



C H A R L E S T O N

PROGRAM
2016

THE SOPHIA INSTITUTE

www.TheSophiaInstitute.org

JEAN HOUSTON · MARIANNE WILLIAMSON · DAVID WHYTE · SERA BEAK · MARK NEPO · DEBRA MOFFITT · RICK BROWN
GLORIA KARPINSKI · ELLEN WATSON · DR. LEE IRWIN · STEPHANIE HUNT · FRANCINE LAPONTE · TATER BEAK · ELLEN BURSTYN
JUDY CROMWELL · CARMEN WILLIAMS · ANGELES ARRIEN · DR. MARIANNE ROSEN · MARY ALICE MONROE · JOSEPHINE HUMPHREYS
SUSAN FITCH STEVENS · SUSAN LAUGHTER MEYERS · NINA BRUHNS · BELL HOOKS · CARLY HOWARD · PAM NOBLE
MARCY WALSH · ANNE LECLAIRE · CAROLYN RIVERS · HENK BRANDT



Carolyn Rivers

DEAR FRIENDS,

This is a profound moment in human history when women are awakening to their full potential and being empowered to become passionate co-creative agents for change, joining men in full partnership in the domain of human affairs. Women, and men too, are being called to attend to the changes that are needed now, to align with their heart callings, to do their own deep work and to take it back to their relationships, communities, and workplace, to form networks and circles of connection, to see that we are really a microcosm of the macrocosm—our evolution is at the heart of planetary evolution. Together we are pioneering an Age of Wisdom.

It is a time of great evolutionary shift, when the Feminine impulse is coming into balance with the Masculine and bringing with it a radical wisdom of the heart. It has the potential to attune us to what we already know inside, to a guidance that continually sources us with new possibilities and aligns us with a sense of dynamic purpose. Old patterns that no longer serve us, patterns of domination, aggression, greed, and control are now beginning to be overturned, patterns that have created the crisis we are now in. Yet, we have opportunity to find solutions which cannot be born of the old mindset, as Einstein says, but a new, more wisdom-based mindset found in the hearts of women and men alike.

We believe that community and global transformation often arises out of individual transformation, that inner work leads to outer action. We invite leading-edge visionaries and thinkers whose work reflects this vision to The Sophia Institute to lead retreats, workshops, lectures, and other special events. Their messages of wisdom, healing, integration, oneness, sustainability, peace, and the conscious Feminine and Masculine herald the arrival of new paradigms and fresh perspectives at that moment in our history when they are needed most.

The Sophia Institute is drawing participants from 50 states and 9 other countries. The Sophia Institute will be launching Sophia Circles soon, connecting women all over the country and internationally. Please stay tuned for updated information on this exciting roll out!

The Sophia Institute envisions a world that could be called a wisdom society, a 21st century that could be called The Sophia Century: a conscious enlightened world, a compassionate, global community, where wholeness, oneness, sustainability, wisdom, and the sacred Feminine and Masculine are at the center of life. Please join us as together we can create a more conscious world, a world that expresses the vastness of the human spirit.

Blessings,

Carolyn Rivers

BOARD OF DIRECTORS Tim Baker, Alex Beard, Henk Brandt, Cam Busch, Barbara Kelley-Duncan, Gail DePriest, Eliza Ingle, Patricia Williams Lessane, Kathleen Sullivan, Carolyn Rivers, Founder

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PERSONAL RETREATS can be held anytime or can be centered on one of our sponsored events. Take time to process your work before returning to the demands of everyday life. Join us for a few days, a week or more.

BOOKS AVAILABLE for purchase and autographing.

REGISTER ONLINE...Go Paperless by signing up for our monthly e-newsletters and announcements at TheSophiaInstitute.org

Join us on Facebook and LinkedIn!

JANUARY

Master Class- Making Writing Dreams a Reality Liberate Your Creative Life and Soar

Debra Moffitt

January 8, 9 | Master Class- 1:00pm-4:00pm

Friday Night Lecture- 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat- Saturday 9:30am-5:30pm



Debra Moffitt is author of *Awake in the World: 108 Practices to Live a Divinely Inspired Life* which won the Independent Book Publishers Gold Medal Award and Foreword's Bronze Medal. Her second book, *Garden of Bliss: Cultivating the Inner Landscape for Self-Discovery* (Llewellyn Worldwide) was published in February 2013. Debra blogs for Intent.com and Beliefnet.com. She's on the faculty at Esalen Institute and the Sophia Institute and presents workshops worldwide. Her workshops use spiritual practices to inspire creativity. Visit her online at <http://www.debramoffitt.com>

Healing Our Souls, Healing Our World: The Transformative Power of the Mother

Meghan Don

January 29, 30 | Friday Night Lecture - 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat- Saturday 9:30am-5:00pm



Meghan Don is an initiate of the Sophian Lineage, and Founder and Leading Guide of The Gnostic Grace Circle. An award-winning author, spiritual mentor, and retreat presenter, Meghan's work helps to raise the feminine consciousness and confidence in our world. She has worked extensively with the Christian mystics, Gnostic and Kabbalistic teachings, and Jungian psychology, and is renowned for her keen insight into the human soul. Coming from Celtic heritage and raised in New Zealand, Meghan's work is informed by deep connection with the natural world. Her work incorporates mystical prayer and meditation, and sacred dance and chant, bringing ancient wisdom into a contemporary and accessible form.

Meghan has taught at Omega Institute, Esalen Institute, Unity and New Thought Churches, and Episcopal and Methodist Churches. She has led many sacred pilgrimages to Europe, and is the author of *Meditations with Teresa of Avila: A Journey into the Sacred*, which won the Ashton Wylie/New Zealand Book Council Award for Best Book and Author in 2006. She has also authored *Sacred Companions Sacred Community: Reflections with Clare of Assisi*. Her upcoming book, *The New Divine Feminine: Spiritual Evolution for a Woman's Soul* is to be released in August 2016.

Meghan divides her time between the Carolinas in the United States and Nova Scotia, Canada.

www.GnosticGrace.com

FEBRUARY

A Day for Movement

Eliza Ingle

February 13 | 9:00am-2:00pm



Eliza Ingle received her BA in Dance from Middlebury College in Vermont. She continued her training at the Merce Cunningham and Erick Hawkins schools and performed and choreographed her work in the North and Southeast. She is a former Professor of Dance at the College of Charleston and has performed and choreographed locally for the past 24 years.

Sacred Crossroads: Connecting with Your Next Yes

Joan Borysenko

February 19-21 | Friday Night Lecture- 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat- Sat 9:30am-5:00pm Sun 9:30am-12:30pm



Joan Borysenko, Ph.D. is known for her gracious presence, world-class sense of humor and brilliance as a speaker and workshop facilitator. Trained as both a cell biologist and clinical psychologist, Joan is a pioneer in psychoneuroimmunology, stress management, and women's health. She is the author of 15 books, including the New York Times bestseller *Minding the Body*, *Mending the Mind* and her most recent book *Fried: Why You Burn Out and How to Revive*. A radio and television personality, wife, mother, and grandmother, Joan lives in the front range of Colorado's Rocky Mountains. You can find out more about her at www.joanborysenko.com.

MARCH

A Conversation with...

Marian Wright Edelman

March 1 | 6:30pm-8:30pm

co-sponsored with the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture



Marian Wright Edelman, Founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), has been an advocate for disadvantaged Americans for her entire professional life. Under her leadership, CDF has become the nation's strongest voice for children and families. The Children's Defense Fund's Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. A graduate of Spelman College and Yale Law School, Edelman was the first black woman admitted to the Mississippi Bar and directed the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund office in Jackson, Mississippi.

Hidden Harvests: The Inner Seasons of Everyday Life

David Whyte

March 19 | 9:30am-5:00pm



Poet **David Whyte** grew up with a strong, imaginative influence from his Irish mother among the hills and valleys of his father's Yorkshire. He now makes his home, with his family, in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. The author of eight books of poetry and four books of prose, David Whyte holds a degree in Marine Zoology and has traveled extensively, including living and working as a naturalist guide in the Galapagos Islands and leading anthropological and natural history expeditions in the Andes the Amazon and the Himalaya. He brings this wealth of experience to his poetry, lectures and workshops.



American Injustice: Mercy, Humanity, and Making a Difference

Bryan Stevenson

March 31 | 6:00pm- 800pm

co-sponsored with the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture

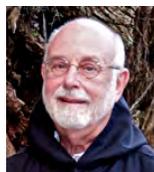
Bryan Stevenson is the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative and one of the most acclaimed and respected lawyers in the nation. His memoir, *Just Mercy*, is the story of a young lawyer fighting on the front lines of a country in thrall to extreme punishments and careless justice. It is an inspiring story of unbreakable humanity in the most desperate circumstances, and a powerful indictment of our broken justice system and the twisted values that allow it to continue. Stevenson is the recipient of numerous awards, including the MacArthur Foundation “Genius” Grant and the NAACP Image Award for Best Non-Fiction, and was named one of Time’s 100 Most Influential People for 2015. Stevenson is a tenured law professor at New York University School of Law. For more information on this speaker please visit www.prhspeakers.com.

APRIL

The Art of Living the Contemplative Life

Fr. Gueric Heckel

April 1 | Friday Night Lecture 6:30pm-8:30pm



Fr. Gueric Heckel has been a monk at Mepkin Abbey for the past 21 years where he has served as infirmarian caring for the sick and elderly monks, director of the gardens, store manager and currently serves as the Monastic Guest Director, Director of the Annual Mepkin Abbey Creche Festival and The St. Francis Retreat Center. He served as a hospital chaplain for 11 years and had been a parish priest for 28 years in Richmond, VA before coming to Mepkin Abbey.

More Lessons in Becoming Myself

Ellen Burstyn

April 30 | 5:00pm-6:15pm - garden reception to follow



Ellen Burstyn’s illustrious acting career encompasses film, stage and television. She became a “triple crown winner” when she won an Emmy for her guest appearance in “Law & Order: SVU” (2009) to add to her Oscar win for “Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore” (1974) and her Tony Award for “Same Time, Next Year” (1974) on Broadway. Ellen has been nominated for an Academy Award five other times for “The Last Picture Show” (1972), “The Exorcist” (1973), “Same Time, Next Year,” (1979), “Resurrection” (1981), and “Requiem for a Dream” (2000). Her many theater credits include the Broadway production of “84 Charing Cross Road” (1982), the acclaimed one-woman play “Shirley Valentine” (1989) and “Sacrilege” (1995). She received glowing reviews in Stephen Adley Guirgis’ play “The Little Flower of East Orange” (2008), directed by Philip Seymour Hoffman at The Public Theater in New York. Earlier this year, Ellen appeared in London’s West End in Lillian Hellman’s “The Children’s Hour” to rave reviews. She just finished shooting a TV miniseries, “Coma,” and is teaching a Master Class in acting in Australia. Ellen was the first woman elected president of Actors Equity Association (1982-85), and served as the Artistic Director of the famed Actors Studio where she studied with the late Lee Strasberg. She continues to be active there as co-president with Al Pacino and Harvey Keitel.

Academically, Ellen holds four honorary doctorates, one in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts, a Doctor of Humane Letters from Dowling College, a doctorate from the New School for Social Research, and a doctorate from Pace University where she teaches in The Actors Studio M.F.A. program. Ellen lectures throughout the country on a wide range of topics, and became a national best-selling author with the publication in 2006 of her memoir, *Lessons in Becoming Myself*, published by Riverhead Press.

In addition to a continuing and thriving acting career, Ellen is writing a screenplay, as well as planning a book of her photography accompanied by her favorite poetry.

MAY

Journey with No End- Writing and Spiritual Growth

Mark Nepo

May 13-15 | Friday Night Lecture- 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat- Sat 9:30am-5:00pm Sun 9:30am-12:30pm



Mark Nepo is a poet and philosopher who has taught in the fields of poetry and spirituality for forty years. A New York Times #1 bestselling author, he has published fourteen books and recorded eight audio projects. Recent work includes: *Reduced to Joy* (2013), *Seven Thousand Ways to Listen* which won the 2012 Books for a Better Life Award, *Staying Awake* (2012), *Holding Nothing Back* (2012), *As Far As the Heart Can See* (2011), *Finding Inner Courage* (2011), and *Surviving Has Made Me Crazy* (2007), as well as audio books of *The Book of Awakening*, *Finding Inner Courage*, and *As Far As the Heart Can See* (2011). As a cancer survivor, Mark devotes his writing and teaching to the journey of inner transformation and the life of relationship.

Mark has appeared with Oprah Winfrey on her Super Soul Sunday program on OWN TV, and has been interviewed twice by Oprah as part of her SIRIUS XM Radio show, Soul Series. He has also been interviewed by Robin Roberts on Good Morning America about his New York Times bestseller *The Book of Awakening*. As well, *The Exquisite Risk* (Harmony Books) was cited by *Spirituality & Health Magazine* as one of the Best Spiritual Books of 2005, calling it “one of the best books we’ve ever read on what it takes to live an authentic life.” Mark’s collected essays appear in *Unlearning Back to God: Essays on Inwardness* (Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 2006). He is also the editor of *Deepening the American Dream: Reflections on the Inner Life and Spirit of Democracy* (Jossey-Bass, 2005). Other books of poetry include *Suite for the Living* (2004), *Inhabiting Wonder* (2004), *Acre of Light* (1994, also available as an audiotape from Parabola under the title *Inside the Miracle*, 1996), *Fire Without Witness* (1988), and *God, the Maker of the Bed, and the Painter* (1988).

His work has been translated into twenty languages including French, Portuguese, Japanese, and Danish. In leading spiritual retreats, in working with healing and medical communities, and in his teaching as a poet, Mark’s work is widely accessible and used by many. He continues to offer readings, lectures, and retreats. Please visit Mark at: www.MarkNepo.com and www.threeintentions.com.

JUNE

The Art of Letting Go

Connie Numbers

June 24, 25 | Friday Night Lecture- 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat- Saturday 9:30am-5:00pm



Connie Numbers, PsyD, is an author, inspirational speaker, spiritual teacher and a psychotherapist who believes that the inner journey is by far, the most exciting and rewarding quest we can take in our lives. It is an adventure like no other, filled with mystery, intrigue and suspense, along with a myriad of opportunities to discover love, happiness, and the richness of life. Dr. Numbers has devoted her life to this ‘diving to the depths’ adventure and believes that anyone can grow as a human and evolve as a soul through the practice of Self Love. Believing in one’s self-worth is the first step to accepting our Divine magnificence as a soul who is here to learn, grow, and become the next outstanding version of ourselves.

Dr. Numbers has a passion for helping others remember this version of who they are by discovering that they can lead a deeply fulfilling spiritual life while still experiencing and loving themselves as an imperfect human being. She brings a wealth of wisdom, experience, and humor into her retreats and workshop settings, illustrating the concept that inner work does not have to be a burden. Instead, it is a joy and a privilege that brings healing, love and light to the adventure of being human and divine at the same time.

Connie has a Bachelor and Masters in Music, as well as a Masters in Social Work and a Doctoral degree in Psychology. She has been in private practice as a psychotherapist for 30 years helping others to find their way and lead a more fulfilling life. She is the author of “*The Dear One Letters: A Path to Growing as a Human and Evolving as a Soul*,” and is currently working on Volume II of the same title. She continues to offer workshops, retreats, spiritual guidance and psychotherapy and more information is available on her website: www.connienumbers.com.

AUGUST

Getting the Love You Want: Imago Relationship Therapy

Rick Brown

August 29, 30 | Full Retreat - Sat 8am-8pm / Sun 8am-6pm



Rick Brown is Executive Director of the Institute for Relationship Therapy. He offers national and international workshops and seminars for couples, as well as training for qualified therapists in the theory and practice of relationship therapy. Rick has trained hundreds of psychiatrists, psychologists, marriage and family therapists and other mental health professionals. Rick is a graduate of Florida State University, Princeton and Union Theological Seminary. He is a pastoral psychotherapist and licensed mental health counselor with over twenty-eight years of clinical experience working with individuals, couples, and families. His appearance on the Oprah Winfrey Show for his expertise in creating intimacy in even the most difficult relationships, was named by Oprah as one of her Top 20 episodes. Visit www.rickbrown.org.

SEPTEMBER

The One Life We're Given- Finding the Wisdom that Waits in Your Heart

Mark Nepo

September 16-18 | Friday Night Lecture 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat- Sat 9:30am-5:00pm Sun 9:30am-12:30pm



Mark Nepo is a poet and philosopher who has taught in the fields of poetry and spirituality for forty years. A New York Times #1 bestselling author, he has published fourteen books and recorded eight audio projects. Recent work includes: *Reduced to Joy* (2013), *Seven Thousand Ways to Listen* which won the 2012 Books for a Better Life Award, *Staying Awake* (2012), *Holding Nothing Back* (2012), *As Far As the Heart Can See* (2011), *Finding Inner Courage* (2011), and *Surviving Has Made Me Crazy* (2007), as well as audio books of *The Book of Awakening*, *Finding Inner Courage*, and *As Far As the Heart Can See* (2011). As a cancer survivor, Mark devotes his writing and teaching to the journey of inner transformation and the life of relationship.

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His work has been translated into twenty languages including French, Portuguese, Japanese, and Danish. In leading spiritual retreats, in working with healing and medical communities, and in his teaching as a poet, Mark's work is widely accessible and used by many. He continues to offer readings, lectures, and retreats. Please visit Mark at: www.MarkNepo.com and www.threeintentions.com.

Climate Change as a Door to Awakening

Heather Mann

September 24 | Saturday Program 9:30am-4:00pm



Heather Lyn Mann is a writer, Mindfulness teacher, and environmental advocate. She founded and directed the Center for Resilient Cities--a Wisconsin-based not-for-profit dedicated to supporting healthy, resilient people in healthy, resilient places. Battle-weary in 2007, Heather took a six-year time-out to sail a small sloop with her husband and cat upon the Atlantic. She traveled with one question: how am I to live in a suffering world? This fall, Parallax Press will publish the memoir of her physical and spiritual journey--*Ocean of Insight: A Sailor's Voyage from Despair to Hope*. Heather is a practicing Buddhist in the Plum Village Tradition and in 2006, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh ordained Heather into the Order of Interbeing. Today, she serves as the Facilitator of the North American Plum Village Earth Holder Sangha -- a group continuing Nhat Hanh's teaching of our great togetherness to bring transformation and healing to Earth. A recent transplant to our area, she also founded and leads weekly gatherings in Summerville of the Charleston Community of Mindful Living.

OCTOBER

Soul Saturation: Igniting an Intimate Relationship with Your Soul

Sera Beak

October 7, 8 | Friday Night Lecture 6:30pm-8:30pm

Full Retreat Saturday, 9:30am-5:00pm



Sera Beak is a Harvard-trained scholar of mysticism and comparative religion and an intrepid spiritual cowgirl who's spent the last dozen years traveling the world exploring spirituality. She's the author of *The Red Book: A Deliciously Unorthodox Approach to Igniting Your Divine Spark*. Check out: www.serabeak.com. Sera was featured on the cover of *The New York Times Sunday Style* Section in the article "Seeing Yourself in Their Light" as one of the new "Carrie Bradshaws of self-help spirituality". Her work has been published in magazines ranging from *People Magazine* to *Skirt!* to *Washington Woman*. She has been interviewed in *Publishers Weekly* and on numerous radio shows ranging from the Dr. Oz show on Oprah and Friends, Martha Stewart's "Living A Charmed Life," NPR's *New Dimensions* with Justine Toms, Father Paul Keenan's Catholic radio show, "As You Think," Kristin and David Morelli's show, "Everything is Energy", and Stuart Davis's HBO T.V. show: *Sex, God, Rock and Roll*. She has facilitated Red workshops and presented Red talks at retreat centers such as Omega Center, Kripalu, The Open Center, Mount Madonna, and The Sophia Institute, as well as bookstores, yoga studios, churches and universities. She's also a member of the blog posse on *Crazy Sexy Life* and a proud board member of REVEAL Conference: Young Women Defining the Divine.

OCTOBER

A Deeper Black: Race in America

Ta-Nehisi Coates

October 18 | Friday Night- Lecture 6:30pm-8:30pm



Ta-Nehisi Coates is the author, most recently of *Between the World and Me*, which was a No.1 New York Times bestseller and winner of the 2015 National Book Award. Also in 2015, Coates received a MacArthur Genius Grant Fellowship. Coates wrote *Between the World and Me* in the form of a letter to his teenage son, Samori, addressing what it means to be black in America. He is a national correspondent for the Atlantic and the journalist in residence at the School of Journalism at CUNY.

An Inter-spiritual Approach to Contemplative Living

Rory McEntee - co-sponsored with Mepkin Abbey

October 28 | Friday night lecture at in Charleston

October 29 | Saturday program at Mepkin Abbey



Rory McEntee, author, philosopher-theologian, educator, and contemplative activist, works at an intersection of spirituality, education, social justice and culture. He has been a leader in the new monastic movement, and serves as Executive Director of the Foundation for New Monasticism. As a close friend and mentee of the late Brother Wayne Teasdale, Rory helped to found the Inter-spiritual Movement, traveling and participating in dialogues with world spiritual leaders, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He currently serves as the administrator for the Snowmass InterSpiritual Dialogues—an ongoing 30-year project convened by Father Thomas Keating which engages contemplative leaders from multiple faiths in intimate “dialogical dialogue,” where they meet as human beings in search of the ultimate rather than representatives of their religious traditions. Rory counts the late Brother Wayne Teasdale, Father Thomas Keating, Advaitin Joshi Baba and His Holiness the Dalai Lama among his mentors.

Rory co-wrote the “New Monastic Manifesto” with Adam Bucko and is co-author of *The New Monasticism: An Inter-spiritual Manifesto for Contemplative Living* (Orbis Books, 2015), which presents a philosophical, theological, and poetic vision for new monastic life, as well as methodologies for its praxis. He is also the author of numerous articles on new monasticism and inter-spiritual theology, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Theological and Philosophical Studies at Drew University. Previously, Rory did doctoral work in mathematics at the University of Southern California and served as a high school vice principal, math and physics teacher while bringing meditation practices into secondary education. Rory is also working to develop deep formation processes for young people in contemplative life and prophetic spirituality which emerge out of collaborative and intergenerational friendships with some of the world’s leading contemplatives and activists as part of the Foundation for New Monasticism.



The Hours Between Us- Book Launch

Dr. Carol Graf

October 27 | Thursday night program 6:30pm-8:30pm

Carol Graf was born in 1946, surrounded by the great plains of Oklahoma. Her father was an Army Air Corps instructor pilot based in Tulsa and her mother was a homemaker to Carol and her two brothers. Her childhood was idyllic and full of creative play. Her parent's decision to return "home" to South Carolina when Carol was five, changed her life irrevocably. For the next ten years, her family was caught in the emotional turbulence and dysfunction of her mother's extended family. Excelling in academics and athletics provided much needed balance and buffers to her family turmoil. She was valedictorian of her senior class.

She graduated from the University of South Carolina with degrees in biology and chemistry (pre-med curriculum) and was listed in Who's Who and Top Ten Outstanding Seniors. Her work on the school newspaper, the Gamecock, culminated in editorship her senior year and honed her parallel interest in writing.

Carol and Alex's eight grandchildren are a great joy to their Poppi and Gammi.

November

Mindful Living, Mindful Working

Mirabai Bush

November 11 | Friday night lecture 6:30pm-8:30pm

November 12 | Full retreat 9:30am-5:00pm



Mirabai Bush is a Senior Fellow and Founding Director of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society. Under her direction, The Center introduced contemplative practices into the fields of higher education, law, business, journalism, social justice activism, and the military. A key contributor to Google's Search Inside Yourself curriculum, she has taught mindfulness in organizations including AMEX, Hearst Publications, Mind and Life Institute, and Fetzer Institute.

She is the co-author of *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning* and author of *Working with Mindfulness CD*. She is co-author with Ram Dass of *Compassion in Action*. In 2015, her chapter, "Awakening at Work: Introducing Mindfulness into Organizations" will be published in *Mindfulness in Organizations* by Cambridge University Press.

Mirabai's contemplative teachers include Neemkaroli Baba, S. N. Goenka, Kalu Rinpoche, Gelek Rinpoche, Kanai Sensei, and others. She is the mother of digital artist Owen Bush and grandmother of the divine 5-year-old Dahlia. She lives in western Massachusetts.

Discovering Earth as Teacher: the Voyage from Despair to Hope

Heather Lyn Mann

November 18 | Friday night lecture 6:30pm-8:30pm

November 19 | Full Retreat 9:30am-4:00pm



Heather Lyn Mann is a writer, Mindfulness teacher, and environmental advocate. She founded and directed the Center for Resilient Cities--a Wisconsin-based not-for-profit dedicated to supporting healthy, resilient people in healthy, resilient places. Battle-weary in 2007, Heather took a six-year time-out to sail a small sloop with her husband and cat upon the Atlantic. She traveled with one question: how am I to live in a suffering world? This fall, Parallax Press will publish the memoir of her physical and spiritual journey--*Ocean of Insight: A Sailor's Voyage from Despair to Hope*. Heather is a practicing Buddhist in the Plum Village Tradition and in 2006, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh ordained Heather into the Order of Interbeing. Today, she serves as the Facilitator of the North American Plum Village Earth Holder Sangha -- a group continuing Nhat Hanh's teaching of our great togetherness to bring transformation and healing to Earth. A recent transplant to our area, she also founded and leads weekly gatherings in Summerville of the Charleston Community of Mindful Living.

December

The Divine Feminine: Spiritual Evolution for a Woman's Soul

Meghan Don

December 1 | Thursday program 6:30pm-8:30pm



Meghan Don is an initiate of the Sophian Lineage, and Founder and Leading Guide of The Gnostic Grace Circle. An award-winning author, spiritual mentor, and retreat presenter, Meghan's work helps to raise the feminine consciousness and confidence in our world. She has worked extensively with the Christian mystics, Gnostic and Kabbalistic teachings, and Jungian psychology, and is renowned for her keen insight into the human soul. Coming from Celtic heritage and raised in New Zealand, Meghan's work is informed by deep connection with the natural world. Her work incorporates mystical prayer and meditation, and sacred dance and chant, bringing ancient wisdom into a contemporary and accessible form. Meghan has taught at Omega Institute, Esalen Institute, Unity and New Thought Churches, and Episcopal and Methodist Churches. She has led many sacred pilgrimages to Europe, and is the author of *Meditations with Teresa of Avila: A Journey into the Sacred*, which won the Ashton Wylie/New Zealand Book Council Award for Best Book and Author in 2006. She has also authored *Sacred Companions Sacred Community: Reflections with Clare of Assisi*. Her upcoming book, *The New Divine Feminine: Spiritual Evolution for a Woman's Soul* is to be released in August 2016.