



Late Autumn, 2017

Dear Friends,

We arrive at the time of year that naturally seems to bring a greater awareness of our many blessings, one of which is Stillpoint, as are each of you. Whether it is financial support, participation in Stillpoint programs, or spreading the word, we would not be looking forward to celebrating 14 years in our community without you. THANK YOU!

Stillpoint itself is greatly blessed in our teachers, our volunteers and our staff. We are especially grateful to our Executive Director, Roxanne Rawson. In her first year at Stillpoint (and Las Vegas!), Roxanne has done a remarkable job of getting to know many of you and understanding the mission and vision of Stillpoint. We are happy to say Stillpoint is in good hands. At the Board level, we were sorry to lose Trustee, Phyllis Sikora to the demands of her new position, but are very pleased to welcome new Trustee, Bill Terry, a longtime participant in Stillpoint programs.

For the past several years, I have considered it an honor to be able to share with you a reflection on the importance of Stillpoint. This year the word "beacon" came to mind (Mt. 5:15), prompted by a reflection at our Board retreat in September, led by The Rev. Shannon and The Rev. JoAnn Leach of Grace in the Desert Episcopal Church.

Most times, I have considered the gift of Stillpoint from the perspective of my own journey. In contrast, I can't think of a time when Gard Jameson has failed to remind his fellow board members of the importance of Stillpoint to the entire community. More than before I feel how right Gard is. Everywhere we look, we see and hear of the pain, hurt and longing in the lives of so many of our brothers and sisters. (I am reminded of Stillpoint's reception for Richard Rohr a year ago last September. In his brief remarks Richard said [my rough translation], if you take away only one thing tonight, let it be that each of us never fails to see the other as a child of God.)

Over the years, we have wrestled with the role of Stillpoint's outreach to the community. Are we too focused on the personal journey? The mission of Stillpoint is "to provide a gathering place that is hospitable to and nourishing of the spiritual life." Still, the question might be asked, "To what end?"

The answer is contained in the vision of Stillpoint, "transforming individuals through a deepening and broadening of the personal experience of the divine." If asked, co-founder Delise Sartini will tell you her commitment to Stillpoint is her great hope and desire that others have the opportunity to experience the transformation she found through Roisin's gift of creating a place where one can encounter, welcome and nourish the spiritual life. I know it is through Stillpoint that I have come to understand, as Ann Voskamp tells us in her book *One Thousand Gifts*, "that

all new life comes out of dark places," and "[i]t is suffering that has the realest possibility to bear down and deliver grace."

I began with the thought of a beacon, but I see it's really just a candle, the small light each of us can be in the world. Each person who encounters the gift of Stillpoint has the opportunity to bring that light into his or her own community: family and friends, the workplace, the market – even our faith communities. The simple genius of what Roisin has created in our city, a place that welcomes the world, cannot be doubted.

With this in mind, we ask you to financially support the mission and vision of Stillpoint. Your contributions are essential to keeping our Center open, staffed and available for spiritual direction, prayer groups, contemplative and other retreats, as well as seminars, workshops and a variety of ongoing programs. (See them all on our website: stillpointcsd.org.) Through your help Stillpoint established a one-of-a-kind program in Las Vegas for the education and training of spiritual directors. Your support enables us to continue to host leaders in faith based spirituality who, like the Prophets, bring into our community the truth and challenges of our times. In keeping with this tradition, we are pleased to announce that next spring Stillpoint will host Sr. Joan Chittister, a courageous and passionate advocate for justice, peace and equality (and, not incidentally, the award-winning author of 50 books). Finally, broad based community support is critically important to our grant-seeking efforts.

Clichés are often denigrated by the critics, but clichés work because they are true. In a world of empty consumerism, hatred and violence, a culture of death far beyond what we might have imagined, may each of us who have encountered the Spirit at Stillpoint be a light to those around us. Stillpoint IS important. YOU are important. May each of us let that light be seen by others. Together we can be that beacon so many of our brothers and sisters are seeking. Help us spread the good news, with your financial support and word-of-mouth, that here in our desert city one can encounter the Spirit!

Again this year, I have the pleasure of announcing that members of the Stillpoint Board have agreed to match your year-end donations to Stillpoint up to \$20,000. Please respond generously to this letter via the enclosed envelope or at <http://stillpointcsd.org/donations-and-sponsorships/> so that we may take advantage of this matching gift!

In blessing and gratitude,



Michael Buckley,
On behalf of the Board of Trustees:
Gard Jameson, Ph.D.
Mary Alice Nielson
Róisín O'Loughlin, D. Min.
Delise Sartini
Bill Terry