



Spring 2026

a legacy of service to spiritual deepening

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Jonathan Elmergreen, E.D.

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on 40 Years of Service

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This season, we honor a legacy of spiritual deepening through the life and service of Sister Johanna. Forty years ago, she first came to the Christine Center. Since then she has offered steady, loving presence to this place and to all who come here seeking peace, healing, renewal, and a deeper relationship with the sacred.

Her forty years of service reflect the heart of the Christine Center itself. Rooted in Franciscan spirit, the Center has long been a place of contemplation, hospitality, compassion, and reverence for all creation. In a world that often feels exhausting and uncertain, places like this matter more than ever. They offer space to slow down, listen deeply, and return to what is most sustaining.

In honor of Sister Johanna, we are raising \$40,000 for 40 years of service, with every gift matched dollar for dollar. This effort is not only a tribute to her remarkable years of service, but an investment in the future of the Christine Center. Ensuring that this sanctuary of spiritual deepening may continue to welcome and sustain seekers for generations to come.

In the pages ahead, you will hear Sister Johanna's own reflection on her forty years, ways to support this important campaign, and meet some of the Volunteers whose generosity helps sustain the Center's daily life. We hope you will join us in celebrating this legacy—and in helping carry it forward.

Jonathan

Jonathan Elmergreen
Executive Director



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jonathan Elmergreen

**RESIDENT PARTNER
IN MISSION**

Sister Johanna Seubert, FSPA

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FORTY YEARS... one sacred journey

Forty years ago, I came to the Christine Center searching—quietly, honestly—for a spiritual director. I did not know then that I was also being led into a way of life that would transform me, root me in community, and open my heart to the sacredness of all creation.

In 1986, I met Sister Virginia. In her presence, I encountered a spirituality that stretched beyond boundaries—one that honored truth wherever it is found and invited a deep listening to the Spirit moving within all things. Not long after, I attended a Basic Life Transformation Seminar here at the Center. It changed me. Mind, body, and spirit were awakened in a new way, and something within me said, *stay*.

And so I did.

What began as a search became a calling. What began as a visit became a home.

For forty years, I have had the privilege of living and serving in this sacred place—welcoming seekers, walking with others on their spiritual paths, and growing ever more deeply into the Franciscan vision: a life of contemplation, simplicity, compassion, and reverence for all creation.

As I talked about in an interview in a recent e-news, Sister Virginia dreamed of the Christine Center as an awakened, eclectic community—one that fosters spiritual deepening for the sake of global transformation. That dream is alive. I see it in every retreatant who arrives weary and leaves renewed, in every moment of silence that opens into insight, in every connection that reminds us we belong to one another.

Now, as I mark these years, I invite you to be part of this ongoing story.

Together, **we are seeking to raise \$40,000** in honor of these forty years of service—not as a tribute to me, but

as a way to sustain and strengthen this place of transformation for all who come here.

If the Christine Center has touched your life...

If you believe in a world shaped by compassion, peace, and spiritual awakening...

If you feel called to support a space where all are welcomed and the sacred is honored...

Please consider making a gift.

Your support helps ensure that this “vortex of love and transformation” continues—gently shaping lives, nurturing hope, and serving our Earth Community for generations to come.

With deep gratitude and blessings,

Sister Johanna Neubert, FSPA

\$40,000 for 40 Years

HONOR SISTER JOHANNA'S FORTY YEARS OF SERVICE

Every dollar you give will be matched thanks to four generous Friends of the Center.

Your gift helps sustain the Christine Center as a place of prayer, contemplation, healing, and renewal.

Scan to donate, or visit:
christinecenter.org/donate



EVERY GIFT
IS DOUBLED

HOW YOUR DONATION HELPS

\$40

Extends the spirit of welcome that greets each person.

\$140

Supports a day of quiet reflection, prayer, and spiritual renewal.

\$400

Sustains the sacred spaces that make retreat possible.

\$1,040

Strengthens programs that nurture spiritual deepening.

\$4,000

Sustains this legacy for future generations.

A SPECIAL CALLING:

honoring our volunteers



Since the Christine Center first opened its doors in 1980, Volunteers have been at the very heart of what makes this sanctuary thrive. This spirit of quiet, often unseen service is the tempo that has composed the Center's rhythm of hospitality for more than four decades.

Our 296 Volunteers are stewards of the contemplative values we hold dear and the living embodiment of caring for of our Earth community. Whether they are supporting the kitchen, assisting with office tasks, guiding guests, tending the land, or offering their creative gifts, Volunteer contributions are essential in creating our atmosphere of peace and sense of belonging. But the impact goes deeper than tasks completed or operation dollars saved.

Rooted in Franciscan values, Volunteers sustain a tradition of generosity that nourishes the entire community. In return, volunteers are enriched by the Center's contemplative rhythms - meditation, stillness, time in nature, and connection with others on the path. They become a part of the Christine Center family circle, belonging to our community.

“

I get to be connected to a community aspiring to do good and be good in the world. Every time I serve, my personal and spiritual cup re-fills because The Center and its amazing staff, and retreatants, bring out the best in me! It is truly fulfilling to give back to such a special mission and space, that has given me so much growth, joy, and love.

~Stephanie Rudnicki, Volunteer

“

For three years, the Christine Center has felt like home to me. I am grateful to be of service to such a peaceful and spiritual sanctuary. The connections I've formed with the staff, guests and nature are what make this place so special. They have shown me what it means to live in compassion, community and spirit. I feel truly seen and celebrated while I'm there. I will continue to volunteer at the Christine Center for years to come because now it is a part of me.

~Tami Kibisz, Volunteer



To learn more or begin a conversation about volunteering, please reach out:

Tracy Garber
Volunteer Coordinator
tracy@christinecenter.org
(715) 267-7507

Feeling Inspired to Volunteer?

If you are called to service in this special way, we would be honored to welcome you. Volunteering at the Christine Center is flexible, meaningful, and open to people of all backgrounds and experience levels. Whether you're drawn to kitchen support, hospitality, creative projects, event assistance, maintenance, or tending the land, there is a place for your gifts here. Complimentary housing in rustic hermitages is provided, in-kind. Meals as well,

when available. Dogs welcome based on housing availability. Between shifts, Volunteers are offered time for renewal in the Chapel, Library, Art Studio, Sauna, or in the sanctuary of the woodlands. Consider sharing the experience with a friend or family member.



*Based on volunteer time value of \$34/hr minimum by Independent Sector

featured christine center retreats

This year, as we honor the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis, we are invited to reflect on what it means to carry his legacy in our own time.

Francis offered a way of being—rooted in humility, simplicity, and reverence for life. But just as essential was his openness:

a recognition of all people and all creation as kin, worthy of care and belonging.

At the Christine Center, one way this spirit lives is in our open door. We welcome all who seek spiritual refuge and practice, across traditions and paths. What unites us is not a single way, but a shared longing for depth, connection, and transformation.

Offered here are a sampling of programs that express the diversity we hold sacred. Each offers a distinct doorway—through pilgrimage, chant, contemplative practice, or sacred movement—yet all invite us into deeper presence, relationship, and care for life.

TRAVEL
TO ASSISI
IN CENTRAL
ITALY

Encountering Francis and Clare:

**OPENING TO DEEPER SEEING
AND BEING**

OCTOBER 19-30, 2026

This fall, we are excited to return to Assisi during the Jubilee Year of St. Francis, a rare and meaningful time to encounter the living legacy of Francis and his devoted companion, St. Clare of Assisi, founder of the Poor Clares.

Their witness meets us not as distant history, but as a living invitation for our own time, to let the vision of Francis and Clare transform how we see and our way of being in the world.

We come to experience the landscapes that hold the testimony of Francis and Clare, not only physically, but with our attention and our hearts. We come to experience life through their eyes: eyes trained by prayer, softened by suffering, and widened by love. To see as they saw—creation as sacred, each person as brother or sister, and every moment as an opportunity for conversion of the heart.



“

In the words of Sister Gabe, being a pilgrim is different than being a tourist. It was transformational to be with other seekers and share a journey to such a holy and spiritually alive place. Come prepared to be changed, to laugh, to share, to pray, to cry, to reflect, and to grow.

~Susan S.
2025 Pilgrim

Contemplative Practices for a Disorienting World

with Shane Tytenicz

JUNE 12-14, 2026

Contemplative practices have served as steady companions for centuries during times of upheaval. They help ground us and offer clarity, presence, and a deeper wisdom for meeting the unknown. Contemplative Practices for a Disorienting World invites participants into practices that can support a more rooted, life-giving way of being in the midst of change.

Sacred Sound, Sacred Silence:

**A WEEKEND OF KIRTAN
AND MEDITATION**

with Kaita Bliffert,
Fred Bliffert,
and Ron Moor

JUNE 26-28, 2026

This weekend invites us into a way of listening: *Let sound open the heart; Let silence deepen what has been stirred.* Through kirtan and meditation, we are invited into a rhythm of prayer that is both simple and spacious.

**Chant, sit, enter the silence,
deepen, connect, heal.** Let the practice meet you where you are.

Dances of Universal Peace Retreat

**ENTER THE CIRCLE,
DEEPEN THE PRACTICE,
STEP INTO THE TRADITION**

with Robin Schnitzler and
Michael Hopwood

MAY 3-4, 2026

Rooted in the world's wisdom traditions, the dances help us recognize the sacred within ourselves and one another, invite us into a lived experience of connection—through sacred phrases, music, and simple movement.

For nearly 40 years, Sister Johanna has nurtured the practice of Dances of Universal Peace at the Christine Center. This retreat is an invitation to enter that living tradition more fully and to help carry it forward.

The retreat concludes with an afternoon conversation about growing an ongoing Dances of Universal Peace community at the Christine Center.

No experience necessary—come join the dance and stay for the conversation if it calls to you.

Below: Sister Johanna leading Dances of Universal Peace in 1990



housing offerings

EXTEND YOUR RETREAT

Arrive early or stay late and receive **50% off extended lodging**, allowing more time for reflection and integration.

WEATHER ACCOMMODATIONS

Plan your travel with ease—receive **50% off extended lodging** when adjusting your stay to avoid predicted storms.

To receive offers, contact our office.

welcome@christinecenter.org
715-267-7507

on-going experiences

Twice Daily Weekday Meditations
with Sister Johanna & the Christine Center Community
MONDAY – FRIDAY
8:45–9:30 AM & 5:00–5:30 PM (CST)

Our Hearts Were Made For This
with Sara Neall
SUNDAYS 9:00 AM (CST)

Tao Te Ching: Offering a Way Forward
with Ron Moor
WEDNESDAYS 10:15 AM (CST)

Death Cafe: A Compassionate Space for End of Life Conversations
with Paul Norton & Nancy Newman
THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH
7:00–8:30 PM (CST)

Monthly Full Moon Meditation
with Barb Wooley
6:30 PM (CST)



may

MAY – MAY
3 4

Dances of Universal Peace Retreat: Shared Practice and Community Building
with Robin Schnitzler & Michael Hopwood

MAY – MAY
8 10

Inner Alignment Seasonal Retreat
with Andrea Russell

MAY – MAY
22 25

Memorial Day Retreat: Remembering with Care
with the Christine Center Community

MAY – MAY
26 28

Volunteer Event
with Tracy Garber

MAY – JUN
31 7

Opening to Pure Awareness: The Path of Meditation
with Susan Mickel

june

JUN – JUN
12 14

Contemplative Practices for a Disorienting World
with Shane Tytenicz

JUN
13

– ONLINE ONLY –
The Power of Belief and Insight: Aligning and Refreshing Our Inner Compass
with SDGT VIII Guides

JUN – JUN
12 14

Spirit Doll Making: A Journey of Creativity, Spirit, and Transformation
with Brita Rekve

JUN – JUN
26 28

Finding Peace in Times of Fear and Anxiety
with Yanchy Lacska

JUN – JUN
26 28

Sacred Sound, Sacred Silence: A Weekend of Kirtan and Meditation
with Kaita Bliffert, Fred Bliffert, and Ron Moor



Visit our website to register and explore new program offerings:

upcoming programs

july

JULY

TBD

– ONLINE –

– ONLINE ONLY –
Losing the Map, Finding the Way: A Journey Back to the Heart of Christ
Valerie Dodge Reyna

JULY – JULY

3 5

Fourth of July Retreat: Dances of Universal Peace, Freedom, and Interdependence
with Robin Schnitzler & Michael Hopwood

JULY

6, 13, 20, 27

– ONLINE –

– ONLINE ONLY –
Wisdom Untethered Summer Book Circle
with Chris Flynn

JULY – JULY

17 19

Move in Your Heart's Passion: Seasonal Qigong Practice to Support the Fire Element
with Sandra Mighell

JULY – JULY

24 26

Grief and Spirituality
with Cass Hale

JULY – JULY

26 31

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness
with Paul Norton

JULY – AUG

31 2

Going Deeper: A Weekend of Extended Meditation and Support
with Paul Norton

august

AUG

3, 10, 17, 24

– ONLINE –

– ONLINE ONLY –
Daring Greatly Summer Book Circle
with Chris Flynn

AUG – AUG

7 9

Men's Retreat
with Drake Powe & Ron Moor

AUG – AUG

24 27

Tao in Summer
with Ron Moor



*the
Christine
Center*

mission

Offering contemplative support
to persons of all spiritual paths
in a natural woodland sanctuary

vision

Spiritual deepening for
global transformation

values

Rooted in the Franciscan tradition,
our values are contemplation,
hospitality, compassion, simplicity,
transformation, and care for our
Earth Community

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