



Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication

VOL. XV, NO. 07, July 2019



Hold Space for Love

By E.S. Nowakowski

It has been said that all emotions stem from fear or love.

What do you value, fear or love? This is the question. What is your answer? What is guiding your perception?

Do you perceive in terms of what's in it for me? Or do you perceive in terms of what's in it for us?

Are you a spiritual being having a human experience, or are you just a plain old human being?

We may have feelings of this peculiar emotional vessel being buffeted and thrown about by things beyond our control. What are these reasons that lead us to feel how we do? We talk of our socio-economic status, the weather, other people's behavior, genetics, and countless other factors that shape and justify our feelings at any given moment.

May we consider that genesis of these emotions is discovered somewhere much deeper than that. May we consider that your experience in relationship to the external world begins within. May we consider that the fundamental exercise of our free will is answering this question of "fear or love" in every decision we make.

The decision to act from fear could be considered a decision to act as a body, a mere collection of molecules whose very existence is constantly threatened and afraid.

What was that alternative again? Oh yeah, LOVE! When we choose love over hate, when we embody our higher Holy Spirit Self, we will

remember who we really are.

What does it mean to hold space? One description of Holding Space is the art of being present with others. I also like this description by Lynn Hauka: "You walk along with them without judgment, sharing their journey to an unknown destination. Yet you're completely willing to end up wherever they need to go. You give your heart, let go of control, and offer unconditional support."

Think of holding space in terms of love. For me the first step is to simply make room. To make room we must clear away the blocks to love. When we release our fears to Spirit or "undo" them through guidance, this is exactly what we are accomplishing.

So with love as my strength. I encourage you to hold space for love. Are you asleep in a world of fear? Please consider this your wake-up call. How are you removing the blocks to love in your life?

"T-12.VII.8.: When you want only love you will see nothing else. 2 The contradictory nature of the witnesses you perceive is merely the reflection of your conflicting invitations. 3 You have looked upon your mind and accepted opposition there, having sought it there. 4 But do not then believe that the witnesses for opposition are true, for they attest only to your decision about reality, returning to you the messages you gave them. 5 Love, too, is recognized by its messengers. 6 If you make love manifest, its messengers will come to you because you invited them." - A Course in Miracles

"Love is a state of Being. Your love is not outside; it is deep within you. You can never lose it, and it cannot leave you. It is not dependent on some other body, some external form." - Eckhart Tolle

Ministerial Miscellany

By Rev. Annie Kopko

Last month when I spoke on Sunday, I talked about following your own call, your own path, not the one that other people think you might do best or like best. All of us, sooner or later, think we know what is best for another person, our children, our friends our government. But we really do not know what is best for another. Really, we barely even know what is best for ourselves, we are kind of muddling along hoping we are tuning in to the guidance that is always there. Two things that always help are trusting ourselves to properly respond to the nudge and actually listening from a place of quiet contemplation. Take some deep breaths, anytime, anywhere, and be available to your own higher wisdom.

Fortunately not everyone wants to do everything that is available at Interfaith in any given month, but I do suggest that you check out some events, because there are so many great ways to expand your consciousness by learning new things. Sometimes small and unexpected ideas come to us from others that make a huge difference in our lives. We nurture ourselves and each other by showing up, by receiving and offering ideas that come forth from deep within when there is a place and event to share them.

It is a busy month at Interfaith. As always, more information and specific detail about each event is on our website at interfaithspirit.org.

July 2nd, Death Cafe, always on the 1st Tuesday. Come for potluck at 5:45 or Death Cafe at 6:30PM. Lively confidential discussion that expands our understanding about death.

July 11th, Singing for Comfort. Always on the 2nd Thursday, easy to learn, soul nourishing songs led by Layla Ananda.

July 13th, Cafe 704, Always on the 2nd Saturday at 8PM, this month featuring Path, original folk/soul music. Donation \$8 per person.

July 20th, 6PM Party for Rod Rodriguez, Interfaith soulmate, soon to be leaving for Mexico to live. Taco fixings potluck.

July 21st, Jon Mundy, Sunday speaker, with a workshop in the afternoon 1:30 to 4:30. "A Course in Miracles and the need for Mind Training" \$30, advanced registration (\$40. After 7/19)

July 25,26,27 YARD SALE! Set up July 24th after 5pm. We need MANY volunteers and donations. Please help, this is our biggest fundraiser of the year! Sale starts July 25th at 9AM, and ends July 27th at 3PM. WE WILL NEED HELP BOXING UP and TRANSPORTING LEFTOVERS. PLEASE HELP.

I look forward to seeing you this month and getting to know you better. Blessings! Annie

Community Member

of the Month

Marvelous Marilyn



By Jaclyn Morrow

This month we are showing our appreciation to a pillar of adventure and compassion in our community. Marilyn Alf has been a member of Interfaith for about 10 years. She has led the Caring Committee for almost as long. As parents we realize our children will change our lives forever. But so often it comes in ways we would never expect. Marilyn came to live in Ann Arbor because of one such example. Her son Greg was becoming an accomplished violin builder. He had clients on both sides of the country and all over the world. When he was looking for a place to settle for a bit, he discovered Ann Arbor. A small community that supported artistic endeavors. Ann Arbor definitely fits the bill. After graduating from college in Environmental Studies, her other son Scott came next and as sons can be quite persuasive- she followed.

Marilyn is a equal opportunity kinda person. She has spent her life giving every religion you can think of a chance. Catholicism raised her- she tried Judaism, Cycles of Christ, High Church Anglican... you get the picture. She was trying to find a place where she fit. She wouldn't accept anything that demanded you subscribe to a set of rules. So how did she finally come to Interfaith? That instigating son of hers... surprised? He dared her to go. So what could she do? On her first visit Dave Bell was giving a Christian Oriented talk. Marilyn spoke her truth during the open mic and no one pushed her away. Actually quite the opposite. Her opinion was accepted and she was welcomed with open arms. She finally found a spiritual home that would be there for her when she returned home from her travels.

Because not only has Marilyn given lots of religions a chance she has also spent much of her life exploring different cultures. This love of travel was inspired early on by her Uncle and his knack for storytelling. She's followed life's flow to El Salvador, Hawaii, China, the Soviet Union and many places in between. Spirituality and travel show that many roads can get you to Rome. And they're all valid.

These days Marilyn is getting comfortable with ambiguity. She's comfortable saying "I don't know." We are grateful to have Marilyn in our midst. She is a motivating teacher, compassionate leader, and great hugger.

Hold Space for Love

CMM

Community page

Peggy's Column

Youthful Spirits

Rob Fagerlund

Fundraiser flyer

Page 1

Page 2

Page 3

Page 4

Page 5

Page 6

Page 7

Volunteer Coordinator Corner

By Bob Hopkins

This space will be used to identify volunteer needs and appreciation as of June 23, 2019

We regularly need to add to our pool of people who help to set-up and clean-up for potlucks – See Ted
We want responsible people to set up and tidy up the sanctuary before or after the service – See Annie
We can always use treats for after Service – See Ted or just bring them in
We could use a person at the Welcome table on the fourth Sunday of the month – See Bob
We need people to help with transportation –see Donald, the Transportation Coordinator.
We will be needing plenty of people to help with the July yard sale (July 25 – 27) – see Delyth if you are interested in forming a committee to coordinate this event.

APPRECIATION

THANKS TO: Dave Bell for his ongoing help behind the scenes in Café 704

THANKS TO: Delyth Balmer and all the people she is gathering together to coordinate the July yard sale

THANKS TO: Sally Searls and all the people she has gathered to help plan Rod's farewell party

July Birthdays

11: Randall Counts

14: Jaclyn Morrow

22: Scott McWhinney

25: Maureen McFarlan

31: Marie Hough

**July 6, 1-3 p.m. at the Cal Zorn Park
on Russell Rd. in Tecumseh**

**My children are throwing a 60th
birthday party in my honor. You are all
invited. Please bring a dish to share :-)**

**My kids are providing Subway.
Love, Heide**

July Talks

**7: Rev. Dave Bell: Being
Gay according to the Bi-
ble**

**14: Rev. Lyriel Claire:
"Accessing and activating
your heart center"**

**21: Rev. Jon
Mundy: "Never Think
you can see Sin in Any-
one"**

**28: Gretchen Leonhardt:
"The Road Taken" with a
discussion of reincarna-
tion as part of the journey**

July Music

**7: Path (Café 704
Promo)**

14: Craig Brann

21: Don Allen

**28: Huron Valley
Harmonics**



IT'S NOT EASY TO BE A TICK!

By Peggy River Singer

A few years ago I spent a weekend at an Animal Communication class out in the country. While we were taking a break on the back porch Saturday afternoon, I discovered a tick walking up my arm. I'd never met a tick before, but recognized it right away thanks to all the media hoopla about Lyme Disease. "Oh, look," I said. "It's a tick!"

My horrified companions insisted that I kill the creature before it could bite me. So far the tick seemed inclined to be peaceable, but I had to admit I was worried. I didn't want to squash the poor thing with my bare feet, so I went back in the house and flushed it -- with apologies.

Later that day, we were asked to silently decide on an animal we disliked or were afraid of, and meditate with that animal. We had to laugh when we found that each of us chose Ticks (surprise!). And what we learned from them was wondrous!

We asked the ticks why they bother humans when there are so many other animals they can feed on. The answer from one tick was: [Imagine a tick shrugging.] *"Because we can." Humans are just another potential food source -- from a tick's point of view.*

The ticks know why so many humans hate them, and they know we'll kill them on sight

to protect ourselves. They said: *"When you squash us, please put our bodies on a compost pile so we can continue to serve the Earth through our death."*

By this time we were all feeling pretty awkward about the whole thing. Here we were, working our butts off to learn how to communicate with all life, and really believing in what we were doing. And yet, we had all freaked out and made sure the tick was dead before we even thought about talking to it! It wasn't our proudest moment, but it gave us a LOT to think about.

One of the ticks we communicated with was really furious with humans. He told us the anti-tick frenzy is a direct result of the chemicals and poisons that humans have been pouring into the Earth for so many years. Long ago the ticks volunteered to process those substances and transmute them in service to Life. But now their bodies are so saturated with toxins that they can't avoid passing them on -- along with any diseases they're carrying -- when they feed, making each bite that much more dangerous to both humans and animals.

When I connected with "my" tick while I wrote this article, he said he had no intention of biting me. He knew what would happen to him, but he wanted to give our group an opportunity to explore what it means to be Tick, and to face the fears we five humans had all absorbed -- like it or not --

from the anti-tick campaigns. One of Tick's greatest spiritual gifts is to remind us of the danger of inflating fears way out of proportion compared to risk. He wanted to help improve the relationship between his people and humans, because even a tiny tick-sized step toward that goal will resonate through the cosmos.

With all that said, we'll always need to take care of our physical bodies as well as those of our animal friends. This article is about balancing the important role ticks have in nature with taking precautions when in their territory so we can safely share the environment with them. We might not ever actually LIKE them, but we can choose to kill them quickly and humanely. And, it will only take a moment to put their little bodies on the nearest patch of dirt to nourish the Earth that is Home to us all.

AUTHOR BIO

Peggy River Singer is a heart-centered animal communicator, medium, faerie ally, Reiki practitioner, and lifelong writer. She combines her gift for communications with her psychic abilities to help create harmonious relationships among all who share the Earth. Connect by phone at **734-548-0194**; and by email at newbluecanoe@aol.com. She shares her experiences and insights on her blog, angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com.

Youthful Spirits



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



Bird Words

By Rob Fagerlund

Birds have inspired writers, artists and thinkers for centuries. Here are a few words that reflect the inspiration birds give us.

* It is not only fine feathers that make fine birds. – Aesop

The birds are molting. If only man could molt also his mind, once a year its errors, his heart once a year its useless passions. - James Allen

* The greatest achievement was at first, and for a time, a dream. The oak sleeps in the acorn, the bird waits in the egg, and in the highest vision of the soul a waking angel stirs. Dreams are the seedlings of realities. - James Allen

* Why do birds sing in the morning? It's the triumphant shout: 'We got through another night!' - Enid Bagnold

* The reason birds can fly and we can't is simply because they have perfect faith, for to have faith is to have wings. - J.M. Barrie

* There are joys which long to be ours. God sends 10,000 truths, which come about us like birds seeking inlet; but we are shut up to them, and so they bring us nothing, but sit and sing awhile upon the roof, and then fly away. - Henry Ward Beecher

* The bird of paradise alights only upon the hand that does not grasp. - John Berry

* No bird soars too high, if he soars with his own wings. - William Blake

* The very idea of a bird is a symbol and a suggestion to the poet. A bird seems to be at the top of the scale, so vehement and intense his life...The beautiful vagabonds, endowed with every grace, masters of all climes, and knowing no bounds - how many human aspirations are realized in their free, holiday-lives - and how many suggestions to the poet in their flight and song! - John Burroughs

* Did you ever see an unhappy horse? Did you ever see a bird that had the blues? One reason why horses and birds are not unhappy is because they are not trying to impress other horses and birds. - Dale Carnegie

* I would rather learn from one bird how to sing than to teach 10,000 stars how not to dance. - e.e. Cummings

* Intelligence without ambition is a bird without wings. - Salvador Dali

* I know why the caged bird sings, ah me, when his wing is bruised and his bosom sore; when he beats

his bars and he would be free, it is not a carol of joy or glee, but a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core. - Paul Laurence Dunbar

* Have you ever observed a hummingbird moving about in an aerial dance among the flowers - a living prismatic gem...it is a creature of such fairy-like loveliness as to mock all description. - W.H. Hudson

* Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly. - Langston Hughes

* Be as a bird perched on a frail branch that she feels bending beneath her, still she sings away all the same, knowing she has wings. - Victor Hugo

* Each bird must sing with his own throat. - Henrik Ibsen

* The soul that is attached to anything, however much good there may be in it, will not arrive at the liberty of divine union. For whether it be a strong wire rope or a slender and delicate thread that holds the bird, it matters not, if it really holds it fast; for, until the cord be broken the bird cannot fly. - Saint John of the Cross

* Birds sing after a storm; why shouldn't people feel as free to delight in whatever sunlight remains to them? - Rose Kennedy

* Even when a bird walks, one feels it has wings. - Antoine-Marie Lemierre

* In order to see birds it is necessary to become part of the silence. - Robert Lynd

* Love is a bird; she needs to fly. - Madonna

* You have to believe in happiness, or happiness never comes...Ah, that's the reason a bird can sing - on his darkest day he believes in spring. - Douglas Malloch

* Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark. - Rabindranath Tagore

* Use what talents you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best. - Henry Van Dyke

* Those little nimble musicians of the air, that warble forth their curious ditties, with which nature hath furnished them to the shame of art. - Izaak Walton

* Happier of happy though I be, like them I cannot take possession of the sky, mount with a thoughtless impulse, and wheel there, one of a mighty multitude whose way and motion is a harmony and dance magnificent. - William Wordsworth

and, of course,...

* Bird is the word. - The Trashmen

Grocery Card Fundraiser ("Scrip" program) Update

Background:

This is a way for local food stores to contribute to Interfaith about 3-5% of whatever you spend at these stores. It costs you nothing more, and it really does help the Center. The only place that still requires actually buying cards at the Center is Peoples Food Co-op. For questions or to buy cards you can find Craig Harvey in the social hall after service, or phone Craig at 734-971-8576. And here are the details about each store's program (Kroger, Busch's, Arbor Farms, and People's Food Co-op).

Kroger shoppers:

Please look at the bottom of your Kroger receipt and verify that it includes the following notice. If it doesn't, then please sign yourself up!

****Kroger Community Rewards****
At your request, Kroger is donating to
INTERFAITH CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

To link your Kroger-Plus account to Interfaith just go to:

<https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/>

Look at the "Community Rewards" section of your account info and edit it as needed to make the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth (#82808) your preferred organization. Whenever you go shopping, just do your usual swiping your Kroger-Plus card or entering your phone number to identify yourself to the system. It may take a couple weeks for you to be fully in the system, after which the bottom of your receipts will always mention Interfaith.

Busch's:

If you don't have a Busch's MyWay account, you first need to do that at <http://buschs.com>.

Then connect your MyWay account to the Interfaith Center using their "Cash for Education" feature.

- To enroll in Cash for Education log into your MYWAY* account and select Cash for Education from the dropdown menu underneath your name.

- Choose up to four organizations that you would like to support per quarter.

- Be sure to use your phone number at checkout.

Reminder: You must have a valid email address and opt-in to receive emails to participate in this program. Please also note that participants will need to re-enroll on an annual basis (easier after you have your MyWay account).

Arbor Farms:

No cards or phone number to worry about! All you need to do is tell the cashier that you want to credit the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth (or just say "Interfaith Church" which they recognize more easily). You just have to remember to **mention it every time you shop**.

Peoples Food Co-op:

Buy \$50 or \$100 card(s) from Craig at Interfaith. When you use them up, buy more of them at the Center. You can pay with cash or check made out to the Interfaith Center (or just "ICSG").