

The Gift of Story: a Retreat for Advent and the Winter Solstice

December 2-4, 2016

Rolling Ridge Study Retreat (near Harpers Ferry, WV)

The season of Advent is a sacred time for people of faith who find their roots in the soil of Christianity. The Winter Solstice and the span of days surrounding it expand that sense of holiness and wonder to encompass religions and wisdom traditions from around the planet and down through time. This retreat is for all those who hunger for a time of quiet and reflection apart from the busyness of the season: a time to renew and re-invigorate one's faith and journey in a container of reverence and wonder.

It's a respite: a chance to pause, to prepare, to be present.

Open to people of all faith traditions, and to both women and men.

In this special season, we are invited to ask three questions in the chambers of our own faith and hearts:

What is love?

What is enough?

And what does it mean to be incarnate and deeply inhabit this world?

Listening anew to the ancient stories of Jesus' birth and to mythic tales from Eastern Europe and around the globe, we weave a container of reverence and mystery in which it is possible to hear whispers from the forest, from the other-than-human inhabitants of this Earth all around us, and from our own deepest selves. In this way, we begin to discern faint echoed answers coming on the wind and in our souls.

In this retreat we will:

- Participate in rituals and ceremony designed to help us enter and remain in sacred space. Rituals will include periods of silence, storytelling, meditative drumming, and sacred circle dance.
- Spend time alone in the pre-winter woods.
- Engage in reflective listening, sharing, and council.
- Enter silence, pray, journal, do meditative art or handwork, read, rest.

*With Lindsay McLaughlin and Julie Gabrielli,
Lisa Bardack (sacred circle dance) and Katy Gaughan (drums)*

5 pm Friday (includes dinner) – lunch on Sunday (departure by 3 pm)

\$280 includes lodging, six meals, and program

\$230 register together and share a room

for more information and to register visit www.rollingridge.net/events
or email lindsay.rollingridge@gmail.com

A note about stories and restorying:

Stories and their power are a large part of this retreat. Thomas Berry, (the Catholic priest, cultural historian and ecotheologian) said, "It is all a question of story...we are in trouble just now because we do not have a good one."

We humans have always lived by stories, and now there are signs all around that our current stories are failing us. We live in a time of unraveling on every scale: personal, societal, global.

As Thomas Berry suggests, our task in this time is to discover and inhabit other stories, ones that may seem altogether new to us. This is the way of restorying, and it undergirds our retreat.

In restorying we hope to hear and inhabit other stories: those told by our human ancestors and those found in the original impulses of religion and faith. We may even listen to the wild ones of the Earth or rediscover some forgotten corner in our hearts. New and ancient stories are found in all of these beings and places. The path of restorying is both deeply personal and profoundly universal. And it is eternally hopeful.