

Maureen Webber, Spiritual Formation Coordinator
EOA/WRA Spiritual Development Team (SDT)
2017 Annual Report

SDT members includes 4 from the EOA: Revs. Maureen Webber, Karen Binford, Susan Lehosky, & Glen Shedlock; and 2 from the WRA: Revs. Jerry Fritz, & Elizabeth Leung
(We are grateful to be growing)

Since our last Associations' Annual Meeting, (fall 2016) we have invited our authorized ministers and church leaders to some meaningful opportunities to deepen their spirituality ... their intimate relationship with God.

Two Lenten Spiritual Spa Days – one in each of our Associations

March 21st, 2017 at Trinity UCC in Canton and **April 4th, 2017 at Middleburg Heights Community UCC** were the perfect settings, and they both offered wonderful hospitality for the day. We offered a labyrinth walk, contemplative prayer, Reiki, Qigong, massage, healing touch and drumming. Participants were invited to participate in as little or as much as they desired, and could stay for all or part of the day.

Spring Retreat April 30th to May 2nd, 2017 with the Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes – “A Renegade’s Guide to Listening for God”

It was held at Loyola Retreat House in Clinton, OH. Eric provided an adventure of storytelling, reflections on scripture and science, and hands-on practice, transforming the way we understand God, prayer, the natural world, and the role our struggles play in spiritual awakening. Connecting with The Holy was the central focus.

Brothers & Sisters of the Way (BSOW) Retreat – September 10-14, 2017

Rev. Jerry Fritz (of First Congregational UCC Andover) was the facilitator for this group of clergy. It was the first time a BSOW retreat was offered in Ohio. Its birthplace was in 1930 on Fisherman's Island near Boothbay Harbor, Maine. These retreats are opportunities, “not for ‘professional talk’ but, that we remember before God that we are persons confronted with a task too great for us, a responsibility beyond our strength, a love beyond our knowledge” (quote from the website <http://bsow.info/Pages/BSOW.html>). The retreat was held at Prettyman Adult Retreat Center at Pilgrim Hills. This is a retreat we look forward to offering on an annual basis in the autumn. <https://www.facebook.com/BrothersAndSistersOfTheWay/>

Fall Retreat October 1-3, 2017: “Opening the Eye of our Heart: The Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom” with The with Rev. Matthew Wright

Regretfully, we needed to *cancel* this retreat due to low registrations; this, after our team spent many hours/days planning this event since early in the year. It was to be held at Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center in Villa Maria, PA (just a few miles inside PA, each of Youngstown). We are hopeful we will offer this again in 2018.

Looking ahead to 2018 – Something to whet your whistles!

Yes, we have begun looking ahead; the balls are either rolling or spinning in the air!

- **Lenten Spiritual Spa Days 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**
 - WRA Tuesday 2/27/18 – Federated Church, Chagrin Falls

- EOA Tuesday 3/13/18 – First UCC, New Philadelphia
- We hope to offer more of the same of what was offered in the past: Labyrinth Walk, Contemplative Prayer, Drumming, Reiki, Healing Touch, and Chair Massage
- **A Spring Retreat (dates not yet confirmed)**
 - We are planning something more contemplative in nature with minimal programming – simplicity is the word 😊
- **BSOW Retreat (dates not yet confirmed)**
- **A Fall Retreat (dates not yet confirmed)**
 - We expect this will be more of a program-type retreat and are hopeful to, once more, extend an invitation to the Rev. Matthew Wright.