



Living in the Balance

January 2010

*The pain I feel now
is the happiness I
had before.*

That's the deal.

C. S. Lewis

While the world hunkers down and coat collars turn up against the wind, January holds Her own and offers the earth her loamy darkness. The annoying nut grass rests in the middle of the flowering phlox. The odorous wild onions nestle next to the fairy ferns. All of nature is bedded down together waiting for Spring to call the dormant up so each can experience anew the fickle, ever changing weather.

This newly birthed year will bring me my very own personal array of “weather” and no doubt I’ll want to cuss some days and dance with others. As the time unfolds, I hope I can be open to whatever each day brings.....to accept what is present and what is not and to live in the “tension” of what I *expect* and what truly *is*. As much as I want to banish parts of my life, I know that to deny one piece is to diminish the other. The dark and the light play off each other and bring richness not complete unless both are present. I feel great sorrow because I knew deep joy. I savor sweetness because I have tasted bitterness. I suffer a wracking grief because I experienced remarkable love.

I recall a black and white photograph taken in Northern Ireland many years ago. The photo captures two smiling middle-aged women walking arm and arm while deeply engaged in conversation. All around the women are heavily armed soldiers moving with their weapons at the ready in an area that has been bombed. These two women had found a way to live in the tension between their deep and abiding friendship and the entrenched collective hatred that surrounded their lives. I believe God sits with us in these paradoxes and that the Spirit makes it possible for us to bear both at the same time.

I need Wisdom to keep my eyes open so that I might glimpse the world through a “God lens.” I ask for a strong heart to hold both the beauty of the red winter sky and the despair of the homeless man stooped over in the soup line. I seek to embrace the joy of my laughing, wide-eyed niece and the deep sadness of a woman standing on the street holding a “need work” sign. In the past I have interviewed teens who had been abused. During that time my father said to me, “I worry that you can’t ‘unknow’ what you know.” It was true that I could not “unknow.” It is also true that some of my greatest awakenings have come from the events I cannot “unknow” because I was cracked open by an Energy much larger than myself. This tension of the opposites is constantly present and I need to be awake and aware of it all. When I see both the dark and light and am asked to sit in the middle of it all, I pray for Wisdom’s presence, not to spare me, but to help me hold fast.

Wanda Meade

Engaging Faith Conference February 26-27, 2010



Engaging Faith (www.engagingfaith.org) is an annual conference at Furman University that is sponsored by the Chaplain's Office at Furman and the NEXUS Center.

Conference Topic: **Living the Questions**

Speakers: **James Hollis**, Jungian Analyst and Author
Marjorie Thompson, Minister of PCUSA

This conference is awaiting approval for CEU's for professional counselors.

Anderson School of Theology for Laypersons Spring Lectures, Sunday, March 14, 2010

Theme: **"Seeking A God Sufficient For The Soul's Passion"**

Speakers: **Jerry R. Wright, D. Min.**,
Jungian Analyst, Pastoral Counselor, Licensed Professional Counselor, and
Presbyterian minister.

Times: Session One (3:00 p.m.)
Session Two (7:30 p.m.)

Location: In Anderson....exact location to be announced. I'll pass that along when I have it.



Quiet Day with Barbara Crafton Saturday, March 20, 2010

St. James Episcopal Church
Greenville, SC

Details and registration information will be posted at
<http://saintjamescenter.org>



About Spiritual Direction —

- Offers a space and time for you to explore, reflect upon, and deepen your relationship with God.
- Provides a haven from the daily busyness of the outer world and opens a time to be still and to reflect on your inner journey.
- Is a companioning relationship grounded in dialogue and discernment.
- Explores ways you may integrate spirituality into your daily life.
- Is not limited to any one spiritual practice or tradition.
- May involve one or two meetings or multiple meetings over time.

You may wish to consider spiritual companioning if you are —

- Longing for a deeper relationship with the Divine
- Looking for a place to dialogue about spiritual questions
- Seeking ways to connect with the Spirit in daily life
- Questioning how the Spirit is working in your life
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a difficult crossroads in your life
- Exploring new or fresh ways to be in relationship with God

For more information about Spiritual Direction, please feel free to contact me by phone
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