

wakening ministry

"The beauty of the Sacred Story is that whenever I look for God in its pages, I seem to find myself; and whenever I look for myself in its pages, I seem to find God. It is never either/or, it is always both/and."

Robert Benson



Fall 2023



Praying *with* Robert Benson



Last spring, I reached out to one of my favorite authors, Robert Benson, in order to get his permission to publish his image as I promoted reading his books through Wakening Ministry. We spoke for 2 hours and ended with his desire to participate in

our classes. I never dreamed we would have gleaned as much insight over these summer classes as we have! What's next? **Venite—Praying with Robert Benson.** Join Robert and me beginning August 30th for a 6 week class on prayer. Robert prays. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing (1

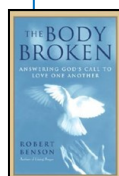
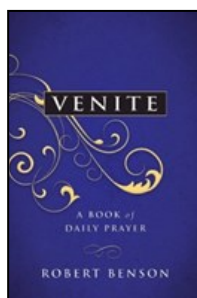
Thessalonians 5:17) . Through his pilgrim journey, he has found his rhythm; and we are invited to find ours.

The Body Broken, by Robert Benson, is about the division in our church denominations and what to do about it.

Discussion

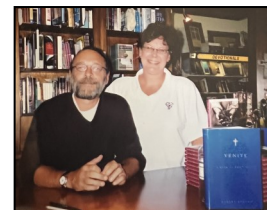
Nov 6, 2023

7:00-9:00 pm EST



Robert Benson has written over 20 books where he invites us into his faith journey. He says, "I only have an interest in you seeing you in my books." I have and I believe you will too. He writes about his life—from baseball, depression, gardening, church, vacation, and prayer (a lot about prayer)—and as he weaves his thoughts into words, we meet a friend; a gentle, kind teacher who will end up including you in his daily prayers as he circles the globe.

Twenty-five years ago, I met Robert face to face when he came to a local bookstore



where I was working, to sign his books. I interacted with him and watched him interact with others. Personal. Intentional. Gentle. Deep. Wise. I had read a few of his books but afterwards I wanted to read them all. The teaching within is timeless. Come, and let me introduce you. Join us—online and always free—as Robert teaches us *his* practice of prayer.

Linda

NAMASTE.

R. Benson

NEW CLASSES INSIDE

We are committed to offer all classes **free of charge**. Donations are requested but *always* optional.



DONATE NOW



Growing in Spirit & Friendship

by Teri Quam



Lisa Rogers (left, from Tennessee)
& Teri Quam (from Wisconsin)

When I first joined a Wakening Ministry on-line class, I didn't know anyone. I was amazed that people were from all over the country, gathering to share our thoughts of the book we were reading. As we met each month, we got to know each other a little better. Then I had the opportunity to join a spiritual retreat in person and I brought a friend! We both were bringing some recent sorrows with us and found loving, accepting people who also were willing to be vulnerable with their feelings. There was also joy in the experiences of retreat. Here I met Lisa in person, not just a face on Zoom.

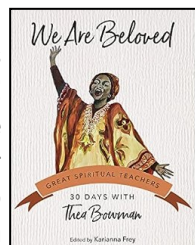
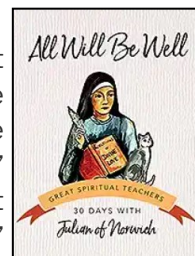
When the second retreat came up and my friend from home was unavailable to travel, I asked Lisa to be my roommate. We were so excited. We met at the Atlanta airport to fly together for the last stretch. When we arrived at the retreat, someone had cancelled, so we got our own rooms instead of sharing. In one respect it was nice to have one's own space but also disappointing because we had hoped to further our friendship through this experience. However, God had other plans. During the first night we each had to pick a wrapped book that would partner us with someone in the group. You can call it coincidence or divine intervention, but my partner turned out to be Lisa!!!

We were assigned to stay connected with each other after the retreat through the book we had received: 30 Days with Julian of Norwich (whom I had never heard of). This meant each day, we were reading the same words each morning

and prayer each night. Then about once a week (sometimes more) we would text each other. Phrases like "what do you think she meant by that?" or "I really liked this part" or "I didn't understand any of what she just said" began our conversations. We even talked on the phone. Julian brought us together, sharing ideas and daily practice. When the month was done, Lisa said "I really want to do this with Thea Bowman, what do you think?" I said "sure!" Well, Thea Bowman was delightful! We both loved her writing! Most of our comments were "I love this!" or "This really speaks to me" or "It feels like Thea & I are sharing a cup of coffee on my front porch." When

our month was over, Lisa said she wanted to do Thea again for another month. I thought that would be a good idea, but I should challenge myself to journal with Thea's thoughts. I've never been one for journaling, but Wakening Ministry gave me a beautiful little writing booklet that I thought I could put to good use. So this month, when I would do the morning reading, I highlighted a phrase or sentence that spoke to me. Then, I copied those phrases or sentences into the journal and wrote my own comments or dialogue on that same topic. It has been an amazing reflection tool. It has increased my gratitude but also my awareness of what I might be able to "step out" and do in this life right now. Thank you, Thea, for your inspiration!

While Julian and Thea have given Lisa and I the time and space to share with one another, we have now established a friendship that continues without them by our side but with love in our hearts.



Fall Retreat Sign up today!

Love: Being the Light

Fall Retreat 2023
Montreat Conference Center
Montreat, NC

November 10-12, 2023

\$295 Double Occupancy

\$395 Single Occupancy

Cost covers lodging, meals, & materials

Registration closes October 1, 2023

Closest Airport: Asheville, NC

(free transportation from either the Asheville or Charlotte airport to and from the Retreat Center will be provided at no additional cost)

For those traveling from out of state, you are invited to be Pastor Linda's guest for an additional overnight stay.

Contact us for more details prior to making your travel plans.

Don't miss the Fall Retreat!

Sign up at wakeningministry.org/pilgrimages

Wakening Ministry Anniversary

by Linda Zastovnik

It's been an amazing **3 years!** I haven't stopped working much since we began in 2020. I took a bit of a break this summer to focus more on myself. Rest, relationships, therapy, and remembering my dreams. I am beginning a dream of returning to camping, this time in style—some call it glamping (with electricity and less dirt!). I will spend my weekends in the camper, reading and studying for upcoming classes while refreshing my soul. Thank you for everything. Between my two jobs, it's more than a living...it's *abundant life!* Wakening Ministry goes on the road!



Wakening Ministry Grieves



Cheryl Haynes Hicks
Nov. 26, 1964—July 29, 2023

After the spring retreat at St. Frances Prayer Center, she responded to the question on the survey, "What would have made it better?"

"Another day."

Amen, Cheryl, amen. Rest in sweet peace.



Wakening Ministry "Bed & Breakfast"

by Lisa Rogers

In May, I planned to be in North Carolina and reached out to Linda to see if we could connect. She said, "Of course!" I then asked if I could stay with her a few days and she gave me a resounding "YES!" This is how I became the first Wakening Ministry Bed & Breakfast guest! It was such a blessing to be able to stay there and receive Linda's one-on-one hospitality. We had great conversations early in the mornings and late into the evenings, great food and lots of laughs. She also made sure I got to see some of you in person! What a treat to see my Zoom family in person!

While there, we had one of our classes. It was fun to be in Linda's home as she guided the class, but it was more fun afterwards as she celebrated the goodness of God! Have you ever wondered what Linda does

when she ends a class and clicks the close button on Zoom? She is cheering for God, praising loudly and leaping with joy! I've seen people get excited at a sports event or a concert. But those can never compare to Linda's expression of joy I got to witness during my stay. Thank you, Linda.



(L to R) Julie Westhofen, Lisa, Beverly Caldwell, Donna Lineberger, Linda, Myrna Caudle.

Holy Land Impressions

by Julie Westhofen



Communion in Israel

One meaningful communion experience I had in Israel was in Chorazin (also called Korazim), mentioned in Matthew 11:21-24 "Woe to you, Chorazin!" Linda laid out her communion cloth, plate and cup on a table located in the ruins of a city cursed by Jesus.

She took, blessed and gave us the bread and the juice, in remembrance of Jesus, in a city that had rejected him. This felt powerful, we were living our lives as disciples of Jesus, flourishing, but not all will accept Jesus' message.



A second powerful communion service in Israel was in an upper room at our hotel on the Sea of Galilee. There were 12 of us, each sharing one memory that we



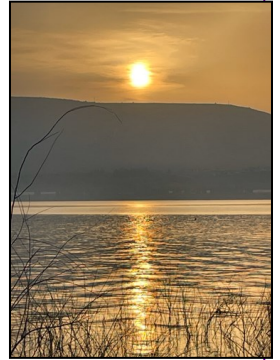
would take with us from where Jesus spent most of his ministry. To share the bread and juice together, praying and singing, just as Jesus did with his disciples, we really felt like we were walking in Jesus' footsteps.

Sights & Sounds in Israel

After 2000 years, the land of Israel has changed. I approached Israel wanting to connect with where Jesus lived, what he saw, but knowing that the places where Jesus walked had changed dramatically. Here are 3 examples of sights and sounds that stayed with me from the Holy Land.

Within hours after landing at Tel Aviv, we stopped at Caesarea Maritima, the city on the Mediterranean Coast where Paul was kept as a prisoner (Acts 24). I could hear the waves of the Mediterranean crashing on the shore, and I knew that Paul would have heard them, too. He would have heard the power of God outside his cell, a constant reminder that God was in control.

The next morning, I walked down a path from our hotel and sat on a rock next to the Sea of Galilee to watch the sunrise. I could hear the birds singing, the waves lapping, and watch the same sunrise that Jesus watched when he went alone in the mornings to a quiet place. I saw what he saw and heard what he heard.



Finally, while in Jordan we stopped at Mount Nebo, the place where Moses saw the promised land in the distance, knowing he could not go with them (Deuteronomy 34). To gaze off into the distance, to the promised land on the other side of the Jericho River, was a powerful connection to the history of Israel, and the end of Moses' leadership.



Linda mentioned that sometimes God calls us to do a certain thing, and then our mission is complete. We may want more, but that may not be God's plan for us. It was a powerful way to connect Moses' role to the roles we have in our own lives.



The Twelve Pilgrims



“Haze over the Sea of Galilee seemed appropriate as the disciples on the sea saw Jesus walk toward them in the water.”

Mary T



“After a long day of travel our final destination was Mount Arbel. While sitting on the rocks taking in the lovely views of the Sea of Galilee, the cliffs and the Golan Heights, I spotted a butterfly on the rocks with us. Its beautiful wings were opened to the warmth of the sunshine. Butterflies remind me of metamorphosis, which reminds me of the change our group is going through as we walk in the footsteps of Jesus.”

Ginny



“I was imagining Jesus on the lake with his disciples sitting with his friends, and then talking with his friends as they walked together down the streets. I thought to myself that day they were his people and now he is ours.”

Beverly

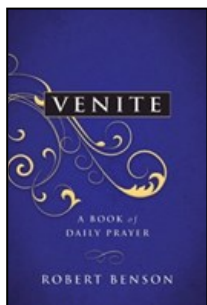
**DID YOU
KNOW?**

There are two sermons (audio only) on the website where Pastor Linda preaches Messages of Hope.

See

www.wakeningministry.org/newsletters

Praying with Robert Benson



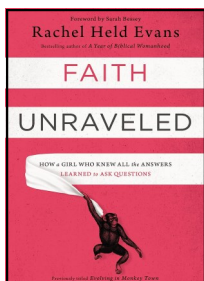
Taught by Robert Benson, hosted by Pastor Linda, we will learn about and practice prayer as we pray with one who lives this holy mystery. The Bible encourages us to “pray without ceasing.” How do we do this? One step at a time. Writer of over 20 books, **Robert Benson** is offering to teach us over 6 weeks what he has taught leading weekend retreats for over 30 years. His book, *Venite*, will guide us (free copies available).



Wednesdays
(6 weeks)
Aug. 30—Oct. 4, 2023
7:00 pm—9:00 pm

Book is Required
(2 free books available,
just ask)

Faith Unraveled by Rachel Held Evans

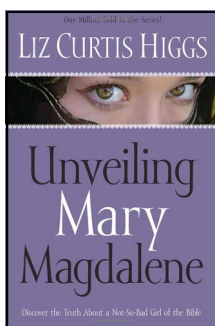


Eighty years after the Scopes Monkey Trial made a spectacle of Christian fundamentalism and brought national attention to her hometown, Rachel Held Evans faced a trial of her own when she began to have doubts about her faith. She realized in order for her faith to survive it must adapt and evolve. Using as an illustration her own spiritual journey from certainty to doubt to faith, Evans challenges us to trust in a God who is big enough to handle our tough questions.

Once a Month
2nd Tuesdays
Sept 2023—May 2024
7:30—9:00 p.m.

Book is Required

Unveiling Mary Magdalene



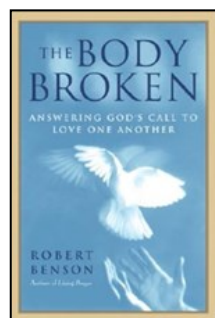
Was Mary Magdalene a prostitute? An adulteress? The wife of Jesus? An ancient goddess? Liz Curtis Higgs combines heartfelt contemporary fiction with extensive biblical research to bring to life the *real* Mary Magdalene of the Bible. Come meet the genuine Mary Magdalene of the Bible. Follow her one-of-a-kind story of deliverance and dedication, despair and declaration through a verse-by-verse study of the first-century Mary Magdalene and her life-changing encounters with the Christ. *Led by Julie Westhofen and Rev. Linda Zastovnik.*

Once a Month
1st Thursdays
Sept. 2023—May 2024
7:30—9:00 pm

Book is Required



The Body Broken by Robert Benson



The Bible refers to the Church as the Body of Christ. Robert Benson writes about the Church and recounts his own journey from Nazarene to Methodist to Episcopalian. He writes of the intolerance and divisiveness that have become an all too familiar part of the Church and a call for a Christian community that embraces a spirit of love and unity even as it honors our differences.

Monday
Nov. 6, 2023
7:00 pm.—9:00 pm

Book is Required.

“Isn’t it true...?” led by Lea Burt

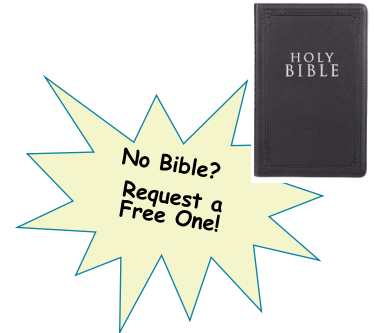


Living as a Christian invites us to share our faith with others – however, for most of us, we are not comfortable doing so. We lack confidence wondering, “What if they ask me something I can’t answer?” Lea Burt will raise some objections to Christianity in order that we will become better prepared to provide faithful answers. **Led by Lea Burt**, hosted by Rev. Linda Zastovnik.

Lea Burt is retired from the air conditioning business where he was a design engineer for 43 years. Now he enjoys traveling with his wife, Robin. When not working on their horse farm, Lea enjoys fly fishing, golf, and road biking. Lea was raised in a Methodist family and has been active in the church all his life.

Once a Month
2nd Tuesdays
Oct. 2023—Apr. 2024

Bring your Bible.



The Communion of Saints



“I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, and the life everlasting.” The communion of saints refers to all who have been baptized – living and dead. On All Saints Day, we will gather online to learn more about what we believe about the communion of saints and to remember and name those we love who have died.

Wednesday
Nov. 1, 2023
7:00—9:00 p.m.

Bring your Bible.
No Preparation.

Shadow & Light: A Journey into Advent



Shadow and Light is a guide for the Advent season to help you contemplate the sacred gift we celebrate in the Christmas season. We will discover fresh insights for new and longtime believers alike. Each day includes Scripture, a reflection, a question, and a simple activity to engage the senses, such as lighting candles, listening to music, and viewing artwork both old and new.

Wednesdays
(4 weeks)
Nov. 29—Dec. 20, 2023
7:30 pm—9:00 pm

Book is Required.

Light in the Longest Night



A casual and comfortable online gathering where readings & prayer will surround the sharing of stories of the Advent/Christmas season. Details will be provided following registration. The first day of winter, we experience fewer hours of daylight than on any other day of the year. The sun is at the lowest point in the sky. Join us as we share the light of Christ during this “longest night.”

Thursday
Dec. 21, 2023
7:00—9:00 pm

No Preparation.

**Click to Register
for Classes**

wakening ministry
Rev. Linda Zastovnik
Teaching Pastor and Consultant

SEPTEMBER 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|---|--|-----|-----|
| 27 6:00-7:30 pm Pilgrimage Prep Footsteps of Paul | 28 | 29 7:00—9:00 pm Wakening Reads Punching Holes | 30 7:00-9:00 pm Praying with Robert Benson | 31 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4  | 5 | 6 7:00-9:00 pm Praying with Robert Benson | 7 7:30-9:00 pm Unveiling Mary Magdalene | 8 | 9 |
| 10  | 11 | 12 7:30-9:00 pm Faith Unraveled | 13 7:00-9:00 pm Praying with Robert Benson | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 7:00-9:00 pm Praying with Robert Benson | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 6:00-7:30 pm Pilgrimage Prep Footsteps of Paul | 25 | 26 | 27 7:00-9:00 pm Praying with Robert Benson | 28 | 29 | 30 |

OCTOBER 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 7:00-9:00 pm Praying with Robert Benson | 5 7:30-9:00 pm Unveiling Mary Magdalene | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 7:30--9:00 pm "Isn't it true...?" with Lea Burt | 10 7:30-9:00 pm Faith Unraveled | Footsteps of Paul Pilgrimage | | | |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| Footsteps of Paul Pilgrimage | | | | | | |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

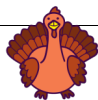
[Click to Register
for Classes](#)

wakening ministry

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NOVEMBER 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|-----|-------------------------------|
| | | | 1 7:00-9:00 pm Communion of Saints | 2 7:30-9:00 pm Unveiling Mary Magdalene | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 7:00—9:00 pm Body Broken | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 Fall Retreat (Montreat) |
| 12 Fall Retreat | 13 7:30--9:00 pm "Isn't it true...?" with Lea Burt | 14 7:30-9:00 pm Faith Unraveled | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23  | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 7:30—9:00 pm Advent Study | 30 | | |

DECEMBER 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|-----|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7:30—9:00 pm Advent Study | 7 7:30-9:00 pm Unveiling Mary Magdalene | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 7:30--9:00 pm "Isn't it true...?" with Lea Burt | 12 7:30-9:00 pm Faith Unraveled | 13 7:30—9:00 pm Advent Study | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 7:30—9:00 pm Advent Study | 21 7:00—9:00 pm Longest Night | 22 | 23 |
| 24  | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

wakening ministry

Rev. Linda Zastovnik
Teaching Pastor and Consultant

Wakening Ministry LLC
8081 Summit Ridge Drive
Catawba, NC 28609

Phone: (704) 770-1858

Email: lindaz@wakeningministry.org



Founded by Rev. Linda Zastovnik, Wakening Ministry LLC exists to make disciples for Jesus Christ through trusting relationships and relevant studies, both in person and online. Created in response to the unique challenges of COVID-19, Pastor Linda has taken this time as an opportunity to connect with Christians and curious minds who are hungry for qualified and engaging studies. She has created online classes that have inspired the vision for this ministry, to reach out to people and make virtual human connections which enhances our spiritual experience. Linda is appointed to Wakening Ministry by the bishop of the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. Wakening Ministry and Pastor Linda receive no funding other than by your donations.

www.wakeningministry.org

**Morning by morning he awakens—wakens my ear.
Isaiah 50:4**

About Wakening Ministry

What We Offer

- Exciting Bible Studies, Book Studies
- Creative Classes and Groups that Foster Spiritual Growth
- Spiritual Direction
- Pastoral Counseling
- Experienced Church Ministry Consultant for All Age Levels
- Qualified Training for Church Leaders
- Specialized Christian Education Classes
- Personalized Holy Land Pilgrimages
- Preaching, Weddings & Funerals

Board of Advisors:

Myrna Caudle
(Chairperson)
Dennis Swanick, CPA
Rev. Ashley Thomas (UMC)
Rev. Dr. John Ryan,
D.EdMin (Presbyterian)
Beverly Caldwell
Frances Hamilton
Donna Lineberger
Kake Nations

All Are Welcome:



Wakening Ministry is called to the ministry of the sacred worth of all people. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God's love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the ministries of Wakening Ministry as we seek to understand and journey towards reconciliation through Christ.

The Financial Details

Wakening Ministry is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. All donations to Wakening Ministry are tax deductible. We are committed to offer all classes free of charge. Your donation to Wakening Ministry enables everyone to receive exceptional Christian education while growing this faith community. Donations are requested but always optional. Our financial records are open if you would like to know more about the financial status of Wakening Ministry.



"Wakening Ministry is Church for me. I've gained a greater understanding of scripture by my participation in Wakening Ministry classes which has strengthened my relationship with God. I support this ministry in hopes that it can shine the light of Christ to many more people."

Ways to Give



PayPal



**ELECTRONIC
FUNDS
TRANSFER
(EFT)**



thank you

**501(c)(3)
Nonprofit
Charitable
Organization**