



# Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication

VOL. XIII, NO. 12, December 2017



## **Favorite Holiday Memories/Traditions**

*Compiled from responses from the  
Center community*

### **From Marilyn Alf**

We always set an extra place at the table in remembrance of those who couldn't or could no longer be with us.

My grandmother would insist that we have juice (coffee for the adults) and a piece of toast before going to the tree and finding our stockings and opening presents. What expectant torment! It was her way of reducing the amount of candy we ate, I think.

My grandmother made plum pudding with a coin baked in it. Whoever got the coin would have good fortune in the coming year. She served.

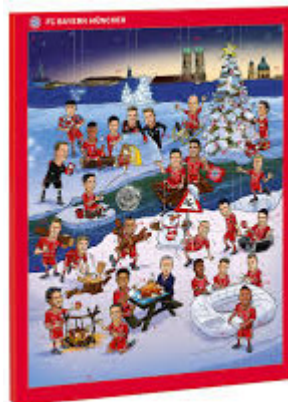
My littlest brother seemed to always get the piece with the coin. My other brother and I suspected favoritism and one year caused a holiday uproar when we took the coin away from John.



### **From Johanna Nader**

A large envelope arrived every November when I was young. Inside was a favorite Christmas tradition: a brand-new Advent Calendar sent from relatives in West Germany. Each one was a beautiful, brightly colored composition of a winter scene or a large house with many windows. All featured 24 little doors which were opened, one on each day from December 1 through the 24<sup>th</sup>. Behind each tiny door was a symbol of the season, like a candle or wreath. I remember what a thrill it was to open one door each morning as it got closer to Christmas.

This was a tradition I had hoped to share with my own children, but at the time, the only Advent Calendars you could get had a chocolate candy behind each door, instead of a picture. Luckily, I was able to save two of my special childhood calendars to share with them.



### **From Tommy Kaminski**

When I was little, my mother always got me an Advent Calendar, because she grew up getting one every year.

### **From Janet Fry**

What to choose from? Of course, I loved Christmas morning (especially breakfast), but I think my favorite tradition was the Christmas eve midnight service. I loved the specialness of the later night, the lit candles, the quiet and reflective tone, and different people, from whom you would not normally hear, doing the readings from the Bible. I really basked in the aura of peaceful meditation.

My favorite memory was when I was a senior in high school, and all my freshman college friends as well as my brother and sister would come home in late December. I was so glad to see everyone and it felt like old times. The weather was snowy and cold, but being out with my friends and having my family together were warm and loving experiences.



## Ministerial Miscellany

By Lauren Tatarsky

Hello Interfaith Family,

The season of light is upon us! Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa, and Happy Yule! As we settle into the winter weather and we begin to adjust to the cold, we are invited to join Mother Earth in this time of deep reflection. I always enjoy the permission winter gives to get quiet, move slowly, and rejuvenate. The shorter days, overcast skies, and brisk air encourage us to find joy in simple things; spending time with loved ones, eating a warm meal, noticing the sunlight peak through the clouds, feeling the warmth of a fire.

In the Netherlands, where it can be dark nearly all day and night in the dead of winter with the exception of an hour or two, there is a concept called *hygge*, which refers to a general sense of coziness and togetherness during the deep winter months. The Danish culture is steeped in the wisdom of *hygge*, which encourages gathering together in community to enjoy warm conversation, warm drinks, and warm environments. This concept portrays the value of this time of year, a season during which we can make time for moments of quiet connectedness as if Earth itself is creating that space for us. I hope you find many moments of *hygge* this winter.

This month at our Celebration Service, we will be honoring the season of light with service topics ranging from Hanukkah and the Season of Light, to The Christians and The Pagans, to our beautiful annual Burning Bowl Ceremony. Make sure to check our calendar! Here are a few more opportunities to gather with us at Interfaith for some community connection this winter.

Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>: Benefit Concert and Raffle, 6:30-10:30pm. Join us for a fun and exciting evening of music and shopping! We have an amazing list of items and services to raffle off (\$2 per raffle ticket), great for gifts for family and friends or just to treat yourself! There will be 10 fabulous bands, all local musicians, playing throughout the night. Tickets are \$20 and are being sold at the door and through our website. Don't miss this fabulous opportunity to support our community!

Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>: 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Visioning Event, 10:15am-2:00pm, Lunch by Donation. Missed our first gathering in November? Fear not, you still have a chance to add your voice to the future of our center! Our first visioning session was a huge success and a fun and powerful event for all. We gathered the community's voices around what we already love about ICSG so as to carry this forward into our future. The next session in January will allow us to begin dreaming into the next phase, so don't miss it!

Looking forward to seeing you all at the center during the beautiful season of light.

With Love,

*Lauren*



*Community  
Member  
of the Month*

# Joyous Jill

By Johanna Nader

This month we honor Jill Crane as our Community Member of the Month. Jill has kept the sound system at the Center going for many Café 704 concerts as well as during services. She works closely with Alaura and with our guest musicians to create the beautiful sounds that fill our space every Sunday.

Additionally, she creates most of the Café 704 flyers for the newsletter and always does a beautiful job!

We are so grateful for Jill's service to the community!

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## Message from the Caring Committee

Each and everyone of you can turn to the Caring Committee when you have a need— and many of you have. We always do our best to help you or lead you in the direction where you can find help that is outside of our committee's ability range. Now it is our turn to ask YOU for assistance. We are a small group and just can't do it all...

Currently, we are seeking some volunteers:

- We need someone to take over the coordination of people who need transportation and people who are willing to provide transportation. We have a system in place and training can be provided. Preferably, you will join the CC and attend our one-a-month meetings (generally 4th Sunday of each month, immediately following the service).
- We need people who are willing to coordinate the annual Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. You do not need to be a member of the CC.
- We are looking for individuals who will assist for a one-time current need of spending some time helping a member of our community with the task of downsizing—meaning organizing items into “keep,” “sell,” “give away,” and “throw away” boxes.

Please contact Marilyn Alf or any member of the CC for details.

Namaste, the Caring Committee

### Thanksgiving Dinner

We had a great turnout at our annual Thanksgiving!  
Thanks you, Jack Richards for providing entertainment to go along with the delicious food!

Mary Ellen and Jack, Debbie and Malcolm, Esther and Norah, Iddgie, Scott Alf, Janis Baird, Bonnie Dede and Rob Fagerlund...hope I've mentioned everyone.

Finally, Marilyn would like to ask people what their holiday wish would be...or if they could send a special silent holiday greeting to someone, to whom would they send it, and what would it say. Contributors could be confidential if they requested it.

### Christmas Dinner

December 25th 1 p.m.

Ham provided by the Caring Committee.

## Traditional Christmas Eve Service with Dave Bell and Cathy DeLauter

December 24 p.m.

Light refreshments follow

Sunday Celebration Services  
are held at 10:45 a.m. at  
704 Airport Blvd.,  
(off S. State Street) near I 94



### MISSION STATEMENT

*Spiritual seekers joining in community to attract others of like mind, creating an atmosphere and structure to foster and stimulate our individual and collective spiritual growth.*

### Mark your calendars!

#### CAFE 704 CONCERT SERIES

##### Saturdays

December: Benefit Concert  
January 13: Madcat Ruth  
February 10: reserved f  
March 10: Harmony Bones  
April 14: Marlena Studer  
May 12: Laz Slomovits  
June 9: Paul Vornhagen & Tumbao  
Bravo  
July 14: OPEN  
August 11: Alaura programming  
September 8: PATH with Scott Mcwinney  
October 13: Benefit Concert  
November 10: Lisa Pappas and Michael Weiss  
December 8: Billy King



PEACE  
GENERATOR  
December 15

The Service begins at 10:45 a.m.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>The speaker/ topic are in bold/italic</i>  <b>R</b> indicates the reader  <b>M</b> indicates the meditator  <b>MU</b> indicates the musician.	Board meeting this month is on December 10	The newslet- ter submis- sion deadline is December 24	Birthdays are indicated in <b>bold/italic</b> <i>Happy Birthday!</i>		1  7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers	2  8:30 a.m. AA 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. workshop with Dave Winfree 4 - 6 p.m. Norma Gentile Candle Light concert <i>Francis Patritis</i>
3  <i>Rev. Lauren: Spirituality as Revolution</i> <b>R: Linda R.</b> <b>M: Dolores R.</b> <b>MU: Algorithm</b> Potluck	4  10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting  <i>Bette Robinson</i>	5  10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group  5:30 p.m. Com- munity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	6  6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	7  Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM  7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	8  7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers	9  8:30 a.m. AA  8 p.m. Café 704  <i>Nancy Biehn</i>
10  <i>Rev. Lauren: The Desire for Con- nection</i> <b>R: Esther R.</b> <b>M: David T.</b> <b>MU: Kevin Gilson</b>	11  10-noon Dynamic Transformation  6:45 p.m. ACIM  7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	12  10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group  5:30 p.m. Com- munity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	13  6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop  <i>Andy Walker</i>	14  Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM  7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	15  7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session   <b>Peace Generator</b> <i>Rob Fagerlund</i>	16  8:30 a.m. AA  8 p.m. Spiritual Cinema
17  <i>Rev. Lauren: Hanukkah and the Season of Light</i> <i>Children's Christ- mas Play</i> <b>R: Maggie B.</b> <b>M: TBA</b> <b>MU: Surprise!</b>	18  10-noon Dynamic Transformation  6:45 p.m. ACIM  7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	19  10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group  5:30 p.m. Com- munity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share <i>Valoree Sprentall</i>	20  6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop  <i>Amy Garber</i>	21  Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM  7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle  <i>Susan King</i>	22  7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers	23  8:30 a.m. AA
24  <i>Rev. Annie: The Christians and The Pagans</i> <i>Christmas Service</i> <b>R: Mary-Alice T.</b> <b>M: Clark T.</b> <b>MU: Surprise!</b> 7 p.m. Candle- light Service	25  10-noon Dynamic Transformation 1 p.m. CC spon- sored Christmas Dinner 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	26  10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group  5:30 p.m. Com- munity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	27  6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	28  Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:30 p.m. Urantia Book Study 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle  <i>Penny Helsine</i>	29  7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers	30  8:30 a.m. AA
31  <i>Burning Bowl Service</i>						



## **November Board Minutes**

**By Tony Nader**

### **Lauren**

She opened by thanking Delyth, Mary Alice & Johanna for their contributions to the Fundraiser and Visioning. Lauren will continue to focus on promoting the Benefit Concert/Fundraiser in our Sunday announcements.

In the interim, she has offered the Webmaster position to Becky. Bob Hopkins has accepted the position of Volunteer Coordinator.

She is considering using Mail Chimp for a year-end solicitation for the Center. This would help compensate for the shortfall in Special Offerings and Rental Income this year.

### **Kevin Gilson**

He reported on the Leadership Meeting. Here is the full copy of his report:

#### **Roaring 20's Program – Mary Alice**

Mary Alice is on track to provide 3 Community Visioning sessions with the first on November 18, "Imagining What Could Be."

#### **Sound Technician Committee – Jill and Scott**

Jill and Scott presented a detailed discussion of the status of the sound equipment. Scott noted that the large center speaker suspended in the Sanctuary ceiling failed and he and Jill procured replacement speakers. These will be mounted on the wall by Rod in the near future (11/26) and cable routing will be established after that for all equipment to simplify troubleshooting. The amplifier will be located in the corner where drums are now stored. Scott tweaked the sound system to improve its performance. He noted that about \$1800 worth of his own equipment is currently at the Center on loan, including the soundboard. Jill will coordinate the creation of a list of all sound equipment owned by the Center and on-loan.

A program to raise funds for ongoing replacements needs to be established. To that end, Scott is planning a fundraiser for the sound system on May 29, 2018. He has several performers lined up. The ongoing sug-

gestion is for each event to be assessed a small amount (e.g., 2%) that will go to the sound system replacement fund.

The time to set-up the sound system for performers has been inadequate. Special Music Sunday performers need to arrive at the Center at 10:00 am, sound system set-up needs to start not later than 10:15 am with the goal of completing the set-up by 10:30 am. An issue is the conflict with the needs of the Choir. Scott and Jill will meet with the Ministerial Team in mid-January to discuss the set-up timeline for Sunday Service performers and Jill will coordinate with Dawn.

Jill noted that she is requesting to be replaced as Sound Committee Chair by April 2018 for Café 704 support.

#### **Café 704 – Al**

The December Café will be a fundraiser for the Center. Alaura is recruiting musicians for the event. Donations for fundraising are completed and a brochure describes the offerings. Tickets are available. Regarding raffle winners, the Board will be approached to determine the policy regarding eligibility of people to win a prize.

#### **Artisan 704 – Annie**

Additional artisans continue to be recruited for the Artisan 704 Sunday to be held on December 17 following the Service.

#### **Greeters Committee – Randall**

There continues to be too many times that commitments have not been met. A new schedule was created and continues to be evaluated. Greeter replacements for no-shows are done on an as needed basis at the Center.

#### **Welcome Committee – Bob**

Similar problems with commitments are showing up. Replacements are recruited on Sundays from members present.

#### **Volunteer Coordinator**

Kevin resent the job descriptions to the current Leadership Team membership. Due to pressing discussions, the topic was discussed and copies of the position description were distributed for discussion. Noted were 3 different

needs: standing committees (pot luck, etc.), operating committees (caring committee), and special committees (fundraising events). This will be further discussed at the December meeting.

#### **Other Business - Delyth**

The Kickshaw Theater contract continues in progress.

There will be a benefit concert at Café 704 on December 9. A team is seeking items for the raffle with the kickoff at the October 29<sup>th</sup> QCC. It will be a 3-hour event from 7 to 10 pm. Discussion regarding the way to qualify people who are eligible to win raffle prizes was briefly discussed and will be taken off-line by Mary Alice. The Halloween Party was a success. The SWOT exercise, started at the November Leadership Team meeting, was displayed but not addressed. Kevin will send out a copy for consideration and discussion at the December meeting.

#### **Mary Alice**

She reported that the Visioning workshop went well. We had 14 people in attendance. People want the process reported - we'll type up the flip charts. She has resources for the next meeting, which is on January 20, 2018 for "Dreaming".

#### **Delyth**

We have targeted \$3k to be raised at our Fundraiser. She had a suggestion: Have a board member speak at services about our Sunday collection and what it supports (to help raise awareness and promote for contributions). Another suggestions was to have uplifting music played at collection time.

A \$250 gift basket was donated for our raffle. All pre-sold concert tickets will be eligible to win in a drawing. There was one motion made by Lindsey, 2nd - Marlana, the board unanimously approved to contribute to the Interfaith Roundtable of Washtenaw County

Our next board meeting is December 17, 2017.

## SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW SQUIRRELS?

By Peggy Lubahn

National Squirrel Appreciation Day is  
January 21

Squirrels. They're everywhere. There's so many of them you kind of block them out after a while. Then one day you're driving along minding your own business, and suddenly one of the furry felons sprints across the road right in front of your car. It's almost like he was actually WAITING for YOUR car so he could give you a heart attack as you desperately try to avoid squashing him without causing an accident! What was that little maniac THINKING, anyway?

Prepare to be amazed.

My apartment is in prime squirrel habitat on the eastern edge of Ford Lake. Occasionally we see Red and Gray Squirrels; but big, flashy Fox Squirrels are in charge. Some of them have decided I'm friendly and harmless; but they're still wary of other humans, which is a Good Thing. Their relationships with dogs are, of course, the stuff of legend. Everyone within a mile knows when my neighbors bring their Shih Tzu outside. A couple of the squirrels perch on a tree outside his door and dare Sparty to try and catch them. I honestly believe that he adores these trash talk tournaments, and that all his blustering braggadocio and slobbering rage are part of his personal fitness program!

### Nothing Beats NUTS For Fine Dining

We have lots of black walnut trees where I live, and squirrels LOVE the nuts. Unfortunately, walnuts are encased in a tough green husk when they fall from the tree and gnawing through the husk and then the shell to get to the nut meat takes up valuable time and energy. So the squirrels bury the walnuts in the loose soil of my flower bed, then dig them up months later. By that time, the pesky husk has rotted away.

Squirrel-ologists at UC Berkeley offered fox squirrels several very different kinds of nuts. The squirrels toted the nuts home and went through them with all the concentration of a trick-or-treater organizing his candy loot. They separated the almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts and peanuts with the piles organized according to size, quality and (presumably) how well they liked each kind. Finally, the nuts were transferred to several nests which featured different storage conditions. Splitting up the food stashes helps make sure that even if some of the nuts are stolen, there will still be plenty left; and the process of organizing helps the squirrels recall exactly what they've got where.

### Home Sweet Home

Tree cavity dens are choice real estate in the squirrel

world, but you're more likely to spot leaf nests (dreys) in trees this time of year -- yesterday I counted eleven just at one corner of our property. Each squirrel builds several dreys in his or her territory, and uses them to get out of the rain, to hide before a hawk spots them, to stash some snacks, and for naps. Designs range from simple platforms to sophisticated "condos" so well-built they can last for years. Gnomes, who are great travelers, often spend the night in a cozy squirrel nest. They'll repay their host with fresh gossip and special treats they've picked up along the way or perhaps an herbal remedy for an ailing baby or arthritic elder.

### Bird Feeders: Lumosity for Squirrels

"Squirrel proof" bird feeders are popular with those who wish to feed only birds, and who are not amused by a squirrel's ability to outthink fancy feeder designs. Fortunately, this blatant anti-squirrellism is balanced by an equally vast array of feeders that offer squirrels nourishing food via inventive contraptions which both diners and their hosts enjoy. For a hilarious exploration of squirrel brainpower, check out "Super Squirrel" on NatGeoWild.

### An Attitude Wrapped in Fur

Amelia Kinkade, an animal communicator, recalls the first time she talked with a squirrel as she walked through a park on her way to an appointment.

*"Hey lady, got any nuts?"*

*"Sorry, no."*

*"Why not?"*

*"I just don't."*

*"Why don't you go GET some?"*

The squirrel showed Amelia a quick vision of his concept of a human grocery store, except the store was full of delicious nuts.

*"You know about grocery stores?"*

*"Of course! Why don't you go get me some nuts? I'll wait right here."*

*"I can't. I have something to do."*

*"Hurry and finish, then go get my nuts. I'll wait right here."*

*"But I won't be able to come back for an hour!"*

*"I can't wait all day, you know!"*

And as the disgusted squirrel watched her leave, she distinctly heard him add: *"Idiot!"*

### The Rest of the Story

Whether we consider squirrels to be charming neighbors or potential sources of food and fur, they have a unique ability to captivate and inspire humans. By simply going through their daily lives, they remind us of the importance of balancing work and play, rest and activity to save for the future while living in the moment; and that the world offers so much more than the structures of our daily routines.



Image from [peaceseeds](http://peaceseeds)

### Caring Committee Contact List

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Sue Booker

### CONTRIBUTORS WANTED!

We would love to have your input in the newsletter: spiritual moments, movie/book reviews, exciting announcements, poems, etc.

We try to have the newsletter ready for final editing by the third Sunday of each month. Please send contributions to Heide at [mommyk@tc3net.com](mailto:mommyk@tc3net.com) with "Interfaith submission" in the subject line. If you do not mention Interfaith, your email might get kicked right into the recycle bin by my spam filter.

If you cannot email your contribution, you may give

it to Heide on Sunday.

To receive the online newsletter, go to <http://lists.interfaithspirit.org/listinfo.cgi/interfaithinspirer-interfaithinspirer.org> to subscribe.

Want to hear from us throughout the week? Receive or send email through

Interfaith Yahoo by going to

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/InterfaithSpirit/>

Namaste from your newsletter team: Heide, Esther, and Lindsay.

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Tony Nader, secretary

Marlena Studer, member

Lindsay Passmore, member

Ray Fix, member

Steve Orlowski, member

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Annie Kopko, Associate Minister

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Dawn Swartz, Choir Director

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Here is a beautiful 2018 Interfaith Calendar for yourself or for you to use as a holiday gift. We have had these for sale for the last few years, and here they are again. Beautifully made, with references to hundreds of sacred holidays, they can serve as a good reminder of what other faith traditions are celebrating throughout the year. You can order them by contacting us at [gbrides@umich.edu](mailto:gbrides@umich.edu). \$15 each. ONLY SEVEN LEFT!!!

# Cafe 704

**Benefit Concert & Raffle**  
for the  
**Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth**

**A Star Studded Evening of Music  
Poetry and Light.**

**Saturday, December 9, 2017**

**6:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.**

**Featuring**

**Algorithm  
Don Allen  
Craig Brann  
Jennifer Burd  
Laurel Emrys**

**Curtis Glatter  
Jill Halpern  
Alaura Massaro  
Laz Slemovits  
Marlena Studer**

**AND other  
SURPRISE GUESTS**

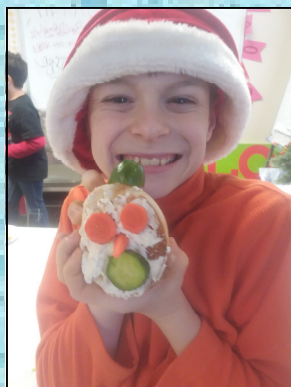
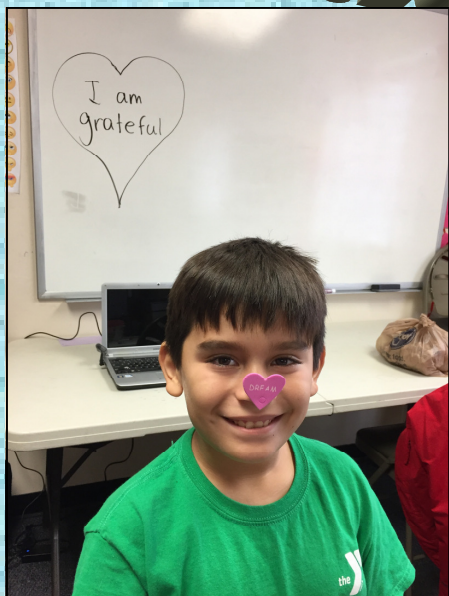
**TICKETS are \$20.00 each**  
online at [www.interfaithspirit.org](http://www.interfaithspirit.org)  
in advance at Sunday Service or at the door

**704 Airport Blvd. Suite 1, Ann Arbor, MI 48108**





# Youthful Spirits



*Love, Light, and Laughter  
Heide, Kellie, Tommy, Dawn, and the Youthful Spirits*

## *The Caring Committee*



*Marilyn,  
Chair*



*Heide and Kellie,  
Vice Co-chairs*



*Tommy, record  
keeper*



*Khristian*



*Annie*



*Delyth,  
Liaison*



*Idgie*



*Judy*



*Jan*



*Jack*

*If you have a service to  
offer, please contact  
Marilyn*



## Interfaith Caring Committee Survey

We are looking for your participation and support of fellow Interfaith members in crisis in any way that is appropriate for you. If you are called on by a caring committee member to support a particular need, you always have the opportunity to decline if it doesn't work for you at that time. Please fill out this survey as completely as you are able. All gifts, skills, and talents are appreciated. Thank you for taking the time!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Part of town you live or work in: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Best way to contact you: \_\_\_\_\_ Best times to contact you: \_\_\_\_\_

Check all areas that you are willing to participate in and specify any limitations...

\_\_\_ Driver (Interfaith/appointments) \_\_\_ Craft Teaching (type) \_\_\_ Counseling (type)

\_\_\_ Medical Equipment loan (type) \_\_\_ Meal Prep \_\_\_ Consulting (type)

\_\_\_ Child Care \_\_\_ Errands \_\_\_ Cleaning \_\_\_ Yardwork \_\_\_ Snow Shoveling

\_\_\_ Healing/energy work \_\_\_ Household Donations \_\_\_ Clothing Donations

\_\_\_ Caregiver Break \_\_\_ Send Cards \_\_\_ Computer Help \_\_\_ Healing Music

\_\_\_ Fun Companionship \_\_\_ Pet Care \_\_\_ Massage \_\_\_ Money Donation

\_\_\_ Listening \_\_\_ Prayers \_\_\_ Respite Care \_\_\_ Join Caring Committee

Other \_\_\_\_\_

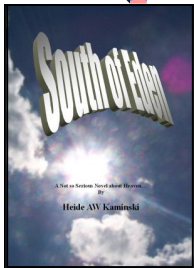
Limitations and additional information:

I currently have need of (be specific):





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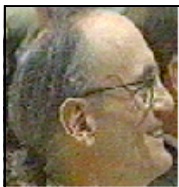


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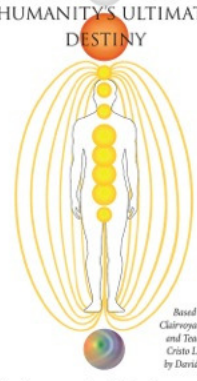
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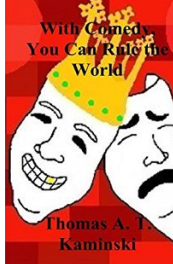
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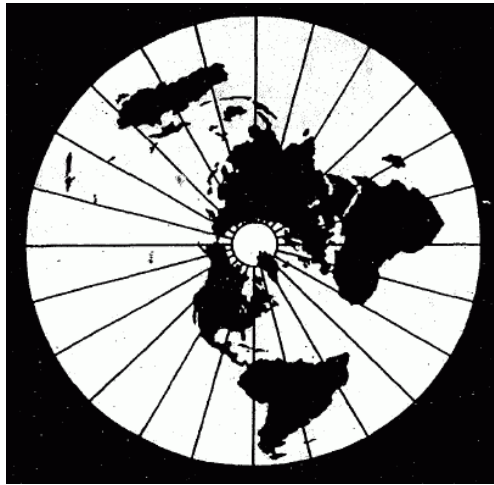
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