

Benedictine Bridge

connecting with the communities at Holy Wisdom Monastery
weaving prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth into a shared way of life

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April 2018



Holy Wisdom Monastery's mission to care for the earth will be celebrated on Sunday, April 22, 2018 at 9:00 am at an Earth Day worship service. Below are the words to one of the songs that will be sung that day.

We Celebrate the World

We celebrate the world
which God has given us
to tend, protect and keep it yet
a treasure and a trust.
Still all creation cries
for us to show we care
that oceans wane, few birds remain,
felled forests leave land bare.

We pray for strength, O God.
Your pow'r through us release
to live with less, that we can bless
our world which longs for peace.
Remembering your son
who would not bow to wealth,
when we right wrong, by faith made strong,
we help our planet's health.

We know we have a part
in healing our torn earth.
All humankind awaits a sign
that justice may rebirth.
Let us, God's agents now,



commit ourselves this hour
to heed God's word, and be assured
we can bring hope to flower.

Tune: TERRA BEATA, traditional English melody; Text: Edith Sinclair Downing; © 2008, Wayne Leupold Editions, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Sisters & Sojourners

Road trip

by [Denise West](#), novice



Before Sojourner Diane Ray's departure, Sister Lynne Smith, Diane and I traveled to St. John's University (SJU) in Collegeville, Minnesota for a few days last month. The sisters wanted to nurture Diane's interest in ancient Islamic texts by introducing her to the wonderful archives that are housed at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML) at SJU. Diane met with David Calabro, who leads the cataloging of HMML's Eastern Christian and Islamic manuscripts and talked about the digitizing of these manuscripts. We also enjoyed walking the grounds of the school, which was still in the midst of winter's silence. We crossed the frozen lake to visit the small Stella Maris

chapel on the other shore and attended prayer in the abbey church.

A highlight of the trip was dinner with the monks. It is a more formal, ritualized affair than at Holy Wisdom. Dinner began in silence as we all stood behind our chairs. At the signal, everyone sat, then listened as a monk read aloud from *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* by Bryan Massingale. As proscribed by Benedict in the *Rule*, the brothers served one another, and us, and soon the food arrived from the kitchen. The reading ended and we enjoyed conversation at the abbot's table, where guests, students, and monks intermingled.

We attended evening prayer one night with the sisters at St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, Minnesota, down the road from St. John's. The sisters at Holy Wisdom Monastery have had a long relationship with the monks of St. John's and the sisters at St. Benedict's. It was a lovely experience to be on the receiving end of Benedictine hospitality!

Experience Benedictine Life at the Monastery

by Denise West, novice

Many of us seek greater meaning in our lives. We long for depth on our spiritual journey. At Holy Wisdom Monastery we offer a brief experience of Benedictine monastic life for women who may be interested in a longer stay.

Learn how prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth shape our lives. Experience our rhythm of work and prayer, sharing and silence, reflection and service.

Whether you're in the midst of transition or



seeking spiritual practices that can enrich life, we invite you to inquire about this opportunity to experience communal living in a peaceful, environmentally friendly setting. This retreat is for single, Protestant or Catholic women, ages 24-50 with no dependents, who would like to learn about the six-month [Benedictine Sojourner](#) experience. The retreat begins Friday, June 1, 5:00 pm and concludes Sunday, June 3, 11:30 am.

If you are interested in learning more, please complete a retreat interest form. We will call to talk with you about the retreat and registration process and to answer any questions you may have.

[Fill out the retreat interest form](#)

Sunday Assembly

Sacred Citizenship:

What's Happening with Small and Medium Farms in Wisconsin



Wisconsin farmers and rural communities are facing serious challenges at this time. Dairy and crop farmers are dealing with continued low prices and at the same time CSA and farmers' market farmers are finding increased competition in the marketplace for local and organic produce. As farmers struggle to make ends meet we also know that many working families in both rural and urban communities struggle to find affordable access to nutritious food.

Wisconsin Farmers Union staff members Kara O'Connor, Government Relations Director and Sarah Lloyd, Special Projects Coordinator will discuss the current status of agriculture and rural communities and how we can build on a history of farmer-labor solidarity to address the interests of farmers and farm workers—both immigrant and U.S. born—in solidarity with working families across the state.

The program will begin with prayer and dinner, followed by speakers, resource sharing and opportunities for dialogue and discussion.

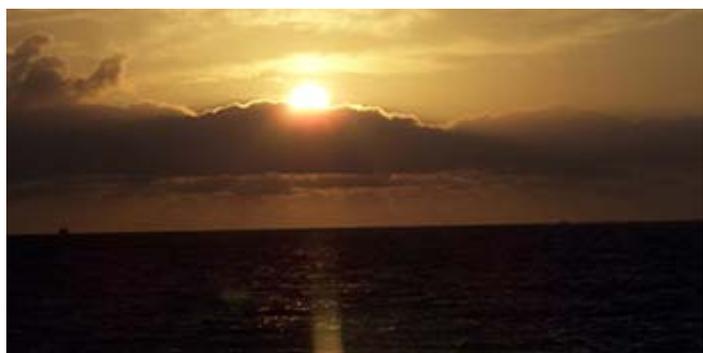
[Register by April 24, 2018.](#)

Seeing the Sacred: Exploring Personal Images of the Divine

Tuesday, May 8, May 15, May 22, 2018
| 9:00-11:30 am

Using a combination of visual images, short readings and reflection, participants will create their own unique collaged images of aspects of the Divine and their relationship with the Divine. Relationships and images of the Divine to be explored are Source; Self—an Aspect of the Divine; and Nature—Revealer of God. Each session expands on the previous session

allowing an ever deeper "Seeing of the Sacred." Those who attend will have the opportunity to gain more knowledge and experience of their own spirituality. They will be able to expand their creative self and to increase confidence in their own ability to perceive the sacred in everyday.



Leaders:

Kay DeWaide holds a bachelor's degree in art therapy from Edgewood College and has many years of experience in facilitating experiences in expressive arts for people of all ages and abilities. She has presented about her work at national conferences. Kay is a trained SoulCollage® Facilitator.

Carla Peterson is a spiritual director, healing touch spiritual ministry practitioner, and licensed professional counselor. She is an oblate and member of Sunday Assembly at Holy Wisdom Monastery.

[Register by April 30, 2018](#)

Oblates

Compassionate Communication: Right Relationship with Myself and Others

July 13-15, 2018

Facilitated by Mary Hoddy and Mary Kay Reinemann

Assisted by Lynne Smith, Denise West, Paz Vital, and others from Madison Area Nonviolent Communication Practice Groups



Mary Hoddy



Mary Kay Reinemann

As Oblates, we value deep listening and having what Benedict calls right relationships, but it's not always easy. Compassionate communication is the intention to stay present to one another as we make a connection in which everyone's needs are valued. This includes our own needs as well as the needs of others. This practice is based on Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication and Robert Gonzales' Living Compassion, and is aligned with the *Rule of Benedict*. This process includes learning how to listen to our own inner thoughts and discern how to use this information in a way that serves.

Retreat open to the public

[Register by June 29, 2018.](#)

Friends & Supporters

Lisa Seidman—*Beneath the Surface*

Holy Wisdom Monastery spring art exhibit

by [Rachel Olson](#), development project manager

For Lisa Seidman, digital photography combines a lifetime of skill and experiences into the perfect medium for creative expression. Lisa is a semi-retired professor of biotechnology at Madison College and former electron microscopist. She has a scientist's natural curiosity about the world, a deep reverence for the creative power of technology and a teacher's instincts to share her sense of wonder and discovery. These traits are the basic building blocks of her life and work as a visual artist.

Lisa has been taking pictures since childhood, but in 2010 as she was starting to consider retirement, she found herself increasingly drawn to photography as an art form. As an educator, her first inclination was to seek training. She found it at the Rocky Mountain School of Photography in Missoula, Montana where she attended a summer intensive. She continues her education locally, studying with professional photographer, Tom McInville, whom she credits as having nurtured her creativity and understanding of photography as an art.



Although she is a native of Chicago, Lisa has lived in Madison for 32 years and often finds subjects of

interest and inspiration on a small lake within a few blocks from her home. She ventures out at sunrise to take pictures from her kayak hoping to get glimpses of what is beneath the surface of this ordinary urban waterway.



When asked about her use of digital manipulation, Lisa stated, "The photos I capture are all digitally manipulated, some more so, some less. Some juxtapose locations and events that do not meet in objective space. This is because my images are not meant to be literal representations of what I saw; they are reflections of what I seek."

In recent months, Lisa's work has been exhibited at the Fluno Center Art Gallery, the Overture Center and the Capitol Lakes Center. She first became

aware of Holy Wisdom Monastery through a women's group at PhotoMidwest, a community dedicated to the photographic arts. She felt that her *Beneath the Surface* series would compliment the naturalist ethos of the monastery and Benedictine values of simplicity and reverence for creation.

Beneath the Surface will open at Holy Wisdom Monastery on Friday, May 4, 2018 with a reception from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Please join us as we welcome Lisa and her work to the monastery. Light refreshments will be served and Lisa will give a brief talk about her work at 6:00 pm. No RSVP required. The exhibit will be at the monastery through the end of July and can be viewed Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm (excluding holidays) and Sundays, 10:00-11:00 am.

What does the Earth Ask of Us?

With Robin Wall Kimmerer | May 16, 2018, 5:30-7:30 pm



"Change Over Time," by Victor Bakhtin, on view at the UW-Madison Arboretum Visitor Center. Image courtesy UW-Madison Arboretum.

"We are showered every day with the gifts of the Earth, gifts we have neither earned nor paid for: air to breathe, nurturing rain, black soil, berries and honeybees, the tree that became this page, a bag of rice and the exuberance of a field of goldenrod and asters at full bloom."

"Though the Earth provides us with all that we need, we have created a consumption-driven economy that asks, 'What more can we take from the Earth?' and almost never 'What does the Earth ask of us in return?'" -Robin Wall Kimmerer

Join us for an evening of light refreshments and lecture with Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, who will share the wisdom of the indigenous people's spirituality and its relationship to caring for the earth.

Robin is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and a Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology at the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

The Friends of Wisdom Prairie at Holy Wisdom Monastery and the Indigenous Arts and Sciences Program of UW-Madison co-sponsor this event.

The deadline to register is May 2, 2018, but we are filling fast and probably will close registrations before then.

[Register now!](#)

March For Our Lives

Thousands of people marched to the Wisconsin State Capitol on March 24, 2018 in support of the student-led March For Our Lives campaign against gun violence in schools. At Holy Wisdom Monastery people from all areas of the monastery donated money to help support the campaign. A total of \$6,500, exactly \$100 for each year of the monastery's history, was donated to the local and national campaign. Sunday Assembly members and sisters also joined the March in Madison.



Picture here from left to right are Sunday Assembly member Rita Emmenegger, Sister Lynne Smith, Sojourner Diane Ray and Novice Denise West.

65 years: rooted in faith, transforming lives, people, land, spirit

In 1953, three sisters came to Middleton, Wisconsin to build a monastery and start a girls' high school. 65 years later the community is still here, weaving prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth into a shared way of life. Below is a list of some of the many influential guests who came to the monastery over the 65 years and helped shape the work we do today.



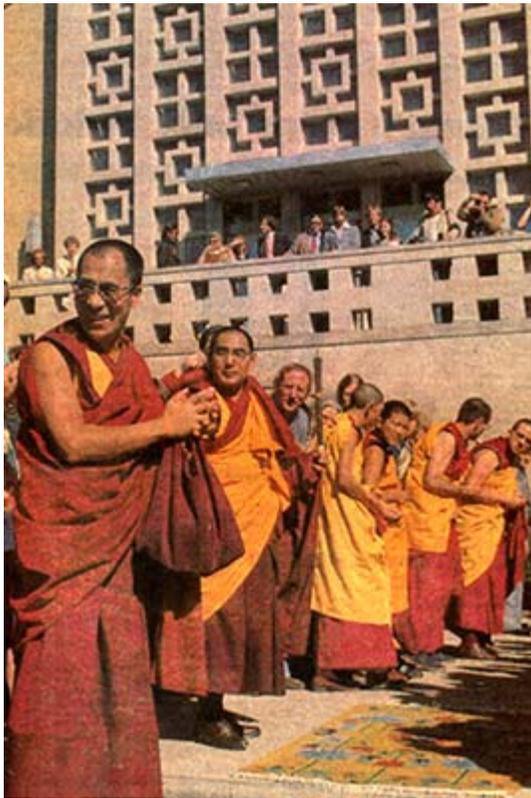
Most Reverend John Gran: Bishop of Oslo, Norway and member of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity and for Dialogue with Non-believers. The sisters held a reception and dinner in his honor at St. Benedict Center in June of 1970.

Dr. Douglas Steere: Active Quaker and former professor of philosophy at Haverford College in Pennsylvania, specializing in Eastern religions. An author and speaker, he led one of the sisters' first ecumenical retreats in March of 1970.

Reverend Henri J. M. Nouwen: Dutch-born priest, prolific author and speaker. He first came to St. Benedict Center in September of 1975 to lead a day of reflection. He returned in July of 1987 to co-lead a workshop entitled *Doing Theology from the Heart*.

Sister Joan Chittister, OSB: Member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania, author, speaker, former prioress for her community and president of the Conference of American Benedictine Prioresses. Starting in 1978, she spoke at various events/programs at Saint Benedict Center/Holy Wisdom Monastery, including the 1980 Benedictine symposium and the dedication of the new green monastery in 2009.

Dom Jean LeClercq, OSB: Member of the Benedictine Abbey of Clervaux in Luxembourg and professor of monastic history, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. He spoke at two symposiums—the symposium in honor of the sesquimillennium (1500 years) of the birth of St. Benedict of Nursia, entitled *Benedict and Scholastica: Then and Now*, held at St. Benedict Center October 9-12, 1980 and an earlier (December of 1978) symposium on Thomas Merton.



The Dalai Lama (left) visits Holy Wisdom Monastery in 1979 during his first visit to the U.S. Wisconsin State Journal photo by Joseph W Jackson III.

Dalai Lama: On the last day of his visit to Madison in September of 1979, His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, led a Buddhist worship service at St. Benedict Center for more than 400 people.

Dr. Giles Constable: Professor emeritus from Princeton, author and speaker. He gave a presentation on the authority of superiors in religious institutions at the 1980 Benedictine symposium.

Drs. Evelyn & James Whitehead: Developmental psychologist and pastoral theologian, respectively, and authors, speakers. They led their first program, entitled "Adult Life: The Religious Journey," at St. Benedict Center in April of 1981. They returned many times to lead successful workshops on spirituality and sexuality.

Dr. Walter Brueggemann: Ordained UCC minister and Old Testament scholar and theologian, he first came to St. Benedict Center in 1984 to lead a workshop on praying the psalms.

Sister Sandra Schneiders, IHM: Professor emerita from Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, speaker and author. She led a program entitled "Healing & Liberation for Women and the Church" at St. Benedict Center in 1986.

Dr. James Finley: Psychotherapist, author and speaker. Thomas Merton was his spiritual guide for two of the six years he spent as a monk at the Abbey of Gethsemani. He has led many successful workshops at St. Benedict Center/Holy Wisdom Monastery, starting with a program on the spirituality of Merton held in October of 1988.

Reverend George Tavard, AA: Member of the Augustinians of the Assumption, professor of theology, prolific author and speaker. He was a noted ecumenist and attended Vatican Council II. He served on the Sisters' Ecumenical Board from 1997-2007.

Rev. Dr. Gordon Lathrop: Professor emeritus in liturgy from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, author and speaker. He gave a presentation on baptism and the Eucharist in an ecumenical monastic community at the 2000 Ecumenical Dialogue.

Dr. Nathan Mitchell: Professor emeritus from Notre Dame University, author, and speaker. He gave a presentation on liturgical rituals at the 2002 Ecumenical Dialogue.

Abbot Primate Notker Wolf, OSB: Representative of the worldwide Benedictine order, attended Benedictine Women of Madison's "Celebration of Ecumenism" on May 12, 2007. He gave his blessing to the ecumenical community.

Father Thomas Keating, OCSO: Trappist monk and priest, founder of the Centering Prayer Movement, author and speaker. Member of St. Benedict's Community in Snowmass, Colorado. He was one of the panelists on the program "Contemplation and Education—Landscape of Research" held at University of Wisconsin-Madison in November of 2007. Sisters Mary David Walgenbach and Joanne Kollasch, coworkers and oblates participated in a discussion and luncheon with Father Keating after the program.



Keynote speaker Simone Campbell (right) talks with Sister Mary David Walgenbach at the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice breakfast held at Holy Wisdom in 2013. Photo by Carlos Miranda.

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS: Member of the Sisters of Social Service, lawyer, lobbyist, and executive director of NETWORK. She first came to Holy Wisdom Monastery in February of 2013 to participate in Ash Wednesday services and give the keynote presentation at the 14th annual faith-labor breakfast hosted by the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice.

Fund to support quality speakers for programs at Holy Wisdom Monastery

by Libby Caes, Sunday Assembly member

The Ayer Enrichment Fund (AEF) was established to strengthen the study of the *Rule of Benedict* at Holy Wisdom Monastery. Monies are available to support quality speakers sponsored by any of the Holy Wisdom communities. The goal is to deepen our understanding of how we live out the *Rule* in the 21st century. [Application for funds](#) and more information are available from committee members (Roberta Felker, Libby Caes, Jean Feraca, Tom Sullivan, Mary Hoddy, Barb Dannhausen, Holly Prince and Doreen Adamany). The committee meets quarterly to evaluate requests for funding. The Fund is administered by the Madison Community Foundation (www.madisongives.org). All contributions are tax deductible. Monies are transferred to a restricted fund at Holy Wisdom as programs are developed.

Guests & Retreatants

Wedding bells are ringing at Holy Wisdom Monastery!

by [Monica Jefcoat](#), event and accounting assistant



Plan your big day at Holy Wisdom Monastery. Photo by Elizabeth Haase.

Our wedding season started early this year with our first ceremony in January, but April is the month it starts to get really busy.

Weddings at the monastery represent an average of 10 months of planning for most of our couples, but generally it is never too late or too early to plan a special day. Weddings can be scheduled with just a few weeks' notice, a couple of years in advance or anywhere in between. If you know someone looking for a ceremony site, we have good news! Dates are still available for 2018, 2019 and beyond. To start the process, all couples need to do is [complete an inquiry](#) on the Holy Wisdom website.

Through the electronic inquiry, couples can ask about specific dates or request a tour. Once the wedding is scheduled, the process is quite easy. A planning meeting occurs a few weeks before the wedding and the rehearsal is usually conducted the night before the big day. Wedding coordinators, Amanda Conway and Monica Jefcoat, offer Benedictine hospitality and are helpful resources to the bridal couple throughout the planning process, plus are on-hand to guide both the rehearsal and the ceremony.

All are welcome to marry at Holy Wisdom Monastery. Weddings are scheduled throughout the year for up to 300 guests and can occur on any day of the week. Most take

place in the Assembly Room or on the Lake Lawn. When outdoor weddings are scheduled, the Assembly Room is automatically reserved as a backup location in case of inclement weather. This is a rare venue perk making Holy Wisdom an ideal place for an outdoor ceremony. Regardless of the time of year, the monastery grounds provide beautiful backdrops for stunning wedding photos. Rates vary for indoor and outdoor weddings and are based on the time of year.

Please encourage anyone you know who is looking for a wedding venue to tour and consider Holy Wisdom Monastery—all are welcome! They will have a beautiful, memorable wedding and be grateful to you for telling them about Holy Wisdom Monastery!

We remember



Our thoughts and prayers are extended to the families and friends of the following:

Don Neurauter, father of Holy Wisdom Monastery staff member and Sunday Assembly member, Janet Neurauter. Don passed away in April.

We celebrate the gifts he shared and rejoice in the promise of eternal life.

New on our website

Follow the links below to see what's new on our website.

[One last blog](#) by Sojourner Diane Ray

[April phenology \(monthly nature happenings\)](#) by Sylvia Marek

[April new books in the library](#), by Nancy Sandleback



Recent homilies:

- [Paul Knitter's homily, April 15, 2018](#)
- [Leora Weitzman's homily, Easter, April 1, 2018](#)
- [Libby Caes' homily, Easter Vigil, March 31, 2018](#)
- [Sister Lynne Smith's homily, Good Friday, March 30, 2018](#)
- [Patti LaCross' homily, Good Friday, March 30, 2018](#)
- [Terry Larson's homily, Good Friday, March 30, 2018](#)
- [David McKee's homily, Good Friday, March 30, 2018](#)

Scripture commentaries by Arthur H. Cash:

- [March 25, 2018 Palm Sunday](#)

Calendar

[Sunday Worship](#), 9:00 am
Monastery Assembly Room

[Daily Prayer](#)

Monastery Oratory

Morning Prayer, Sunday-Saturday, 8:00 am

Midday Prayer, Monday-Friday, 11:45 am

Evening Prayer, Sunday-Saturday, 4:30 pm

[Centering Prayer](#)

Monastery Oratory

Morning Centering Prayer, Tuesday-Saturday, 7:35 am

Evening Centering Prayer, Tuesday-Friday, 4:55 pm

Retreat & Guest House Room 10

Centering Prayer Group, Wednesdays, 7:00 pm

Follow the links below to learn more or register for upcoming events at Holy Wisdom Monastery

For the complete calendar visit holywisdommonastery.org/events

April 22
Earth Day Sunday

Children's Liturgy of the Word, 9:00-10:00 am

All ages are welcome to participate—little ones with a parent, and older students as readers and helpers with the teachers. Children’s Liturgy of the Word is usually scheduled on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. Students are dismissed from worship to hear and learn about the scripture readings at their level. The children return later in the liturgy to receive communion.

April 25

Wisdom Prairie Workday, 9:00 am-12:00 pm

Volunteer on the land and help preserve and protect this important area on the north shore of Lake Mendota. Work outside with old friends, meet new people and have fun. Join the party!

[Register one day or more before the workday.](#)

April 29

Hospitality and Car Pool Sunday

Hospitality Sunday is the last Sunday of the month. All are encouraged to bring food to share. It is also a time for the Sunday Assembly community to meet and get to know other members and visitors. Carpool Sunday: gift your neighbors and Mother Earth by sharing a ride.

Blessing of New Sunday Assembly Members

May 1

Sacred Citizenship—Farming: What’s Happening with Small and Medium Farms in Wisconsin

[See description above](#)

[Register by April 24, 2018.](#)

May 4

Beneath the Surface art exhibit opening reception, 5:00-7:00 pm

[See description above](#)

[No registration necessary, just come, and bring your friends!](#)

May 6

Sunday Assembly Childcare Ministry, 9:00-10:00 am

We are happy to announce that we will be offering a childcare ministry, typically on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, during the Sunday Assembly liturgy. Adult care takers and teenage helpers will provide care for infants and toddlers in the hospitality room.

May 8, 15, 22

Seeing the Sacred, 9:00-11:30 am

[See description above](#)

[Register by April 30, 2018.](#)

May 8

Luke House

On the second Tuesday of each month members of Holy Wisdom Monastery participate in preparing, serving and sharing a meal at Luke House. We serve a vegetarian lasagna dinner, complete with salad, bread, and cookies.

May 9

Wisdom Prairie Workday, 9:00 am-12:00 pm

[Register one day or more before the workday.](#)

May 13

Children’s Liturgy of the Word, 9:00-10:00 am

May 16

What does the Earth Ask of Us?

Reception and lecture with Robin Wall Kimmerer

[See description above](#)

[Register by May 2, 2018.](#)

May 20
Sunday Assembly Childcare Ministry, 9:00-10:00 am

May 23
Wisdom Prairie Workday
[Register one day or more before the workday.](#)

May 27
Children's Liturgy of the Word, 9:00-10:00 am

Hospitality and Car Pool Sunday

[Visit our website calendar for all of our upcoming events at holywisdommonastery.org/events/](http://www.holywisdommonastery.org/events/)



Holy Wisdom Monastery

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