

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

The Quiet Day Retreat

Hosted by:
Congregational Retreat Society
Immaculate Heart Retreat Center
Spokane, Washington

In a famous passage from the Old Testament, the great prophet Elijah, on the run and in fear of enemies determined to kill him, seeks the Presence of God out in the desert. He encounters a tremendous storm, but God is not in the storm. Following the storm is a powerful earthquake, but God is not in the earthquake. God is in the still small voice that follows in which He speaks direction and vision and moves Elijah from fear and indecision to obedience and action. People have been seeking that still small voice ever since, and in a vibrant, active but very busy culture such as ours, taking time to seek the still small voice is more vital than ever.

The Congregational Retreat Society exists to arrange the time and space to do that. We plan a Fall gathering over Zoom to take a time in our own places to seek the voice of God, and we plan to have a day of prayer and contemplation on **Wednesday, June 26, 2024**, just after the Annual Meeting of the Congregational Christian Churches in Spokane, Washington. In one of the highlights of the year for me, I join others in a series of reflections on Ecclesiastes 3 followed by times of silence and prayer. I can't say that I hear a "quiet voice" every time I do this, but by the end of the day I am refreshed, I think more clearly, and my prayer life is enriched. A day of silence may not be for everyone, but I find it to be encouraging and peaceful. I am not alone. Here are the thoughts of some of our sisters and brothers in Christ who find a day of silent prayer is valuable.

"I appreciate the Quiet Day retreat as a time not only to reflect on my own spiritual life, but also do so in company with others from our Association. Even though there is silence during the retreat, we develop a bond with one another through the shared experience. Our guides help us to focus our thoughts together on a single topic, enhancing the fellowship we feel." -Garry Fisher



"A quiet day retreat means a lot to me. It's a chance for me to escape the constant hustle and bustle of everyday life and take some time to recharge my batteries. I can disconnect from technology, reflect on my thoughts, be closer to God, and be present in the moment. It's a time for self-care and introspection, where I can explore my feelings, emotions, and spirituality without distractions. Whether I spend the day meditating, journaling, praying, or simply enjoying the peace and quiet, a quiet day retreat is a much-needed break that helps me to feel refreshed and rejuvenated." - Laura Wright

"I think many of us have the best of intentions of honoring sabbath and giving our minds, souls, and bodies an opportunity

to rest, but other priorities crowd in. For me, the Quiet Day Retreats open up intentional space in my life where I am blessed by brief presentations by the retreat leader but then given lengthy times to mull over the topic on my own, apart from others, letting the Holy Spirit reveal to me new insights and challenges. We often hold retreats in places where taking a long walk in nature helps to recharge my overspent heart. I will take time to journal and pray and always depart with a sense of being refreshed and renewed.” -Rev. Wendy Van Tassell

Dan Vellinga is the current president of the Congregational Retreat Society and is also the pastor of First Congregational Church, Marshalltown, Iowa. He resides in Central Iowa with his wife, Jeanne. He enjoys music, hiking, and really good books. Wendy Van Tassell is well-known in Congregational circles with years in ministry to the local church and to the NACCC, Garry Fisher is the pastor of the Congregational church in Olivet, Michigan and Laura Wright is on the NACCC staff.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

This year’s Quiet Day will be **Wednesday, June 26, 2024, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at the [Immaculate Heart Retreat Center](#), with lunch and transportation to and from the hotel included.

The fee for the day is \$30.00 and the deadline to enroll is May 1st.

Membership in the Retreat Society has annual dues of \$25.00 per year and a chance to explore retreat options together with like-minded individuals. I encourage you to take the time to seek the still small voice of the Holy Spirit and invest in prayer, contemplation, and fellowship.

Any inquiries or questions can be addressed to Dan Vellinga at pastor@fccmarshalltown.org.