



Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication

New Year, New You

By Adam Salomone

The end of the year is upon us and along with it, the annual tradition of deciding on resolutions for the new year. I've never been a fan, and not just because I can never seem to summon the willpower to see them through – no, it's mainly because I take issue with the popular shorthand "new year, new you."



be a "new you" next year. It's just a matter of how much will be self-directed versus automatic – how much will be because we've brought attention to our intention?

So take some time this month to think about what's most important to you in the year ahead – and if you do end up setting resolutions for the year ahead, whether they work out or not, just remember, there's always next year! And don't forget to say hello to your new you when we get there.

Of course, setting goals and devoting yourself to new habits can create formidable change, but there is no "new you." You are just you. And while that may seem dismissive, it's actually profound. There's no better version of yourself than the one that you are, because you are here, and real and truly present in the world, imbued with the light and goodness that connects us all. Within that frame of mind, trying to quantify how many times I'll go to the gym is too pedestrian a goal for the gift of another year on this earth.

Instead, I'm asking myself: what do I want my life to look like at the end of next year? What's one skill I'd like to learn? One experience I'm going to have? Who do I want to be when 2026 comes to a close?

Because whether you decide on resolutions or not, see them through or not, you will indeed

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Special Interfaith Services

Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service

Led by Rev. Dave Bell

Wednesday, December 24

7:00-8:00 pm



Burning Bowl Ceremony

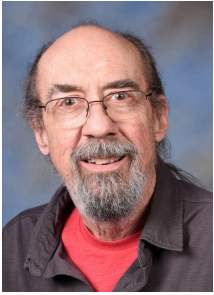
Sunday, January 4, 2026

10:45 am-12:15 pm

during the regular
Sunday service

This is an opportunity to release (burn away) that which no longer serves us and manifest what we want in the new year.





Meet... Don Digirolamo Following the Sound

Interviewed by Norah Reilly
ChatGPT assisted

From a childhood shaped by both Catholic and Methodist traditions to a lifelong exploration of spiritual ideas, Don Digirolamo's journey has been one of curiosity, creativity, and community. A sound engineer by profession and a singer at heart, Don brings a thoughtful mix of practicality and wonder to everything he does. In this conversation, he reflects on his evolving spiritual path, his connection to the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, and the joy he finds in music, mindfulness, and shared purpose.

Did you have a spiritual path growing up or as you went along?

I was baptized both Catholic and Methodist — my mom was Methodist; my dad was Catholic. I grew up Methodist but eventually became disenchanted with the contradictions. For a while, I drifted spiritually.

In the 1970s, I discovered *Seth Speaks* — the channeled material by Jane Roberts — and found it fascinating. That led me to Transcendental Meditation, which I practiced twice a day for about a year. Later, I connected deeply with the teachings of Abraham channeled by Esther and Jerry Hicks. A Course in Miracles never quite clicked for me, so I kept exploring. One day, I opened the phone book and found a church called SpiritWorks, a Science of Mind church. I started attending, learned a lot, and loved it.

Can you briefly touch on Science of Mind?

Science of Mind, created by Ernest Holmes, is based on the idea that we create our own lives. Holmes taught that what we set into motion manifests through focus and persistence. I've had proof of that in my own life — we attract more of what we give attention to.

What do you like best about the Center?

What I love most is the people — a community that genuinely wants to be kind, loving, and comfortable with one another. Things happen, of course, but mostly it works, and that's a wonderful thing. I also appreciate that there's no dogma. Everyone can find their own spiritual path.

In traditional Christian churches, I noticed that most people "pick and choose" which doctrines they believe in anyway — and honestly, that seems

like the smartest approach. Interfaith encourages exactly that: finding what resonates and leaving what doesn't.

Do you have favorite spiritual books or authors?

I really like Neale Donald Walsch's *Conversations with God* books. I've read the first one at least a dozen times — I probably have parts memorized. It's written in clear, uplifting language and fills in the kind of spiritual ideas I never learned in school. I also admire Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*. Her "morning pages" practice — writing every day — helps me process and reflect on my experiences. And of course, *Ask and It Is Given* by Esther and Jerry Hicks — that message rings true for me.

Do you volunteer at the Center?

Primarily, I volunteer mixing the sound and I serve on the Interfaith Board of Trustees.

What would you like to see changed at Interfaith?

Occasionally, there are some challenges that come up at Interfaith, and while we tend to wish there to be none of those, I think they serve us and give us little nudges to grow and take better care of ourselves and others.

I'd also love to see more people get interested in doing sound. With our new modern gear, it's a little harder to bring in people without experience, and yet it's such a rewarding way to contribute.

What makes your heart sing?

Singing — especially singing with others, songs that move you to tears. I regularly take part in an online folk open mic on Zoom. It's not connected to the Center, but it keeps me in practice. I sing three songs a week, originals and covers, with a core group from Ann Arbor, and elsewhere across the U.S., and even the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand. It's a beautiful way to stay connected through music and spirit.

Haiku from Dexter

by Barb Fisher, Sandy Hill,
and Cooper Holland

*Change of seasons
Sunshine with hints of green
Tomorrow snow*



Ministerial Miscellany Peace is Now

by Rev. Annie Kopko

I want to talk about acceptance and about peace this month. I think this idea touches

something quite deep in us. What would happen if we were more accepting of each other? Are we happy being at odds with what is? Are we being doormats if we accept what the government is handing us, or are we finding peace wherever we can? We are free to make choices about our own peace. Who else could?

Christmas is the season of peace. Maybe we forgot. Or perhaps we really don't have a sense of what peace is, or what it feels like. Jesus is the one we remember at this time of year as we celebrate his birth. It is not as important to remember Jesus the person as it is to remember his teachings. While many world religions do not revere Jesus, they all teach peace in their own way.

To become aware of peace, one must be present in one's awareness. Peace will never be in the past or in the future. It can only be now. Peace is completely an inside job. We can experience peace in our "worldly" lives, but it is not the peace of God or our Divine Self. It is the peace of ourselves in the world and seems to be a reflection of our acceptance of the world just as it is. It is also just one aspect of peace, but an important one. In *A Course in Miracles*, Lesson 267: "My heart is beating in the peace of God." And Lesson 268: "In Love was I created, and in Love will I remain forever. What can frighten me, when I let all things be exactly as they are?"

We do not seek peace; we become peace. Any time, any place, we can be peace. Peace is not of the mind, but of the heart. Nonetheless, our mind will carry it through our divine being into our world.

May we all know and feel peace in new ways during this Season of Love and Peace.

Blessings,

Annie



Happy Birthday

December 9 Nancy Biehn

December 12 Lyriel Claire

December 13 Andy Walker

December 15 Rob Fagerlund

December 19 Valoree Sprentall

December 27 Adam Salomone

Cat Prose

by Jean Balent

*Cat Cassie inspired this.
It was written to provide joy!*

- Looking at cat Cassie, I think, what do I want to wear tomorrow?
- Kitties don't have to decide what to wear cause they always have a beautiful coat to wear
- They don't have laundry to do or books to read
- They don't have bills to pay
- Sometimes someone gives them some pieces of cheese or a piece of turkey or chicken or tuna or tuna water. And then Cassie might steal a Cheeto or a potato chip, or there was that time that some cat took a part of a piece of a pizza
- Cat Flash really liked the turkey from Thanksgiving
- Flash was missing his cardboard box. He decided to make himself a box from a broken-down box!
- They usually feed us cats breakfast and dinner on time even before they eat themselves. Isn't that really nice?
- I like to climb up high and look down at people and jump down
- Laps are nice too
- Oh, the naps I can have!
- Sometimes I run outside and they chase after me to bring me back in
- And then they throw me a ball and I play a bit
- And then there's apron string to play with
- Oh, and then it's nice to sit in the sun
- Friend's cat Charlie likes to chase a red light
- Oh, the life of a cat is pretty good!!



The Gift of Neurodivergence

by Norah Reilly

When I agreed to write this article, I had a ready-made topic: neurodivergence

vis-à-vis spirituality. Sounds good, doesn't it? An interesting, even worthy subject which has come to have deep meaning for me. But as I sat down at the computer to write, I stopped dead when I realized I had only a limited understanding of the role that spirituality played in connection with neurodivergence. The proposed article went on the back burner while I dove into the ocean of information available on the internet regarding all kinds of neurodivergence, particularly my own.

As a person living with undiagnosed attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), I had become accustomed to second-guessing myself about most things, leading to a rampant sense of uncertainty for me. Upon discovering a couple of additional co-morbidities and without any kind of strong spiritual practice, I found myself in a dark place with no apparent hope or help. And I broke.

That breaking point a few years ago led me to become more involved here at the Center and I now see that so much of my growing love of life is fueled by the spiritual path I am walking. Over the past few months, I have been graced with the realization that my breakdown allowed in a light that I had been searching for and gave me the impetus to seek and embrace a spiritual path.

In March, I was officially diagnosed as having ADHD. That was, and still is, one of the most powerful life-changing revelations I have ever received. Instantly, a lifetime of feeling a misfit in someone else's world began to change. As it has, I've become more comfortable with the idea that my neurodivergence is a gift rather than a deficiency or "disorder". The growing sense of comfort I'm feeling with my amended self-image has fostered an awareness of the importance of continuing on my spiritual path to nourish my mental health and happiness. In my online research, I came across a list of simple practices that are especially helpful since they appeal to the need someone living with ADHD may have to take an active approach to fostering their spirituality.

Here they are:

- Keep a gratitude journal by the bed and every

morning when you wake up, write three things that you're grateful for.

- Spend time in nature, admire and pay attention to the natural world every day.
- Be mindful of the seasons, the sky, and the wildlife that's around you at any given time.
- Read spiritual or religious texts of any tradition.
- Express your creativity, without judgment, through writing, poetry, art, singing, dancing, cooking. Do it for yourself; you don't have to show it to anyone.
- Play as much as possible, whenever possible.
- Laugh when you can and enjoy the silly, quirky, and odd things in life.
- Embrace simplicity.

I have begun following several of these suggested practices to retrain my sometimes wonky brain to stay open to the incredible beauty that is all around. Perhaps more importantly, developing regular practices is reinforcing my spiritual "armor," allowing me to more freely accept all of life as it is and to accept myself as I AM. Since my diagnosis earlier this year, the journey has been both painful and liberating; with the loving kindness of my Interfaith family and friends, and the addition of some new tools for my toolbox (Thank you, Dwight Wilson!), my wonky brain and I are going to keep moving down the path.

Tarot Card Meet Up

Sunday, December 28 - 12:30-1:30 pm

Facilitated by Lyriel Claire

- Lyriel has had years of experience giving readings and teaching others how to use the cards easily.
- No books to read or methods to study. The cards will teach you to trust your intuition.
- Unsure if this is for you? Lyriel has a couple decks for students to use during the class. If you need or wish to purchase a deck, she suggests "Radiant Rider-Waite Tarot" by Pamela Colman Smith.
- This class will continue to meet on the fourth Sunday of the month.
- For more information, contact Lyriel at: lyriel.claire@gmail.com



Special ICSG Holiday Events, Activities and Opportunities



**Brett Koon and
Cristó Bowers-
2024 Ugly
Sweater
participants.**

ICSG Annual Holiday Party Friday, December 19 - 5:00-8:00 pm

- Ugly Sweater Contest
- Games
- 50/50 Raffle
- White Elephant Gift Exchange
- Nacho/Taco Bar
- Music
- Sweets (brought by attendees to share)

RSVP at: <https://forms.gle/2Q52XpqKZhdvL8nx8>

Volunteer—We need a few volunteers to help set up, clean up, decorate, welcome attendees, and sell raffle tickets.

Please contact Parina Bowers at pkamdar@umich.edu or Annemarie Howse at ahowse21@gmail.com if you would like to help. There will be a logistics meeting on December 16 at 3:00 on Zoom for all volunteers.

Suggested donation - \$15.00

Pay by cash or check at the door.

Christmas Choral

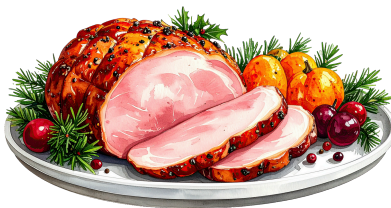
Performance on Sunday, December 21

Please contact Dawn Swartz, our choral director, by text (313-204-0060) if you are interested in joining our Interfaith chorale. Chorale members will determine rehearsal times.

The Interfaith Chorale will be performing on December 21 during the regular Sunday service.

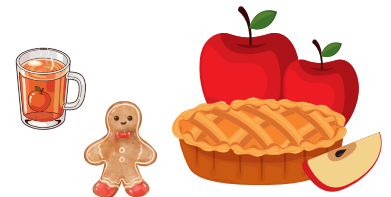


2023 Chorale - Dave Bell, Andy Walker, Dawn Swartz, Bethany King, Marice Clark, and Nancy Kingsbury.



ICSG Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner

Thursday, December 25, at 1:00 pm



Ham will be provided by the Caring Committee. Please bring a side dish or dessert.

- Set-up crew will need to arrive at 12:00.
- Guests should arrive by 12:45 for mingling and to find the appropriate space on the buffet line for your shared dish.
- If your dish requires any preparation (reheating, slicing etc.) we ask that you arrive a bit earlier.
- Dinner will be at 1:00 pm.

Please go to mealtrain.com/7886zn or use the QR code to sign up and let us know what you will bring and if you would like to assist with set-up and/or clean-up.

There will also be a signup sheet at the Center near the greeting station and welcome table.





A Conversation With Gold

by Peggy River Singer

Gold shows itself to me as a human-sized, vaguely comma-shaped nugget gleaming from every aspect of its surface

which seems to be constantly shifting. Its energy is smooth, powerful, welcoming, and benign.

When Gold speaks, its energy momentarily surrounds me with warmth and joy, which is withdrawn when the speech has ended and is re-established with the next words.

Gold: Your thoughts about requesting this speaking have become known to us. It is a pleasure to combine our awarenesses in this manner. The energy you are feeling is from what you might call the heart-song of all the Gold Folk. All of them – every atom and molecule and spiritual entity of gold – are listening and joining in this conversation.

Peggy: Thank you! I've read that "gold is formed during massive cosmic events like the collision of neutron stars or the explosions of supernovae. It was delivered to Earth billions of years ago by a heavy bombardment of meteorites, embedding the gold into the planet's crust over time." (Wikipedia) Was this experience chosen by your people, or by Creator?

Gold: Creator saw the potential for how we could be of service to your world, and we were eager to assist. It was necessary for us to experience what you've described, but we felt no pain or discomfort as you think of it; it was actually quite exhilarating.

Peggy: What form did your people have originally, and where did you live?

Gold: We existed as individual physical particles, and we lived in The Great Between (open space) and traveled wherever we wished, often in groups or swarms. Many of us continue to follow our traditional paths and customs today.

You wonder whether we knew how important gold would be to humans when we accepted Creator's invitation. Creator described what our future might look like on Earth, and we decided that an

opportunity to colonize a world that would benefit in so many ways from our presence should be accepted.

Peggy: You mentioned being of service to Earth. Will you please describe what that service includes?

Gold: Stabilizing, purifying, and balancing energies; and moving energies to where they are needed.

Peggy: What kinds of energies do you work with?

Gold: Gravity, magnetics, all those energies that cooperate to help keep the planet stable in its physical expression.

Peggy: When gold is taken from the earth in great quantities, how does that affect your activities?

Gold: Remember that a great part of our work involves balance. Our manipulations might take billions of years, but the balance is maintained.

Peggy: Can your people work in the past and/or the future in order to assist these manipulations and the overall balance?

[pause]

Gold: Creator has explained to us your concept of linear time. We do not inhabit that kind of reality, but yes, it can be described as "reaching out to the past or the future". Allow me to show you...

Against the black vastness of Space, I see the Earth moving steadily through its orbit while colorful streams and bursts and waves and pinpoints of energy are in constant motion around it, and ribbons of energy flow to the planet and away from it in all directions. I start to feel queasy and a bit dizzy, so the image is withdrawn.

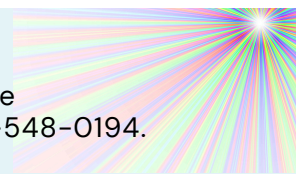
Peggy: Thank you for sharing that with me! My people treasure gold for its beauty as well as its monetary value. How do your people feel about that?

Gold: Appreciation is greatly valued in our culture. We take pleasure in being shaped into beautiful objects that are admired and appreciated.

Peggy: Is there anything else you'd like to express today?

Gold: No, we are satisfied.

AUTHOR BIO: Peggy River Singer is a Pleiadian Starseed, Lightworker, all-beings communicator, faerie ally, and lifelong writer. More of her articles and channelings are posted on angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com. To request a session, please call 734-548-0194.



Monster Mash Halloween Party at the Interfaith Center



Khristian Speelman, Diane Gledhill, Norah Reilly, Jamie Clark, and Marice Clark play pass the hot pumpkin



Lyriel Claire, Tarot Reader



Khristian Speelman, Chili Cook-off Winner



Delyth Balmer



Dan Ramsey



Gretchen Leonhardt and Idgie Patterson



Cristo and Parina Bowers



Annie Kopko and Bethany King



Cristo Bowers and Bob Hopkins



Annie Kopko and Parina Bowers



Did you miss our Monster Mash Halloween party? Mark your calendar. The ICSG Holiday Party is just around the corner, on December 19. Details are on page 5.



December Special Events

Sound
ShamanNORMA
GENTILESunday
December 7
4:00 - 5:00 pm

Candlelight Meditation Concert

Enjoy an hour of soothing sacred songs sung in complete candlelight by sound shaman Norma Gentile. Relax as Norma sings ancient songs by St. Hildegard and others, accompanied by Tibetan singing bowls and harmonic toning. This is a time of transformation, rejuvenation and renewal. Bring friends, pillows and blankets if you are coming in person and wish to lie down.



TICKETS: In person-suggested donation \$20.00 (cash/check at the door)

For advance tickets go to: https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=9L56YKGT7N7W



Community Sing with Matt Watroba

Wednesday,
December 10
7:00-8:30 pm

Your donations make this event possible.



Scan for a song
sheet with links
to recordings

Friday, December 12

7:00-8:30 pm

Feel free to bring your own
instrument if you have one.

Cafe 704 presents ...



Saturday, December 13
7:00-9:00 pm

A Jazzy Little Christmas in two parts:

- During the first portion, stellar jazz musicians Will Bennet on piano, Steve Ragsdale on guitar, Pete Siers on drums, Paul Vornhagen on sax and Marlena Studer on vocals will perform lively renditions of holiday tunes.
- The second half of the show will include a community sing-along featuring Christina Morales Hemenway, Eleni Kelakos and others inviting us to join in singing our favorite holiday tunes!
- Bonus! Since December 13 is the day Scandinavian countries celebrate St. Lucia, we'll have our very own Danish exchange student, Thea Sundergard, singing the traditional Saint Lucia song while arriving with candles in her hair.

** Visit our Holiday Craft Themed Artisan 704 before and after the concert in our social hall. Local crafters will offer jewelry, fiber arts, truffles, and more.

Tickets: \$10.00-\$20.00 (sliding scale). If attending in person - pay at the door (cash or check only). Doors open at 6:30. If attending on Zoom - please purchase tickets online at <https://interfaithspirit.org/cafe-704-coffeehouse/>

What Are You Doing on the Longest Night of the Year?

Come celebrate with us as we sing songs of peace, hope, love, and joy sure to lift your spirit!



Saturday, December 20
7:00 pm

Led by the Merry Solstice Band
featuring Lori Fithian, Jean
Chorazyczewski,
Eric & Mary Fithian, Linda Teaman,
and Tom Voiles.

(Donations to the Interfaith Center are always appreciated)

**FREE, but space is
limited. Use QR Code to
reserve your seat or go to
<https://rsvp.church/r/pl4u8kl2>

