**The Rivendell Community**

**Application for Postulancy**

**Name:** Mary Lorraine Sherrill Miller, AKA “Lori” **Date:** July 31, 2013

**Contact Information**

**Mailing address:** 385 Whispering Creek DR, Oakland, TN 38060-4692

**Email address:** [eaglesnesttn@gmail.com](mailto:eaglesnesttn@gmail.com)

**Phone(s):** land line home phone (901)465-0768 cell (901)483-2420

**Personal Data**

**Birth** June 6, 1945 Newburyport, MA

**Baptism** March 29, 1953 First Presbyterian Church, Lexington, NE

**Confirmation** April 3, 1958 First Presbyterian Church, Lexington, NE

**Marriage** December 18, 1965 First Presbyterian Church, Lexington, NE

**Ordination(s)**  not ordained

**Family**

**Spouse** Charles Dudley Miller Date of birth: January 24, 1943

**Children** Scott Allen Miller Date of birth: November 26, 1967

Christopher Daniel Miller Date of birth: September 10, 1972

**Previous marriages?** No

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**Church Affiliation**

**Denomination:** The Episcopal Church

**Parish or congregation:** As of this writing I am a member of Church of the Holy Communion (CHC), Memphis, TN. However, since May 2012 I have been worshiping and serving with the street ministry team at St. Mary’s Cathedral, Memphis, TN while continuing to serve as a Care Group Member and Knitting Team member at CHC. It is my intent to transfer my membership to St. Mary’s Cathedral soon, but not severing my ties with CHC.

**Diocese:** West Tennessee

**Brief description of your current ministry (in church and world):**

Care group member (send cards to members and friends of parish who are sick, bereaved, have new baby, in prison, etc., etc.)

Knitting ministry (knit prayer shawls, chemo caps, hats for homeless, prayer bears, baptismal shawls, etc.)

Breakfast for street people weekly: welcome, serve, clean up, do dishes after, etc.

Local food pantry: serve as treasurer; collect, sort, and distribute groceries to families; register clients of which there are over 1,000

**Membership in church groups, organizations, committees, etc., with positions held, if applicable:**

CHC care team member

CHC knitting team member

Assist with ministry to street people on Wednesday mornings @ St. Mary’s Cathedral. I am not an official group/organization member. This ministry falls under the Servant Leadership Team and I plan to take Servant Leadership training this fall.

***For Lay Persons:***

**Licenses and certifications (e.g., Eucharistic Visitor, EFM mentor):**

None nor am I an aspirant, postulant nor candidate for ordination.

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**Background check and training for lay ministers and clergy**

I am neither a lay minister nor clergy.

**Work; Education**

**Profession:** Registered Nurse Certified in Gerontology

**Current employer and position:** Retired

**Previous positions and types of work:** In my nursing career I worked in hospitals, nursing homes, was Staff Developer, Assistant Director of Nursing, and Director of Nursing.

After I retired from nursing, I worked at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA as Staff Associate of the Spirituality Program Office and Life Long Learning Center.

**Other skills, hobbies and interests:** Reading, traveling, gardening, being with family and friends

**Membership in organizations (civic, professional, social, lodges, etc.):**

None

**Education – Degrees held:**

Graduate of Lincoln General Hospital School of Nursing, Lincoln, NE

Professional Registered Nurse, retired

**Certifications and special training:**

None

**Languages spoken:**

English

**Interests and hopes for Community life**

**What appeals to you about participation in a Community? What interests or attracts you to the Rivendell Community?**

In small group settings, I have experienced the support of Christians seeking to be faithful to God. I was first introduced to this in 1971 when I joined a weekly group studying scripture and sharing life together.

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I was a member of a church of over 6,800 members and it was in this intimate group that I felt “church” really come alive. Wherever I have lived since then, I have sought out a group of faithful Christians to share the journey with on a regular basis.

Over the past approximately 15 years I have been a guest in monasteries in Georgia, South Carolina, Missouri and Colorado. Each time I stayed for five to seven days. I yearn for the contemplative life that includes community, worship, study and service to others.

I am interested in seeing if the Rivendell Community will provide nurture to me as well as challenge me to be faithful as we journey on this road of faith together.

**What do you hope to gain through exploring membership/association? Are there particular ways in which you hope this Community may be of support to you in your vocation and your life with God?**

I hope to become an active member of a group of dedicated Christians gathering at least weekly to worship and study scripture together while meeting around a table of food and fellowship. By being closely connected to these persons, I hope to gain encouragement plus spiritual support in what God calls me to do. I want to be challenged to look at new ways God may be working in my life as well as new ways I am being called to serve.

**How do you hope to participate in and contribute to the life and work of the Community?**

I hope to meet weekly, study the scripture lessons so that I can add to the discussions, and be available to help in other ways of which I may not yet be familiar. I hope to share with others my faith in God and any “words of wisdom” I have gained over the years. I have been an active member of a church all my life. As a child our family attended worship faithfully each week and I was involved in many church activities and camps. I continued that path as an adult. I hope I have gleaned something of value to pass on to others. I am a good active listener and I encourage others because I believe in people. I also hope to be able to “be there” for other members of the Community as they may need/desire a friend to walk the road with them, i.e. be a spiritual friend. I am in excellent health.

**Briefly describe your current spiritual practice and aspirations.**

Currently I have an hour long prayer walk to start each day, read and discuss the lectionary readings and devotional books with my spouse daily, attend mass each Sunday and Wednesday. I observe weekly Sabbath. I attend special services throughout the church calendar year, celebrating the Eucharist whenever it is a part of the service. Since June 22, 2013, I have been attending the Emmaus Chapter Saturday evening meetings. I seek to be attentive to God and to respond in faithful service to God.

I yearn to be the face of God to others by truly being present and attentive to those with whom I come in contact. Mary Lorraine “Lori” Miller, page 4

**Have you had any previous experience as a member or postulant of religious orders, Christian Communities, or other intentional communities? If so, how?**

Since 1971 my husband and I have moved several times due to his work. Each place we have lived we have sought out intentional communities of Christian believers. When we “found” one, we joined and were faithful members. If we did not locate one, we started one. We met weekly with these groups, sometimes in churches and sometimes in members’ homes. The last one was a Friends of St. Benedict group in Norfolk, VA.

Although through the years I have searched for a religious order that would work for me, I have never found one where I could be a postulant on the path to membership. Some were of the Catholic faith and only allow Catholics to join. Some only let single persons. Some have age limits. Some are only for men. Therefore I am delighted to learn that The Rivendell Community will not limit me on any of these fronts! I am hopeful we will be a match for each other.

**Have you ever had experience with a spiritual direction relationship? Do you currently have a spiritual director?**

I have attended courses at Columbia Theological Seminary on Spiritual Direction through their Life Long Learning program. I am familiar with the technical aspects of spiritual direction. However, I do not have a formal relationship with a Spiritual Director. For over 34 years I have had a spiritual friend who very much fills that roll for me.

**References**

The Rev. Laura F. Gettys 700 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38105-4512

[lgettys@stmarysmemphis.org](mailto:lgettys@stmarysmemphis.org)

901.527.3361

Kay Lutjemeyer 1103 Jefferson Street, Gothenburg, NE 69138

[kblutj@hotmail.com](mailto:kblutj@hotmail.com)

308.537.5333

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*Expectations of Postulants*: I have read the Overview of Postulancy, and am able and willing to participate in the process of discernment and formation, assuming this application is accepted. I understand that as a Postulant I will be expected to submit a monthly report, to support the work of the Community through prayer and financial contribution, and to attend the Community’s annual General Chapter and annual retreat.

I request admission as a Postulant of the Rivendell Community.

Signature ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return to* Rivendell Motherhouse, 365 E. 372nd Road, Dunnegan, MO 65640

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385 Whispering Creek Drive

Oakland, Tennessee 38060-4692

July 31, 2013

Rivendell Motherhouse

365 East 372nd Road

Dunnegan, Missouri 65640

To Whom it may concern:

It is with JOY and HOPE that I submit my application for Postulancy to The Rivendell Community.

Since moving to the greater Memphis area in June 2007, I have been searching for a community experience to live out my journey of faith. It was only in mid-June of this year that I was introduced to the Emmaus Chapter and began to learn about your community. The more I learned the more I felt I had come to “the Last Homely House.” There I feel “at home” and sense a spiritual pull to connect on a deeper level.

I have answered your questions using my computer rather than on the form designated for use. I hope this is acceptable. If not, I will gladly use the form. Please let me know right away if you need me to do so. I do not want to delay the process for you to consider my application.

Sincerely,

Mary Lorraine Miller, AKA Lori