



Homecoming

Bethany Retreat House

Volume 16, Number 2

April 2012

Save the Date!

Bethany to Celebrate 20th Anniversary

On September 30 Bethany Retreat House will commemorate its 20th anniversary with a special celebration. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the 2 p.m. event at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Hammond, Indiana.

Vinita Hampton Wright and Rev. Jerry Schweitzer will each speak on "Listening for the Voice Within: Masculine and Feminine Perspectives on Paying Attention to the Inner Life." Following the presentations there will be a short question-and-answer session. Then guests will move to the parish social hall for refreshments and conversation. There will also be an opportunity to purchase raffle tickets for some special gift baskets during the social.

In planning this celebration, the retreat house wants to offer an enriching experience for participants. The presentations on "Listening for the Voice Within" speak to the heart of Bethany's ministry to provide space and resources for prayer and reflection. Over the past 20 years, the retreat house has been a place where individuals have found support and encouragement in nurturing their inner life and responding to God who dwells within and among us.

Since 1992 Bethany has been welcoming guests for retreat, ongoing spiritual direction, and monthly reflection and dream groups. It is hoped that many of these individuals will want to join in the celebration to reflect on and celebrate the ways that Bethany has been an important part of their spiritual growth. Additionally, it is hoped that many friends of Bethany will want to gather to celebrate and support the important resource that Bethany Retreat House is for northwest Indiana and its surroundings.

Tickets will be available June 1 through the retreat house office (219-398-5047).

BRH Bookshelf



A New Harmony:

The Spirit, the Earth, and the Human Soul

by John Philip Newell

Jossey Bass, 2011, cloth, 189 pages, \$19.95

Reviewed by Deb Szrom Steppe

I have not read any other of John Philip Newell's books. After reading *A New Harmony*, I wish I had.

Newell, an ordained Church of Scotland minister, is a poet, peacemaker and visionary. In *A New Harmony*, he shows us a vision of inter-relatedness of all creation where God's infinite presence is beyond definition or boundary. Newell invites us to see with both a sun-like consciousness where we see differentiation in all things as well as a moon-like consciousness where we readily and more easily perceive oneness.

Written from a Christian perspective, he desires to go beyond our boundaries of religion and race. He honors each religious tradition and culture and shows the oneness of our origins. Far from being new ideas, Newell draws on ancient as well as new sources. Meister Eckhart, Julian of Norwich, and Hildegard of Bingen are quoted as well as Carl Jung, Paul Tillich, and Teilhard de Chardin. His vision of all things holy and interwoven is very much ancient and new.

While inviting the reader into a wider, hopeful view of our world, the author doesn't gloss over the darkness either. The chapter on looking suffering straight in the eye is filled with wisdom. The author uses much of his own story in a masterful way. The broad, wide-angled concepts of God's omnipresence and the world's interconnectedness are made manageable and grounded in the stories of his life experiences.

This book opened my mind to new perspectives from the very start. The first chapter is titled, "Every Bush is Burning." The author tells us that the point of the story is not so much that the bush is burning, but it's

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Garden Day 2012 Join us Saturday, May 5, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. See details on page 2.

From the Director's Chair

by Joyce Diltz, PHJC



It is with some wonder and excitement that we announce Bethany's 20th anniversary celebration. How 20 years have flown by! There is much to celebrate about these years of making space for and accompanying people on their inner journey. Do plan to join us for the celebration!

Those of you who enjoy our annual tea and are disappointed that the anniversary celebration is taking its place this fall will be glad to know that Denyse Buck, whose labor of love always makes the tea such a beautiful and scrumptious event, will be catering the refreshments for our anniversary celebration. And there will be some very select baskets for raffle as well.

For those of you who missed our bookstore stock reduction sale, many items are still marked down. You're welcome to stop by and explore the offerings. Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Other times are available by appointment.

I don't know when Easter in the midwest has ever had nature reflect the joy and beauty of new life like it has this spring! The green and flowers display so beautifully the paschal mystery we celebrate of life coming out of death and barrenness. May we always hold on to the truth of this mystery, whether we see it displayed around us or need to reach into our memory and our faith to believe that it is again possible. Blessed Easter to you!

Garden Day 2012 Is May 5!

All hands on deck for from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.! (Raindate: May 12.) Plan to join this 14th annual volunteer effort to get the meditation gardens spruced up and growing for the summer retreat season.



Joan Beck cuts through ground cover during last year's garden day.

No gardening experience is needed. Come join the fun digging in the earth, communing with nature, and meeting good people as we plant flowers, spread mulch, and do general clean-up. Do bring any garden tools you have: wheel barrows, rakes, shovels, gloves, trowels, etc.

Please RSVP ahead of time through Bethany's office (219-398-5047) to help us organize the work and have enough lunch for everyone. We welcome your presence and energy in this important annual venture! With the early spring, plants are already growing and flowering, so the day should be especially beautiful and pleasant!

Bookshelf *cont. from page 1*

that Moses notices. Every bush is aflame with the living presence of God.

What resonated with me in the book has stayed with me long after I finished the last chapter. In a fractured world and a fractured church, Newell's hopeful vision is most welcome.

This book can be purchased through Bethany Retreat House bookstore: 219-398-5047/bethanyrh@sbcglobal.net.

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Bethany Retreat House
is a ministry of the
Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ
(Ancilla Domini Sisters, Inc.)
congregation of women religious.

In Memory of . . .

- Elizabeth Gonzalez Avila** by Cindy Hall
- Owen Bryce** by Francis Felus
- Owen "Don" Bryce** by Al & Yolán Fabian
- Vyto Damasius** by Francis Felus
- Carmen Domingo** by Madeline Fryer
- Ann Draus** by Al & Yolán Fabian
- Patricia A. Fabian** by Gregory Fabian
- Rodrigo Flores III** by Sonia Sanchez
- Francis Gauthier** by Kathy Little
- John Gertz** by Joyce Gertz
- Elizabeth Gonzalez** by R. Louie & Martha Gonzalez
- Willie Doug Holland** by R. Louie & Martha Gonzalez
- Georgia "YiaYia" Kollintzas** by R. Louie & Martha Gonzalez
- Jacoba Lenting** by R. Louie & Martha Gonzalez
- Sr. Lorine, PHJC** by Sr. Florence Kuhn, PHJC
- Patricia Marzec** by Agnes Marzec
- Raymond E. Michalak, Jr.** by Vickie Michalak
- Deloris Mish** by Nancy & Bernard Baltrushaitis
- Tom Morgan** by Sr. Joyce Diltz, PHJC
- John A. & Helen Mroczkowski** by John M. Mroczkowski
- Delores Nevers** by Stanley & Irene Oboy
- Daniel Ramker** by Margaret Ramker
- George A. Saliga** by Margaret Saliga
- Mary Sienkiewicz** by R. Louie & Martha Gonzalez
- Helen M. Visclosky** by R. Louie & Martha Gonzalez

Bethany Receives Grant from FEC

Foundations of East Chicago awarded a grant for \$2,800 to buy a new main computer for the office along with a new multi-function printer/fax/copier/scanner and updated versions of Microsoft Office Professional software. We are most grateful to the Foundations for their gift and for their ongoing support of the retreat house.