

## Spiritual Direction

By Jennifer Drummond

Reflecting on my faith journey has been a wonderful process. As I look back on the twists and turns in my life, it often becomes clear(er) how God has woven certain people, experiences and themes together. Many times these have been in preparation for the next step along the path, although... not always. Regardless, there has been one particular practice that has helped me notice what God might be doing in my life: Spiritual Direction.

As a member of the founding Vestry of Christ the Redeemer, I was first introduced to the notion of Spiritual Direction by Susan Currie, a friend and fellow Vestry member. She invited our group to silence (not a natural state for meetings!), and led us in many deep listening exercises. That whole year was marked by attentiveness - to the Holy Spirit, to one another and to the quiet reaches of our inner selves. That attentive work set the stage for Christ the Redeemer to be born. It was one of the most remarkable groups I have ever been a part of, and that year was of unbeliev-



Photo: Stefan Kunze

able grace. The following few years were full of transition (I'll be sharing a bit about that at the upcoming Women's Brunch). But the hunger for close encounters with the Holy Spirit had been awakened! I knew I wanted to continue; I just didn't quite have the language, or know exactly what to do to foster that closeness with Jesus. That introduction to Spiritual Direction gave me a place to start.

I decided to find my own spiritual director. I began to notice common threads in my scripture reading (and my "fun" reading). Nature sung out to me. Friends spoke into me. It seemed everywhere I turned, I saw evidence of God - his presence, his goodness, his care for me. Soon I entered training to become a spiritual director (a two year process with the Anglican Diocese of New England under Moth-

er Susan Skillen). I still have my own director, but am now meeting with several women and am constantly amazed to see God at work.

Spiritual Direction is an ancient Christian tradition (often called Spiritual Companionship), where two people agree to meet regularly - usually once a month, and often for nine months or one year. The goal of the meetings is not counseling, advice-giving, mentoring, prayer partners, or Bible study, but rather to listen. The Director listens to God and to the person, and perhaps asks questions, focusing on the Directee's relationship with God: what is that like? What might God be doing, asking, inviting, showing? It is a holy, and sacred time, and a beautiful thing.

The upcoming Women's Brunch (Saturday, January 28 at 9 a.m.) will continue this conversation. We will hear two stories that morning, and will also be talking about how we can develop our awareness of God's presence, and how the practice of Spiritual Direction aids us in that work. It is a special time to gather, to witness to and with one another the glory of God at work in our lives, and I hope that you can join us.

## Today at CTR

**FORUM SERIES:** Today at 10 a.m. in the Parish Hall, "Working for Common Good." The sixth in our *Keep Calm and Love Your Neighbor* dialogue series.

**THE ANCHOR:** Junior High Youth group today at the Keifer home from 2-4pm. Refreshments, games, and a Bible Study. Contact Fr. Brian for info, [brian.barry@ctr-anglican.org](mailto:brian.barry@ctr-anglican.org).

## This Week at CTR



**WOMEN'S BRUNCH:** Please join us for our Winter Women's Brunch on Saturday, January 28, 9am. Learning how to thrive in the "in-between" times. Come hear the stories of two women in our community who began to understand in a deeper

way how to linger and listen well to God during times of great change in their lives. RSVP, Kim Ober, [kimwober@msn.com](mailto:kimwober@msn.com).

**WINTER PLAYGROUP:** Kids feeling cooped up this winter? Then come get their sillies out at Winter Playgroup! Caregivers with children from ages 0-5 years old, Tuesday mornings from 9-10:30 a.m., January 17th through March. Contact Rachel Nimon, or [emma.acker@ctr-anglican.org](mailto:emma.acker@ctr-anglican.org).

**MOMS IN PRAYER INTERNATIONAL:** Do you worry about your children? Their friends? Their school? Experience the joy of replacing your fear with peace by praying with other moms. We meet on Thursdays during the school year from 9-10 a.m. at CTR. For more info, please contact Flora Lee, [floraisabella@gmail.com](mailto:floraisabella@gmail.com) or 978-626-1179.

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY:** The Women's Ministry offers a weekly Bible study for women of all ages. The group meets in the Parish Hall every Thursday, from 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. for fellowship, refreshments, Scripture study, discussion, and shared prayer. Led by Carol Powers Sheridan, we will walk in gratitude, unity, and joy as we study the book of Philippians. Contact Kim Ober, [kimwober@msn.com](mailto:kimwober@msn.com), with questions or to request materials.

**WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY** meets in the Sacristy on Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact Richard Thorndike, 978-922-3618, for more information.

**PRAYER FOR CTR'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS:** Join us to pray, Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Sacristy.

## Upcoming Events



**CANDLEMAS CHORAL EVENSONG:** Sunday, January 29, 5:00 p.m., in the Church, with incense, to commemorate the Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple (Candlemas). Candles will be blessed, and the congregation will

light candles and process if desired in the festal procession while singing hymns to celebrate Christ the Light of the World. Choral Evensong is possibly the most distinctive Anglican service and is noted for its extraordinarily thrilling music. The Choir of Christ the Redeemer will sing music by John Bertalot, Hugh Blair, Gideon Cox, and Charles Wood. Fr. Tim Clayton will officiate; Deacon Adam Gosnell will preach a brief homily. Child care will be provided; a reception will follow. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors. Pray to God by candlelight and with glorious music.

**CONFIRMATION CLASS** is starting! Confirmation is for those looking to make a post-baptismal profession of faith or to be received from a different church tradition. We will meet weekly, starting January 22 at 10:00 a.m. in the Baptistry. Contact Dcn. Adam for more information, [adam.gosnell@ctr-anglican.org](mailto:adam.gosnell@ctr-anglican.org).



**ARCHBISHOP BEN KWASHI:** Saturday, February 4, Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi, Diocese of Jos, Nigeria, will be speaking at **10:15 a.m.** and **2:30 p.m.** at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral, Amesbury, as part of SOMA: Mission in New England

Conference. For more information or to register, please visit <https://adn.webconnex.com/soma-new-england>.

**GO CONFERENCE NEW ENGLAND:** February 17-18, Worcester, MA. Keynote speakers and workshops. Group ticket discount is available. For more information, [www.goconf.org](http://www.goconf.org).

**CTR WINTER WOMEN'S BRUNCH**  
Saturday, January 28, 9 am  
Sharing our Stories Part of His Story  
[rsvp kimwober@msn.com](mailto:rsvpkimwober@msn.com)

## Visiting Speakers

In the new series of Keep Calm and Love your Neighbor we look forward to hearing from the following friends of CTR as they dialogue with Fr. Tim over the next two weeks. A full schedule of speakers and their bios is available on our website, [www.ctrnorthshore.org](http://www.ctrnorthshore.org).



### **29 January: Dr. Nick Rowe – The Art (and Sweat) of Peacemaking**

Prior to becoming the new Dean of Student Engagement at Gordon College, Dr. Rowe has served in South Africa at St. Augustine College, for the past decade,

where he led the development of the undergraduate program—itsself a notable feat, but even more so within the country’s historical context. “Even 20 years after the fall of apartheid,” he says, “there’s such a massive backlog for access to education, which is seen as the chief way to escape poverty for a lot of students.” Widely experienced in conflict resolution and reconciliation, Dr. Rowe helped establish the College’s peacebuilding and peace studies program and spent considerable time consulting organizations that, in his words, “are still trying to work out how to coexist after 1994.” He and his wife, Sheila, also co-founded Rebecca’s Well, an NGO focused on women’s empowerment.

### **5 February: Sheila Rowe – The Art (and Sweat) of Peacemaking II**

Sheila co-founded Rebecca’s Well, an NGO in South Africa focused on women’s empowerment and continued to grow the organization throughout her time in South Africa.



### **...Or, alternatively, we may hear from: Gloria Kwashi (wife of Nigerian Archbishop Ben Kwashi)– Taking Your Neighbor into Your Home**

Gloria is an Anglican Christian theologian in Jos, Nigeria, in a region known as the Middle Belt that has been marked by ethnic and religious tensions and has also suffered numerous bomb attacks from militants. Together with her husband, Archbishop Ben Kwashi, she works in mediation and peacebuilding. In 1998, she was a seminar leader at the Lambeth Conference. For over a decade, Gloria has had a courageous and creative ministry to street children in a dangerous area of Nigeria.

## A Letter from Father Tim

Dear CTR Family,

There are two important things I want to address today.

The first is to say a great “Thank you!” to everyone who was able to make a special year-end gift. The response was fantastic; it is deeply heartening to see the love for CTR that so many have, and the acts of faith so many of you practiced. It turns out that December became the single largest month we have ever experienced in terms of giving, and we were able to catch up to where we need to be. I am delighted to call us to give thanks to our Lord Jesus and to mark, yet again, God’s faithfulness to us.

I also wanted to share an update on our Strategic Plan, and what’s happening there. To give a quick reminder of the story: in September of 2016 the Vestry approved a new Strategic Plan that painted a picture of where the Vestry saw God leading CTR in the coming season and for several years to come. One might say that moment was, in truth, the beginning of the real work, work that has begun now but also that will stretch out for several years.

Since then I have been working with a small steering committee that has continued to meet and plan for implementation. Periodically I will want to share a quick overview of what’s happening with all of this:

- First of all, we developed a detailed implementation plan, which means we prioritised the various projects and sort out who is doing what. It’s important to remember that while some of the work associated with the Strategic Plan has already begun, some of it will likely not be begun for a few years.

- At the Annual Meeting and in the 10 a.m. hour over a handful Sundays I discussed the plan — our Vision, Mission, and the core six categories which are addressed.

- So far we have begun working in three of those six categories:

*continued overleaf*

*Strategic Plan Update—Continued from page 3*

## **Stewardship Strategic Focus Area**

- We have launched a Stewardship Committee that will be focusing on how we can deepen our overall thinking about giving as a spiritual discipline, and on how we can communicate better about giving.
- We are working on launching Building and Grounds Team that will work with David Greening to give attention to our overall significant campus needs and physical plant needs (major repairs, capital improvements, etc.), and also will be continuing work to develop options (architectural, financial, missional) for completing the CTR campus — adding space, especially for children’s ministry, but also for youth, for adult formation, and offices.
- We have contracted with an outside consultant who specialises in narrative evaluation technique to continue development of our Rector and for informing discussions between the Rector and the Vestry.
- We hired a communications director and constituted a communications committee to advise on and execute communication strategy.
- We have begun evaluating our organization of staff and responsibilities in the church office, to include beginning process of revising written job descriptions or staff.

## **Formation Strategic Objective**

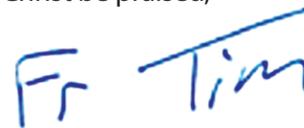
- A Youth Advisory Committee has begun meeting regularly with Fr Brian, in particular to plan for how best to build our high school youth program, as we now have more youth entering that stage of life.
- Coming out of the Becoming Whole Conference in October we have begun a Lay Leadership Development Group with Isaiah 40. This is a small prototype team going through a discipleship program and our doing this is in part a test as to how this might help us to build a discipling culture.

## **Witness and Cultural Engagement**

- A team of folks has begun discerning how the Lord might be calling CTR to engage marginalized groups in our area, particularly whether the Lord may be calling us to care for vulnerable children.
- I have engaged a Gordon Conwell seminary student to identify a core handful of churches in transferable cultural contexts and which have an effective work of witness. He is visiting and interviewing staff and/or lay leaders of the relevant ministries in these churches with an eye toward suggesting and testing creative means of witness here on the North Shore.
- We’ve set up a ride request email process for college students for Sunday mornings.
- CTR hosted a North Shore Gospel Partnership gathering.
- The “Keep Calm and Love your Neighbor” series is rolling along, and we’re working on spreading the word about it through signage and social media . The series is aimed at training us for and encouraging our witness.

Last year’s strategic planning process bore great fruit simply through all that comes from the process of seeking God earnestly. But also be encouraged that there are very practical, urgent, and impactful steps being taken to help us fulfill God’s vision for CTR. You are also invited to join us for prayer on Wednesday evenings at 7 for prayer for CTR and that the Gospel would capture the imagination Boston’s North Shore to the glory of Jesus Christ.

May Jesus Christ be praised,  
Fr Tim



***That The Gospel capture the imagination  
of Boston’s North Shore to the glory of Jesus Christ.***