



Spiritual Light Center

March 2022 Newsletter

President's Message **A Spirituality of Pregnancy**

While you carry the receptacle of another life within you, the soul who will be born into that body visits it—some more frequently than others—and more frequently as the pregnancy progresses.

This other soul consists of energy without form, as we consist of energy and form. This other's energy does have an effect upon your own energy when you both are near to each other. They (your souls) blend and lose distinction to the point that neither of you can tell where one ends and the other begins. Thus, your own energy seems magnified, yet different from before. Still, you become so very accustomed to this dual energy that when the child is born into life and that soul-energy leaves you to reside within the new body, you feel as though you are missing something: You are lost; you are incomplete—you are crazy for feeling this loss!—when you are holding this new gift of life in your arms!

Yet you are not crazy in the true sense of being and of life. And depression is just a name given to you by those who will not understand what you cannot say: "I was part of the complete melding of two souls—of the sharing of pure sweet love—and now I feel bereft and alone."

It takes time to get yourself back into balance again—to re-acquaint yourself with yourself alone. Things that once gave you great joy may not seem

as spectacular anymore, but as you remember yourself again, the miracles will again hold great wonders and joy for you.

When you feel lost within yourself—as though your skin is too big for you—look into your child's eyes and see their soul—the one they shared so completely with you. Know that the love you share is still there. Then imagine yourself looking out through their eyes at the world around both of you. Sense their thrill, happiness, and excitement—their joy and wonder—and become recharged and balanced. Then also feel these feelings (thrill, happiness, excitement, joy, wonder) redoubled within you. And give this renewed energy, along with your love, back to your child. Because they also miss your former joining and need to find, with you, a joining of your souls within the physical realm.

Much love, Rhonda Murphy

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 AT SLC

Every Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. Join our group in the Hall for **Movie Afternoon!** We choose something fun to watch and afterward pick a place and go out to eat!

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

March 6, 11 a.m.

Tom Wright has a massive list of accomplishments including a presidential commendation, licensed Science of Mind practitioner, extensively trained in Toltec Shamanism and martial arts, and well published. He will share with us on “**The Most Influential Positive Thing You Will Ever Do.**”

March 13, 11 a.m.

Nancy Gnecci has a 30-year background in teaching and counseling, and has trained extensively in Energy Psychotherapy modalities. She is an EFT Founding Master and a Licensed Professional Counselor with a Master's Degree in Education. Nancy has a private Energy Psychotherapy practice in Demorest, GA and works

virtually with people from all over the world. She'll share on “**Cutting the Ties that Bind – Healing Karmic Connections**”. Let's welcome her to SLC!

March 20, 11 a.m.

Rev. Tom Tyre has been a student of Buddhism and Yoga for over forty years. He is the director of the Ubuntu Choir of the Great Smoky Mountains, and a fiddle and guitar player who composes choral music for Ubuntu choirs around the globe. He formerly worked for the Unitarian Universalist Association. He will share on “**What's So Great About the Buddha?**”

March 27, 11 a.m.

Rita de Maintenon is a retired educator and speaker who now lives in Fletcher, NC where she is a full-time fiber artist. Rita is a folk artist in a tradition that she learned, not from long-ago immigrant ancestors, but during her own childhood in Frankfurt, Germany. She will share with us on “**Great Expectations: What is Expected of Us and What We Do With It.**”

**Happy St. Patrick's
Day
Thursday, March
17th**

SPIRITUAL LIGHT CENTER INFORMATION

80 Heritage Hollow Drive, Franklin, NC 28734
Right behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow
828-369-3065 slcfranklin@frontier.com www.spirituallightcenter.com
our Zoom link is <https://tinyurl.com/SLC-zoom-meeting>



On March 13 at 1:30 p.m. following her Sunday talk, Nancy Gnecci will give us a workshop on EFT – Emotional Freedom technique (Tapping). Claim your Emotional Freedom! In this short, 90 min-2 hour, workshop you will be invited to explore a user-friendly protocol that has the potential of relieving stress, supporting the immune system, clearing old trauma, and coming into alignment with soul's purpose. Nancy is an EFT founding master we are grateful to

has with us. A Love Offering is requested.

Trusting the Universe is on Our Side

The Universe is on Our Side by Bill Groves

I know I am far from alone when I say I've experienced some really difficult things in my life. And I still do. Another thing I can say for an absolute certainty is that those difficult moments are not the definition of my existence. I am grateful for each and every one of those moments because they have molded me into the person that is sitting here clacking away on this keyboard late at night. It is my gratitude and joy I feel that defines me as I exist in the presence of All that Is. I have made a decision to embrace every moment of my life, the difficult ones and the joyous ones, because they make me who I am. I am grateful that I am and for who I am. I'm a child of the Universe, and I have come to believe the Universe loves who I AM as an extension of it. The Universe is most definitely on my side!

How dare I make such statements, and stand by them? Ultimately it's a choice I've decided to make. I could say that life is a harsh teacher, that it's not easy. I suppose I could say that, but to what end? Would it make life easier if that were my viewpoint? It definitely would not. How I feel and the ease by which I walk through this life is the product of my focus. How do I choose to sum up my existence as I sit here, not long after my 70th anniversary of life on this planet? Well, one thing is for sure, it is flatly and utterly illogical that I should still be here at all. I've had an unusual number of experiences that by all reason should have snuffed my existence from the surface of this earth. But they didn't, and I can't say for certain why. I can only live in gratitude that I am still here to write this. It is that gratitude that defines me.

So now I'm faced with a choice. One is rooted in fear. The other is rooted in love. I could certainly choose fear and say "Look at those painful things that that have happened to me. Surely another could befall me at any moment and this time I'd be done for!" Yeah, I could do that, and the result would be I'd live in anxiety and fear. I'd exist in a *defensive* relationship with the Universe. I'd have made my decision that the Universe is not on my side. I've had enough difficulties in my life that I could defend such a choice; I could decide to live a lifestyle of fear. The ultimate question I have to ask myself is quite simple. Is that the life I want to live?

I have an alternative choice, and it is equally logical. I can take a look and realize not one of those difficulties or near death moments ended my life on this earth. I'm still a healthy human being with every reason to look forward to a joyous existence. Instead of fearing further hardship I can recognize that each difficulty has given me the opportunity to see God's grace pulling me through. In each tough moment I've met the

love of God face to face. I have sensed that re-creative, redeeming Presence building me into the stronger, more trusting person I was always meant to be. In each experience of my life I have been given a further reason to love the Divine Hand that has healed me and led me through them all. Now I know for certain there is *nothing* to fear. I do believe I can face with peace and trust whatever life gives me. In each experience I face, I see the Face of the Divine in Whom I can entrust my very existence.

To say "I love and trust God" is a mode of existence by which I choose to encounter each of life's experiences. It is also the way I choose to define myself. This Universe has been a teacher who has taught me there is no logical reason to fear. If I really want to use flawless logic, I'll do the math. I've not only survived 100% of all the difficult days I've had, but each of them has made me more trusting, loving, and stronger (after some needed processing). The odds are obviously in my favor! This gives me good reason to trust the Universe and live without fear! And, may I say, if you're reading this you can say the very same thing. It's your choice, but it's clearly a very logical choice.

I'm suddenly aware I'm speaking from my masculine side, one based on logic and reason. But it is not that alone that brings me to this point of peace and trust in All that Is. My intuition is in play as well. I close my eyes or look out at the landscape and I feel the swirl of the Universe flowing within me. What I feel is undeniably clear. I feel a loving embrace. I am instinctively aware that the Universe which brought me into existence is Love Itself. It is that Love of the Divine that has led me to this point. It has gotten me through each experience with brilliant precision. It is that sacred "knowing" that assures me beyond doubt that there can be no cause for fear. In my heart of hearts I know I can securely embrace that Divine Love and be at peace knowing that very same Love will embrace me back, for all of eternity. It has never and cannot ever abandon me nor leave me alone. That is because this Universe, the Divine I call God, dwells fully within me and is me. God cannot abandon Itself.

Let's listen to the words we say. Those words will tell us if we are living in fear, or in the Love which builds utter and complete trust. Sometimes I hear things that give me the impression we see the Universe as a soulless, heartless machine which will turn around and smite us if we unintentionally say the 'wrong' thing. Let's say someone humorously says "Honestly, if I don't fix that torn carpet I'm going to trip over it and break my neck!" And someone else jumps in with eyes bugged out and exclaims "Don't put that out into the Universe!!" What does such a comment say about the Universe? It clearly says the Universe will react to your unintentional humor by harming you. That does not sound at all unconditionally loving to me. If my intention is light hearted humor, I believe the Universe will laugh with me. God *knows* my heart. It's where God dwells. If I speak in joy, even when I'm being silly, it is the intention of my heart that returns to me. God is the creator of laughter. And I must say humor, even good natured satirical, wry humor makes me laugh. I see no reason to fear it, or to ever fear God Who dwells in me and is me as Love and pure Consciousness.

I've had enough hard knocks to know that they aren't evil. Every time hard knocks came a' knockin', all it did was give me a choice. Choices are nothing to fear. What you choose is up to you, and at this point in my life I don't fear myself either. If I make a so-called bad choice, I'll learn from it. As a result I'll eventually turn around and choose again for the better, for my benefit. But, what if something difficult comes along and it doesn't seem like it's going to go away, even if I ask in just the right way? I personally am encountering that with neuropathy, nerve damage that causes constant pain in my feet which can at times be fairly extreme. How can I embrace such a thing, or should I?

St. Paul wrote about experiencing this exact thing which he called his "thorn in the flesh". I think his response to it was profound. In 2 Corinthians 12:7 Paul shares his experience which I'll paraphrase. Essentially Paul says he tended to be boastful and arrogant. So, to keep him humble he was given a thorn in his flesh, some painful thing that would help keep him in a prayerful state and not be so prideful. He did NOT like it one bit! He said he begged God three times to take it away. Well, that didn't work. Whatever the problem was, it remained chronic. Paul says God told him "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect *in* your weakness." In other words, God told him that his hardship was a vehicle of grace. It was there for a reason, to help make him grow into the person he was meant to become, so it was not going to be taken away at that point. Paul responded with "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, hardships, and difficulties. For when I am weak, it is then that I am made strong."

I'm pretty sure Paul was no spiritual slouch and he says he begged God not once but three times to fix his painful problem. Bottom line, whatever he was suffering was not some evil to be exorcised. It was a sacred gift he was meant to grow with. In that particular case, Paul was meant to embrace that issue just as he was to embrace God, because his "thorn in the flesh" was God dwelling within his body. Sure I will eventually exit this body and dwell in utter bliss in Spirit. In the mean time, while I'm an embodied human on this earth, I want to ask my Creator for patience while I grow. I want to embrace each experience as if in it I were meeting God face to face, and honor those experiences as the Sacred Ground upon which I stand. If it's painful, sure, I'll pray in whatever way that it may pass me by. I'm *not* a masochist! I don't like pain! But I will remember the format of prayer that Jesus used when he was in the flesh. He certainly asked for hardships to pass him by, but he always amended each prayer with the suffix "not my will, but Your will be done." There's an important message to be had there. Difficult experiences are not to be feared or run from. If we do, we're running from God.

I don't know where we get the notion that because we are indeed God's Divine Presence on this earth we are not supposed to experience anything painful. Or that if we do, it's God's job to fix it each and every time. Our Universe isn't a loose cannon we need to control into submission by our words. We are a unified part of a Whole we can peacefully surrender to, if we choose. The Universe unconditionally has our back.

Even if I make a destructive decision and suffer the consequences, this is never punishment. I am being provided the necessary experience I need in order to grow into the perfect being I actually am. Sometimes I need a little shake up in order to wake up.


And of course the last difficulty we must all face is death. I find it very hard to cry, but it was in facing the death of my loved ones that I was always brought to helpless tears. Whether it was my family or my pets, I found it dreadfully hard to say goodbye. So how do I face the inevitable coming of death, especially when it's at the door? First, remember you're still human. That means you will grieve. This is not a lack of faith. Goodbyes are hard. Even if it takes us a while to accept it as we face death with others, and eventually with ourself, death is a sacred reality. It is not an end of life, but a divine part of it. Just like each and every experience we have, death is a Holy Ground upon which we will stand and come to know the Presence of the Divine within it. The Grim Reaper is merely God in disguise coming to bring us Home. It's bittersweet gift, often hard to accept.

My friend St. Francis is my model in this area. He had chronic, painful diseases. Instead of rejecting the difficulty he always welcomed it as family, calling it "Brother Pain". To him, pain was no different than any of the rest of Creation around him, the fish in the stream, the animals on the land, each one was the presence of God in his midst. Every step he took and every experience he encountered was Holy Ground. It was there he met and embraced God. As he patiently found his mortal life coming to an end he reached out to welcome "Sister Death". Another integral part of the family of life.

I do not want to ask people to pray for me as always seeing me in flawless health and not dying. Sure, I don't want any unnecessary pain, and I want as long a life as I need on this earth. But the absolute bottom line is that I am grounded and rooted in the belief that the Universe is on my side. I'm gonna get all that I need because Love is all there is. If I didn't believe that, I'd fear pain and death. I'm enough of a Buddhist to know that resisting their inevitability is where suffering comes from. I want to eat healthy, exercise, and keep my brain active so I don't invite unnecessary pain or illness. Doing that will likely prolong my life here on this physical plane. But this is NOT my home! I'm a sojourner in this land. I don't know how many times so far I've crossed the great divide, so why get worried about doing it again? Sister Death is family. She won't come until the time is right. At that time I want to welcome her once again.

Many people say they sense the veil between life and death is getting progressively thinner. I hear children are being born with full memory of their past lives. Perhaps death and rebirth are soon to become not so much a total forgetting, and we will be able to build fully upon our past life experiences. Even though I cannot say this is a certain fact, it does give me yet another clear basis of hope that reduces even further any unease I may have regarding my future passings through the veil.

Our joy in this life rests upon one thing, and one thing only, as I see it. Do I or do I not believe that this Universe is, by its very nature, a friend Who on my side. Do I meet every experience as an encounter with the Divine. Do I know that my every step, regardless what I encounter, is on Holy Ground. If so, I will no longer live in fear. I will have made the choice to dwell in Love. And I will know I already exist in Eternity.

 Faith is believing that the universe is on our side, and that the universe knows what it's doing. Faith is a psychological awareness of an unfolding force for good, constantly at work in all dimensions. Our attempts to direct this force only interferes with it. Our willingness to relax into it allows it to work on our behalf. ~*Marianne Williamson*

Universe is on our side **by Suma Varughese**

One of the daunting truths about life is that we are essentially alone. We come alone into the world, and depart alone from it. Right through life, even while embedded in a network of relationships, we are alone with our grief and joy, our confusion and clarity, our success and failure. No one else can feel what we feel, and no one else can walk in our shoes.

That is the down side. The up side is that we are not really alone. The Universe is on our side. We are tenderly looked after. If you do not believe this, look back on your own life and recall the number of near accidents that were averted, the problems that got resolved through someone's interventions, the calamities we fearfully anticipated which dissipated into nothingness. There is a force that watches over all of us, and ensures that only what is impossible to avoid because of our karmic baggage, is meted out to us. Grace mitigates much more of our karmic debts than we can possibly know.

I myself cannot recall the number of times I have slipped and would have fallen, had not some mysterious force righted me up. At such times, I always think that a legion of angelic beings must have come rushing to my help. As a naive 16-year-old on her way back home after her first term in a Mumbai college, I found myself stranded penniless in Nagpur halfway between Mumbai and Orissa, where my family lived. What could have been a tragedy ended with a benevolent station master lending me the money to board the train to my destination. My mother attributed this to the hand of God and I agree. The more we walk towards God by aligning ourselves to the laws of life, the more strongly we will become aware of how truly we are supported and loved. God is always constant. We have the choice of drawing closer and experiencing Her presence powerfully, or pulling away and muffling the connection.

All seekers have the marvelous experience of walking along a coherent path that apparently seems to unfold before them. Where once life seemed random, confusing and directionless, one now gets a distinct sense of being led along in a particular direction. Everything that we look for in the spiritual or even mundane realm mysteriously manifests. Knowledge and insights come to us from books, conversations, or even from a piece of paper floating in the air. Synchronicities abound. We think of someone and they call us. We desperately need a lawyer, and behold, a lawyer friend who we had lost touch with materialises out of the blue. In his book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Paramahansa Yogananda shares how his brother Ananta, tests his ardent faith in God by sending him and his friend to Mathura with no money and no return ticket. In a striking example of God's providence, he was taken to an ashram where a banquet meant for some royal visitors who did not turn up, was offered to him instead. Later, a young man appeared, took them around the town, bought him and his friend tickets back home, and pressed some money into their hands as well!

So walk towards God and you will find that although challenges may still arise, you will also be guided and supported. Slowly, you will grow in faith and trust and eventually repose in surrender — that wonderful state when you are so sure that all that comes to you comes for your highest good, that you no longer fret and worry, but instead simply flow through life unresistingly. You are now on God's side, and His grace will submerge you!

SLC Community Pages

Recycle Reuse Repurpose - Fast, Free Potting Benches

~by Sue Ditch

You don't need to spend hundreds of dollars and lots of weekend time crafting a potting table for your garage or backyard. You probably have the makings of a very serviceable storage/potting area around the house. Try one of these ideas.

An old desk. Top with shelves made with stacked bricks and scrap boards.

Old cabinets. Are you or your neighbor remodeling the kitchen? Save a chunk of kitchen cabinet with the counter still attached, and anchor it to the garage or tool shed wall. If you have any upper cabinets left over from the project, mount one of them directly above it.

Stacked milk crates. Stack six crates, on their sides, into two towers of three crates each. Wire them together for sturdiness. Top with a piece of scrap lumber bridging the towers.

A Tribute to Beverly Valentine Allen

She is ~ by Russ Bertow

She is Magic. I feel transported to tranquility whenever I am in her presence.

She is Knowledge. Her experiences have enlightened, informed and educated me.

She is Joy. Her face just delights my heart when it is in full smile.

She is Fearless. She has shown me how to face the most adverse of obstacles with strength and dignity

She is Laughter. She has the ability to make my cheeks hurt so much from laughter that I almost wet my plants.

She is Strength. When I need it most, she provides it like no one else can. I hope I do the same for her.

She is Acceptance. She doesn't expect anything in return for her kindness.

She is Kindness. She gives it freely and randomly.

She is Genuine. And boy is it refreshing.

She is Truth. You won't ever get a line of bs from her,

She is Honest. She always has been as long as I have known her.

She is Gentle. When she needs to be.

She is Tough. She can handle things like a pro.

She is Compassion. Her heart is wide, her table is long and her fence is low.

She is Welcome. From the moment I met her I felt like family.

She is Cohort. On this adventure I call life.

She is Bold. She teaches me to be the same.

She is Light. She shines bright enough so that her light and radiance illuminate my soul and heart and show me the way from darkness.

She is Teacher and Mentor. From her I have learned grace in life at any stage comes from All of these this she is.

She is Loved. I couldn't imagine her not in my life.

She is my sister from a different mister.

She is one of my best friends.

She is you.

She is Bev.



If you would like to make a contribution to SLC we now have a PayPal account to make that easier. <https://tinyurl.com/SLC-donate> This link takes you to a page where you can easily donate one time or a recurring donation. You can also mail a contribution directly to us at **Spiritual Light Center, 80 Heritage Hollow, Franklin, NC 28734.**

Financial Report:

12/31/21 Opening balance	\$10,173.02
Income	+\$2,053.05
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>-\$1,388.17</u>
12/31/21 Ending balance	\$10,837.90