

## An Invitation to Grow in Christian Spirituality

The Friends of Christ School for Christian Spirituality invites all seekers to gather in community to explore and experience the riches of the Christian faith and spiritual traditions.

Come walk the common Christian path, a 'path of the heart,' in the company of wise teachers of the past and present, spiritual companions, and fellow seekers who share from their wisdom and experience.

### The Curriculum and Resources

Five core courses are currently offered and are led by clergy and laity from various Christian faith traditions.

Texts used currently include:

- *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* by Marjorie J. Thompson;
- *Too Deep for Words* by Thelma Hall;
- *Light from Light* by Louis Dupré and James Wiseman, O.S.B.;
- *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making* by Elizabeth Liebert, SNJM;
- *The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21st Century* by Joan Chittister, OSB

In addition, participants may receive supplemental materials, readings, and spiritual resources.

Experience of Christian spiritual community is stressed and modeled through the School. Spiritual companionship is integrated into each course by the faculty and/or certified spiritual directors.

### Format and Schedule

Both 6 or 8 week day and evening course options are offered. Most courses are hosted by Triangle-area congregations.

Orientation sessions are held periodically for those interested in learning more about this spiritual journey opportunity.

The schedule and other information are available online at [www.friendsofChristSchool.com](http://www.friendsofChristSchool.com).



### Core Courses

#### The Christian Spiritual Journey as Transformation

The Christian spiritual journey begins with the heart's deep longing for the wholeness found only in and through God. It moves along the path leading to transformation into the likeness of Christ.

In this course we explore the common path Christians throughout the ages have taken to seek and find the God who also seeks us. The core spiritual practices of worship and the sacraments, sacred reading of Scripture, and prayer are introduced, along with voices of wise guides of the past and present who help us find and stay on the path.

#### Spiritual Practices for the Journey

Practices that sustain us on our inner spiritual journeys and prepare us for loving service are explored and experienced in depth. *Lectio divina* (the sacred reading of Scripture, nature, the arts, and life) will be stressed as well as other contemplative prayer practices; e.g., breath and body prayer, centering prayer, chanting, and the practice of gratitude. Also, we will explore ways of prayerfully reflecting on the day, the role of spiritual community, and ways of bringing the contemplative way of being into all of life.

#### Spiritual Wisdom and Guidance

How to live a life transformed by God's love, modeled on the life and sacrificial death of Christ, is illustrated through the voices and examples of wise guides through the ages. Drawing from the wisdom, experience, and inspiration of deeply formed Christian women and men, we discover how much these wise ones can teach us and enrich our own journeys.

### Spiritual Discernment

Discernment is an advanced spiritual practice which tests and integrates all the wisdom of the spiritual journey. It flows from the desire to live within the reign of God and to make God's will our will. Through prayerful listening, observing, and following the whisperings and actions of the Holy Spirit, the mature Christian and Christian community learn to trust God in all of life and to discern what is of God, of self, or of evil.

### Rule of Life

Living by a Rule of Life offers an intentional way to develop a balanced and sustainable rhythm of life. A Rule of Life helps us to live in regular contact with God as Jesus modeled. Models from the Christian traditions will be explored with focus on the Rule of St. Benedict and adapting the rule for contemporary Christian life.

*Upon completion of the core curriculum participants will be awarded a Certificate in Foundations of Christian Spirituality from Friends of Christ School for Christian Spirituality.*

### Spring 2016 Voices...

*"Leaders provided a very relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. I was not hesitant to participate and share. Wonderful range of topics. Thought provoking discussions - individuals from varied backgrounds offered a wide range of insights. Reading assignments were balanced and not overwhelming."*

*"I enjoyed the way the book was incorporated into the class presentation/discussions. I appreciated the generous distribution of excellent handouts. I thought the facilitated discussions were the best part of the entire course."*

*"For me, everyone's insights were wonderful. I don't have the opportunity to talk 'God-talk' a lot each day. I took away many things to think about."*

*"This course exceeded my expectations. I enrolled with a little trepidation and a sense I wasn't wise enough for the practice of discernment. Being given such concrete ways to approach discernment was wonderful."*

*"The School gives me renewed hope for Christian unity in the richness of our diversity, coming from the bottom up rather than the top down."*

## Faculty 2016-2017

Ms. Cely Chicurel, United Church of Chapel Hill

Sr. Evelyn Craig, Newman Catholic Center

Dr. Heather Ferguson, Westminster Presbyterian Church

Dr. Stephanie Ford, Binkley Baptist Church

Deacon Phil Rzewnicki, Holy Cross Catholic Church

Rev. Judy Stephens, Academy for Leadership Excellence, UMC

Winter-Spring faculty to be announced

## Spiritual Companionship in Community

Spiritual companionship is the art of providing support and encouragement to persons seeking deeper awareness of God's activity in their lives. Spiritual companionship is integrated into each course.

## Spiritual Enrichment Offerings

Opportunities to gather as a community are offered periodically to hear guest speakers, attend retreats, discuss topics of interest, and experience spiritual practices. These events as well as other happenings in the wider community are listed on the School's website.

## Spiritual Direction

*"Spiritual direction, is, in reality, nothing more than a way of leading us to see and obey the real Director—the Holy Spirit hidden in the depths of our soul."*

—Thomas Merton, Trappist monk

For more information about spiritual direction

NC Community of Spiritual Directors

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

Spiritual Directors International

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

Listening Place Spiritual Center

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

*"I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father." -*

*- John 15:15 NRSV*



## Supporting Churches and Communities

providing generous in-kind services to the School include

Amity United Methodist Church

Binkley Baptist Church

Carrboro United Methodist Church

Chapel in the Pines (Presbyterian)

Chapel of the Cross (Episcopal)

Christ United Methodist Church

Church of the Holy Family (Episcopal)

Church of Reconciliation (Presbyterian)

Croasdaile Village

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Listening Place Spiritual Center

New Hope Presbyterian Church

Newman Catholic Parish

St. Thomas More Catholic Church

United Church of Chapel Hill

University Presbyterian Church

University United Methodist Church

Westminster Presbyterian Church

## Founder and Consultant

Dr. Laura Dunham, ObISB (Catholic), Riverside, CA

## Core Team 2016-2017

Ms. Allison Davidson, Church of the Reconciliation (Presbyterian)

The Rev. Mark Davidson, Church of the Reconciliation (Presbyterian)

Dr. Heather Ferguson, Westminster Presbyterian Church

Mr. James Hynes, St. Thomas More Catholic Church

Ms. Rita Proctor, University United Methodist Church

Deacon Phil Rzewnicki, Holy Cross Catholic Church; FCSCS coordinator

Mr. Don Schoene, University United Methodist Church

The Rev. Judy Stephens, Academy for Leadership Excellence, UMC

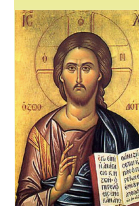
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Friends of Christ School for Christian Spirituality (FCSCS) is an ecumenical school for spiritual seekers who want to explore a deeper relationship with God within an open, inviting community. Its purpose is to contribute to the spiritual formation and transformation of participants and to supplement what is already offered within their own faith communities.

The School offers spiritual growth both through transmission of the common Christian traditions and in-depth experiences of its core spiritual practices. Anyone drawn to discover and explore the breadth and depth of the Christian faith within a supportive community will find appealing the School's classes, gatherings, and opportunities for spiritual companionship.



**"Thus says the LORD:  
Stand at the crossroads, and look,  
and ask for the ancient paths,  
where the good way lies; and walk in it,  
and find rest for your souls."**

Jeremiah 6:16 NRSV