



Spiritual Light Center

Newsletter--September 2013

MESSAGE FROM BILL

Dear SLC Family

This past Sunday we gathered for our Annual Membership Meeting in the Fellowship Hall. I was deeply impressed and surely blessed to be in the midst of such a motivated and dedicated family ready to roll up their sleeves and tackle the critical issues facing our community. We made decisions on some very important issues, and everyone came together in unity, clearly led by Spirit and a vision of who we are to be. We decided to put the sale of our building on hold for the indeterminate future to allow us time to consider the wisdom of selling our space. We also looked squarely and bravely at our financial circumstances and made decisions aimed at reducing expenses and better increasing revenue. We will suspend costly newspaper advertising for now and put that money to better use reaching specific target groups through other less costly channels. We also made decisions on how to effectively reduce the significant expense of our weekly speakers, without reducing the quality of our spiritual input. I am extremely grateful for the wisdom and support that was poured forth from the fine, diverse group of people who made the effort to come, share, and vote. I saw it as very clear evidence that the future of the Spiritual Light Center is in good hands and that the Spirit of our Creator is moving through us, helping us co-create a bright, blessed, and sustainable future.

Each one of us is an author endowed by our Creator with the power to write the story of

our own life as we see fit. We as a family, a community, have begun a new chapter in the continuously evolving story that is the Spiritual Light Center. That story will be written and told as we choose, based on the decisions and contributions each one of us makes toward that story. In my own mind's eye I see it at this point somewhat like a Phoenix rising beautifully from renewing fire. Not that we have experienced destruction, but that we have grown from experiencing uncertainty and change. There is no life without such experiences, and there certainly cannot be growth or progress without learning from and responding to occasional issues that make us think and pray. I saw us respond with wisdom, prayer, and a spirit of unity, and I was and am grateful to be part of the family and the ongoing story that is the Spiritual Light Center. I foresee us writing many more exciting and blessed chapters to our story in the years to come.

Many Blessings, Bill Groves, President

OUR VISION STATEMENT

The Spiritual Light Center is a peaceful and joyful fellowship of individuals, centered in love, dedicated to the God within, and honoring the many paths to truth.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We seek to develop our highest selves by continuous sharing of spiritual ideas, in an environment of unconditional love and respect for others.

ONGOING EVENTS in Fellowship Hall

Every Tuesday at 5:00 pm - Join our insightful group as we watch a selected film of a spiritual nature, followed by discussion to develop our evolution. Afterward we choose a restaurant and go out to eat!

Every other Thursday, September 5 & 19, at 5:15 pm- Please join us for our meditation group led by Dr Richard Kimball. He begins with an informative discussion on the practice of meditation followed by walking and then sitting meditation. Call Richard at 371-3425 for details.

Every Thursday at 6:30pm - Come to a group discussion studying the workbook of A Course in Miracles. This has a powerful message, expertly led by Arthur Cataldo.

Last Sunday of each Month - Join us following our Sunday Celebration for a pot luck lunch. Bring a covered dish and join us for food and enjoyment.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

September 1 & 8, 11 a.m.

Rev. Christina Bowman, an ordained Unity Minister and wedding professional, was a regular at our center and we're very grateful to have her back. She'll be speaking two weeks in a row on "My Spiritual Inheritance".

September 15, 11 a.m

Rev. Barbara Jefferys is a well known and loved Science of Mind minister in her recently organized center in Sylva. We don't yet know her topic, but you can bet it will be dynamite.

September 22, 11 a.m.

Jimmy Landry is an accomplished spiritual musician who has performed with the likes of David Crosby, Stevie Ray Vaughn, and Richie Havens. He will provide us a sermon in song.

September 29, 11 a.m.

Rev. Barbara Ross is a writer, healer, and transition counselor. She is coming from Tennessee to speak on How to Understand our Spiritual Guides, Angels, and Masters.

Our October Speakers are yet to be confirmed due to recent scheduling changes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Saturday Sept. 21, 4 p.m. We're having a Big Thank You Party! This is to welcome our new board members and honor the outgoing members. BYOB and come to the fellowship hall prepared to have a good time. For info or to lend a hand call Kay Smith at 369-8741.

Sunday Sept. 22 1:30 p.m. Mountain Light is having their Autumnal Equinox gathering at the Community Center. Our own Bill Groves will be speaking on "Who Is the Light?". This will look at the nature of the Divine and it's reflection on us. All are welcome!

WE ARE OPENING OUR OWN STORE!

SLC is proud to announce that we are currently arranging sections of our fellowship hall to open our own metaphysical store and resale shop. No name yet, but how about "Too Woo Woo For You Metaphysical Book and Gift Shop". I like it! We will sell items on consignment or donated, including books, jewelry, gift items, decorative items, art, household goods and crafts. We really need your good, saleable donated items (no clothing please). We plan to be open Thurs, Fri, and Sat 11-5 and Sunday 12-4. For further info contact Martie Taylor at 828-342-7382.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PRESIDENT.....Bill Groves
VICE PRESIDENT.....Kay Smith
SECRETARY.....Millard Deutsch
TREASURER.....Linda Ramsey
VICE TREASURER.....Arthur Cataldo
TRUSTEE-AT-LARGE.....Raymond Braziel

SPIRITUAL LIGHT CENTER INFORMATION

80 Heritage Hollow Drive, Franklin, NC 28734
Right behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow
828-371- 3065
slcfranklin@frontier.com
www.spiritualightcenter.com

The Power of Stories

OSA story is a place of freedom, potential and possibility. This is true of the stories we hold about ourselves as well as of the stories that we hold in common as an organization, an institution or a nation. We all have stories about ourselves that diminish us, stories we sometimes believe for years which are not true. Often these stories rob us of our strength and our potential. However our stories can certainly empower us, give us courage to face hardship. Perhaps it may be time to rewrite our own story, and so create for ourselves a new future.

One of the oldest Wisdom stories is about change, a story from the 14th century. It offers a somewhat different viewpoint. This story tells us that in the Beginning the world was whole, but that at some point in the history of things there was a great accident which scattered the wholeness of the world into an infinite number of tiny sparks of wholeness. These sparks fell into all events, all organizations and all people, where they remain deeply hidden until this very day. The story goes on to say that the whole human race is a response to this accident. We have been born because we can discover and uncover the hidden spark of wholeness in all events, all organizations and all people...we can lift it up and strengthen it and make it visible once again ... and by doing so we can heal the world back into its original wholeness. So restoring the wholeness of the world is not only a function of our expertise, it is also a part of our birthright as human beings. We have the power to further the wholeness of things just as we are, with our listening, our belief, our encouragement and our love.

So perhaps change is less about fixing a broken world and more about uncovering hidden wholeness in all events, all organizations and all people and remembering our personal power to make a difference. Everyone and everything has in it a seed of a greater wholeness, a dream of possibility. Perhaps what we once saw as “broken” or “lacking” might just as easily be seen as the growing edge of things ... a place to be valued and nurtured.

By Rachel Naomi Remen, MD (contributed by Arthur Cataldo)

Stories from the Divine

☞ "Laws as such do not make people better," said Mulla Nasrudin to the King; "they must practice certain things in order to become attuned to inner truth. Following laws resembles inner truth only slightly." The King decided that he would make people observe the reality of truth. He would make them practice truthfulness.

His city was entered by a bridge. On this he built a gallows. The following day, when the gates were opened at dawn, the Captain of the Guard was stationed with a squad of troops to examine all who entered. An announcement was made: "Everyone will be questioned. If he tells the truth, he will be allowed to enter. If he lies, he will be hanged." Nasrudin stepped forward. "Where are you going?" "I am on my way," said Nasrudin slowly, "to be hanged." "We don't believe you!" "Very well, if I have told a lie, hang me!" "But if we hang you for lying, we will have made what you said come true!" "That's right: now you know what truth is - You have made your truth by your own belief."

Idries Shah

☞ A Master would insist that the final barrier to our attaining God was our name and concept of "God." This so infuriated the local priest that he came in a huff to argue the matter out with the Master. "But surely the name 'God' and our beliefs about him can lead us to God?" said the priest. "It can," said the Master calmly. "Then how can a thing help and also be a barrier?" The Master said, "The donkey that brings you to the door is not the means by which you enter the house."

Anthony de Mello, Jesuit priest

☞ A Mystic returned from many days of prayer and meditation in the desert. "Tell us," the people said, "What is God like?"

The mystic wondered just how he could ever tell them what he had experienced in his heart while in the desert. Can God ever be put into words? He had no choice but to tell them something that was so convoluted and literally impossible, so inadequate, that they would have to do as he had done and go into the desert to experience God for themselves.

Alas, however, that is not what his hearers did. Instead they seized upon his words, turning them into a sacred text or an infallible doctrine. Then they imposed it onto others as a creed or a set of laws. They even proclaimed that it was necessary to hold it if one wants to be "saved". They began to persecute and to kill those who would not consent to their teachings. They went to enormous efforts and great costs to spread their various interpretations to foreign lands. Some even gave their lives for their cause.

The mystic was sad. "It might have been better," he thought, "if I had said nothing at all."

Bishop John Shelby Spong (contributed by Dr. Jim Swanson)



Long Ago, a land was ruled by a king named Canute. Like many leaders and men of power, Canute was surrounded by people who were always praising him. Every time he walked into a room, the flattery began. "You are the greatest man that ever lived," one would say. "Your highness, there is nothing you cannot do," someone would smile. "Nothing in this world dares to disobey you." The king was a man of sense, and he grew tired of hearing such foolish speeches.

One day he was walking by the seashore, and his officers and courtiers were with him, praising him as usual. Canute decided to teach them a lesson. "So you say I am the greatest man in the world?" he asked them. "O king," they cried, "there never has been anyone as mighty as you!" "And you say all things obey me?" Canute asked. "Absolutely! The world bows before you, and gives you honor." "I see," the king answered. "In that case, bring me my chair, and we will go down to the water." "At once, your majesty!" They scrambled to carry his royal chair over the sands. "Bring it closer to the sea," Canute called. "Put it right here, right at the water's edge." He sat down and surveyed the ocean before him. "I notice the tide is coming in. Do you think it will stop if I give the command?" His officers were puzzled, but they did not dare say no. "Give the order, O great king, and it will obey," one of them assured him. "Very well. Sea," cried Canute, "I command you to come no further! Waves, stop your rolling! Surf, stop your pounding! Do not dare touch my feet!" He waited a moment, quietly, and a tiny wave rushed up the sand and lapped at his feet. "How dare you!" Canute shouted. "Ocean, turn back now! I have ordered you to retreat before me, and now you must obey! Go back!" And in answer another wave swept forward and curled around the king's feet. The tide came in, just as it always did. The water rose higher and higher. It came up around the king's chair, and wet not only his feet, but also his robe. His officers stood before him, alarmed and wondering. "Well, my friends," Canute said, "it seems I do not have quite so much power as you would have me believe. Perhaps you have learned something today. Perhaps now you will remember there is only one King who is all-powerful, and it is he who rules the sea, and holds the ocean in the hollow of his hand. I suggest you reserve your praises for him." The royal officers and courtiers hung their heads and looked foolish.

Some say Canute took off his crown afterward and never wore it again. **James Baldwin**

In Ancient Times, a wise king had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the king for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way. Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the king indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us never understand. As we struggle to remove each obstacle in our path, we uncover great wealth through the experience and effort.

Author Unknown

Nasrudin heard that there was a banquet being held in the near-by town, and that everyone was invited. He made his way there as quickly as he could. When the Master of Ceremonies saw him in his ragged cloak, he seated him in the most inconspicuous place far from the great table where the most important people were being waited on hand and foot. Nasrudin saw that it would be an hour at least before the waiters reached the place where he was sitting, so he got up and went home. He dressed himself in a magnificent sable cloak and turban and returned to the feast. As soon as the heralds of the Emir, his host, saw this splendid sight they started to beat the drum of welcome and sound the trumpets in a manner consonant with a visitor of high rank. The Chamberlain came out of the palace himself, and conducted the magnificent Nasrudin to a place almost next to the Emir. A dish of wonderful food was immediately placed before him. Without a pause, Nasrudin began to rub handfuls of it onto his turban and cloak. "Your Eminence," said the prince, "I am curious as to your eating habits, which are new to me." "Nothing special," said Nasrudin; "the cloak got me in here and got me the food. Surely it deserves its portion?" *Idries Shah*

There was once a wise man who lived simply. His spartan food habits reflected this. He had a friend who, being a sycophant of the king, lived in great luxury. One day this friend called on the wise man while he was eating. Looking at the food, the friend said, "My friend, if you can please the king like me, you will be free from your wretched food." The wise man smiled and replied, "My friend, if you can be pleased with this simple food, you can be free from the wretched job of pleasing the king." *Author Unknown*

His Master Spoke, "Every word, every image used for God is a distortion more than a description." "Then how does one speak of God?" asked the disciple. "Through Silence" he replied. "Why, then, do you speak in words?" wondered the disciple. At that the Master laughed uproariously. He said, "When I speak, you mustn't listen to the words. You must listen to the Silence." *Author Unknown*

A Hermit Was Meditating by a river when a young man interrupted him. "Master, I wish to become your disciple," said the man. "Why?" replied the hermit. The young man thought for a moment. "Because I want to find God." The master jumped up, grabbed him by the scruff of his neck, dragged him into the river, and plunged his head under water. After holding him there for a minute, kicking and struggling to free himself, the master finally pulled him up out of the river. The young man coughed up water and gasped to get his breath. When he eventually quieted down, the master spoke. "Tell me, what did you want most of all when you were under water." "Air!" answered the man. "Very well, then," said the master. "Go home and come back to me when you want God as much as you just now wanted air." *Author Unknown*

