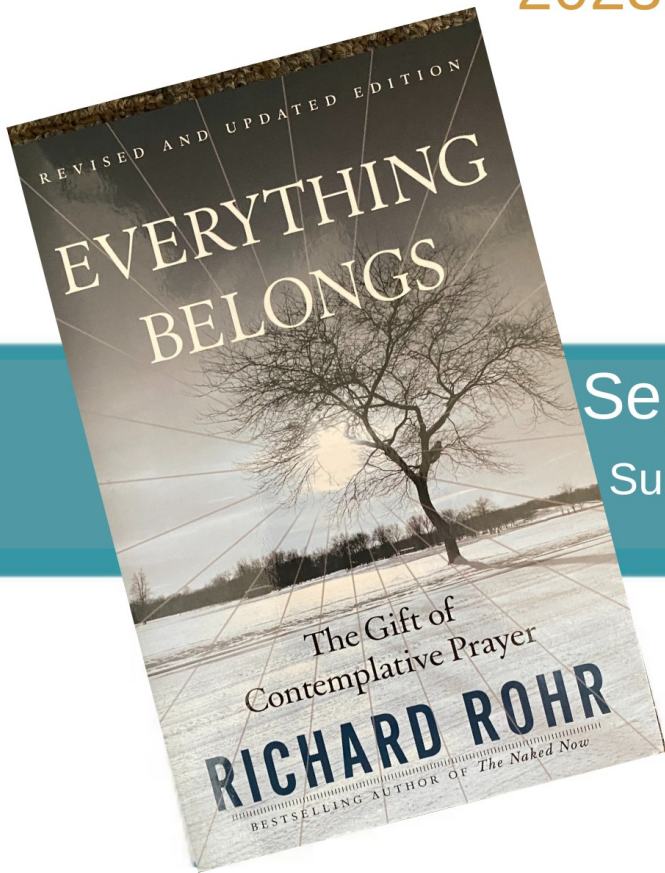


Adventures in Spirituality 2023



September 24 - November 18
Sunday Talks | Small Groups | Celebration

“The gift that true contemplatives offer to themselves and society is that they know themselves as part of a much larger story, a much larger self.”

Richard Rohr, *Everything Belongs*; *The Gift of Contemplative Prayer*

FACILITATOR GUIDE

Join: [Facebook.com/groups/UnityAIS](https://www.facebook.com/groups/UnityAIS)

Find online resources at: [UnityVillageChapel.org/AIS](https://www.UnityVillageChapel.org/AIS)

CHAPTERS & WEEKLY AGENDA

CENTERED AROUND A COMMON BOOK, WE INCORPORATE SMALL GROUPS WITH SUNDAY MESSAGES.

TOGETHER WE STUDY AND EXPLORE, DEEPEN OUR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE AND BUILD COMMUNITY.

WEEK 1

9/24/23 - 9/30/23

Introductions, Logistics and Bonding

WEEK 2

10/1/23 - 10/7/23

Chapter 1: Center and Circumference

Pages 13-27

WEEK 3

10/8/23 - 10/14/23

Chapter 2: Vision of Enchantment

Pages 28-59

WEEK 4

10/15/23 - 10/21/23

Chapter 3: Ego and Soul

Pages 60-92

WEEK 5

10/22/23 - 10/28/23

Chapter 4: Cleansing the Lens

Pages 93-121

WEEK 6

10/29/23 - 11/4/23

Chapter 5: Don't Push the River

Pages 122-153

WEEK 7

11/5/23 - 11/11/23

Chapter 6: Return to the Sacred

Pages 154-176

WEEK 8

11/12/23 - 11/18/23

Conclusion: A Contemplative Seeing of the Doctrine of the Cross

Pages 177-182

WEEKLY GROUP FORMAT

OPENING PRAYER

We open this sacred space acknowledging the power of Divine Love, which draws us together today. Each of us is a unique, unrepeatable expression of Spirit. Together as One, we are a powerful combination of souls. We acknowledge and appreciate the choice each person has made to be here. This is a gathering of friendship, support and discovery. We bless our spiritual community and each Small Group gathering this week. For our insights, connection and spiritual growth, we are grateful. And so it is. Amen.

CHECK-IN & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Personal sharing to be present

Announcements shared by facilitator

GROUP AGREEMENTS (week one only)

Commitments, Sacred Agreements, 5 C's, Art of Listening

MEDITATION/MINDFULNESS

We invest a moment to bring our attention and intention to the present. (pause). Setting aside anything that has been on our minds, we tune into our breath. We now allow our breath to bring us deeply into this moment. (pause) As we slowly inhale and exhale, we allow each breath to lengthen and deepen as our awareness comes to the heart center. Let us breathe in the silence. (1-5 minutes silence) Through the power of this practice, may all beings have freedom from suffering and the causes of suffering. May all beings know God as Love and themselves as an emanation of love. May all beings know they are born blessed, and here to be a blessing to all. Namaste

AFFIRMATION

*Our hearts, minds and eyes are open. We are immersed in a holy field of life, love and wisdom.
A mighty quickening of Mind-Body-Spirit is happening—right here, right now.*

DISCUSSION

1. Getting to know each other activity such as: If you really knew me...game.
2. During this week's reading, what touched your heart, inspired you, or captured your attention?
3. Review and discuss the questions from this week's reading in "Guide for reflection" Pages 183-186

SPIRIT WORK OPPORTUNITIES

1. How did this week's reading impact your spiritual practice and create abundant living?
2. What is your current I AM challenge? With what do you identify as your I AM?

CLOSING

Prayer Intentions

Group members are invited to share personal prayer intentions.

The Law of Circulation

Small groups are a vital part of our spiritual community. Your contributions make gatherings like this possible.

Bless Offerings

Divine love through me, blesses and multiplies all that I have, all that I give and all that I receive. I am grateful.

Prayer for Protection

The light of God surrounds us.

The love of God enfolds us.

The power of God protects us.

The presence of God watches over us.

Wherever we are, God is, and all is well.

GROUP COMMITMENTS

My commitment is fueled by words that speak boldly of my intentions and actions, transforming my life and our world.

- Connect** I believe the connecting power of Spirit dwells in the One Heart, of which we are all a part.
- Accept** I love and accept you as you are. I respect your right to think and feel differently than me.
- Choose** I choose words of kindness, encouragement and appreciation to build a strong foundation of mutual support.
- Celebrate** I celebrate the Divine Nature in myself and in you. As we acknowledge Oneness, we celebrate infinite possibilities.
- Share** I authentically share my personal truth. I lovingly listen to your truth.
- Commit** I commit myself to this process of spiritual exploration. I fulfill my soul's longing to know and express the Divine to the best of my ability through my thoughts, words and actions.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

I commit to these Sacred Agreements which foster a safe and healthy environment for everyone in our group.

- GROUP DYNAMICS** I agree to prepare for each session and participate in group discussions to the best of my ability. When sharing, I agree to use "I" statements. I will avoid advising, coaching or problem solving for others. I understand that this group is for personal discovery and spiritual growth. It is not a setting for group therapy.
- RESPECT** I show respect for our group members by attending each week and arriving on time. I silence my electronic devices so I may be fully present. I allow everyone to participate without interruption.
- COMPASSION** I understand that judgmental thoughts and comments are toxic to the group. I relate to others with unconditional, compassionate acceptance.
- CONFIDENTIALITY** I honor confidentiality. I do not share another person's story—even good news—without their permission. What is shared here stays here. When I need to personally process, I ask my facilitator or minister for sacred support.
- VULNERABILITY** I am willing to be vulnerable, even when it feels risky. I share authentically, and encourage others to do the same.
- CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS** I acknowledge that when people come together, the potential for misunderstanding, hurt feelings and triangulation exists. When left unresolved, these situations are toxic to the sacred safety of the group. For resolution, I agree to speak directly with people—not about them.

THE ART OF LISTENING

I am *Listening* when:

- I allow participants to be authentic and I respect their privacy.
- I strive to connect with others, especially when I don't understand what they're sharing.
- I endeavor to grasp other's viewpoints, even when my convictions don't align with them.
- I avoid coaching, offering spiritual Band-Aids, fixing or solving other participant's issues.

FIVE *C'S* OF CONSCIOUSNESS

COMMUNION: Each group session includes communion with Spirit through prayer & meditation.

CONNECTION: Each member invests time and energy in building authentic connections.

COMPASSION: Each member practices compassion by supporting the group with prayer.

COMMUNITY: Each member considers how they can and will serve in this spiritual community.

CHALLENGE: Each member is challenged to take on new spiritual practices.

EVENTS AND SMALL GROUP TEAMS

AIS EVENTS ~ MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sunday, October 15th ~ Harvest Fest Kick off: Community BBQ & Music Jam on lawn in front of the UVC CommUnity Space.

Monday, October 20th 7:00 pm ~ Small Group Facilitator meeting — Zoom

Tuesday November 28 ~ Giving Tuesday & end of Harvest Fest.

AIS SMALL GROUP SUPPORT TEAM

Rev brenda ehret ~ 319-360-0333 ~ revbse@gmail.com

Mark Livingston ~ 816-355-4570 ~ LivingstonMA@unityonline.org

Shea Maultsby ~ 201-315-2088 ~ maultsbysd@unityonline.org

AIS ONLINE RESOURCES

Find online resources at: UnityVillageChapel.org/AIS

Giving options

Online: <https://tinyurl.com/4rah2t67>

Text to give: (833) 993-2065

Download the UVC app for Prayer Wall and online giving

Apple: <https://tinyurl.com/42w2fwtx>

Android: <https://tinyurl.com/42643aj4>

Join: [Facebook.com/groups/UnityAIS](https://www.facebook.com/groups/UnityAIS)

PRAYER CHAPLAIN EMAIL ~ uvcprayerchaplains@gmail.com



Adventures in Spirituality

Sunday Services 10:30am CST

200 Unity Circle North, Lee's Summit, MO 64086

More information and LiveStream at UnityVillageChapel.org

Inspiring Spiritual Growth and Abundant Living

Small Group Facilitator Qualities

Consciousness

- ◆ Pray up, prepare and be fully present for each session.
- ◆ Trust Spirit to do the work.
- ◆ Use the Group Commitments as the basis of guiding each group meeting.
- ◆ Demonstrate spiritual/emotional maturity in the group, maintaining a calm presence.
- ◆ Remember that all participants are both student and teacher.
- ◆ Hold a consciousness of inclusivity.
- ◆ Foster a sacred/safe environment that allows others to authentically share.
- ◆ Listen mindfully to group members and uphold confidentiality.
- ◆ Accept participants as they are.
- ◆ Anchor in the awareness of the well-being of each participant and pray daily for them.

Accountabilities

- ◆ Know the material and be prepared for your role.
- ◆ Be present at least 30 minutes prior for in-person sessions.
- ◆ Make certain the room is ready prior to start of in-person sessions.
- ◆ Log onto zoom-meeting at least 20 minutes prior.
- ◆ Ensure each group member has the correct zoom link for each session.
- ◆ Open each session with prayer.
- ◆ Speak in an audible, positive tone, maintaining eye contact.
- ◆ Refer to members by their first name and encourage others to do the same.
- ◆ Allow members to freely participate. Guide the discussion and stay on topic.
- ◆ Acting as facilitator, keep the group focused and redirect coaching, tangents, etc)
- ◆ Close each session with prayer.
- ◆ Communicate with the group or individual members between sessions, as needed.
- ◆ Attend Sunday services and small group team meetings during the program.
- ◆ Recognize that as facilitator, my purpose is to support the UVC community as a whole.