



# Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication

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## Dear ICSG Family

*From Patti Dallas*

When Sue Booker first called me to see if I might make a video about Dave's retirement and Lauren's "hirement," I had never heard of the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth. I arranged to come to the next Sunday service and meet with Sue. Right away I felt comfortable and enjoyed meeting some of the folks there.

This has been quite a journey, experiencing this truly unique place and this warm and inviting family. In my work I always aim to give voice to my subjects, allowing them to amplify who and what they are about. I hope this video accomplishes that.

In addition to this project, getting to know the community has become an important part of my time in Ann Arbor. There is a feeling of connection, with everyone doing their part to make it all come together. The richness, authenticity and creative spirit is truly refreshing!

As I complete my work at the Center and begin a new grandmotherly chapter in Ohio, I look forward to sharing the fruits of my labor with you all. I am so glad that Sue had the vision of capturing this moment in time and highlighting the qualities of this unique spiritual experience.

I wish you all the Best!

Love,  
Patti

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## VIDEO PROJECT

In honor of Dave Bell's retirement, the creation of a video by Patti Dallas, a new resident of Ann Arbor, is completed which includes interviews with Dave and our new senior minister, Lauren Tatarsky. There are also clips from past services, comments from community members, and music.

After seeing a presentation of Patti's video work, Sue Booker asked her if she would consider producing a video about Dave and the center. After attending a couple of Sunday services, Patti became interested herself in the Center, and liked the idea of creating the video. Patti and Delyth met to discuss what might be included in the project, and how to cover the cost of production. They decided the DVD's

would be made available for sale, with part of the sales used to compensate Patti, and a portion going toward the ICSG Building Fund. This was approved by the Board of Trustees at the Board Meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

After being the coordinator of the public access station in Yellow Springs, Ohio for several years, Patti began producing videos on her own. Her focus has been community and family historical portraits, a few samples of which can be viewed on her website,

[www.pattidallas.com](http://www.pattidallas.com). Earlier in her career, she and another singer produced several audio recordings and a video for young children under their own label, Golden Glow Music [goldenglowmusic.com](http://goldenglowmusic.com). They are proud recipients of the Parents' Choice Award. Patti will be making her recordings available for sale to the ICSG community.

Note from Delyth: We are truly blessed to have Patti show up in our midst and offer her videography talent to us for this project. Patti is willing to accept whatever funds are collected through the sale of her music recordings and the sale of the DVD's as remuneration for her work. I thoroughly enjoyed viewing

**DVDs are now available for ordering!**

## Ministerial Miscellany

By Lauren Tatarsky

Hello Interfaith Family,

Believe it or not, fall is nearly upon us and this month, September, is considered a holy time in many faith traditions. It marks a season that is widely recognized as a sacred passage; a time of harvesting what has been sown, enjoying the bounty of our work, and beginning to slow down. It has been quite a summer, filled with beauty and joy, as well as chaos and pain. We have faced loss, grief, and turmoil in our own lives and in the world, and we have called on our spiritual practice as we navigated these rough waters.

So let's take this moment to welcome in Fall's invitation to reflect, to take inventory, and to reconnect. Be with your soul as you explore and acknowledge the transformation that has taken place within you and around you during the summer season. Notice the subtleties, the messages that lie beneath the surface, the deeper knowings and understandings that come clear to us in quiet moments of connection. Take stock of your harvest and notice the bounty of your life. This is a rich time, a sacred season. Allow it to be a vessel for you to dive inward.

Here is a blessing for our community during this time; Beannacht by John O'Donohue.

On the day when the weight deadens on your shoulders and you stumble, may the clay dance to balance you. And when your eyes freeze behind the grey window and the ghost of loss gets into you, may a flock of colors, indigo, red, green and azure blue, come to awaken in you a meadow of delight. When the canvas frays in the currach of thought and a stain of ocean blackens beneath you, may there come across the waters a path of yellow moonlight to bring you safely home. May the nourishment of the earth be yours, may the clarity of light be yours, may the fluency of the ocean be yours, may the protection of the ancestors be yours. And so may a slow wind work these words of love around you, an invisible cloak to mind your life.

Finally, I want to take a moment to make you all aware that we will have a number of exciting one-time offerings in October, including a women's workshop, a Kabbalah course, and a dance workshop (led by yours truly). Make sure to visit our website for details and mark your calendars! See you there!

*With Love,  
Lauren*



*Community  
Member  
of the Month*

**Noble Norah**

By Johann Nader

This month we honor Norah Reilly for the beautiful book she created for Dave Bell's retirement. Norah is a talented and creative photographer. She began her interest in photography while on an exchange trip to the Loire region of France when she graduated high school. Norah remembers using a disc camera (how many of us remember that camera?) and taking many, many pictures. She was inspired by this amazingly beautiful area and by the photographs she took.

Norah describes her current passion for macro photography of wild flowers. She takes extreme close-ups of them, going into the center where you can see the important parts of the flower; stamen, pistils and smaller insect organisms that most of us miss when observing a flower. Norah calls them "little miracles that are happening all around us."

Norah uses and recommends Photoshop Elements to translate her photos into what she feels when she takes the picture. But she says her favorite photos are the ones that are the least processed. Norah has taken some photography classes, but found them limiting to her creativity. She says she learns the most when she just takes her camera and shoots a ton of pictures.

Norah was born in Inkster and has lived in Detroit, Novi and the "white-burbs" before moving to Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti in 2001. She was baptized and raised a Catholic. As a young child, around age 8, Norah says she began to see a disconnect between what she was told to believe and those that were teaching it. She later realized that God, the Universe could be found within oneself; that an outside "authority" was not necessary in order to find one's spiritual path. Norah is grateful for Interfaith and feels we are her true family.

Norah wants us to know that she is ALWAYS willing to help in any way necessary, each and every one of use. She seems to have an intuitive sense for folks in need.

We are blessed, indeed, to have Norah at the Center!

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### Notable Quotes

**Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words. Keep your words positive because your words become your behavior. Keep your behavior positive because your behavior becomes your habits. Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values. Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny.**

**~ Mahatma Gandhi**



### Peace Vigil

*Photos submitted by Sally Searls*

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**

**September: Path**

\*\*\*\*\*

**PEACE  
GENERATOR  
SEPTEMBER**



The Service  
begins at  
10:45 a.m.

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

*The speaker/ topic  
are in bold/italic*

**R** indicates the  
reader

**M** indicates the  
meditator

**MU** indicates the  
musician.

The newsletter  
submission  
deadline is  
September 17

Board  
meeting this  
month is on  
September 10

Birthdays are  
indicated in  
***bold/italic***  
***Happy  
Birthday!***

**1**

**7-9 p.m.** Healing  
Energy Session with  
Gregory Weathers

**2**

**8:30 a.m.** AA  
**7:30 p.m.** Drum  
and Dance Jam

**3**

**Rev. Lauren: The  
Wisdom of a Bro-  
ken Heart**  
**R:** Mary Alice T.  
**M:** Craig H.  
**MU:** Path  
Potluck

**4**

**10-noon** Dynamic  
Transformation  
**6:45 p.m.** ACIM  
**7 p.m.** Great Bal-  
anced View Video  
Meeting

**5**

**10:30 a.m.** The  
Power of Now Discus-  
sion Group  
**5:30 p.m.** Commu-  
nity Gathering/  
Potluck and Reiki  
Share  
  
*Connie Snow*

**6**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
Creative Writing  
Workshop  
  
*Amy Advey*

**7**

**Noon—1:30 p.m.**  
ACIM  
**6:30—8:30 p.m.**  
Science of Mind  
**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  
  
*Michael O'Shea*  
*Nicholas DePaul*

**10**

**Gathering of the  
Waters Ceremony**  
**R:** Janet Fry  
**M:** Violet E.  
**MU:** Water Cere-  
mony

**11**

**10-noon** Dynamic  
Transformation  
**6:45 p.m.** ACIM  
**7 p.m.** Great Bal-  
anced View Video  
Meeting  
  
*Laurel Beyer*

**12**

**10:30 a.m.** The  
Power of Now Discus-  
sion Group  
**5:30 p.m.** Commu-  
nity Gathering/  
Potluck and Reiki  
Share

**13**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
Creative Writing  
Workshop

**14**

**Noon—1:30 p.m.**  
ACIM  
**7:15-8:30 p.m.**  
Speaking Circle

**15**

**7-9 p.m.** Healing  
Energy Session with  
Gregory Weathers  
**7-9 p.m.**  
**Peace Generator**



**16**

**8:30 a.m.** AA  
**8 p.m.** Spiritual  
Cinema

**17**

**Rev. Lauren: Re-  
claiming the  
Power Within**  
**R:** Joy P.  
**M:** Bonnie D.  
**MU:** Fusionix

**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 Discus-  
sion Group  
**5:30 p.m.** Commu-  
nity Gathering/  
Potluck and Reiki  
Share

**20**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
Creative Writing  
Workshop

**21**

**Noon—1:30 p.m.**  
ACIM  
**6:30—8:30 p.m.**  
Science of Mind  
**7:15-8:30 p.m.**  
Speaking Circle  
  
*Sue Booker*

**22**

**7-9 p.m.** Healing  
Energy Session with  
Gregory Weathers

**23**

**8:30 a.m.** AA  
  
*Mary Seibert*

**24**

**Rev. Lau-  
ren: Times of  
Transformation**  
**R:** Johanna N.  
**M:**  
**MU:** All of Us

**25**

**10-noon** Dynamic  
Transformation  
**6:45 p.m.** ACIM  
**7 p.m.** Great Bal-  
anced View Video  
Meeting

**26**

**10:30 a.m.** The  
Power of Now Discus-  
sion Group  
**5:30 p.m.** Commu-  
nity 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

**29**

**7-9 p.m.** Healing  
Energy Session with  
Gregory Weathers

**30**

**8:30 a.m.** AA



## DANCING STARS OF SUMMER

*By Peggy Lubahn*

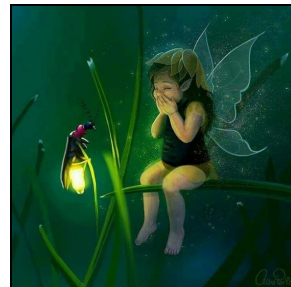
Fireflies are one of the few insects that most humans actually LIKE! We look forward to their appearance during the warm months, and allow ourselves to be transported back to childhood as we savor soft summer nights illuminated with tiny dancing stars. The real stars are far away, but we can hold a firefly in our hand and admire its perfection nose to nose, before it flutters away to continue its romantic quest.

"Fireflies are associated with inspiration, the light at the end of the tunnel, attraction, guidance, friendship, grace and kindness." As I was writing that line, I heard crinkling laughter and a really big firefly popped up in front of me. He was delighted to hear his people described with so much affection and positive imagery!

Oscar went on to tell me that all firefly species are intentional carriers and messengers of Light/light; they

live in joy like the fairies, and with each bright flash they broadcast that joy on all levels. It's no coincidence that fireflies and fairies have always enjoyed a friendly partnership. Fireflies provide decorative lighting for fairy weddings and other celebrations; and fairy children love to ride them into the night sky. In return, fairies help fireflies keep their tail lights in good repair, and make sure their protective wing covers are brightly polished.

Fairies and fireflies also share a mission that they believe in deeply: helping busy humans remember to appreciate the little things that mean so much. Once you let their joyful energy into your heart, forever after you can call on them to lift your spirits and help you find something to smile about!



## Board Highlights for August, 2017

by Mary Alice Truitt, Vice-Chair

**Save The Date:** Community Visioning and CoCreation Conversation: November 18th 10a-2pm

Open House and Welcoming Potluck: September 11<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm; opportunity to meet our new members

September Board Meeting: September 17th 1pm-3pm; open to all members

**Lauren:** Working on launching a workshop on Teen Meditation; discussing collaboration with the Democratic Party Black Caucus for a "Uncomfortable Conversations" workshop; creating a Women's Group/Circle, many people have expressed interest; organizing a vigil (8/27 4p-5p) at Skate Park as an Interfaith response to the racist graffiti discovered there.

**Mary Alice:** The Co-Creation Team is on the second step in developing interview guides for the Community Visioning and CoCreation Conversation scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> at 10am. We will be encouraging all members to participate in cocreating the next five, ten, and twenty years at ICSG.

**Delyth:** Finances: July was an excellent month. We exceeded our monthly goal by \$3k due to a very good yard sale. Café 704 is doing well.

The Kickshaw theatre group (performed at ICSG in early 2016) contacted us about renting space this winter.

She was approached by a few ICSG members about circulating a Gerrymandering Petition at the Center. After much discussion about the bias of our congregation and the apolitical nature of ICSG. Mary Alice made a motion that no petitions be allowed in the Center. Tony seconded and the Board affirmed with no dissent. We ask that members be respectful of the role of ICSG to be a spiritual haven for all, even those with different political opinions than our individual selves.

On September 11<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm we will host an open house welcoming new members to the center. Plans are to hold this every other month

**Future:** Next year is the Center's 20th anniversary. We need to start planning for this now; there are many opportunities to highlight our 20th anniversary throughout the year.

Sally is working on a party with the theme is Roaring Twenties.

The Kickshaw theater group will most likely be partnering with us in January of 2018.

**Johanna:** We reviewed the findings of She conducted a survey of our membership with 9 questions using the online website Survey Monkey. The responses confirm that we are headed in the right direction with the new changes to our service; more details of what inspired this survey will be in the QCC Highlights. The board discussed the value of this information for the ministerial team during this year of transition.

## QCC Highlights July 30th

by Mary Alice Truitt

Quarterly Community Conversation is an opportunity for the congregation to discuss and give feedback to the board and the ministerial team. We had lively discussions and ended early. Agenda items are bolded:

### **Length of Service Readings and Meditations**

Craig requested that volunteers be reminded of the time limit for R&M: 3-5 minutes. Because he is recording, editing, and uploading components of our services to YouTube, a consistent time length will be helpful. His suggestion was to practice prior to make sure it will be within the time limit.

Feedback: volunteers need to be more sternly reminded of the time limit; quality over quantity; maybe they could be longer by alternating readings on one sunday, meditations the next.

### **Length of Namaste as component of Sunday service**

This conversation naturally followed the topic of the time limit for readings and meditations. It was suggested that it be lengthened because our congregation is growing and its difficult to get around the chairs. In response it was suggested that namaste be encouraged as silent with socializing out in the hall after service.

At this point it was decided that a survey was needed to capture the range of opinions about the service structure and its recent changes.

### **Update on Community Visioning**

Mary Alice provided an update from the CoCreation Team. The CoCreation team are working on a plan for capturing the community's vision of the center over the next five, ten, twenty years. We are em-

phasizing the spiritual priorities of the center in order to guide the leadership during the organization's growth. There will be two community conversations, one in November and another in January. The CoCreation team is using the Appreciative Inquiry Approach to organizational planning; this is noted because it is different than strategic planning initiatives used by many nonprofit organizations. Strategic Planning focuses on what's wrong and how to fix it. Appreciative Inquiry includes everyone in dialogue to identify what it is that we love about the organization and what we dream for its future. The topic of these community visioning conversations: CoCreating A Haven for Spiritual Growth and Rejuvenation.

### **Update from Caring Committee**

A request was made for helping Connie with plumbing. The Caring Committee has been discussing how to limit negative gossip by offering a talking circle in addition to referrals.

### **20th Anniversary**

Lindsey wanted to highlight that next year is ICSG's 20th Anniversary. She encouraged the organization to utilize this moment in our history to build relationships with communities outside of the organization. She suggested themed marketing and an Event. Sally accepted the challenge to plan the event with a team.

### **Update on Finances**

\$5k behind budget; expect yard sale to make a difference but not cover the projected short-fall; this year we've brought in \$8k for the Building Fund, bringing the total to \$15k; A discussion followed about Sunday offerings being crucial to our everyday functions, and perhaps we to improve our online giving. There will be an effort to clarify the different types of PayPal accounts; it was suggested to look into promoting Network for Good to receive online donations.

**Updates from Lauren** her door is open; the changes in service structure are in pursuit of ending on time; Thank you for your passion

Main Take-aways: Lauren's door is open; Community Visioning and CoCreation discussions will be occurring; a survey will be conducted by Johanna with Survey Monkey to better capture the congregation's opinions about the structure and timing of the Sunday service.



## Survey Answers

### By Johanna Nader

Question 1: Overall, which parts of the survey do you most enjoy: Majority of respondents enjoyed the Message and Special Music the most; followed by Spiritual Reading, Namaste greeting, and Guided Meditation.

Question 2: The service currently lasts 1.5 hours. 2/3 of respondents answered that this was just the right length, while 1/3 said it was too long.

Question 3: Spiritual Readings are typically 2-4 minutes long. A majority of respondents responded that this was a good length (88%). Folks that commented, however, that this time limit was rarely adhered to and felt that it should be.

Question 4: Should Spiritual Readings be related to the Message topic? A majority of respondents, 70%, said “not necessarily.”

Question 5: Guided Meditations are typically 2-4 minutes long. 80% of respondents said this time was “just right,” as long as the time limit is adhered to.

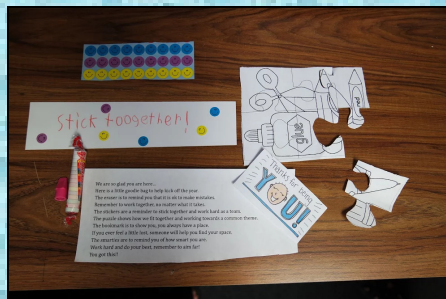
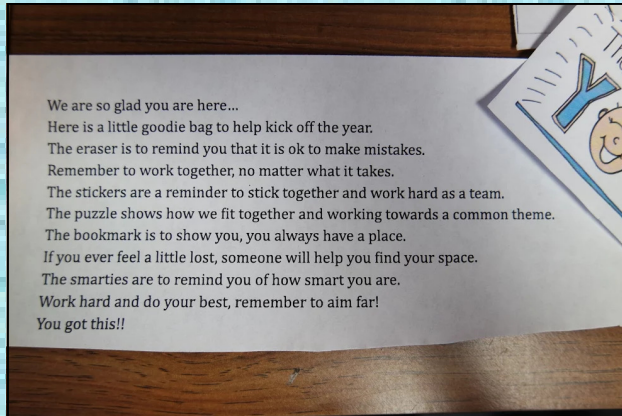
Question 6: How do you feel about Announcement time limit of 30 seconds? A majority (85%) felt this was just right. Some respondents suggested that longer announcements and details be put into written form on the website, through email or posted on the community room bulletin board.

Question 7: Asked whether the time allotted to the Namaste greeting was “Too Long, Too Short or Just Right”. The results were not clear cut. 56% thought the time was “just right,” while 36% thought the time was “too long.” A minority (12%) considered this time to be “too short.”

Question 8: Regarding whether Namaste greeting should be silent or quietly social, 66% (2/3) voted for quietly social, while 37% voted for the time to be silent. However, many respondents thought that silent Namaste greeting should occur once per month on First Sunday.

Question 9: Should the entire service be live-streamed on our website? Results were not as clear cut: 45% said “Not sure”, 32% said “No”, and 23% said “Yes.” Most folks seemed to be concerned about privacy during open mic time.

# Youthful Spirits



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







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

### 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/interfaithinspiner-interfaithinspiner.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.

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## **Reaching Across Differences: Conversations that Matter in Today's World**

Some have asked, “How do I talk with people who see life from such a different points of view?” Others have said, “I just want to be a better listener.” And still others wonder, “Are there better ways to connect with those who don’t think like me, look like me or practice like me?”

A current crisis in our society is our ongoing struggle to truly hear each other and to help each other discern what sits at the heart of our beliefs, our fears and our desires for a wholesome life. What are some deep listening and inquiry practices that can bring us closer together rather than further apart?

The IRT invites you to come explore and practice conversations that will expand our ability to listen more deeply and discover what truly matters at the core of any conversation. How can we reflect each other’s sacredness in ways that can help each of us see our true beauty and each other’s heart’s desire to thrive and live a blessed life?

Four October evenings (7-9 pm): 3 Tuesdays (3,10,17) & 1 Thursday (26)

Themes: four core attributes (trust, hope, love and clarity/light)

Approach: self-examination, small and large group discussion

Location: Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W. Liberty, Ann Arbor

Facilitator: Rev. Susan King, IRT Co-Director

Cost: \$40 (includes all materials)

Reserve a place by registering via email at [gbrides@umich.edu](mailto:gbrides@umich.edu)