



Hope in Focus

October 5, 2025

*They were so deeply rooted in mutual love: each one humbly revered his brother as a father or mother....
Francis also admonished the brothers not to judge anyone,
nor to look down upon those who live with refinement and dress extravagantly or fashionably.
For, he would say, their God is ours, the Lord Who is capable of calling them to Himself and justifying those called.
He also used to tell them he wanted the brothers to show reverence to these people as their brothers and lords.
They are brothers, because we were all created by one Creator;
they are lords, because they help the good to do penance by providing them with the necessities of life.
He added: "The brothers' way of life among the people should be such that whoever hears or sees them
glorifies and praises the heavenly Father with dedication."
The Legend of the Three Companions, 13th century
Early Biography of St. Francis of Assisi*

Crossing the Threshold

Praying with Francis

"Most High and Glorious God"
(The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi)

*Most High and Glorious God, lighten the darkness of heart and mind.
Let Wisdom lead me to you, that I may live for love of your love.
Most High and Glorious God, grant me true faith, certain hope, and pure love.
That I may follow you, and carry out your holy command.
My God and my all, my God and my all, my God and my all.*

Blessing of St. Francis

adapted from St. Francis' "Letter to the Faithful"

*Happy and blessed are those who love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength,
And who love their neighbors as themselves....
The Spirit of God has come to rest on these people,
And is making a home among them for eternity, for they are God's children.
They have become as husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, and mothers of our Lord Jesus.*

*We are the husbands and wives of Jesus when the Holy Spirit has joined us to him.
We are brothers and sisters to Jesus when we do the will of God in heaven.
We are mothers of Jesus if we carry him in our hearts and lives by living holy ways,
Shining in this world for and on behalf of others.*

The Work of Faith

"The Heart of God"

*Faith that moves mountains, grace that forgives, peace that calms stormy seas.
Love that brings healing, trust that endures, truth that can set us free.
Help us embody all that you are, and live lives that reflect your grace.
To walk with the stranger, until we are friends,
And we all find our place, at home in the heart of God.*

*Make us faithful to forgive, when we're wounded by the world.
Peaceful bearers of your grace, help us love as you love.*

*Divided hearts
divide the world
Divided hearts
parse the world
into insiders and outsiders
us and them
good and bad
moral and immoral
conservatives and liberals
Palestinian and Israel
rebels and loyalists
documented and undocumented
Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, or Hindus.
So that all of life
becomes over-against
and the stance of over-against-ness
leaves no room for love.*

*You, God, are the undivided Center
the Magnetic core to whom all are drawn.*

*Save me from easy demonizing and blaming
that divides
and makes a villain
of the other.*

*Hold me, God, in the tension of this otherness
Let my discomfort melt into kinship.*

*Hold me, God, in Your undivided heart
where I know my connection
to the other.*

*For none of us are pure
none of us completely spurn deceitfulness
none of us can claim a moral high-path
that has earned the right to judge another.*

*In the fire of Your love
We all melt into Your heart
When we sink into silence
I see others through the lens of love.*

*Dread and fear are lame masters
they gateway paranoia
guilt and shame.*

*Love, kinship, compassion
these unlock
every door.*

Questions for Reflection

Seeing God in All

"Wherever You Turn"

Wherever you turn, there is the Face of God.

Seeking God in Word and Image

1 John 4:20-21 and "Da Pacem Domine" by Arvo Pärt

We love God, because he aforesaid loved us.

But if one shall say, "I love God," and is hateful to his sibling, he is false.

For the one who does not love his sibling whom he sees,

how is that one able to love God who is invisible?

And this commandment we have received from him:

That all who love God also love their sibling.

Da Pacem Domine
in diebus nostris
quia non est alius
qui pugnet pro nobis
nisi tu Deus noster.

Give peace, O Lord,
In our time
Because there is no one else
Who will fight for us
If not You, our God.

Seeing God in All

"Wherever You Turn"

Wherever you turn, there is the Face of God.

Centering in the Silence

During these minutes of silence, simply rest in God's abiding and loving presence in this moment. You are in God and God is in you. Just be and relax. Center your attention in your heart and imagine your breath flowing in and out from your heart area. If it helps you to center, use a sacred prayer word such as Abba, Spirit, Jesus, Beloved, Light, or Love.

The Work of Faith

"The Heart of God"

Make us faithful to forgive, when we're wounded by the world.

Peaceful bearers of your grace, help us love as you love

Faith that moves mountains, grace that forgives, peace that calms stormy seas.

Love that brings healing, trust that endures, truth that can set us free.

Help us embody all that you are, and live lives that reflect your grace.

To walk with the stranger, until we are friends,

And we all find our place, at home in the heart of God.

Receiving Holy Communion

"O Jesus Christe" by J. Van Berchem

O Jesu Christe, miserere mei
cum dolore languéo:
O Domine, tu es spes mea
Clamavi ad te, miserere mei

O Jesus Christ have mercy on me
as I languish with grief.
O Lord, You are my hope.
I have cried to You, have mercy on me.

Receiving a Good Word



Our Staff

Haley Brown – Associate Director of The Anchor House

Courtney Garrison – Ministry Assistant

Christian Ibanez – AV Production

Peter Johns – Associate Director of Contemplative Worship

Zachary Montasser – Violinist

Nick Cavazos – AV Production

Rev. Rachel Sciretti – Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. – Pastor of The Center

Today's Music

'Most High and Glorious God' – Peter Johns, *'The Heart of God'* – Peter Johns,
'Wherever You Turn' – Lynn Bauman

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 5 | The Anchor House | 5:00 p.m.

Hop, run or fly over with your special pet friend for an individual blessing by Michael and Rachel. Let's give thanks for fur, feathers, and friendship in all its unique forms. We will meet at The Anchor House. We will have a brief worship service celebrating the unique relationship we have with our pets, and then each owner is invited to bring their pet forward for an individual blessing.

Yoga at The Center: A Posture of Prayer

Monday, October 6 | The Anchor House | 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | \$10 per class

In this course, led by Jonathan Mangrum, we will use the practice of yoga as a lens to explore what it means to embody spirituality. Each class will include time engaging in breath work, meditation, yoga postures, and poses.



Creative Space

Saturday, October 11 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Creative Space is a nurturing, encouraging gathering of people who come together to create art and spend time in personal reflection. You will get an opportunity to explore spirituality through creative expression, as well as to be creative in a setting that is intentionally designed to enhance the spiritual. Materials are provided and everyone is welcome. No reservation is required.

Community Gathering

Sunday, October 12 | Dish Society (Memorial) | 11:30 a.m.

Join us for food and fellowship at Dish Society (12525 Memorial Dr). It's a great time to get to know folks from our contemplative community. R.S.V.P. to Haley by email or in person so we can save you a seat!

The Anchor House Hours

Tuesdays – Fridays | Noon - 4pm

The Anchor House is open in the afternoons for you to come and pray, meditate, walk the Labyrinth or just be still. If you would like to request a specific room for spiritual direction, counseling or for your own time of retreat outside of these hours, please let Haley know and we will make sure a room is available for you.

Holding One Another in the Light

As our commitment to one another deepens, we want to be able to pray for one another – bearing burdens and joining in celebrations. Here is how to participate:

1. Make a request for prayer or thanksgiving using the QR link or go to thecenterfcs.org
2. Opt in to receive the weekly prayer list by emailing Rachel at rscoretti@chapelwood.org.



Giving to The Center

We invite you to financially give to The Center in response to what you have received today or throughout our contemplative offerings. Using the QR code will take you to a page where you can make a one-time offering or recurring gift. Thank you for your contribution and investment.

