



Whale Spouts

*inspiration & information
to nurture spiritual vitality in everyday living*

A monthly newsletter of Belly of the Whale
Spiritual Direction & Retreat Ministries LLC
August 2014

My kids started marching band camp this week, which means that fall is fast approaching! I want to savor these last few days of summer as we ease our way into the change of rhythm that comes with the change in season. As the calendar fills with back-to-school activities and practices, however, I don't want to forget to make space for my own spiritual practices as well.

As you look ahead to your own fall calendar, remember to make space for whatever it is that feeds your spirit – prayer, nature walks, meditation, Bible study, retreats, painting, reading, etc. If you are interested in learning more about the possibility of Spiritual Direction, please give me a call.

Remember these upcoming fall opportunities as well...

- **September 14 Open House** (Would love to see you there!!)
- **Creative Pray-dates**
- **Spiritual Renewal Retreats**

See the back of this newsletter for more info. Please register sooner rather than later as space is limited and already starting to fill up.

May the awareness of God's constant, gracious presence fill your day.

Peace and joy,
Sharon

More than a Fluke

A whale's tail is more than just a fluke. The fluke, or tail, of each humpback whale has a unique pattern that is different than all others. Like our human fingerprints, no two flukes are exactly alike. However, in addition to identity, a fluke also provides direction and forward motion for the whale as it moves through the surrounding waters.

Similarly, our divine calling is more than just a fluke. God has created each person with a unique pattern of gifts and graces that is different than all others. No two calls are exactly alike. Our calling provides direction and forward motion that propels us through both the calm and turbulent waters of our lives.

I invite you to make time in your busy life to identify and embrace your divine calling. Prayer, meditation, and other spiritual disciplines can guide you along this journey. May we have eyes to see and ears to hear God's call in our lives – it's no fluke!



Our mission

is to nurture spiritual vitality
in everyday living through
personal spiritual direction
& small group retreats.

Our name

is a reminder that, just as Jonah
encountered God in the
"belly of the whale,"
we also long for
a safe space
to encounter God –
space where we can
express our spiritual longings,
ask the challenging questions and
nurture a genuine relationship with God.

Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Formation Retreats

provide just this sort of safe space
-amidst our often stormy and busy lives-
to nurture a deeper and more meaningful
relationship with God.

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Whale Spouts



FAQ

What retreats do you offer?

We offer many different retreats that can be custom designed to fit the needs of your group. Retreats may last anywhere from 2 hours to 2 days or more. You can come to us - small groups (of up to 12) can gather at the relaxing Belly of the Whale office for day retreats. Or, we can come to you - your own location or a retreat center for overnight getaways. Here are a few of my favorite retreat themes...

Advent Speed Bumps: The Christmas season often feels like a non-stop race from early fall (when shops start the displays!) until December 25. Explore ways to slow down along the road to Christmas and savor the sacred season of Advent.

Your Prayer Personality: Learn which prayer styles may be most meaningful to you based on your Myers-Briggs Personality Type. Reflect on how you interact with others in your daily life and how that influences the way you interact with God through a variety of different prayers and meditative techniques.

Picture Book Prayers: Bring along a favorite childhood picture book to share and explore the theological meanings behind the words and beautiful illustrations.

The Sound of Silence: Gift yourself with time to turn off the sounds of the world and tune into the sound of God's still small voice. Learn different breath prayers and meditation techniques to help still your spirit and listen deeply to the sound of silence deep within your soul.

Creative Prayer Workshops: Enjoy creative "pray-dates" that offer hands on opportunities to learn meaningful, new ways to pray using journaling, pottery and/or prayer beads.

*"Come to me,
all you who are weary and burdened
and I will give you rest."*

Jesus

How is Belly of the Whale Ministries funded?

Belly of the Whale Spiritual Direction & Retreat Ministries is a limited liability corporation. Although it is endorsed by the United Methodist Church, it is not financially supported by the church. Therefore, our ministries are funded solely by fees collected for our services. Because spiritual formation can be such a meaningful experience, I do not want anyone to miss out because of lack of funds. I will gladly work with you to determine fees that fit with your personal or organizational budget. Please contact me directly to discuss flexible options.

Upcoming Events

See our website for more details and registration information.

Open House



September 14

Location: Belly of the Whale Office
@ University Circle UMC

Time: 12:30-3:00

Cost: Free

Stop by the celebration and bless our new office space with your presence.

Creative Pray-dates

Oct. 5 - Spiritual Journaling

Nov. 2 - Pottery

Dec. 7 - Prayer Beads

Location: Belly of the Whale Office
@ University Circle UMC

Time: 1:00-3:00

Cost: \$20/session or \$50/all three
Reservations required

Refresh your prayer practices through these creative workshops.

Spiritual Renewal Retreats

October 6-7 or 22-23

Location: River's Edge Retreat Center
Cleveland, Ohio

Cost: \$125

Embrace the sacred silence of a quiet, guided retreat & be renewed. Space is limited so make your reservations now.

Listen to yourself and in that quietude
you might hear the voice of God.

Maya Angelou