



# Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication



## A New Season by Norah Reilly

It's already August, and September is right around the corner, waiting for us to ready ourselves for the shift from hot,

lazy summer days to the colorful, cooler time of autumn. This seasonal transition can evoke strong feelings and memories and has the potential to provide inspiration for meaningful personal growth. That is, IF you take what I've come to believe is the essential step of closing out the last chapter of your life before moving on to the next. Like so many things, just because it's simple doesn't mean it's easy, and that is something that seems often to be true when it comes to real change.

Until this year, I hadn't noticed the parallel between the two, primarily because, to me, seasons seem to slide one into the other, whereas the idea of closing and opening life chapters sounds clearly defined. A long year of grief and changing circumstances had left me feeling at loose ends. Still, in the spring, changes began to take place within me. The first was allowing myself to take part in Sunday services with my heart as well as my head, to enter into real community with others at the Center, and to get out of my head and be fully present. For years I have considered

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Interfaith to be my spiritual home, yet I did so from the sidelines, reluctant to commit to more than providing the occasional side dish at a potluck.

That all changed this season when I made the decision to volunteer on the newsletter team. Just a short while ago, joining a group of talented people to do a job I'd never done before would have been daunting, but that has begun to turn around, much of which is due to finally choosing to be open to all the joy and possibilities that exist in me and around me. Cue the "buts" and "what ifs" that lurk in the background. Getting to the root of self-doubt is a key ingredient to becoming more of who you are. After a while, though, constantly revisiting old hurts and traumatic times teaches you nothing and leaves you without the impetus to move forward.

The simplest yet most difficult thing that any of us will ever do is to step back from these chapters, taking with us only lessons learned (if any). When we begin to loosen our grip on our old hurts and move away from them, we often find in ourselves an astonishing oasis of joy and eagerness that can inspire us to begin a new chapter. This happens slowly at first, the way the first few days of September slide into August; summer is reluctant to go until it relaxes into autumn and a new season has begun.

So, here we are, rounding the corner from summer into autumn, readying ourselves for the next season, whatever that might bring.



*If you've enjoyed this article, be sure to read Let July be July, a poem by Morgan Harper Nichols, on page 7.*



## Meet...

### **Marian Orihel** by Norah Reilly

Marian Orihel was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. She later moved with her family to the nearby

borough of Canonsburg, some eighteen miles southwest of Pittsburgh, where she lived until she was 22. After graduating college and receiving a teaching degree, she moved to Sandusky, Ohio. There, she began working with emotionally impaired adolescents in the Erie County Public School District.

Toward the end of her first year of teaching, Marian met her future husband, Vince, whom she married just one year later. During their 40-year marriage, the couple regularly attended Catholic churches. By the time they relocated from Sandusky, Ohio, to Farmington Hills, Michigan, in 1986, Marian and Vince had welcomed the birth of twin girls. Marian returned to teaching special needs students in 1985, this time with Farmington Public Schools. In 2019, the couple moved to Ypsilanti, and four months later, Vince was diagnosed with cancer. He passed away just two weeks before the Covid pandemic shutdown.

Eventually, Marian decided to move to Ann Arbor. She found herself questioning the limitations of a single religion and seeking a broader understanding of spirituality. A chance encounter at an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute open house with Cooper Holland encouraged her to investigate the Interfaith Center further, a place she had heard of but never explored.

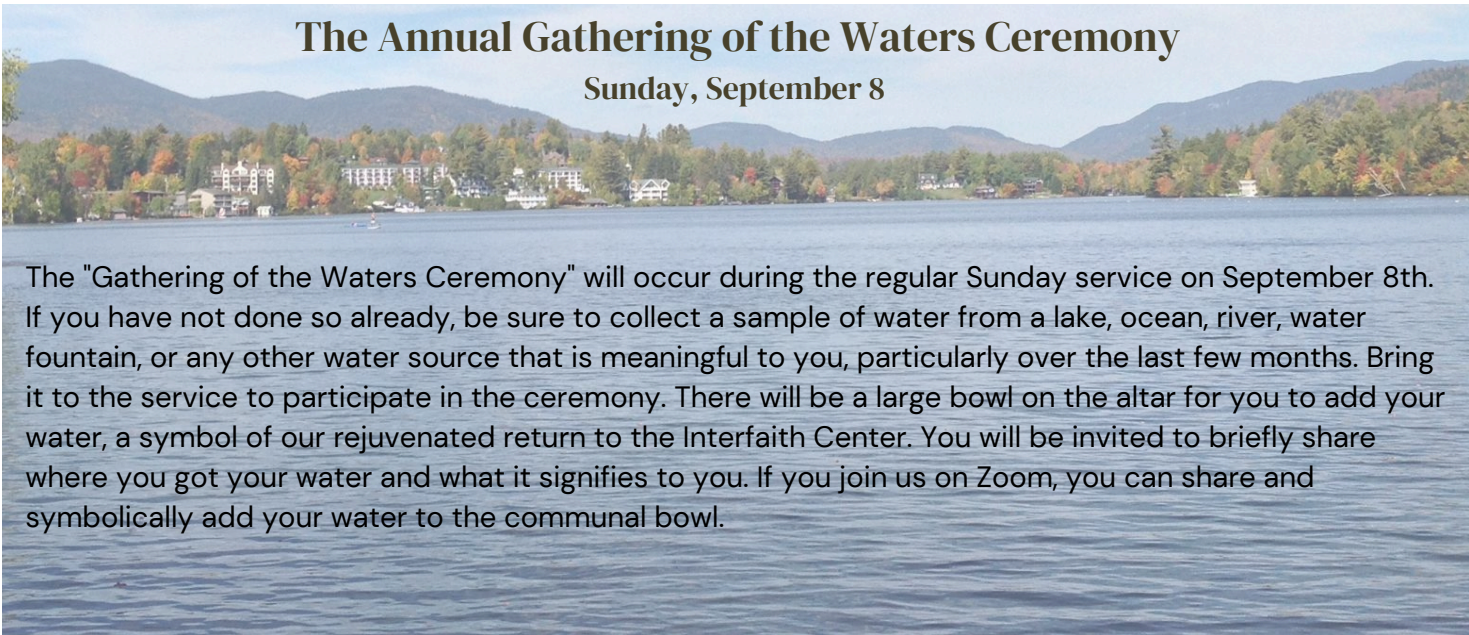
What Marian appreciates about the Interfaith Center are the people: welcoming but not intrusive; warm, authentic, and inclusive; and spiritually accepting of everyone no matter where they are on their journey. Mostly, she feels a palpable deep kindness, a genuine interest in one another, and a generosity that keeps her coming back. Much of what she finds at the Interfaith Center is in keeping with what is essential to her, including how to be in the world, knowing that this life isn't the end, and, perhaps most importantly, using one's time here to do the most good.

#### FUN FACT:

Marian likes writing letters to forge connections with others. She believes letting people know they're being thought of is very powerful.

## The Annual Gathering of the Waters Ceremony

Sunday, September 8



The "Gathering of the Waters Ceremony" will occur during the regular Sunday service on September 8th. If you have not done so already, be sure to collect a sample of water from a lake, ocean, river, water fountain, or any other water source that is meaningful to you, particularly over the last few months. Bring it to the service to participate in the ceremony. There will be a large bowl on the altar for you to add your water, a symbol of our rejuvenated return to the Interfaith Center. You will be invited to briefly share where you got your water and what it signifies to you. If you join us on Zoom, you can share and symbolically add your water to the communal bowl.



## Ministerial Miscellany

August, 2024

by Annie Kopko

It is interesting to me to think that we are involved in the art of our lives every day and somehow forget to

acknowledge our own creativity and the importance of art in our lives. From the art and craft on our breakfast table to the colors of the clothes we decide to wear, and from the design of the cars we drive off in to go to work to the work itself, we are setting forth a great stream of creative consciousness.

All this expressive flow of energy fulfills a need deep within us to creatively express life in and with everything around us and to continually communicate energetically with our environment. This really happens at a subconscious level. So, as we bring this process to present consciousness, we recognize the power of our creativity and the true beauty and spirit that we move around in and create in every day. "Art is the mediator of the divine." These words were shared in an Interfaith Roundtable Forum recently, and I realized this is the outpouring of communication from God into all of our lives, and we are all being Spirit continually. The more we become aware of this, the richer and more healing our daily lives can be.

Experience how music is the Art and Spirit of our lives during these August events. See our website for more information at [interfaithspirit.org](http://interfaithspirit.org)

- Friday, August 2nd, Steve Wyse will perform his "Down Home Dharma" concert from 7-9PM in person at the Center, on Zoom, and on Facebook. Love Offering.
- Saturday, August 3rd, Curtis Glatter, Drum and Dance Jam, 7:30-9PM. Last one of the year. In person. Completely interactive, bring drums if you like. \$5 donation suggested.
- Saturday, August 10th, Cafe 704 presents the Kozora Quartet. 7-9PM. In person or on Zoom, \$10 per person.
- Saturday, August 17th, Drummunity with Lori Fithian and friends, 7-9PM. In person, interactive, and great fun. Donations welcome.

Much Joy and Blessings,

Annie



## August Celebrants

- 2 - Sandy Hill
- 6 - Alex Penn
- 6 - Barb Fisher
- 7 - Tracy Repp
- 7 - Jack Richards
- 12 - Judy Mosavat
- 17 - Andrea Shaw
- 18 - Oana Popa
- 18 - David Winfree
- 21 - Donald Prevost-Hart
- 21 - Diane Gledhill
- 25 - Gathy Dyer



Count your age by friends,  
not years. Count your life  
by smiles, not tears.

— John Lennon





## Volunteer Corner August 2024

by Annemarie Howse

*Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. - Helen Keller*

The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth is a thriving community due to the principles that guide us and the many volunteers who serve, have served, or will serve in the future. Below are some ongoing volunteer opportunities if you want to get more involved. We hope you do, and we look forward to hearing from you!

- Be a greeter one Sunday a month. Talk to Randall Counts, our Greeter Coordinator, after a Sunday service or email Randall at [randallcounts@yahoo.com](mailto:randallcounts@yahoo.com).
- Bring flowers for the altar, the greeter table, or the welcome table. Marice Clark brings flowers for the altar but occasionally needs someone to fill in when she cannot attend. Additional flowers are always appreciated. You may contact Marice at [studiosaluki@yahoo.com](mailto:studiosaluki@yahoo.com).
- Submit an article, poem, photo, book review, or your ideas for our newsletter, Interfaith Inspirer. Submissions are due to Norah Reilly at [nkreilly58gm@gmail.com](mailto:nkreilly58gm@gmail.com) by the 10th of the month for publication the following month. Submissions that are not time-sensitive may be saved for a future publication.
- Serve on the Caring Committee. The committee assists members who are ill, injured, or otherwise in need of rides, meals, and moral support. They also host holiday meals at the center. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm (on Zoom) to coordinate care. For more information, read the Caring Committee Report on page 5. You may also contact Committee Chair Marilyn Alf at [sdtoaa@gmail.com](mailto:sdtoaa@gmail.com) or 734-686-7849.
- Lead a Sunday meditation or spiritual reading. Readings and meditations are three to five minutes long and of your choosing. A sign-up book is on or near the welcome table in the social hall.
- Assemble Welcome Packets. This will take a few minutes of your time before or after the Sunday service once or twice a month.
- Sit at the Welcome Table for about 30 minutes after the Sunday service to hand out welcome packets, help with sign-ups for volunteer opportunities, and greet visitors and those who are new to the Center. It's a great way to meet folks!
- Bring treats for the Sunday Social Hour, Cafe 704, or other events. No sign-up is required. And remember, the first Sunday of the month is potluck!
- Serve on the Board of Trustees. Do you have a vision for the Interfaith Center? The trustees hold the vision and establish policies. Any member may stand for election. Voting takes place during the annual meeting in the spring (it's not too early to start thinking about it). All are welcome to attend board meetings (in person or on Zoom). Meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month from 12:30 to 2:30 pm.
- Help publicize activities and events. This can be as simple as re-posting events on your social media page or inviting your friends to attend an event. You can check out our Facebook page, [Facebook.com/interfaithspirit](https://Facebook.com/interfaithspirit), and excerpts of our services can be found on our YouTube page, [YouTube.com/interfaith704](https://YouTube.com/interfaith704).

For these and other volunteer opportunities, please contact Annemarie at [ahowse21@gmail.com](mailto:ahowse21@gmail.com) or leave a message at 818-667-2815.





**Caring Committee**  
**Second Quarter Report**  
 Respectfully submitted by  
**Annemarie Howse**

The mission of the Caring Committee is to assist individuals or families primarily within the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth community, and selectively support outreach groups or people who aren't part of our Interfaith community, but we know about through our members and affiliations.

Since the Caring Committee members may not always be able to provide the services that are requested, we may reach out to the Interfaith community for help. For example, if someone is moving or needs a ride, we might make an announcement or send an email with their request. We would then ask that you contact a member of the Caring Committee to let them know you are able to help.

During the second quarter of 2024 (April, May, and June), the Caring Committee provided the following services:

- Transportation – 2
- Cards and flowers sent on behalf of the committee – 5
- Cards sent by individual members – 1
- Texts/emails – 15
- Phone calls – 38
- Home or hospital visits – 1
- Services such as providing a meal, helping someone move, or light home repairs – 4
- Outreach – 2 (magazines to Milan prisons)
- Reiki (provided remotely) – 4

These supports and services were provided to 18 different individuals or families in our Interfaith Community.

Interfaith community members can request assistance by contacting Committee Chair

Marilyn Alf at [sdtoaa@gmail.com](mailto:sdtoaa@gmail.com) or (734) 686-7849 or by speaking to one of the committee members after the Sunday service. Delyth Balmer, Judy Bell, Vicki Davinich, Annemarie Howse, Annie Kopko, and Peggy Lubahn are committee members.

Financial Report for the second quarter of 2024 (April, May, and June), is as follows:

- Beginning balance on April 1 – \$3,058.74.
- Donations – \$585.00.
- Expenses – \$307.31 (refreshments for Easter, Mother's Day, and Father's Day)
- Balance – \$3,336.43.

Thank you for your generosity!

### Haiku from Dexter

by Cooper Holland, Barb Fisher  
and Sandy Hill

Four friends together  
 Pounding, punching, cursing  
 Success Huzzah!

*The inspiration for this haiku came from a craft class where the friends were learning to punch tin. Barb said, "It was a lot more work than we expected. We had to hammer nails through the tin for every one of those holes. Whew!"*



Tin-punched lanterns made in craft class.



## The Slugs of Summer

by Peggy River Singer

I've always enjoyed slugs and snails for their energy, cheerful nature, and cute little faces. I've even kept them as "pets" in the past, and you'll find quite a few people online who share their homes with exotic species of these quiet, mysterious animals.

Slugs have never caused any significant problems in any of my gardens until this year; when I planted marigolds (one of my favorites since childhood) here at my lakeside apartment for the first time.

Did you know that slugs REALLY LOVE marigolds?

Each plant was stripped, from the ground up, so they all ended up looking like tiny little topiary trees. I would have thought such a spicy-smelling plant would be immune to slime-trailing snackers, but that's not true.

Worried about my beloved marigolds, I asked to speak with a representative of the slugs in my garden. It was unproductive: I got a flat NOPE when I asked about a truce or a compromise. (I'm sure it would have helped if I had waited until night to connect, instead of trying to negotiate during the day when the slugs were sleeping!)

Meanwhile, my Sage plant was also getting chewed on, and I asked it what I could do to help. To my surprise, the answer was: Nothing. We can handle this.

That evening, Sage had more to say when it connected with me during Dreamtime:

*I do not mind a nibble here or a nibble there. Sometimes the slugs come to us for healing substances we can provide. Only the weak and sick plants are*

*harmed by slug dining. Yes, marigolds are medicinal for the slugs. There is so much poison used here [insecticides] and it makes the slugs sick. The marigold essence helps them.*

*Yes, they do LIKE the taste of marigolds; that is part of the scenario. They are not mindless; they have awareness of the consequences of their actions. As in, if they eat every bit of a plant, it might not grow anymore and they must seek elsewhere.*

*Their mind processes are quite basic/simple and they live in the day, the Now. Focused on their little bit of the big world, big matters are not part of their awareness. They experience bliss, joy, fear, and affection in a limited way. They would tell you that life is good, until it is not, then it becomes good once again. What else is there? What else would they possibly need?"*

Well, Sage gave me a lot to think about, and as a result, I've let go of trying to "fix" this situation. I'll continue to send loving Reiki energy to everyone involved and choose less vulnerable plants.

At this point, you might be expecting me to share advice about how to cope with slug damage on YOUR plants. Sorry, that's not my department; but you'll find plenty of ideas online. You'll also find lots of fine articles about the spiritual aspects and messages of slugs, and what we can learn from them.

The rest, I leave up to you.



### Author Bio

Peggy River Singer is a Lightworker, all-beings communicator, faerie ally, Reiki practitioner, and lifelong writer.

More of her articles are posted on [angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com](https://angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com). To request a reading, please call 734-548-0194.

## Let July be July

by Morgan Harper Nichols

Even here, you are growing.  
When August is approaching  
and you feel a little restless  
thinking about how  
this month might end  
and how  
this year might end  
and how you are supposed to  
start again,  
you are growing,  
you are growing,  
in grace  
courage  
strength.

And it is okay  
if it does not feel like it.  
It is okay if there are moments  
where you cannot see  
the way you have grown,  
because far beneath the surface  
the seeds have still been sown.  
The ground beneath your feet  
is still a bed for new beginnings.

So much is changing around you  
but you are changing, too.

You are so much more than the brokenness  
that you were certain would define you.

It has not been easy for you.  
You have worked so hard  
to be the positive one.  
You have given your best

in areas of your life  
where the effort was not returned.  
And this has made it so hard  
for you to keep going,  
and there have been days  
where you were not sure  
if it was even possible.  
But after everything,  
here you are,  
just a little stronger,  
holding on a little longer,  
and you still found room for hope.

So take heart  
breathe deep  
you are still becoming  
who you were meant to be.

Let July be July.  
Let August be August.  
And let yourself

just be  
even in  
the uncertainty.  
You don't have to fix  
everything.  
You don't have to solve  
everything.  
And you can still  
find peace  
and grow  
in the wild  
of changing things.



Please submit articles and other content for the *Interfaith Inspirer* to Norah Reilly by August 10th for the September publication. Content that is not time sensitive may be saved for a future publication. [nkreilly58gm@gmail.com](mailto:nkreilly58gm@gmail.com)



## August Special Events



Ken Kozora

### Cafe 704: Kozora Quartet - Saturday, August 10

7:00 - 9:00 pm

Join us for an exciting expedition of diverse and colorful original Global Fusion music presented by:

**KEN KOZORA** – Composer, Bass Guitar, Synth, Percussion, Dulcimer

**PAUL VORNHAGEN** – Sax, Flute, Clarinet, Ocarina

**ROBERT SPALDING NEWCOMB** – Guitar, Sitar

**JOHN CHURCHVILLE** – Drums



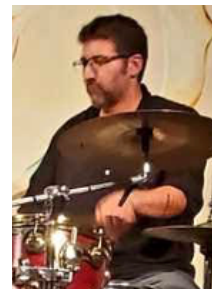
Robert Spalding  
Newcomb



Paul Vornhagen

This month, our **Café 704** coffeehouse concert features the KOZORA QUARTET. This is the second appearance by the group at Café 704. I urge you to take the time to learn more about the amazing things each of these musicians is contributing to our community and beyond at <https://bit.ly/kozora-quartet>. Experience first-hand the awesome magic of their transcendent sound. – Delyth

Tickets \$10 at the door or on Zoom. More info at our website.



John Churchville

### Brian Lottman - Sunday, August 25

#### Guest Speaker & Musician “The Mystical Path”

10:45 am - 12:00 pm

#### Workshop “Awakening of the Heart”

1:00 - 2:30 pm

The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth is thrilled to announce Brian Lottman’s first appearance as our guest speaker on August 25th when he will present the message, meditation, and special music for the Sunday service. Brian is a dynamic speaker who will share his knowledge and insights on the nature of Truth and Existence, drawing from various religions and spiritual traditions.

After the morning service, Brian will lead a special "Awakening of the Heart" event from 1:00 to 2:30 pm for a Love Donation of \$30. This event offers a unique journey, providing a blissful sound bath of musical chanting and practical techniques for clearing the heart chakra and entering a meditation of joy and sweetness.



Brian was recommended to us as a guest speaker by ICSG member Lorri Coburn. After watching a few of his videos Revs. Annie & Delyth whole heartedly agreed! Visit his website, [stirtheheart.com](http://stirtheheart.com) for more information and to preview his joyful, heartfelt messages. – Delyth