

November 7, 2011

COCI Steering Committee Minutes

Attending: Tim Goldman, Steve Melby, Chris Frantsvog, Marilyn Musser, Margaret Mostek, Donna Hendrick, Jan Stegeman, and Marion Panyan

Report from the Leadership team (Chris)

The team met on Oct. 31, 2011. A Welcoming Prayer workshop with Susan Komis followed by an afternoon of visioning and discernment will be held at Covenant Christian Church on May 19, 2011. Paul W. is stepping down as co-coordinator and a new co-coordinator will be selected at this May meeting. All COCI members are invited and encouraged to attend.

The noon Friday Centering Prayer group that met at Central Presbyterian Church is not continuing.

A day of enrichment is being held on Jan. 14, 2011 at Central Presbyterian Church. Snow date is Feb. 4. The theme is "Sticks and stones and obstacles to the spiritual path." All interested in or practicing centering prayer are invited.

Paul W's Taize service is Jan. 15 at 7 pm at Covenant Christian Church.

A one-page overview of the year at a glance with details of other opportunities was passed out, as well as the 2012 calendar to purchase.

Discussion of Training and Recruitment

Tim re-introduced the idea of a service team to disseminate and support upcoming events. Steve suggested announcing events in multiple publications such as in the city View, Drake campus newsletter, etc. After some discussion Chris noted that a service person or team is needed and hopes that someone will volunteer for this work for a year.

Donna questioned whether it might be helpful for Center Prayer practitioners to attend an introductory course first or simply come to a Centering Prayer group. Pros and cons of both approaches were noted. In any event it was decided to offer an Introductory course often enough so that newer members could benefit. A 3-week rather than a 6-week introductory course was recommended. Tentative plans were made for an introductory session on a Sat. with current and new members. Four people on the steering committee indicated they would participate in such an event.

Many present commented on the value of the follow-up. One idea was to have the follow-up scheduled after a centering prayer period. Jan will ask her group how many would be interested in both a CP session and a Lectio Divina course after they meet for centering prayer. Jan suggested that we invite pastors in our outreach efforts.

The issue of timing arose and was deemed critical to participation levels. Steve is teaching Engaging Spirituality now to a JustFaith group. He viewed centering prayers opportunities as a natural sequel to Engaging spirituality sessions. Scheduling CP training soon after the conclusion of Engaging spirituality seemed a sensible approach.

Marion mentioned her experience in a Florida workshop with Fr. Laurence Freeman as a draw to CP and asked if COCI has had a national/international speaker come to Iowa. Chris said that Carl Arico will hold a retreat in April 2013.

Facilitator Handbook Training

Everyone at the meeting thought it was helpful. Probably the interaction with others present was more helpful than the actual handbook itself. Some did not agree with the "rules" per se and thought they needed to be flexible based on style, group dynamics, and the facilitator's personality. The important message to convey is that CP supports people in their individual practices in a group setting. Donna suggested that the practice of rotating facilitators was enriching in her experience.

Thoughts about the April 16-22 Retreat

This event will be a 6 or 7 day silent retreat blended with a weekend retreat with or without grand silence. Participants can attend the weekday or weekend retreat or both. Paul and Stephanie are the co-directors. Costs are anticipated to be in the \$400-\$500 range. It will be held at the Christian Conference Center in Newton, IA.

Advent-focused events

Thursday, Dec. 1 at 7 pm. Taize and Labyrinth at St. John's Lutheran Church. Chris asked everyone to submit other events we knew about connected with the Advent season so he can share these on the eUpdate.

Next COCI steering committee is Monday, Feb. 6, 2012

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Panyan