

## About Contemplative Outreach of Chicago

Contemplative Outreach of Chicago operates as a branch of Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

The organizations share this vision:

“Contemplative Outreach is a spiritual network of individuals and small faith communities committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life through the practice of Centering Prayer. The contemplative dimension of the Gospel manifests itself in an ever-deepening union with the living Christ and the practical caring for others that flows from that relationship.

“Our purpose is to share the method of Centering Prayer and its immediate conceptual background. We also encourage the practice of *Lectio Divina*, particularly its movement into Contemplative Prayer, which a regularly established practice of Centering Prayer facilitates.

“We identify with the Christian Contemplative Heritage. While we are formed by our respective denominations, we are united in our common search for God and the experience of the living Christ through Centering Prayer. We affirm our solidarity with the contemplative dimension of other religions and sacred traditions, with the needs and rights of the whole human family and with all creation.”

## Presenters

*Ted Curtis* is commissioned by Contemplative Outreach Ltd. to present the Centering Prayer Introductory Program. He is the pastor at Grace Episcopal Church, Chicago. Two presenters-in-information will be joining in. *Mary Holmquist* is a massage therapist and the leader of the Old St. Patrick's, Chicago prayer group for seven years. *David Webb* has M.A. from the Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, with a concentration in spiritual formation. He has completed a spiritual direction internship from the Claret Center and is doing special studies in spirituality at the Chicago Theological Seminary.

## For Futher Information

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Websites:

[www.centeringprayerchicago.org](http://www.centeringprayerchicago.org)

[www.contemplativeoutreach.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org)

## **An Introduction to Centering Prayer**

**“Be Still and Know... God”**



**Spring Creek  
United Church of Christ**

**4500 Spring Creek Rd.,  
Rockford, IL 61114**

**Saturday, September 18,  
2010**

9:30am to 3:30pm

and

**Six Saturday\* mornings  
Starting September 25  
9:30am to 11:00am**

*\*There may be other options for  
continuing sessions*

## What is Contemplative Prayer?

We may think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words. But this is only one expression. In the Christian tradition Contemplative Prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being – to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. Through grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing – closer than consciousness itself.

## What is Centering Prayer?

Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of Contemplative Prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. It is an attempt to present the teaching of earlier times in an updated form. It is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on other kinds of prayer. It is a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him. The desire for God is God's gift to us.

The source of Centering Prayer, as in all methods leading to Christian Contemplative Prayer, is the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The focus is the deepening of our relationship with the living Christ. It tends to build communities of faith and bond the members together in mutual friendship and love.

**Centering Prayer is for all who are seeking a deeper relationship with God.**

## What is an Introductory Centering Prayer Program?

The Seven Session Centering Prayer Introductory Program consists of a six-hour workshop and six 1½ hour follow through meetings.

### **Session 1: The Centering Prayer Essentials**

During the workshop each participant receives the essential conceptual framework to enter into Centering Prayer as a solitary individual practice. The schedule consists of four presentations with discussion, and two opportunities to experience Centering Prayer in a group setting:

- 1: Prayer as Relationship
- 2: The Centering Prayer Method, and a Centering Prayer period
- 3: Thoughts and the Use of the Sacred Word, and a Centering Prayer period
- 4: Deepening Our Relationship with God

### **Sessions 2-7: Follow Through Meetings**

During the six weekly meetings of 1½ hour each, there will be a 20-minute centering prayer period, 30-minute video created especially for beginners, and discussion of the video and your questions about the practice of Centering Prayer. Also:

- Session 2: Prayer in Secret – a contemporary method
- Session 3: The Discipline of Centering Prayer
- Session 4: What Centering Prayer Is Not/Is
- Session 5: Basic Principles of Centering Prayer
- Session 6: Clarification of the Method
- Session 7: Three theological Principles of Centering

***“But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” (Mt 6:6)***

## Details for An Introduction to Centering Prayer

### Location:

Spring Creek United Church of Christ  
4500 Spring Creek Rd.  
Rockford, IL 61114

**Session 1:** Saturday, Sept. 18, 2010  
9:30 am to 3:30 pm  
Bring a sack lunch  
Beverages and snacks provided

**Session 2-7:** The continuing sessions  
Six Saturday mornings,  
starting Sept 25 (possible  
Tuesday evening or other  
alternative time options).

**Cost:** \$45 for all sessions.  
***Scholarships available.***

### Registration:

Please make your check payable to  
***Contemplative Outreach Chicago*** and  
mail to:  
**Spring Creek United Church of Christ**  
**Attn: Sue Szatek, Secretary**  
**4500 Spring Creek Rd., Rockford,**  
**Illinois, 61114**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_