



Adult Formation Fall 2026



Holy Comforter

Adult Formation — Fall 2026

Nourish the Mind
Nourish the Spirit
Nourish the Body
Nourish the World

p.2-3
p.4-6
p.6-7
p.7

Luke 10:26-27: “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” The man replied, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And Jesus said to him, “You have given the right answer. Do this, and you will live.”

At each moment, we are being formed into the image of Christ; formed first and foremost by God who is “at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for God’s good pleasure,” that you may “... shine like stars in the world.” (Philippians 2:13, 15) This work ***begun in us by God*** then enlivens everything we think, how we pray, how we take care of ourselves, how we care for God’s creation, and how we love others with whom we share it. For Christians, the relationship we have with God and one another is an *every day affair* culminating each Sunday, as we gather to remember that everything starts with God’s love and then continues through us as we go about the rest of the week — ***faith and being disciples is a way of life.***

Holy Comforter’s Adult Formation will offer opportunities to forge connections within ourselves, with one another, and God; the individual and the community BOTH reflecting the body of Christ, as we all are formed into Christ’s image. The whole person (heart, soul, strength, and mind) will be nourished with food from which we’ll never go hungry and by which we can more deeply love God and our neighbors as ourselves. We will love the Lord our God with ALL of who we are and ALL of who we are becoming.

“Do this, and you will live.” Jesus is talking here of much more than a mere continuation of physical existence and quantity of days. He is teaching us about quality of life; that we can ***thrive*** in ways not found in the world, but only with God; only with our whole being — the heart, the soul, strength, and mind. Do this, and you will live — you will thrive!

I’m looking forward to encountering Christ with each of you.

Your servant,

Brad+

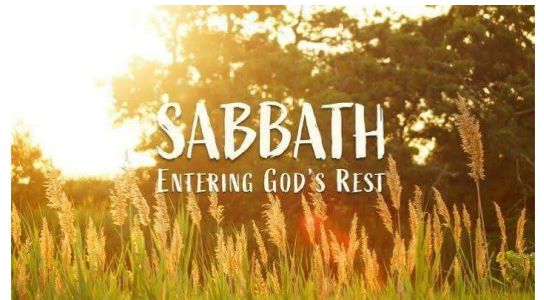
Nourish the Mind

SUNDAY FORUM (9:30-10:15 am, Sundays - Henry Hall)

Ordinary Time Series

In Search of Sabbath (w/Fr. Brad) (Sept. 27 — Oct. 25)

Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. There is something in the pace of modern life that easily captivates our attention towards a rhythm that suggests thriving and depth, but often only exhausts and depletes. Stemming from his 2014 sabbatical, Fr. Brad knew the time had come to reclaim the essence of the Sabbath. All of us, even clergy, need to find connection with the holy rest that is the Sabbath and always remember it. Beginning Sept 27, become part of the exploration:



- Sep 27 What's Missing Does Matter
- Oct 4 Remember the Sabbath?
- Oct 11 Why We Need 24/6
- Oct 18 How Do We Do Sabbath?
- Oct 25 A Liturgy for Your Consideration

Communion: Gift, Belonging, and Becoming (w/Mtr. Cat) (Nov. 1, 8)

How is Christ present in the Eucharist? What happens to us when we receive? What is the connection between Eucharist and Baptism? What place is there for mystery or doubt? Join us for two weeks as we explore the theology of Communion in the Episcopal tradition.

Together, we will consider the Eucharist as God's gift of grace, participation in the life of Christ, a sign of our unity with one another, and a foretaste of God's promised future. Bring your questions and curiosity as we delve into the wonder of Jesus' gift of the Eucharist, and reflect on how it shapes our hearts and minds.



Advent Series

Advent & Christmas Wisdom from St. Benedict (w/Fr. Brad) (Nov. 29-Dec. 20)

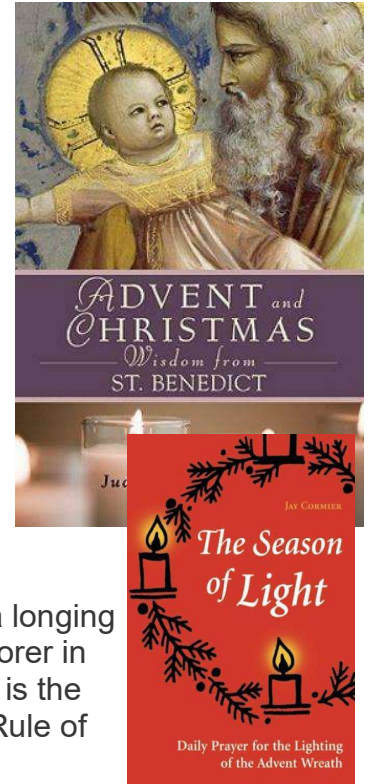
For over 1,500 years, believers from all Christian traditions have looked to St. Benedict, the patriarch of Western monasticism, for spiritual wisdom. And rightly so: his rule has shown how one may experience a simple, holy, and common sense life, despite the increasingly busy pace of our daily existence.

With Benedict as our guide, we will enter the season of Advent, a season of special grace and a time to prepare to receive Jesus more fully at Christmas. Advent is about readying one's heart to cradle the One who will be born anew when the Nativity feast is celebrated once again. It is a time of hopeful expectation that Jesus will heed one's ardent longing that He abide more completely within oneself. If one's desire for Jesus is great, one's whole being will become centered in the joy that will accompany His renewed birthing in one's life.

Advent expectation also reflects a longing deep within each of us; a longing epitomized in the Christmas celebration. "The Lord, seeking his laborer in the multitude to whom he proclaims these words, says again, 'Who is the one who desires life, and loves to see good days?'" (St. Benedict, Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue: Section 14).

We will begin each session with a brief Advent Wreath candle lighting liturgy as arranged in ***The Season of Light***. Twelve copies will be available for a discounted price of \$10 on a first-come, first-served basis, or the book is available for purchase on Amazon.

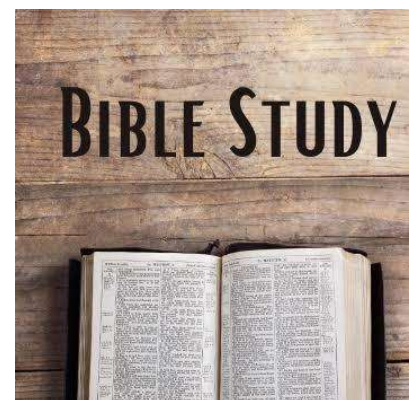
Come and join the exploration.



BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays (3:30 - 4:30 pm, Mtr. Cat, Parlor)

In the Episcopal tradition, studying the Bible is central to faith because Scripture is the foundational source of how we encounter God. Episcopalians approach faith through a three-part framework: **Scripture, Tradition, and Reason**. Within this framework, the Bible holds primary authority, containing all things necessary for salvation. Read in the company of others, we can hear God's active voice speaking to the church and the world today.



Nourish the Spirit

MORNING PRAYER

Mondays-Thursdays (8:00-8:30 am chancel, w/Fr. Brad)

Note: Wednesdays with Holy Communion

In the Episcopal tradition, **Morning Prayer** is a spiritual anchor designed to align the soul with the divine before the day unfolds. Rooted in the ancient monastic rhythms of the Daily Office, **this liturgy is less about performing a duty and more about entering a sanctuary of time.** By offering our first waking thoughts to God, we recognize that the day ahead is a gift to be consecrated rather than a series of tasks to be managed.



The service breathes in a sacred, alternating rhythm of **listening and responding**. It begins in humility with confession, clearing away the mental clutter of yesterday to receive God's absolute forgiveness. We then dive into the Psalms and Scriptures, inhaling the timeless narrative of God's faithfulness. In response, we exhale praise through ancient songs called canticles. This movement acts as a spiritual lung, filling us with the Word before sending us forth in service.

The liturgy reaches its fulfillment in **communal intercession**. As we pray for the world, our leaders, the suffering, and our neighbors, our hearts are stretched beyond personal concerns.

The beauty of the Book of Common Prayer is that it does not rely on our fluctuating emotions or finding the "perfect" words. When we are too tired or distracted to pray, the liturgy carries us. It tethers our modern, hurried lives to the steady, eternal heartbeat of God.

LECTIO DIVINA

Tuesdays (9-10 am, Fr. Brad, Zoom)

- **Contact Fr. Brad for initial conversation & orientation: brad@holyccomfortcharlotte.org**

Lectio divina is an ancient spiritual practice that transforms one's engagement with Scripture from a study and acquisition of information into a deeply personal **encounter with the Divine**. Rather than reading for speed or analysis, this method treats Scripture as a living word meant to be experienced as the soul is nurtured and intimacy with God is cultivated. Its core structure lies in four traditional movements:



- **Lectio (Reading):** You listen to the text with the "ear of the heart," receptive to a specific word or phrase that stands out.

- **Meditatio (Reflecting):** You chew on that word, allowing it to interact with your thoughts, memories, and current life circumstances.
- **Oratio (Responding):** You enter into a spontaneous, heartfelt dialogue with God based on what the text has stirred within you.
- **Contemplatio (Resting):** You move beyond words to rest quietly in God's presence, letting the divine encounter reshape your inner life.

Ultimately, lectio divina moves you from intellectual thinking into deep communion, not just with God but with one another, making it a powerful tool for spiritual formation, peace, and building of relationship.

ADVENT QUIET MINI-RETREAT: Waiting in Hope

Saturday, Dec 12, 1:30 - 4:30 pm, w/ Mary Ann Archer, the Parlor

Come enjoy an island of calm, quiet, prayer, and fellowship with certified spiritual director, artist, and musician, Mary Ann Archer. Hear the Biblical stories of Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth, Mary, and Joseph through the eyes of a sweet she-donkey in "Seila's Story, Nothing is Impossible with God".

Coffee and snacks will be provided, and twelve copies of "Seila" will be available at no charge on a first-come, first-served basis.



LABYRINTH: The Journey Inward

Location: Next door, on Avondale's grounds (open all hours)

The **labyrinth** is an ancient spiritual tool that serves as a physical mirror for the soul's inner journey. Unlike a maze, which is designed to make you lose your way, a labyrinth has only **one winding path** that leads safely to the center and back out again. There are no dead ends, no tricks, and no wrong turns.



Walking the labyrinth is an invitation to **slow down and practice active meditation**. As your feet follow the path, the mind is freed from the rush of daily life to focus on the present moment. The journey traditionally unfolds in three spiritual movements:

- **Releasing:** On the way in, letting go of distractions, burdens, and anxieties.
- **Receiving:** Pausing at the center to find stillness, clarity, and God's presence.
- **Returning:** Walking back out into the world, grounded, renewed, and carrying that peace forward.

Ultimately, the labyrinth reminds us that the spiritual life is not about finding the "right" exit, but about **trusting the path** and finding peace in the journey itself.

CENTERING PRAYER "Be still and know that I am God." PSALM 46:10

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER — We may think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words. But this is only one expression. In the Christian tradition, contemplative prayer ("resting in God") is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart - our whole being - to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions; opening our

awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing, closer than consciousness itself.

SO WHAT IS “CENTERING” PRAYER? — Centering Prayer is a meditative method grounded in ancient Christian wisdom and designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer (“resting in God”) by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. Centering Prayer does not replace other kinds of prayer, but illuminates their depth. It is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. This method moves beyond talking to God to listening to and communing in the heart of God.

THEOLOGICAL BASIS — The source of Centering Prayer, as in all methods leading to contemplative prayer, is the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The focus of Centering Prayer is the deepening of our relationship with the living Christ, which builds communities of faith and bonds members together in mutual friendship and love.

THE ROOT OF CENTERING PRAYER — Listening to the word of God in Scripture (Lectio Divina) is a traditional way of cultivating friendship with Christ. It is a way of listening to the texts of Scripture as if we were in conversation with Christ and he were suggesting the topics of conversation. A regular encounter with Christ and reflecting on (in contrast to analytically studying) his word leads beyond mere acquaintanceship to an attitude of friendship, trust, and love. Conversation simplifies, giving way to communing.



Nourish the Body

“Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God” (Romans 12:1).

TAI CHI and YOGA — in discernment, watch for updates!

A great many of the principals in tai chi are reflected in the wisdom of Jesus’ teachings. Tai Chi is a martial art and also a form of “moving meditation” that calms the mind, relaxes the body, strengthens the spirit, and deepens awareness. Much of Tai Chi is practiced slowly and gently, and is ideal for people of all ages and health conditions. Fr. Brad is a certified Laoshr (“teacher”)



through The Phoenix and Dragon lineage of Shaolin tai chi and whose title in the context of teaching tai chi is Sifu Brad. While there will be no fee, donations to charitable organizations we'll explore will be accepted.

For Christians, practicing yoga can be a powerful embodied prayer, uniting physical health with spiritual devotion. Not unlike tai chi, yoga unites the mind, body, and spirit, acknowledging that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19.) It treats physical movement as an act of worship, in which moving through postures with intention acts as a physical manifestation of praise, surrender, and humility before God. The meditative focus quiets mental chatter, creating a quiet inner sanctuary to hear the "still, small voice" of God.

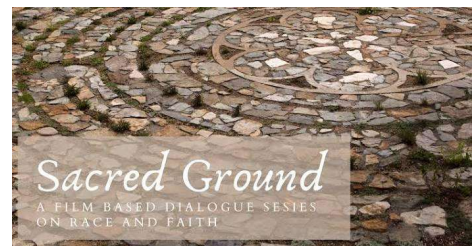
All will be welcomed. No experience required for either tai chi or yoga.

Nourish the World

SACRED GROUND

Tuesdays (6:30-8:00 pm, Zoom)
(Oct 6 - Nov 10)

- Facilitators Jenny Beaumont & Ed Gash
- Space is limited, registration required, contact Ed
- Registration Fee: NONE, but a book to purchase



Sacred Ground is part of Becoming Beloved Community, The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society. This fall starts the first part of the 11-week program to be completed in the Spring.

It is a film-and-readings-based dialogue series on race, grounded in faith. Small groups are invited to walk through chapters of America's history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity. The series is built around a powerful online curriculum that focuses on Indigenous, Black, Latino, and Asian/Pacific American histories as they intersect with European American histories.

This series is open to all, and especially designed to help white people talk with other white people. Participants are invited to peel away the layers that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day – all while grounded in our call to faith, hope, and love. All are welcome. Zoom link provided with registration confirmation. Questions, contact Ed Gash (coachedgash@gmail.com).

