

MAY 2023

COMMUNITY OF HOPE International



Porter at the Door of the World

**COHI 2023
Conference**

**All Saints Church
Atlanta, GA
October 19-21, 2023**

COHI 2023 CONFERENCE

"Leaning In" Series

1ST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH | MARCH-AUGUST | 12PM US EST ON ZOOM

Jun 3, 2023

Expanding the Definition of Pastoral Care

Jul 1, 2023

Meet the Board of Directors

Aug 5, 2023

Spiritual Gifts

Contact us at (210) 305-8066 or event.registrations@cohinternational.org

Register here: ["Leaning In" Facilitator Exchange Series](#)



COHI Facilitator Training



WHAT

A 2-1/2 day training that provides facilitators with tips and tools plus hands-on experience.

- Basic facilitation skills
- Key points of each COHI training module
- Group exercises for each module
- Approaches for building trust and a sense of community
- Participant workbook plus handouts

WHEN

August 10 - August 12, 2023

Thursday and Friday sessions: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CDT

Saturday session: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. CDT

WHERE

ZOOM - To ensure the best possible experience, individual accounts are recommended for each registrant.

WHO

- First-time COHI Training Facilitators
- Experienced COHI Training Facilitators looking for new ideas
- Inquirers contemplating beginning a COHI ministry

COST

\$350 per person

REGISTER HERE

Registration is open until 7/15/2023! Space is Limited to the First 20 Registrants.

Contact us at (210) 305-8066 or event.registrations@cohinternational.org



Daily Something

THE REV. JOANNA SEIBERT
ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL, LITTLE ROCK

Presence, Not Words

Solomon and Wells: Is Love Stronger?

“Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.”— Song of Solomon 8: 6.



Race for the Cure with a dear friend, telling our friends we love them with our feet.

Samuel Wells is the vicar at St. Martins-in-the-Fields in London and a frequent writer for Christian Century. He recently titled his article “Is Love Stronger” (1 Wells) tells the story of visiting with the husband of a wife who committed suicide whom he did not know, and hearing their story, then delivering the homily at her service, suggesting that all is now well. However, when he visited the husband a week later, he was met with anger about his sermon. All had not been well with the woman, who had a painful wasting disease, and all was not well with her husband. The husband said he told Wells that before the funeral.

Wells said he learned from this experience that when being with people living with tragedy or in the aftermath of a disaster, all he has to offer is his presence beside them. There are no words to improve the situation, and attempts to clean up the situation do not affirm their difficulty. Wells believes his role is “not to make things better for someone. It’s facing the truth with them.” This is what makes love stronger than death. It is a presence, not words.



This is also true when we meet with spiritual friends. Sometimes trying to see God in any difficult situation is often simply listening to our friend’s story and letting them know we are beside them. We are not there to improve things, but to be a loving presence beside them in a great storm. Eventually, we hope to lead them to see God’s presence in them that was present all along. In times of great tragedy, I remember people who just came and sat beside me and cried with me and never said a word.

Often the person who can best do this is someone who has known a similar tragedy. They have walked in our shoes and understand that the presence of the listening heart is a more powerful healer than any words.

These are also people like women running or walking in Race for the Cure, who show their loving presence with their feet instead of their mouths.

This is love stronger than death.

Joanna joannaseibert.com <https://www.joannaseibert.com/>

1 Samuel Wells, “Is love stronger?” Faith Matters, Christian Century, April 25, 2018, p. 35.



COHI Regional Retreat

JENNY SMITH

ST. JAMES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, LITTLE ROCK

St. James had its COHI Regional Retreat Saturday, April 22nd. It was a one-day retreat and was the first time we have gathered since COVID.

We had 35 to attend from four denominations: Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian. The majority was from Little Rock, but one each was from Maumelle, White Hall, and North Little Rock in Arkansas.

The morning began with the video of the History of Community of Hope featuring our founder, Helen Appleberg. It was well received especially by those new to COHI.

Sarah Roberts, COHI President, was our guest speaker, and her presentation featured a discussion of the Circle of Care as the heartbeat of each COHI center.

The Healing Service, Eucharist, and Blessing of the Hands by Rev. Mary Vano made a day filled with the spirit and completed the beautiful gathering. How blessed we were with a day filled with sunshine and love!



From left Sarah Roberts, COHI President; Jenny Smith, St. James Director of Congregational Care; and Willie Bob, COHI board member.





Congratulations on your 20th Anniversary!

BEVERLY DAVIS

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH, HOUSTON

April 22, 2023 marks the 20th anniversary of Houston's Christ the King Lutheran Church. The photo shows their lay chaplains to number at least 35. We wish them many more years of the ministry of presence and listening.



Another New Center Comes Onboard!



New Center: The Sugar
Land Methodist Church

We are pleased to welcome the Sugar Land Methodist Church to our COHI family. Let us know if there is anything we can do for you.





**The newest video password
has been released!
Please check with your
regional rep. for more
information.**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

**Tell us about books & blogs you like, ways of
reaching care-receivers, and training ideas
that work!**

DEADLINE: 6/1/2023

**Email Pam Piedfort at
pam.piedfort@cohinternational.org
to share your story!**
