



Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication

Call for Board of Trustees Candidates

Are you interested in helping to shape the future of The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth? The Nominating Committee invites members of our community to consider serving on the Board of Trustees. Board members serve two-year terms, and this year there are four open positions.

If you would like to contribute your time, perspective, and leadership, please submit a letter of interest by March 15 to be considered for election. For more information about board service, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee:

Bob Hopkins, Community Member at Large
(rhopkins@comcast.net)
Rev. Delyth Balmer, Administrator/Associate Minister
(delyth.balmer@interfaithspirit.org)
Lance Clark, Board Chair (studiosaluki@yahoo.com)

Annual Meeting & Board Elections

The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 29, from 1–3 p.m. This meeting will include our Quarterly Conversation in Community (QCC) and the election of Board members.

Voting for new Board members will open on March 16 and conclude during the Annual Meeting on March 29 at 2 p.m.

Participation in the election is open to ICSG members. If you are not yet a member and would like to take part, membership is simple—just complete the form available at the welcome table or on our website under Helpful links Become a Member.

We encourage you to attend, stay informed, and take part in decisions that help guide our community's direction and shared priorities.

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Spiritual Spring Cleaning

by Linda Gilchrist



It's soon to be that time of year when we open the cupboards, clean out the junk drawer, dust off the shelves, and clear out the cobwebs. Spring cleaning! But what about your inner world and soul? Springtime, being the season of renewal and rebirth, is a perfect time to clear out the spiritual cobwebs too! Here are some suggestions to get started:

- Set some time aside to reflect inwardly. Are there resentments you are harboring? Past disappointments still weighing you down? Are there relationships that do not serve your higher good, bringing you negativity or feelings of being "less than"? Do you have aspirations left untended?
- Clear these out! Forgive where you need to, set clear boundaries with those who bring you down, or if needed, let them go. Learn to say no to things or persons who bring negativity. Prioritize what truly matters to you.
- Make space for spiritual growth. Practice meditation, prayer, healthy habits and healthy eating, getting out in nature, laughing and enjoying yourself, cultivating your interests. Surround yourself with those who bring light into your life. All these things will help you open the door to spiritual growth.
- Practice gratitude. Keep a list, either mental or written, of all the things you are grateful for. Maybe try journaling.
- Give back. I like to remember Jimmy Carter's words: "My faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I can, whenever I can, with whatever I have for as long as I can to try and make a difference."

I hope you like my ideas for spiritual spring cleaning! I personally liken them a lot to one of my favorite holidays, Yom Kippur. While not the same exactly, Yom Kippur, known as the Day of Atonement, involves inner reflection, righting wrongs, spiritual growth, and goals for the coming year. I am sure there are many similar practices in all faiths. In any case, happy spring cleaning, and I wish you all a year full of promise, renewed faith, and love!



Interfaith Raspberries

by Rob Fagerlund

Fruits are pretty amazing. They come in so many different shapes. Oranges, pears, bananas, raspberries, strawberries, kiwi — they all have their unique and individual shapes.

This is a true story.

Once I was eating a small bowl of raspberries. I was struck by the number of bumps on each individual raspberry. I looked up raspberries, and what I learned was fascinating.

Those raspberry bumps are called drupelets. Every drupelet contains a seed. 

I wondered, then, how many drupelets are in a raspberry? I selected an average-sized raspberry and took it apart. In an average-sized raspberry, there are 87 drupelets. Then I got out my magnifying glass and studied the drupelets. Like they say about snowflakes, no two drupelets are identical. Each one has something unique about its shape that distinguishes it from all the others. One drupelet is a little more square than it is round. One is a little more round than it is square. One is round, but has one flat side. One is square but with one round side. One has a dimple. And so on.

I then realized that, having taken all of the drupelets apart from one another, I no longer had a raspberry. I had a mess.

So, what can I learn from this mess before me?

We are drupelets. We each have a seed of greatness within us.

We are not meant to be identical. We are individuals, unique and distinct from one another.

We are parts of something greater than our individual selves. Without each other, we are a mess. We were meant to come together, work together, trust and share, and love one another. Our unique individuality is not a detriment to our coming together and becoming something greater than the sum of our drupelets — er, parts.

Namasté, Drupelets.



NAMASTE



We Are Interfaith

by Don Digirolamo

Have you noticed the electronic display outside the classroom at the Interfaith Center? The “We Are Interfaith” section features rotating photos of people in our community, paired with words and phrases that highlight their interests and unique qualities.

Have you ever met someone at the Center several times and still found yourself searching for their name? The display might be the best “cheat sheet” ever! As each photo gently crossfades into a word cloud of that person’s name, interests, and inspirations, it offers a natural icebreaker and insight into what shapes their life and perspective.

Remember, someone may be trying to recall your name, too. If you are a member or a regular attendee of the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, please consider introducing yourself on our electronic bulletin board. Share a photo along with a few words or short phrases that reflect your interests, passions, or spiritual path. It’s a simple way to connect and become more involved.

(Please note: the information displayed here is not published or available outside the building.)

If you’d like to participate, contact Don Digirolamo at dondidge@gmail.com, and he’ll help you get started.

Easter Sunday Potluck

Sunday, April 5
after the service

We hope you will join us
Please bring a dish to share



Ham provided by the Caring Committee



Ministerial Miscellany Do We Know Our Purpose?

by Rev. Annie Kopko

I am pretty sure we all have many opportunities to explore different purposes for our lives. One way to know whether something is part of our life's purpose is to ask ourselves, Does this doing and being feel right? Am I really alive with this choice? I should add that there are some struggles along the way.

I think we are here to dance with joy for life. As I face challenges, especially physical ones right now, I want to say, "Please just let me dance!" Well, maybe that sounds too easy, but easy is not a fact; it is an attitude. As I face challenges, I surrender to the feelings in my reaction. I can say, "Good grief, what next?", but I always look for something amusing about the situation. It will not necessarily help with a solution, but I feel better laughing on my way to solving the issue.

One of our major purposes is to face every challenge that comes our way, I mean, every challenge we have attracted to ourselves, sometimes for known and sometimes for unknown purposes. We need challenges, really need them, and we should never disparage their presence in our lives. Our challenges show us repeatedly how resilient we are, how emotionally strong we are, how much our health can be affected by our thoughts, how wise we can be, and the depth of our willingness to become, increasingly, the Love and Light that we truly are.

Because of what seem to be frequent challenges, I am asking myself, and listening for answers, "Tell me how I can do better." Perhaps it is more about accepting changes as they accompany our challenges. Or perhaps it's about understanding the illusory nature of all things that can and do change and accepting the nature of the Divine Love that accompanies us on all our adventures and doesn't change.

If you are feeling good most of the time about what you have and do for yourself and others, then I would say, life is good!

Please enjoy all the opportunities our Interfaith Community offers to you to enhance your life purpose.

Many Blessings,

Annie

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

March 01 - Lance Clark

March 03 - Celeste Hasty

March 06 - Larissa Stenzel

March 07 - Janet Fry

March 13 - Diane Glatter

March 13 - Cecilia Sikkenga

March 17 - Amy Feger

March 20 - Cynthia McNabb

March 21 - Bonnie Dede

March 23 - Tommie Parker

March 24 - Edie Lewis

March 25 - Chase Dority



Haiku from Dexter

by Barb Fisher, Sandy Hill,
and Cooper Holland



*Blowing snow
Swirls and dances
Dusting the still
sleeping ground*



Ernestly Speaking

by Janet Somalinog

For March, I offer the words of Ernest Holmes directly after the publication of his book, *Science of Mind* in 1926. The magazine, *Science of Mind*, and the Institute of Religious Science followed the next year (the same year my house was built).

WE BELIEVE in God, the Living Spirit Almighty; one, indestructible, absolute and self-existent Cause. This One manifests Itself in and through all creation, but is not absorbed by Its creation. The manifest universe is the body of God; it is the logical and necessary outcome of the infinite self-knowingness of God.

WE BELIEVE in the individualization of the Spirit in us, and that all people are individualizations of the One Spirit.

WE BELIEVE in the eternality, the immortality and the continuity of the individual soul, forever and ever expanding.

WE BELIEVE that heaven is within us, and that we experience it to the degree that we become conscious of it.

WE BELIEVE the ultimate goal of life to be a complete emancipation from all discord of every nature, and that this goal is sure to be attained by all.

WE BELIEVE in the unity of all life, and that the highest God and the innermost God is one God. We believe that God is personal to all who feel this indwelling presence.

WE BELIEVE in the direct revelation of truth through our intuitive and spiritual nature, and that anyone may become a revealer of truth who lives in close contact with the indwelling God.

WE BELIEVE that the Universal Spirit, which is God, operates through a Universal Mind, which is the Law of God; and that we are surrounded by this Creative Mind which receives the direct impress of our thought and acts upon it.

WE BELIEVE in the healing of the sick and control of conditions through the power of this Mind.

WE BELIEVE in the eternal Goodness, the eternal Loving-kindness and the eternal Givingness of Life to All.

WE BELIEVE in our own soul, our own spirit and our own destiny; for we understand that the life of all is God.

Declaration of Principles
Dr. Ernest Holmes
Science of Mind, October 1927

If you have any questions regarding these points, do not hesitate to reach out to me at jsomalinog@gmail.com

Caring Conversations

Presented by the Resolution Committee

Layla Ananda, Janet Fry, Craig Harvey, Annie Kopko

Join us on Sunday, March 1, at 1 p.m. (following the potluck) for an hour of exploration focused on skillful means of communicating with one another in these highly polarizing times, when fear levels may be rising, and we are tempted to protect ourselves through judgment rather than compassion.

We are often most effective at influencing change—within ourselves, with others, and in our environments—when we approach potentially volatile situations from a grounded, calm place. Learning to distinguish between perceived and actual threats can help us maintain a sense of safety and clarity.

During this session, we will reflect on what it means to feel safe physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. We will also explore effective communication practices and introduce practical tools for navigating challenging situations.

Additional discussion sessions are scheduled for April 5 and May 3, both Potluck Sundays. We anticipate continuing these conversations in the months ahead, with an emphasis on skill building, nonviolent communication, and managing difficult interactions.

Please stay tuned for further details!





Saint Patrick and the Fae Folk of Ireland

by Peggy River Singer

This popular missionary saint is best known for introducing Christianity to pagan Ireland during the 5th century AD. I thought it

would be interesting to ask the Irish Fae (*aes sidhe*) for their viewpoint on the massive cultural changes resulting from Patrick's work, which disrupted ancient relationships between humans and the many species of fae folk.

Peggy: Did Patrick follow pagan beliefs as a young man?

Fae Emissary: No, he was born into a Christian family, but belief in the fae folk was the cultural norm in his part of the world at that time.

Peggy: Did any fae folk accompany Patrick throughout his life?

Emissary: Yes, starting at his birth, because our seers knew of the future to come—paganism to be replaced by Christianity—a few fae guided Patrick to incorporate certain elements of paganism into the new religion.

Peggy: Was he aware of those fae companions?

Emissary: No, they kept themselves well cloaked and were very subtle in their suggestions. An example is Patrick's "inspiration" to use a three-leafed shamrock to represent the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit instead of the traditional pagan "triple goddess" (Maiden, Mother, Crone). Both belief systems emphasize the power of three, which is an element of many religions.

Peggy: The arrival of Christianity must have caused huge energetic changes echoing through the timelines that would have felt painfully discordant to fae senses. In the millions of years of fae/human relationship, is this the first such upheaval?

Emissary: No, of course not. We could all see the changes developing with the new beliefs, and we understood that this particular big change was inevitable according to the workings of fate and the woven strands of history, so we envisioned the weaving of a new fabric of time and events.

Peggy: *Now I am in the center of a vast, flat, pearly-white plain stretching out into the distance in all directions. From my vantage point, I can see thousands of scenarios in action, like microscopic theater productions.*

Emissary: This is the Plain of Possibilities. Our greatest seers can study and select the most likely outcomes for any situation. They do not cause a possibility to become reality; instead, they seek an energetic beacon that carries the power to become reality when all aspects match together.

Peggy: Can the possibilities be affected or altered in any way?

Emissary: No, they are protected from any form of interference from lesser beings.

Peggy: So, the seers' personal preferences are not involved?

Emissary: No. This has always been, and must remain, a neutral or objective process.

Peggy: Did the fae feel excluded from the flow of all these changes and events?

Emissary: Not at all. It took hundreds of years for the new faith to replace the old ways that have always been strong in Ireland and are still respected today; so it was a very gradual process. Our role was to step back into our secret places and maintain our ways of life and lovingly preserve what really matters until the wheel of time once again brings fae and humankind together openly as equal partners in caring for the Earth.

Peggy: What else would you like to share today?

Emissary: Great events are taking place that call attention to the needs of our homeworld. All is happening as it must happen in the grand scheme of things, regardless of the appearance of random chaos. We look forward to renewed friendships. Farewell.

Note: This photo shows an ancient "fairy fort" on the property of my family's ancestral farm in County Monaghan, Ireland. Peggy



Peggy River Singer is an all-beings communicator, faery ally, and lifelong writer. She dwells in a funky little apartment on the enchanted shores of Ford Lake in Ypsilanti, where she teaches fae folk how to use and share Reiki to help bring more joy and healing into the world. More of her articles are posted on angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com. To request a communication session, please call 734-548-0194.



March Special Events

Community Sing with Matt Watroba

Wednesday, March 11 7-8:30 pm

Many know Matt as the voice of folk music in Michigan for his work with WDET Detroit Public Radio... he is committed to inspiring the world to sing... one town at a time.

\$5.00-\$10.00 suggested donation

Your donations allow us to continue to host this event



Cafe 704 presents ... Spirit Singing Band

Saturday, March 14 7-9 pm



Lori Fithian, Sam Clark, Kath Weider and Dan Bilich

Led by vocalist Kath Weider & band members
Lori Fithian, Dan Bilich, Sam Clark, and friends

Tickets: \$10.00-\$20.00 (sliding scale)

If attending in person—pay at the door
(cash or check only)

Doors open at 6:30 pm

If attending on Zoom—please purchase tickets at
<https://interfaithspirit.org/cafe-704-coffeehouse/>



Spring Equinox
PAGAN CHANT SING-ALONG

Sunday, March 15 5:30 – 7 pm

Led by Nora Farley

Come celebrate the balance of day and night, and the beginning
of spring with music from Earth-based spiritual traditions.

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

All ages, spiritualities and music abilities are welcome.

donations appreciated

Scan for a song sheet
with lyrics and links
to recordings



Drumcommunity Drum Circle with Lori Fithian

Saturday, March 21 7-8:30 pm

Lori brings her collection of hand drums and percussion toys so everyone attending
has something to choose from. Children of all ages, including those well into their
90's, enjoy the energy that is produced when they join the Drumcommunity experience.

Donations to the Center are appreciated

