



The Anchorage:
A Contemplative Community for All

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Come away...

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 Michael Fleenor
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 Kathryn Fitzgerald
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April 2019

Dear Friends of The Anchorage,

Almost twenty years ago now, in the summer of 2000, I traveled with a number of youth in the church I was serving then in St. Louis for the National Youth Gathering. Young at heart, both now and then, I connected well with one of the keynote speakers at the gathering, the late Mike Yaconelli. He had recently published a book entitled, *Dangerous Wonder*, in which he reminded his readers what the adventure of having a childlike faith is like. He wrote, "Children live in a world of dreams and imagination, a world of aliveness... There is a voice of wonder and amazement inside all of us; but we grow to realize we can no longer hear it, and we live in silence. It isn't that God stopped speaking; it is that our lives became louder."

Through the years of my life and ministry, I have learned repeatedly how easily we consent to insulating our childlike "God-ears" with layer upon layer of distractions. Our active minds are vulnerable to such futile things as trying to justify something that happened in the past or imagining what tomorrow may look like. The result is that we end up taking much of the present moment for granted. We operate on auto-pilot, with little sensation of what we're actually doing or the ones we're doing it with. Worst of all, we muffle even further yet, the still, small voice reminding us that we are beloved by God.

Maybe that is why I found the invitation of The Anchorage to, "Come away - anchor deep," so appealing. Maybe it was like Jesus encouraging me, as he did his disciples to "come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." This is what the many programs and events of The Anchorage seeks to offer – a chance to come away, and to listen with your God-ears again. If you have been one who has invested yourself in the quiet moment afforded by a Desert Day or immersed yourself in the solitude of a retreat to Mepkin Abbey, you know personally the gift that The Anchorage has been for many over its first twenty years.

Still, this ministry exists to encourage contemplative awareness to all. It has sought to diminish obstacles that inhibit this, including financial hardships. Each event invitation includes the reminder that, "If \$10 is all you can pay, then that's all you pay!" In order for us to do this, The Anchorage needs partners like yourself – folks with an appreciation and hunger for the contemplative life. This ministry does indeed value your presence at events, for it is also through one another that we sense God speaking to us about ourselves. This ministry also needs your prayer and your financial gifts. Please do consider joining me in making a commitment that will ensure The Anchorage will be here to receive any thirsty pilgrims that come seeking the nearness of God. Deep blessings to you all.

The Reverend Dr. Alan Kinsey
 Participant, Pledger, Servant Leader,
 The Anchorage

