



Spiritual Light Center

Newsletter—March 2014

MESSAGE FROM BILL

Dear SLC Family,

Certainly one of the main things that originally drew me to the southern Appalachians is the stunning beauty of these mountains. The lush, verdant softness that envelops me as I walk through the hills is so very healing, comforting, sensual. It is said that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I'm sure there is great truth in that statement, but there are some things I imagine would be seen by almost anyone as simply beautiful. A rose in full bloom. A colorful bird courting his mate. The glory of a brilliant sunset in the deserts of the Southwest.

A well-known Native American saying is the call to "Walk in Beauty". All my life I have felt a strong urge to seek out and surround myself with what I sense as beautiful. Surely that is why my first major in college was art and why to this day I love making stained glass windows and photography. My house is a veritable museum of things that reflect beauty to me. In beauty I sense the radiant presence of the Divine.

It is not only art, nature, music, or colors that are beautiful. Beauty is not limited to poetry or a well-crafted phrase, and most certainly not to a lovely face or shapely body. To me the most wondrous and profound example of beauty is found in our behavior and community.

Within the company of a group of friends coexisting in harmony and unconditional respect and kindness toward one another I find the most beautiful experience I can think of. There is a healing balm that comes from sensing the unmistakable peace, warmth and comradery flowing from those who have chosen to join in fellowship without judgment or criticism. I am grateful for the community of the Spiritual Light Center. There I have found the healing presence of unconditional love. It is my hope and prayer we might nurture that beauty within ourselves and become an even greater source and beacon of that divine grace and energy. May it radiate throughout our beautiful mountain home. By living this way we truly Walk in Beauty.

Many blessings to you,
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 the Fellowship Hall

Every Tuesday at 5:15 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!

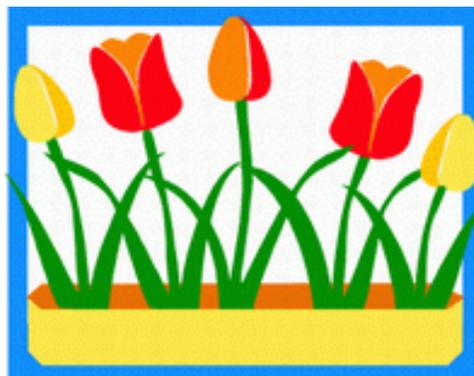
Every other Thursday, March 6 & 20, at 5:15 pm- Please join us for our meditation group led by Dr Richard Kimball. He begins with an informative discussion on the practice of meditation followed by walking and then sitting meditation. Call Richard at 371-3425 for further details.

Thursdays at 6:30pm come join us for our **book study**. We're reading The Sermon on the Mount by Emmett Fox. This book is filled with wisdom and has spurred some very lively discussion.

We're Celebrating St Paddy's Day!



Saturday, March 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. Bring finger food and your favorite beverage. We'll make a toast or two and enjoy each other's priceless company. There's GOLD at SLC!



UPCOMING SPEAKERS

March 2, 11 a.m.

Barbara Brady, an Interfaith Minister, and Grief Recovery Specialist from Asheville, will be returning to share with us on "The Illusion of Control".

March 9, 11 a.m.

Carolyn Buttram is an inspirational humorist, author, lecturer, and professional photographer coming from the Atlanta area. She is a wonderful and humorous speaker whose topic is "I'm Not Dead Yet". Come and enjoy!

March 16, 11 a.m.

Carol Harrison, a professional animal communicator, shamanic practitioner, and Reiki master returns to speak on "Let Go of Fear—Embrace Oneness".

March 23, 11 a.m.

Rev. Barbara Jefferys, our good friend and Science of Mind Minister from the Open Door Center in Sylva, is back to speak on a special *secret* topic you must come to hear.

March 30, 11 a.m.

Rev. Frank Kish, from the Center for Creative Thinking in Waynesville, another good friend and Science of Mind Minister, comes to share on yet another *secret*, special topic.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STORE MANAGER SANDY FRARY

We are actively preparing to open with our regular store hours the beginning of April and have just contracted with Sandy to manage what has proven to be a successful venture. Sandy has owned and operated a similar business in Franklin and comes with considerable skill and recommendations. She's a certified gemologist with a sunny disposition! **Our store continues to be open after each Sunday service or scheduled event in the hall. WE STILL VERY MUCH NEED YOUR DONATED AND CON-SIGNED ITEMS FOR SPRING INVENTORY!** We'll help you bring them if needed. Prepare to be dazzled come our spring grand opening!

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PRESIDENT.....Bill Groves
VICE PRESIDENT.....Kay Smith
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TREASURER.....Linda Ramsey
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SPIRITUAL LIGHT CENTER INFORMATION

80 Heritage Hollow Drive, Franklin, NC 28734
Right behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow
828-369- 3065
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www.spirituallightcenter.com



To Walk in Beauty

In beauty may I walk, all day long may I walk
Through the returning seasons, may I walk
Beautifully will I possess again
Beautifully birds, beautifully joyful birds
On the trail marked by pollen, may I walk
With grasshoppers about my feet, may I walk
With dew about my feet, may I walk
With beauty may I walk
With beauty before me, may I walk

With beauty behind me, may I walk
With beauty about me, may I walk
With beauty all around me, may I walk
In old age, wandering on a trail of beauty, living again, may I walk
It is finished in Beauty, it is finished in Beauty.
~ Excerpt from the Navajo Night Way Ceremony

When my Lakota (Sioux) friends and I say our good-bye, whether on the phone or in person, we part with the comment, "Walk in Beauty." This means--"Beauty before me, beauty behind me, beauty beside me, beauty below me, beauty above me -- I walk in beauty."

Walking in Beauty is walking in -- Joy, Bliss and Safety. It permeates our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual bodies.

In Incan shamanism, the South direction of the Medicine Wheel contains four practices. These are non-attachment, non-suffering, non-judgment and beauty. Pondering this for a moment, you can understand that if we practice non-attachment, non-suffering and non-judgment, we will arrive at a space where we can walk in beauty.

"Walking in Beauty" is more than a feeling or emotion. It is a state of being that can best be described as grace. In this state of grace called beauty, we accept that everything is--neither good nor bad, and we live in a universe that exists on our behalf.

As we examine the other three practices of the South in depth and honestly examine our lives, we realize that our attachments often lead to a great deal of unhappiness. There are many such attachments--to people, careers, money, romantic love, outcomes, possessions, religious practices, keeping up with the neighbors--the list is endless.

Such attachments, at some point, inevi-

tably lead us to refuse or are unable to accept what is. Non-acceptance eventually leads to pain and suffering, and we fall from grace and forget we are surrounded by beauty. By practicing non-attachment, we eliminate the source of the majority of our suffering. In this life, pain is inevitable--suffering is optional. The key to practicing non-suffering is to stay in the moment, stay in our "Beauty."

To help you to "Walk in Beauty," ask yourself some questions. What beliefs do I need to reevaluate/change? Who in my past does an annoying person/situation remind me? What does this person do that I don't like about myself? What do I need to change in myself to change my experience? What are my own choices?



While much of our suffering comes from regret, remorse and guilt about the past or fear of possible future pain, judgment also plays a very large part. It is astonishing how much time and energy we

spend on judging. Not just judging others, but judging what is good and bad about our own lives and the world around us from our limited perspective. Our judgments are all based on comparisons made with past pain or pleasure. Our judgments not only keep us from the grace of beauty, but they keep us locked in time. When we are locked in linear time, we cannot experience our divinity. One of the greatest joys of walking in beauty is the consistent experience of our own divinity.

☞ "Let beauty be what we do there are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the earth." ~Rumi

☞ "Often what prevents us from seeing beauty in the outside world is the fact that we fail to see beauty in ourselves and other people." ~Anthony J Ciorra

☞ "Beauty is everything that one regards with love." ~Christian Morgenstern

☞ Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. ~1 Peter 3:3-4



May we remind each other to Walk in Beauty and stay consistently connected to our own divinity.

Dorothy M. Neddermeyer, PhD, author and motivational speaker



☞ "The Beautiful stirs passion and urgency in us and calls us forth from aloneness into the warmth and wonder of an eternal embrace." ~John O'Donohue

☞ "The painter Henri Matisse had been visiting the great Pierre-Auguste Renoir weekly at his studio since Matisse was a young boy. When Renoir was attacked by arthritis, Matisse began to visit him daily to deliver food, brushes and paints, always trying to convince the master Renoir that he also was an artist. "One day, noting that every stroke made Renoir groan in pain, Matisse could not contain himself and said,

'Grand master, your work is already vast and important. Why keep torturing yourself like this?'

'Very simple,' Renoir answered him. 'The beauty remains; the pain passes.'
~Paulo Coelho

☞ "Every experience of beauty points to infinity." ~Hans Uhr Balthasar

☞ *When Beauty Will Save the World* By April Schmidt

I come from a tradition that highly values truth—even believes in it as an absolute. In the church where I grew up, we were not taught to speak what was pure or lovely, but only what was true. The standard of integrity in my childhood household was not to speak beauty, but to tell the truth. **Stories weren't spurned, but they weren't particularly valued, either.** If we didn't have something good—meaning: edifying—to say, we were instructed to say nothing at all. School presented some esteem of beauty because I took literature classes, but most teenagers are too embarrassed to publically experience beauty. So the lessons remained, at most, informative.

I've always valued beauty inasmuch as it represents order. Composition, balance, and a mathematical conception of elegance are avenues on which I can understand and appreciate visual art. I love those water lilies, and aesthetics help me say why without sputtering about “just adoring lavender right now” or having to use the word “pretty.”

Late in the spring I got a sticker that said, “Beauty will save the world.” The sentiment—from a Christian literary journal—was suspicious enough to be good for posting on my—Baptist college—office door. I felt scandalous, like a philosophy professor.

Honestly, I'm as uncomfortable saying “Beauty will save the world” as I am saying “Love is enough.” I generally don't believe that something that involves so much emotion could be trustworthy—or

sufficient. **But, unsettling as it is, beauty's capacity to include emotion makes it more complete than truth.** Truth has little room for emotion. But a thing cannot be beautiful unless it is true.

My tectonics are shifting. And in the process I'm getting more frustrated with fundamentalist faith, politics, and 1970s architecture. A workplace without landscaping suddenly seems brutal, and churches without art hollow. I recognize the depth of his spirit when a friend tells me **he's lost his faith, not by some rational contradiction, but because he no longer sees it as beautiful.**

And, ironically, in a culture saturated with image, I'm finding in this belief in beauty **a release from bondage.** There's no longer any reason for me to strive toward the images of my neighbors' supposedly organized, organic, glamorous, or important lives, or for me to compete with the pictures in Cosmo. They aren't beautiful. They can't be, because they're not true.



☞ “I find one vast garden spread out all over the universe. All plants, all human beings, all higher mind bodies are about in this garden in various ways,

each has his own uniqueness and beauty. Their presence and variety give me great delight. Every one of you adds with a special feature to the glory of the garden.” ~ Anandamayi Ma