

# Interfaith Inspirer

# **An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication**

VOL. XIV, NO. 01, January 2018





New beginnings Jan 2018

By Annie Kopko

This is the time of year for contemplating changes in our lives and making resolutions to ensure those changes. Even the most enlightened among us make some resolve to do better and be a better person, to eat better and take care of ourselves better.

Energies rise in us, excitement and hope as well as fear. When we set goals and do not achieve them, we tend to be depressed.

Consequently, I usually set goals that I cannot help but achieve.

My affirmations look something like this: I love my life. I love watching everything get better and better, easier and more fulfilling.

When I am in touch with the center of my being, when I am feeding my soul, everything looks better, everything is better. I am in touch with my infinite creativity and opportunity for expression.

It is not really helpful to allow ourselves to be overwhelmed with resolutions for a new life. It is not helpful to set goals so high we simply give up.

Maybe we could start with a desire for simply an experience of happiness, and to let go of our fears. To begin, the challenge is to be happy exactly where we are and with exactly what we have created.

It starts inside.,,,,.÷, remembering who we really are. It starts with being happy with who we are, who we appear to be, and what we have done and are doing in our lives and what we love

It is easy to be swept away in the

energies surrounding us in the moment and in our world. The world seems to pull at us, and it takes a fair amount of inner resolve to keep to our spiritual truth and not be so concerned about what goes on outside of us that it makes us sick.

My body is changing and aging, who I am does not age, and who I am cannot feel age and cannot be a victim of aging. I love this quote from A Course in Miracles goes: "I am not a victim of the world I see."

At the same time, we wonder: How can I get so obsessed with daily life and habits, that I forget who I am? When life feels good we rarely think of who we really are. But the awareness of goodness is intimately connected to the feelings of wellness. Without awareness of the spiritual self we couldn't feel this well being that makes us happy.

In this new year: Be willing to make mistakes and turn them into new opportunities.

"I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes.

Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before.

So that's my wish for you, and all of us, and my wish for myself. Make New Mistakes. Make glorious, amazing mistakes. Make mistakes nobody's ever made before. Don't worry that it isn't good enough, or it isn't perfect, whatever it is: art, or love, or work or family or life.

Whatever it is you're scared of doing, Do it.
Make your mistakes, next year

Make your mistakes, next year and forever."

— Neil Gaiman

Clearly we have to be willing to hold hope for a glorious future as well as let go of the past.

It is clear that we have a choice as to how we let go.

I downloaded an eBook about getting started creatively for the new year. It encouraged me to let go of 27 things a day for 9 days (who knows why 27 and why 9 days). Needless to say I am not doing very well following those instructions. But I am doing something. I am getting rid of some stuff I am not using. I am setting up a flexible timeline of different areas to tackle: unwanted beads, material for sewing that I am not sewing (maybe never). Deciding which books to let go of. I am spending time clearing out plastic storage boxes so I can organize the things I brought from my old home in New York State in September.

As we are finding ways to change our minds, we realize these ways are endless

Simply ask your Self for ideas, and ideas will come. Love yourself. This is one of our biggest blocks to expanded lives.

Love everything else. (just as challenging).

Let everything be as it is, without complaint or criticism.

Remember it is never too late to begin again, to start over. In fact, this is what we do every day, or even every moment. You and I are not the same people we were last year.

Have fun in your new year. Love yourself. Let go. Make mistakes, learn new things, and begin again.

# **Ministerial Miscellany**

By Lauren Tatarsky

Dear Interfaith Family,

Happy New Year!! Blessings to all of you for a year filled with joy, peace, and opportunities for awakening and growth. 2017 was quite a year for many of us individually, for our center, and for our world. This past year presented us with incredible challenges, requiring us to enter times of soul



searching on many levels. I am grateful to be part of a community that offers a supportive and empowering space for us to use what is arising as a source of growth, to raise our consciousness, and to connect deeply in community. Thank you for making our unique community the special place that it is. Thank you also for helping us end the year with huge financial success! We made a big turn-around financially in the last few months of the year and that is in thanks to you. Thank you for your special donations, for coming out to support our fabulous Annual Benefit Concert and Raffle, and for what you give in time, treasure, and talent each Sunday and all week long. We are starting 2018 with a very solid foundation to build upon in the coming year and that is exciting!

A few upcoming highlights for you:

# ICSG Visioning Session #2: Dream Phase. January 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:15 a.m. — 2 p.m.

Whether or not you made it to our first visioning session, you are welcome to join us in the next step of the process! We had a wonderful time last month exploring and expressing all the things we love about the center that we want to carry forward into the future. This month, we will be beginning to dream phase, which is the part of the process where we start to imagine what we want to create and how it might look. It's about manifesting, creating, dreaming, believing, and envisioning everything we want to be. Come join us and add your voice to our future. Lunch provided, by donation.

# Race Dialogues Continue: Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> from 1—2:30 p.m.

Our quarterly race dialogue events will continue next month. These events are free and open to the public so please spread the word! Since our last gathering in October, three small groups of six to seven people of different races have begun meeting in one another's homes. The feedback has been powerful and incredibly moving (I plan to share more about this in a blog post soon). We will continue having large group gatherings every quarter and will form additional small groups as interest necessitates. The large gathering is conducted by a diverse group of experienced leaders and allows for intimate and honest engagement. Hope to see you there!

Looking forward to continuing to commune and create with all of you in this new year. I am honored to be your companion on this journey and I look forward to another season of growth and connection!

# Much Love, Lauren

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Community Members of the Month: Alaura and Johanna



Alaura Massaro has

This month, we honor both, Johanna Nader and Alaura Massaro, for their work in organizing and executing a successful Benefit Concert and Raffle for the Center.

Johanna Nader and her husband, Tony, have been regular attendees of the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth for about 2 years. She describes her experience at the Center as a healing place; a place to bring brokenness and find wholeness.

Johanna's original spiritual path was Presbyterian. From an early age, she attended church regularly with her mother. However, despite her mother's back ground as a "holy roller," Johanna's father was an atheist. Spirituality was never discussed or practiced at home. She stopped attending church when she was in college.

Johanna spent the past 21 years as a public school teacher. She believes the best teachers create a space for kids to learn and to find their own way. After leaving teaching, Johanna and Tony explored other spiritual centers, including the Zen Buddhist Temple and the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor. They found the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth to be a space that encourages all people to be both teachers and learners.

been an important part of the Interfaith community for 14 years. We are so blessed that she shares her extraordinary musical talent with us every week. Alaura studied piano as a child and wrote poems as gifts for family. Songwriting became the perfect combination of these two talents. Born in Detroit. Alaura credits the music of Motown, Bach and the Beatles as a few of her inspirations. She has been a pianist in theme parks (so fun!) in the Smokey's of NC, a school music teacher and presently works as an environmental educator at Howell Nature Center, does piano gigs and is a private music instructor. She did some time in Nashville....an interesting, crazy experience and returned to Michigan where her musical focus shifted. Alaura began to apply her songwriting talents and inspirational message at spiritual centers, seminars that focused on healing and local venues in the area. Her vision is to learn, grow, be creative and connect with others through music. She especially enjoys improvising during the service and loves playing music with others. Alaura appreciates that the Center celebrates everyone on their own individual path and feels acceptance and love from her Interfaith family.



# **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

# Every THING Has a Voice by Peggy Lubahn

Peggy: I found this little six-inch Christmas tree at a dollar store, the perfect size for my small apartment. When switched on, it changes colors and is very soothing to look at. I've been practicing and broadening my telepathic abilities, and since the little tree was right in front of me on my desk one day, I decided to try connecting with it...

So, my sparkling little friend, is there anything you'd like to talk about?

[pause] Me?

Peggy: Yes.

Really?

Peggy: Of course! If you would rather not, that's okay too. It's up to you.

I just... I don't know how to express it. Surprised. Good. Feels very good. A little dizzy even, with the implications. I may speak to a human and be understood. What a BIG idea! I think I'm excited!

Peggy: Good for you! Life is more interesting with some excitement from time to time.

Whew! Okay! I would like to say that this is a stupendous opportunity that I scarcely know how to value or appreciate.

Peggy: You are very welcome.

I can say more?

Peggy: Surely.

I must meditate think about this, it is swirling all around me. Wonderful swirling happy energy. I shall say I am done for now, and thank you.

Peggy: Then I'll say goodnight, and thank YOU for speaking to me.



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 Mary 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 January 19

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.	1 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Balanced View Video Meeting	2 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group 5:30 p.m. Community Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	3 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	4 Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	5	6 8:30 a.m. AA
7 Rev Dave: Kick off to 20 <sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary at ICSG R: M: MU: Potluck	8 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	9 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group 5:30 p.m. Community Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	12	13 8:30 a.m. AA 8 p.m. Café 704
14  Rev. Lauren: Trust Walk R: M: M:	10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	16:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group 5:30 p.m. Community Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	19 Peace Generator	20 8:30 a.m. AA 8 p.m. Spiritual Cinema
21  Rev. Lauren: After  Death Communication R: M: MU:	10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	23 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group 5:30 p.m. Community Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	24 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	26	27 8:30 a.m. AA
28  Rev. Randall R: M: MU:	10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	30 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discussion Group 5:30 p.m. Community Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	31 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	The newsletter submission deadline is January	Birthdays are indicated in bold/italic Happy Birthday!	Board meeting this month is on January

# **December Board Minutes** By Tony Nader

## Lauren

She brought up for discussion the concept of having a board member get up before the weekly offering and speak to the benefits of charitable giving. Some suggestions were to give testimony about why do we spend our money or time at the Center or to work with the minister on a little talk. The board agreed with the concept and decided whoever is counting money that week will give the talk. Mary Alice will go first next Sunday.

On January 21, 2018, there will be training for the Sound Technicians as well as our first Board meeting of the New Year. After our meeting, from 3 to 4, we will throw a little party for them as a token of our appreciation for all the work they do. The board will bring some food and snacks for everyone to share.

She still plans to transition the website to Becky Rowe, but this is somewhat delayed due to Lindsay's back issues. She expects it will happen soon.

There is a revised format for our monthly newsletter. We will remove items that are published on our Website, like Calendar/ Events and refer readers to our website. Only articles/writing contributions will be published in the newsletter. This may start in January.

# **Mary Alice**

Our first Visioning meeting produced good results. The turnout was a little disappointing but those who attended were very committed and made significant

contributions. Mary Alice is meeting with Anna Marie and utilizing her as a consultant on the process. safe, exposed, and vulnerable and Due to the holidays, the Co-Creation team was unable to meet. A summary of our results will be worked on next year. Annie generally one of surprise that she wrote up a report of about the first session, which she will share with us. Our next session, "Envisioning" is January 20, 2018.

## **Finance**

The Benefit was a financial success. Raffle sales yielded \$1398 and the tickets sales were around \$2000. So, we exceeded our goal of \$3000.

On Memorial Day weekend, May 29th, Scott is hosting a fundraising event for the sound sys-

The budget will be presented in January and approved by the board for 2018.

## Other

Pat and Lindsay are planning to provide us a format for Staff Evaluations by next board meeting. They are using last year's evaluation of Delyth as a template. Pat suggested an executive session to create a year-end evaluation on Delyth/Lauren. We are leaning toward a written as opposed to a verbal assessment. This will provide a more wellthought out process.

Lauren had some final comments assessing her year as our spiritual leader. She realizes that she is providing a new model for the Center. She describes this as a Spiritual Dynamic model, as opposed to a Transcendent one. Her method is facilitating inner spiritual exploration and she is receiving some loving, but nega-

tive, feedback from some members. Some people are feeling unthey are not comfortable with that. She is somewhat concerned. The response from the board was was encountering resistance. Though our services are different than they used to be, she still enjoys the full faith and confidence of the board. We are more than willing to give this transition more time to play itself out.

# \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* FACES OF FAITH VII



One of the annual programs that the IRT offers the community is a "face to face" experience with people from many different religious and spiritual backgrounds. This year we have six presenters ready to talk about the joys and misconceptions that come with their tradition or beliefs? Come listen to and engage with a Hindu, an Interfaith minister, a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Jew and a Catholic on what it is that both brings them joy from their faith traditions and sadness from other people's reactive biases. \$5 suggested

donation.

Date: Sunday, January 14, 2018 Time: 4-6 pm Place: Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W Liberty, AA

# A CONVERSATION WITH THE DEVA OF ABUNDANCE

By Peggy Luhban

This past summer I decided I wanted to attend the Earthkeepers event down in Arkansas in November. To manifest the necessary funds I was following the Law of Attraction rules of visualization plus acting like I already had that money, but it wasn't working out the way I thought it should. Then I got the idea to talk to the **Deva of Abundance**, and I'd like to share the conversation for this column...

Peggy: It's easy to <u>visualize</u> that I always have more than enough money for anything I want to do. One of the LOA rules is to ACT as if you really are preparing for an event; however, I know I cannot spend money that has not yet been received to reserve a hotel room. There is a disconnect here -- what am I missing?

There is a disconnect because your reality has not yet been achieved. It has been accepted, even allowed, but it remains distant separate.

Peggy: Can you help me reach a deeper understanding of this?

Yes. Deeper understanding involves self-love allowance acceptance of your innate natural state of being, which is to exist with among amidst a part of the abundance of all good things which you seek.

Peggy: How is this achieved? How is it to happen in the real world, day to day?

Since you began this effort experiment with the help of the article we sent you, already you have united joined with unexpected monetary gifts. The missing piece is your faith TRUST CONFIDENCE in the process, in the system, in how the Universe of energy flows where it is needed.

Peggy: So if I focus on receiving a thousand dollars by a certain date in order to go to an event, does that requirement set by the event organizer and then accepted and reinforced by me block the flow?

YES! You may be sufficiently open and accepting of <u>receiving</u> any amount of dollars you desire, but when you <u>require</u> this to happen by insisting the dollars arrive by a certain day -- even when that requirement is not of your creation but you are <u>perpetuating</u> it -- this chokes off the flow of energy. Even though the dollars <u>wish</u> to join you and make it possible for you to travel and attend, now they are like dogs barking and straining against their leashes, wishing to come to you joyously but constrained by the energy of an inflexible physical demand.

Peggy: How then shall I reorient myself? How shall I adjust my thinking?

Do not forget that when you work cooperatively WITH the Universe, with your Most Benevolent Out-

comes and similar manifestation methods, you can effortlessly accomplish seemingly impossible things regardless of the requirements of what you call the "real world."

<u>Acknowledge</u> what you WANT to happen and what your orderly mind thinks MUST happen in order to attend an event that has great meaning to you.

Enrich these visualizations by FEELING in your body and your soul the joy and excitement of getting on the plane, the exhilaration of walking into the venue with so many others of like mind, and so forth. Adding this emotional power will greatly strengthen your manifestations.

Be careful you do not slip back into worrying about money arriving "on time."

Peggy: Okay, but what if I do all this to the best of my ability, and don't get the result I desire?

The Universe, God, your angels and guides -- who see The Big Picture that is hidden from you -- know whether this activity is appropriate for you at this time. Thus they will undertake to prevent the activity, even if you are very disappointed, because they know something even better is coming toward you.

The solution is to spend time welcoming abundance every day. Just that! Take ten minutes and project love and welcome to abundance in all its forms, without attachment to what the outcome might be. Then get up and go on to your next activity with a grateful heart.

The Rest of the Story: Eventually I changed my mind about Arkansas, but unexpected abundance in different forms keeps arriving. Letting go of my NEED to know How and When, and trust the process, is pretty uncomfortable for this German Capricorn... But I think it will end up being A Good Thing!

Note 1: While most of this material was channeled from the Deva of Abundance, I've worked in some advice channeled from my crystal skull friend Petrichor.

Note 2: The article mentioned above is "How to be Rich - Three Beliefs about Money You Must Release First" by Jenny Smagala.

<u>Note 3</u>: Yes, "the Universe of energy flows where it is needed" does remind me of Harry Potter's Room of Requirement!

Christmas Dinner
December 25th 1 p.m
We had roughly 20
people attend.
Thank you to everyone who came, celebrated, and cleaned

up!





Image from peaceseeds

# Caring Committee Contact List

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Khristian Speelman, ksmithspeelman@gmail.com 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 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 <a href="http://">http://</a> lists.interfaithspirit.org/listinfo.cgi/interfaithinspirerinterfaithinspirer.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 Rebecca.

### ■ BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Heide Kaminski, Editor-in-Chief

RebeccaRowe, Steve Lyskawa, Webmasters

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heide.kaminski@interfaithspirit.org



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. \$15 each. ONLY SEVEN LEFT!!!



# Peter Madcat Ruth SOLO CONCERT

Saturday, January 13, 2018 8:00 - 10:00 PM

Donation: \$8/person or \$15/for two



Café 704
Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth
704 Airport Blvd
Ann Arbor MI 48108





Marilyn, Chair





Heide and Kellie, Vice Co-chairs





Tommy, record keeper



Khristian



Delyth, Liaison



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Judy

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If you have a service to offer, please contact Marilyn



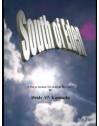
# **Interfaith Caring Committee Survey**

We are looking for your participation and support of fellow Interfaith members <u>in crisis</u> 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!

_City/Part of town you live or work in:				
il:				
Best times to contact you:				
participate in and specify any limitations				
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I currently have need of (be specific):

# Help Support Your Interfaith Family Busin



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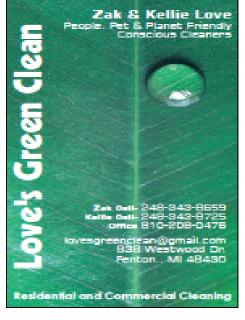
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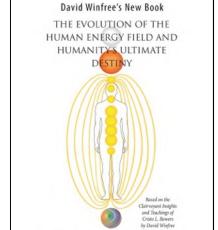
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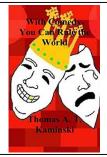
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517 673 1888 to find out if we have what you are looking for. We have clothes, furniture, gadgets, toys, books, cool crafts, and whatnots you can't resist. MUST SEE! Trip to Tecumseh is worth it!





Available at: www.davidwinfree.com/book



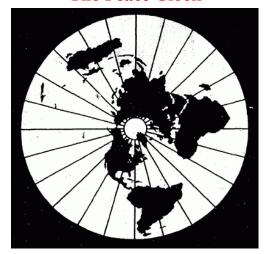
Written by our very own formerly Youthful Spirit, now adult member of the Center, as well as the nursery worker for two years, this book is a hoot to read!

Available on Amazon: amazon.com/Comedy-Rule-World-Fantasy Or you can get a signed copy at the Center!





# Peace in Our Lifetime "The Peace Clock"



Swedish: FREDSKLOCKAN Starting Now:
Wherever you are, perform a silent meditation for world peace
EVERY DAY AT 12 NOON FOR ONE FULL MINUTE

# THE GOAL: To have EVERY PERSON ON EARTH performing this event

# Synchronized Intention is the Key

- With an alarm, a bell, a note or any other method that works for you remind yourself when it is noon in your time zone.
  - Acquire the active participation of your company, your school, community, city, state and nation.
- Involve radio and television have them broadcast the PEACE CLOCK name, slogan and logo accompanied by one minute of silence every day.
  - Above all approach all interactions with others in peaceful, constructive and creative ways.
    - Copy and share this information with as many people as you can.

# PDF Fliers:

• Arabic: Chinese: 和 平 默 禧 Dutch: VREDESKLOK
• English: PEACE CLOCK French: UNE HORLOGE POUR LA PAIX
• German: FRIEDENS UHR Hebrew: שעון השלום OROLOGIO DI PACE
• Japanese: ピース クロック Korean: 우리의 삶에 평화가 깃들길
• Pharsee: Polish: ZEGAR POKOJU
• Portuguese: Hora da Paz Romanian: CEASUL PĂCII
• Russian: ЧАСЫ МИРА Spanish: UN RELOJ POR LA PAZ
• Swahili: SAA YA AMANI

