
to affect one.

Sacramental life  
then becomes a public “yes”  
to the christification  
of the world ... a willingness  
to be “membered”  
to Jesus in costly love  
and to create fields  
of compassion and peace ...  
a choice to focus one’s mind  
on the whole, to think  
according to the whole,  
and to act according to the whole.

Ilia Delio,  
*The Unbearable Wholeness of Being and  
Making All Things New*

“By a conviction born of  
experience...” began Bernadette  
Roberts in her book *The Path to  
No-Self*. May I follow Ms. Roberts  
and begin the same: By a conviction  
born of experience, I feel that I  
have no-thing to share with you  
about Whole-making. No-thing  
but God....

Whole-making is a daring, love-  
filled, testing journey that includes  
both crucifixion and resurrection.  
I must have both. Without the  
crucifixion, there is no resurrection.  
Without the resurrection, there is  
no crucifixion. The crucifixion and  
resurrection are the whole-making  
journey of human life. I have come  
to cherish the preciousness of dying  
to what is not true about me – God  
always gives me something greater.  
Eugene Peterson describes this  
crucifixion-resurrection Whole-

making like this: “God is not only  
engaged in loving each person  
in a saving way, he is bringing a  
kingdom into being.”

#### **The Crucifixion**

My little friend called pity  
frequently tells me that I am not  
worthy of the Kingdom, the journey  
of Whole-making, a sentiment  
Annie Dillard beautifully captured  
when she said, “we sulk in the  
awareness that we did not merit the  
grace.” When I feel violent, lazy, or  
hopeless, how could my worthless  
self ever merit the grace? Where  
is a resurrection in this that feels  
only like crucifixion? How is it  
that I am so far from the ideas I  
love? The tension to live this yes  
is unbearable.

So Whole-making does not  
mean getting better. The story of  
the prodigal son, modified to fit me

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in this case as the prodigal daughter, comes to mind. I sometimes forget that my birthright is to know Christ. I spend my money, or energy as the Work of Inner Christianity has taught me, on worry and on fear about what my students (or anyone for that matter) think about me; my father's cancer diagnosis; the health of kids in foster care; and how and if every young person that I have met at a street youth ministry will ever live under a roof again. I walk further and further away from Home. I spend my inheritance, my talents, which a passage in the *Magnificat* calls Christ, without even knowing that I have such an inheritance, a birthright. The Love of God always finds the prodigal daughter when she is lost like this. Love turns her in spiritual practices and teachings given to her by The Church of Conscious Harmony. Turning home for me has been turning to getting up at 5 a.m., reading tremendous books and ideas, Centering Prayer again and again, going to the Work classes, going on retreats, serving in Godly Play classrooms, and having a

Work partner. Yet the return home is still not an easy journey. You see, the prodigal daughter has met many a magician. Those magicians, the fears and worries that she was convinced were real, get much get smarter – “I am legion,” they say. I stop going to church at times, stop reading, do Centering Prayer only once a day, and allow the mechanical habits of thinking to run my mind. Yet my Beloved always finds me, and turns me back towards the journey to Whole-making.

I forget repeatedly that I want to live ideas I love. But the Life keeps coming back to find me no matter how awful I feel I am or how much I forget Who or What I am. Pierre-Marie Dumont described how the Life searches for me in an interpretation of the *Magnificat's* cover art of the marriage of the prophet Hosea to the harlot Gomer. Gomer was unfaithful, and left home. “She became wealthier than her husband in finding other partners. Yet Hosea spared no pains to bring his strayed wife back to the marital

nest. Even in the depths of her worst betrayal, he never lost hope, continued to forgive, never stopped sharing with her all the fullness of his love and his wealth.” What an awesome picture of God chasing the harlot, me, no matter how truly awful I think I am.

### **Crucifixion Into Resurrection: Whole-Making Means to Journey**

I have self-pity, doubt, fear, and violence, yet somehow God still loves me. How do I know this? By a conviction born of experience.... Henry Drummond exquisitely describes it through the disciple Peter: “There is something in Peter's life that is much greater than his sin. It is his repentance.” Mr. Drummond goes on to say to focus on Peter's sin is to miss what this sin brings him. Peter judged and shamed himself as poor and weak. Peter couldn't look at the Lord. His shame was too great.

Yet the Lord looked at Peter. This line resonates deeply – the Lord looked at Peter.

Sin and shame bring Peter to the Lord in which and through, “the

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Lord turns first.” Mr. Drummond said that in judgment and shame, we miss “feeling deeply our human helplessness, of knowing how God comes to us when we are completely broken.”

I get lost a lot when I think about brokenness. I get lost when I do what our minister Peter suggested to me: “Playing God is seductive.” I get lost in thoughts about families living in ghettos with roaches and filth, overflowing toilets, people thrown out into sub-zero temperatures. I get lost in never knowing what to “do” about hearing the stories of assault, children lost from parents, about drug use that comes at the cost of blocking histories of unending trauma. I read hopeful messages of God’s coming into lives. I “want God” for those who suffer. As if I knew what and where God was and wasn’t. One morning I was so disturbed about the gap I perceived between these ideas as I drove to church. I stopped at a traffic light. A young man with a sign was at the corner. I rolled down the window and looked into clear hazel eyes. From my heart I heard

Mother Theresa say, “I see Christ. I see Christ.” as he and I looked at each other and exchanged the bag given to me by our church to give to women and men living on the streets. God comes to me to tell me through Henri Nouwen who instructed, “You have to trust the place that is solid, the place where you can say yes to God’s love even when you do not feel it ... Keep saying ‘God loves me and God’s love is enough.’ You have to choose the solid place over and over again and return to it after every failure.”

Peter Boehlke shared a story from Abbot Joseph about the monks at St. Benedict’s Monastery. “Thirty years,” someone asked, “and what do we have to show for it?” “Nothing!” Fr. Thomas Keating cried out. “Nothing at all. I have even gotten worse!” he insisted. “But what I do know,” Fr. Keating said, “is that my trust in the mercy of God is ever deeply with me.” If Fr. Keating has no-thing then maybe this is the way to the One. Maybe I must become some One. *Through a conviction born of experience* I have discovered that I have no other instruction in life than

to become Whole.

Twenty-six years ago, I stood listening to a speaker at my college graduation talk about being. I have carried this one statement he made with me until now. “Do not worry about what you will do with this life. Do not worry where you will go, what job you will have, how much money you will make. Worry about who you will become.” Dr. Maurice Nicoll has taught me through reading the *Psychological Commentaries* how to build the Whole-making vessel to become what I was born to be. He said, “Remember that there are no final solutions to anything. To try to find final solutions to things is like trying to do away with the waves of the storms of the sea. You have to have a good ship, a good rudder and a good compass. The solution to things lies in seamanship.”

Whole-making is the “is-ness” of God. Whole-making is the creative evolution that Ilia Delio suggests is the very nature of God, or as Dr. Nicoll has written, “is the Will of the Absolute to create.” So I will choose again and again to turn back Home. God will collect the fragments of me – in offering



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# ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK DINNER

Served with Music, Poetry Readings, Prayer & Pie  
(Not necessarily in that order!)

Thursday, November 22, 2018  
11:30 am-1:30 pm  
CCH Fellowship Hall

All are welcome to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday  
in this conscious and loving way as a church family.  
Simply sign up to bring an entrée or pie to share.  
Come when you can. Leave when you must.

Doors open for music & mingling  
at 11:30 am on Thanksgiving Day.  
Dinner is served at noon,  
followed by more pie, music, poetry readings and prayer.  
Farewell benediction at 1:30 pm.

The sign up sheet will be posted on the kitchen doors  
beginning Sunday, November 4<sup>th</sup>.

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me the Eucharist, the teachings of  
CCH, the silence; work as a nurse;  
hanging out with those who have  
cancer, have been abused, are dying  
or homeless or without family; with  
my beloved partner in 18 years of  
marriage; a relentless voice in my  
head that says this is right and that  
is wrong; loving and losing pets;  
the number of times I go on retreat  
or attend church, go to Work class

or make aim. My life is over and  
again giving up, dying to the search  
to be special, the preferences, my  
preferred weight, what I like and do  
not like, social justice, the academic  
degrees and good works. Do I dare  
take God up on Her offer to become  
Whole, to become Hers, again and  
again? May it be so that I turn and  
allow Her to bring Her kingdom  
into being in me. ☸



**THE CHURCH of  
CONSCIOUS HARMONY**  
A CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

7406 Newhall Lane  
Austin, Texas 78746  
512.347.9673 512.347.9675 fax  
www.consciousharmony.org

MINISTER  
Peter Haas  
minister@consciousharmony.org

Tim and Barbara Cook  
Ministers Emeritus

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OFFICE  
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Donald Genung, Business Mgr  
bizmgr@consciousharmony.org  
Lisa Genung, Office Mgr  
officemgr@consciousharmony.org

BOOKSTORE  
Virginia Maxwell, Manager  
bookmgr@consciousharmony.org

NEWSLETTER  
Sandra Ely, Editor  
garzaely@swbell.net  
Carol Hagar, Design  
lifeisart@austin.rr.com

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*My Father is still working, and I also am working.* John 5:17

## LIVING THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY IN DAILY LIFE

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**Work Idea:** Two Work ideas go hand-in-hand and are equally powerful in helping explain the human condition. The first idea is *Identification*. The second idea is *Multiplicity*, or what is referred to in the Work as “the doctrine of ‘I’s.” We will explore *Multiplicity* further here, since it’s the existential state of fragmentation opposite to inner Wholeness. Multiplicity keeps us in fragmentation, often in ways we are not even conscious of.

A primary remedy for our *multiplicity* is the light of self-observation. When it comes to *multiplicity* and fragmentation, seeing is freeing. Over time, our *multiplicity* is transformed into increasing inner organization and wholeness, described by the idea of Real-I or Master. Whereas we used to be fragmented in our being, thinking, feeling and doing, through conscious Work on ourselves, we discover ourselves to be no longer just a collection of I’s, but now also something more

whole. St. Paul expressed it this way: *it is no longer I, but Christ who lives in me* (c.f. Galatians 2.20). It is our experience and hope that the Work serves our journey from inner fragmentation into the Wholeness of Christ.


**Work Source:** In eight succinct pages, Maurice Nicoll brilliantly summarizes the doctrine of ‘I’s, with attention to the different ‘I’s in the sphere of our thinking and feeling. Careful study of pages 594-596 in Volume Two of the *Psychological Commentaries* is highly encouraged, from which we cite a brief portion here: “Now as regards the sphere of the emotions – here again many ‘I’s exist in us that bring about changes in our emotional states. Just as ‘I’s transmit thoughts into our minds so do ‘I’s transmit feelings into the sphere of our emotions. These ‘I’s effect the emotional state directly and scarcely touch the thinking. Some of these ‘I’s can exhaust us, make us lose confidence, make us depressed,

low-spirited, and so on. Yet they are ‘I’s acting on us and nourishing themselves at our expense. If we could always remember ourselves, these ‘I’s could not have any power over us. But as a rule, we have given them so much power that we never even challenge them and they walk in and out of our emotional part as if we belonged to them. Now although they are difficult to observe directly, after a time in the Work you will always be able to detect their presence by being aware of a drop in level or a sudden loss of force.” Maurice Nicoll, *Commentaries*, Vol 2, 595.

**Practical Application:** This month, work at observing and naming an ‘I’ that continues to hinder you and keep you from experiencing Wholeness. The first step is to Observe yourself. Then name what you see. For example, someone observes within an ‘I’ that is habitually anxious. One names this ‘High-Wire I’, because life with this ‘I’ feels as anxious as walking

on a high-wire. The second step is to non-identify with this 'I'. You can literally point your index finger at yourself and remind yourself, "this High-Wire 'I' is NOT I!" Then, complete the process by declaring a Whole-making deeper truth such as: "I am a manifestation of God and nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ!"

**Supplemental Resources:** In the monastic tradition, 'I's were viewed as "thoughts" or energies. Such thoughts or energies weren't just mental, they

were also physical and emotional. John Cassian cataloged many of these besetting thoughts in his foundational books, *The Conferences* and *Institutes*. Unparalleled and updated psychological resources on these ancient ideas of spiritual *multiplicity* and its remedies include Margaret Funk's accessible book, *Thoughts Matter* and Donald Capps' brilliant book, *Deadly Sins and Saving Virtues*. 

For more experience with these teachings, you are invited to attend the Work of Inner Christianity class held Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

## UPCOMING CENTERING PRAYER RETREATS

### MULTI-DAY AT CEDARBRAKE RETREAT AND RENEWAL CENTER

Nov 30-Dec 6      7-day Advent      \$675\*

\*Double room prices. Single rooms, if available, are an additional \$10/night on a first-to-register basis.

### HALF- AND ONE-DAY AT THE CHURCH OF CONSCIOUS HARMONY

Oct 20	8:30 am-4:30 pm	\$15
Nov 10	12:30 pm-5:00 pm	\$10
Dec 15	8:30 am-12:30 pm	\$10

Cost is a suggested love offering. Scholarships are available as needed.

Contact the church office to register.

## OCTOBER CALENDAR

Visit [consciousharmony.org](http://consciousharmony.org) for a complete listing of events.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Intro to Centering Prayer  
Oct 13 9a-3:15p + 6 consecutive Mondays  
7:30-9pm \$75 Pre-register in the office.

One-Day Centering Prayer Retreat  
Oct 20 8:30 am-4:30 pm  
\$15 Pre-register in the office.

New Member Induction  
Oct 28 during Sunday service  
Reception to follow.

### MONTHLY

1st Sundays  
Bring non-perishables for Caritas

### WEEKLY

Sundays  
Lectio Divina 8:00-9:00 am  
Prayer Circle 9:15-9:45 am  
Worship Service 10:00-11:30 am  
Youth Program 10:00-11:30 am  
Fellowship 11:30 am

Wednesdays  
Contemplative Lunch noon-1:00 pm  
Contemplative Communion Service 6:00-7:00 pm

Thursdays 7:30-9:00 pm  
Work of Inner Christianity Class

Fridays 7:30-8:45 pm  
Devotional Service

Saturdays  
Scriptorium noon-12:50 pm

### DAILY

Sunday-Saturday 7:00-7:35 am  
Centering Prayer Service in Theosis Chapel

Recordings of services are available through the Bookstore and online at [www.consciousharmony.org](http://www.consciousharmony.org)



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*The light came into the world,  
but people preferred darkness  
to light, because their works were evil.  
For everyone who does wicked things hates  
the light and does not come toward the light,  
so that his works might not be exposed.  
But whoever lives the truth comes to the light,  
so that his works may be clearly seen  
as done in God.*

John 3:19-21

## EVER DEEPENING LEVELS OF SURRENDER

The experience of most people on the spiritual path is a recycling of our major instinctual programs for happiness in which we let go of them at ever deepening levels of surrender.

Now we know that whether we succeed or not,  
they are of no consequence to us.

We are no longer interested in reward.

The love of God has taken over our motivation  
so that we have more and more freedom just to do God's will.

And let the chips fall where they may.

If they happen to fall on us,  
there is no big investment in self anymore  
to shed a tear over the humiliations of that illusory entity.  
A distinction that might help is to realize that devotion alone  
is not what the Gospel recommends.  
It is a good start, but it is not what the Gospel  
holds out as the goal of the Christian,  
which is transformation, transformation of consciousness.

Thomas Keating, *Divine Therapy and Addiction*

