

# A Warm Welcome to our Newest Monk and Postulants (2016)

## Our Newest Monk....

Alison Hine was raised in an intellectual, scientific, atheist family in Geneva, Switzerland. Her father was one of the founding scientists at CERN. She obtained a degree in zoology from Cambridge University (1971). After some field work in Kenya and further academic studies in Canada, she settled in Ann Arbor, Michigan where she obtained a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Michigan. She practiced as a psychotherapist for 35 years and began offering spiritual direction in 2005. She has a grown son and Turkish daughter-in-law. She lives with her partner, Murray, of 15 years. She loves BBC TV series, classical music, all manner of art and creativity to be found on the Web and growing orchids in her living room.



Her spiritual search began 25 years ago with a friend's astonished question. "How have you managed to get this far without God?" From this point her hunger for spiritual practice was unrelenting. After stops in some peculiar way stations, she became deeply immersed in Vajrayana Buddhism. Despite being drawn to this path, it did not bear fruit. In 2000 Alison discovered the Diamond Approach, a spiritual path rooted in the wisdom on Buddhism, Sufism and Depth Psychology. She continues to be a member of this mystery school. In 2009 she was drawn to a Christmas service in a small Episcopal Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan. To her great surprise this led to a deep study of Christian mysticism and theology. To this day the Christian path and the Diamond Approach sit synergistically alongside each other. Since then she has been teaching the practice of Presence under the auspices of her church, the fruits of a cross pollination of these threads of practice and teaching. In 2014 Alison met Lynn at a School of Wisdom. This meeting

resulted in a one of a kind collaboration and with his support she created digital illuminations of the "Luminous Gospels". She took vows as a monk at the Annual Gathering in February 2016.

## And our New Postulants...

**Rex Foster** was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas, and now lives in Baltimore, Maryland with his wife, Lindsay, and two kids, Vera (5 yrs.) and Rowan (4 yrs.). He grew up as an active member of Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio and then attended Baylor University from 1997-2001 where he earned his BS in Health Sciences. After attending Baylor, Rex earned his MS in Human Resource Development from Texas A&M (2004) and Ph.D. from The University of Minnesota (2007), with a focus on organizational change.



Rex was introduced to Thomas Keating's "Open Mind, Open Heart" as a freshman at Baylor in 1998, which began his relationship with the contemplative tradition, and he has been pursuing growth in this area ever since. This seeking journey led him to many places over the past 15 years including a Quaker community, a Unitarian Universalist church, a United Methodist Church, regular yoga and meditation practice, and most recently to his current Baptist church home.

In his professional life, Rex has worked and consulted in a variety of industries (education, government, Fortune 500, faith-based, non-profit), and currently works at Catholic Charities of Maryland where he works closely with numerous social service programs to improve the effectiveness of their services.

Rex is a writer, researcher, and loves music (playing guitar and singing). He became a Postulant in February 2016 and is mentored by Priest Michael Sciretti.

**Susan King** was raised in Detroit, Michigan where she grew up during the civil rights movement and the era of the Detroit riot of the late 1960's. Having parents that were working for the Catholic Church as educators, Susan had a unique and wonderful opportunity to see faith and social justice work in action, not only in her family but in the community as well. She attended the University of Detroit as a theology major for two years, then left to get married and raise four wonderful children. After 34 years that marriage ended, Susan came to terms with her true sexual orientation and is now married to an incredible woman; they have a son who is now a junior in college.



Always knowing she needed to respond to a spiritual 'call', Susan left the Catholic church and joined the Episcopal church in 1987. In 1988, she returned to complete her theological education. She received a BA in social justice theology in 1994, a MA in pastoral ministry in 1998, and a doctorate in spiritual psychology and discernment in 2002 from Christ Church, Oxford. She was also ordained as an Interfaith Minister from New Seminary in NYC in 2002.

Susan moved to Ann Arbor, MI in 1985. After finishing her studies she has engaged in a wide variety of ministerial and educational endeavors. She has directed an Interfaith Soup kitchen, been a chaplain at a peace and social justice campus ministry for the University of Michigan, served as a minister at an Episcopal mission church, and as a minister at an Interfaith Center. For 10 years, she taught religious studies at Siena Heights, a Dominican University in Adrian, MI. In 2004, Susan joined the faculty at the University of Michigan in the School of Public Health, where she became the Associate Director of the Life Sciences and Society program, working at the intersection of genetic and scientific technical advances in human reproduction and how those issues intersect with

the teachings of a wide variety of faith traditions. In 2007, Susan was offered a joint appointment to also teach in the Program on Intergroup Relations, where she teaches undergraduates utilizing a social justice pedagogy examining identity issues and how power, privilege and oppression operates in our society. This combinational work is a joy in her life. Three years ago Susan took this pedagogy and began offering similar courses to graduate students in Public Health, Higher Educations and Social Work.

For the past 16 years Susan has also been deeply involved in the Interfaith Roundtable of Washtenaw County. The mission of this organization is to dialogue across religious differences to find commonality, but most importantly, to explore differences and how they can inform faith expressions. Susan was the chair of the board for 10 years, and is now serving as the Co-director of the organization. As well, she is a member of a Meti (mixed blood) Native American society that works to teach non-native Americans the beauty and truth that springs from ancient and long-lived spiritual truth that has lived on our continent for millennia.

At the end of 2016, Susan will retire from the U-M. Her heart's desire is to engage more deeply in contemplative endeavors and to braid together some of what she have learned and lived into the new millennia, especially as it relates to how we have lost touch with our spiritual roots, and how wisdom is speaking so strongly to us today. Becoming a postulant in the OOOW has been a true blessing in her life and she is so looking forward to the chapters ahead. Susan is mentored by Monk Juli Rosenbaum.

**Lee Warren** grew up in Kenbridge, a southern Virginia town of 1,300 as "Mary Lee." Finding it way too southern, she transitioned to "Lee" when she set out for Sweet Briar College. Vowing never to return to south-side Virginia, she majored in French for greater access to the wider world. Always a seeker, in her sophomore year, Lee had a dramatic Christian



conversion. Three months later she met a law student whose hometown, South Hill, happened to be 17 miles from hers. They fell immediately in love, married 11 months later and when they finished their educations they returned back to South Hill where he'd planned to practice. Lessons learned: Never say "never" and trust the detours. She and The Hon. Charles Warren will celebrate 43 years of marriage in 2016.

After a brief stint as a high school teacher, Lee chose to become a stay-at-home mother to her son and daughter until they were out of the nest. A budding contemplative, in 2000 she followed her dream to seek an MDiv at Duke Divinity School and worked as a Licensed Local Pastor for 6 years before leaving the United Methodist Church in 2006 to work for Stop Hunger Now, an international hunger and relief organization. With her back turned to traditional orthodoxy, the "Jesusolatry" in her area and the institutional church, she spent the next years reading and trying to find a path to the Divine other than the one she sensed might have failed her. Synchronicity led her to reading Jim Marion, Ken Wilber, Richard Rohr, Cynthia Bourgeault (to name a few) and evolutionary spirituality. Then in 2015, she was accepted into Center of Action and Contemplation's inaugural class of Living School with Rohr, Bourgeault, and Jim Finley as core faculty.

Following completion of Living School, Lee attended Cynthia's Intro Wisdom School on the Gospel of Thomas where she was referred to Lisa Bonner because she felt drawn to explore the eastern Christian lineage. Discovering she already knew another monk, Michael Sciretti back in VA, she set up a call with him and at his invitation attended the 2016 gathering where she was accepted as Postulant and is being mentored by Monk Lisa Bonner.

Back home in VA, the word that describes the delight and peace in finding Yeshua again and the Order is, "Planted." After much searching, this is where she seeks to sprout deeper spiritual roots, continue her studies and contemplative practices while enjoying two little granddaughters, running, beginner art lessons, volunteering in the elementary school and her work as a Rotarian.