

Peace, Let It Begin With Me!

*“God grant me the **SERENITY** to accept the things I cannot change; **COURAGE** to change the things I can; and the **WISDOM** to know the difference.”*

– Reinhold Niebuhr

This is a prayer that many of us recite on a regular basis. It is such a joy to see the answer to this prayer being realized in our lives as individuals and in our community.

Acceptance of what is, is often interpreted as passive resignation—the horrible situation or circumstance I am experiencing is out of my control so I must learn to live with it. At first this may be the only way for us to come to peace about a situation, and it is a start.

However, my experience of this prayer is not passive at all. In fact, it moves me right into action—full participation with the Universe to improve the situation. When this prayer of serenity is answered in me, I accept the situation as it is without any of my additional stories, without my conditioned thinking. Then, I courageously move through the fear of not knowing the outcome, not having an answer of how it ought to be, allowing the Divine to manifest. It is typically not the way I think it ‘should’ be but rather how it is.

We all have an innate motivation to constantly try to improve our lives—we let go of our need for circumstances to be a certain way in order to have peace. As this beautiful prayer shows us, the starting place is SERENITY. Motivation then arises from the COURAGE that comes as a natural outcome of peace. And WISDOM is



**By Reverend
Brad Miller**

the light that brightens the situation.

Just as our sight moves from monochrome vision at the light of dawn, we see clearly what we need to as the light of wisdom dawns in our consciousness.

As we allow the answer to this prayer to manifest in us, we naturally lay aside our

differences and the innate desire to be of benefit arises. We find compassion when we see someone who is still caught in beliefs of separation, for example someone who thinks a violent act will bring peace. We may even find compassion for ourselves when we see this in our own thinking. We see that the beliefs we took on as a small child simply aren’t true, that our conditioned thinking of how things are or “should be” is merely a mirage.

You might ask, how do I realize my true nature as peace?

First, we must find the willingness to be wrong. As A Course In Miracles teaches, do we want to be right or happy? A simple question to ask ourselves in a conflict is, “Could I be wrong about this?” This simple question gives way to infinite possibilities and opens us up to see things in a new way.

In A Course In Miracles, workbook lesson 34, we are encouraged to say to any conflicting thought: “I could see peace instead of this.” It goes on to say, “Peace of mind is clearly an internal matter. It must begin with

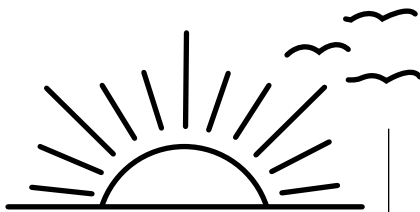
our own thoughts, and then extend outward. It is from your peace of mind that a peaceful perception of the world arises.”

Second, we must make a commitment to peace, a commitment to nonviolence. It has been my experience that the level at which I commit to peace is the same level at which I experience it. If we have a 100% commitment to peace, then we will have 100% experience of peace. It really is an all-or-nothing proposition. It’s like being on a diet and making healthy nutrition choices all day, then right before bed eating a quart of ice cream. It’s the same when we decide for peace all day long, then beat ourselves up for not getting our to-do list done at the end of the day. Commitment to peace comes first, but making the choice to hold to our commitment on a moment-by-moment basis is where we realize the full benefit of our intention.

Our ability to choose is one of the greatest gifts of our human experience, no matter where we are in our experience we are at choice. If we find ourselves acting violently toward ourselves or someone else we can stop and choose peace.

Another key to serenity is to be involved in a supporting community that promotes peace, surrounded with the encouragement to make the choice for peace in each moment.

The Fellowship is committed to teaching and demonstrating peace—individually and as a community. As you read this issue of *Fellowship Voyages*, I encourage you to make the choice for peace! We are here to support each other: **Learning Living Love Together!**



FELLOWSHIP FOR TODAY

Learning • Living • Love
TOGETHER

Sunday Service

5:30 p.m.
2400 E. Lake Lansing Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
(Korean Methodist Church)

Office - Classes - Library

2722 East Michigan Ave.,
Suite 101, Lansing, MI 48912

517-337-4070
info@fellowshipfortoday.org
www.fellowshipfortoday.org

Fellowship Team

Rev. Brad Miller, Minister
revbradmiller@gmail.com
Erin Fry, Associate Minister
erin@fellowshipfortoday.org
Christy English,
Administrative Assistant
info@fellowshipfortoday.org

Steering Committee

President
Denise Wootton..... 230-6188
thewoots@hotmail.com

Vice President
Mark Mandenberg 490-8373
mandenbergm@michigan.gov

Secretary
Sandy Dykins 336-4262
sandydykins@comcast.net

Julia Freije 336-5988
juliakf@aol.com

Cindy Zuker 989-224-8053
zukerfamily@chartermi.net

Gearing Up For Growth

What an exciting time for The Fellowship. We have two new, energetic and visionary ministers. The first phase of our new marketing and outreach mission has been accomplished, including a fantastic



By Denise Wootton
Steering Committee President

new website geared toward community outreach. We have been gifted with a new, state-of-the-art media system. Our Steering Committee leadership is changing. Our teaching center is humming with activity, with many wonderful classes centered

around the Season for Nonviolence. We have made a commitment to, and are gearing up for growth!

Such positive messages. Such positive energy. And yet, in the excitement, there can also be fear. Even the most positive changes can bring up uncertainty over what the future holds for us. Our

challenge is to remember that we can choose to use the feelings that come up around change as opportunities for growth internally, as well.

One way that we can do this is to use a discomfort journal*. Every time we become aware we are uncomfortable, we can write down what we are feeling and our reactions. At the end of the week, we can examine the patterns in our reactions to different emotions. We may find that repeated reaction is our way of making the awkward feeling go away! In our avoidance of our discomfort, we move so quickly away from our feelings, we don't realize what we are losing.

The next time an uncomfortable moment presents itself, we can take a deep breath, lean into the discomfort, and start reaping the rewards of working with our emotions, not against them. And therein, lies real peace.

**From Daneen Skube, Ph.D., executive coach, trainer, therapist and speaker. www.interpersonaledge.com*

'WIP' Toward Peace

I was first introduced to Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication (NVC) during my practitioner training with the United Centers for Spiritual Living. We spent 10 weeks working with the four steps of NVC: 1) to identify what you are observing, without judgment; 2) how you feel about it; 3) what need is behind your feeling; and 4) to formulate a request that addresses your underlying need.

Sounds simple, right? I mean how hard can it be to know what you need and to create a specific request to address the need? Unfortunately, many of us are not skilled at getting our



By Erin Fry
Associate Minister

needs met and as a result we walk around unfulfilled and dissatisfied. Learning Nonviolent Communication is a powerful way to lead a more fulfilled life.

We can use these four steps in working through any situation or experience. Part of the beauty of NVC is

that we can also apply these same four steps when listening to others. Because people are often divorced from themselves, they may not be aware of what they are feeling or needing in a given situation. Using NVC as a listener becomes a gift we give to another—a gift of empathy, a gift of compassion. In fact, Nonviolent Communication



Vola Connelies Nash Bohnett
September 19, 1946 – January 24, 2011

Our beloved Vee made her transition on January 24, 2011.

On February 12, 1999, Vee married the love of her life, Jerry Ivan Bohnett, who survives her. She is also survived by her two children: Andrea Renee' Nash and Edward Earl (Vicki) Nash. Vee was a grandmother of three. She was preceded in death by her sister, Vera.

Vee was an active jazz vocalist, having performed for years at the Lansing Country Club and many private events. She performed at the Lansing Old Town Jazz Festival and for the Michigan Festival. As a professional jazz performer, she sang at Governor Engler's Inauguration; she also performed for the first Martin Luther King Ceremony when the State Legislature declared that the third Monday in January would be a state holiday. The event was held at the Michigan Capitol Building.

She also worked for the Michigan Senate for two decades, and was a Vietnam Veteran. She received the Lansing Community College outstanding alumni award. Most recently, Vee completed her training and was ordained as a minister by the Fellowship for Today. She was a woman of many talents.

Those who knew her well will remember her warm and gracious smile, her laughter, her intelligence, her generosity, her ability to tell a good story, her style, and how she could light up a room. She will be deeply missed.

If you would like to send a note to the family, please address it to: Jerry Bohnett, 370 S. Cedar St., Williamston, MI 48895-1410.

If you would like to make a donation in Vee's name, please consider one of the following: Susan G. Komen for the Cure, www.komen.org; Lansing Community College, Women's Resource Center (WRC), www.lcc.edu/wrc; and Fellowship for Today, www.fellowshipfortoday.org.

is also called "compassionate communication." Personally, I like to call it heart-based communication, because I see it as speaking and listening with the heart.

Interestingly, NVC goes hand-in-hand with Byron Katie's *The Work*. Whenever judgments arise in Nonviolent Communication, we can use *The Work* to evaluate those judgments. Together, these create drama-free living! That sounds like peace to me.

Even after a few years of practicing

Nonviolent Communication I am still learning how to be more compassionate and empathic with myself and others. Seems like I am a "work in progress" (what we used to call a WIP at my old job). During this season for nonviolence, I hope you will join me in our NVC consciousness building groups, workshops on Byron Katie's *The Work*, or any of the many other offerings we have to cultivate peace within ourselves and the world. Thank you for being a part of the progress toward peace.

Fellowship Voyages

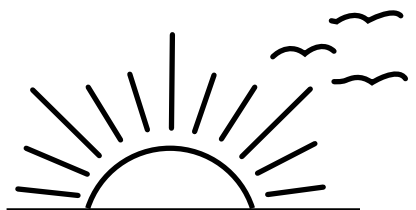
An inspirational newsletter by and for Fellowship members and friends since 1994.

Editorial Team:

- Erin Fry
- Grace Menzel
- Rev. Brad Miller
- Diana Mitchell
- Beth Monteith
- Denise Wootton
- Cindy Zuker

Editor:

Denise Wootton
thewoots@hotmail.com



For current events and time-sensitive news, see **FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS**, distributed via email each Wednesday. To be added to this email list, send your request to info@fellowshipfortoday.org

Shoveling Snow

Reprinted from February/March 2005 Voyages

It is with some hesitation, trepidation, and even embarrassment that I acknowledge my thrill in shoveling snow. I realize shoveling snow is supposed to be a “chore,” “work,” “an onerous job,” and not a thing to love and be overcome with gratitude about. But, I am overcome with gratitude about it. Shoveling snow is one of the times I am most aware of feeling grateful!

First of all, my driveway is small enough that I am not overwhelmed by it. It is doable! Nobody is telling me I have to go out and do this. As a self-directed task, I do it how and when I want. I can shovel when I feel like it. As I don't have to be any place at a certain time, I can shovel whenever I like. I experience this as such a privilege, deep luxury, and self-validating. How fortunate I am to have this luxury with my time. How fortunate I am to have a driveway to shovel. I also have a cozy, warm house to return to after shoveling. Lucky, lucky me!

When I am out there in the cold, flying snow, and blowing wind, I am most aware of how grateful, yes, even happy, I am to be doing exactly

what I am doing. I'm grateful I'm not getting shot at. No matter what time of the day or night I'm shoveling, I feel perfectly safe. I am perfectly safe. I live in a neighborhood where people around me are neighborly and helpful. My community is not a war zone. While shoveling, I am very conscious that millions of people in this country and numerous other countries could not be outside shoveling snow and feel perfectly safe as I do. Again, I feel so fortunate.

Shoveling away, I am very conscious of my body; my wonderful, miraculous body that works perfectly, enabling me to shovel. I enjoy the feel of my arms throwing the heavy snow up on the banks. Even the feeling of tiredness I love; it means I'm helping my muscles to become stronger, and I can feel! It is a joy to me to experience the wonder of feeling... all feeling. Allowing myself to fully feel throughout my body the weight of the snow, the jolt to my body as my shovel catches on rough pavement unseen under the snow, my eyes watering from the wind, the oomph it takes to lift the shovel of snow and throw it on the bank, my

legs strong and holding me up: I am overcome with gratitude. My fingers starting to be cold inside my mittens, how very grateful I am to feel that.

Shoveling snow is for sure one of the times I feel I am fully in the moment, fully living in the now. It absorbs my total body and mind—I experience the wholeness. I especially delight in shoveling in the dark; it heightens my awareness of gratitude. Somehow the night sky helps me get in touch with a larger “out-there-ness,” and being part of that. Sometimes I have to stop shoveling and marvel at the beauty I'm engulfed in and being alive to experience.

I am grateful I have warm clothes, and plenty of them. If I don't put on enough at first I just go inside and layer up more. And, I have warm, waterproof boots. Once again, lucky me!

A couple of years ago one of my neighbors asked if I wanted to go in with her to buy a snow blower. I gave a loud, resounding “No!” I then explained. As we frequently chat, she did have an inkling of my bizarre proclivities.

If you are out driving around anytime of the day or night in my neighborhood, after a snow storm, and see a bundled up person shoveling snow, red nosed, with a big smile ... it might be me.



Peace comes to us in various ways but usually is experienced as an opening, an awareness that starts within. The Oneness Blessing often provides the space in which peace can be experienced. People receiving the Oneness Blessing have a variety of experiences, but most report a sense of calm and spaciousness. Their mind chatter subsides as they feel a flow of unconditional love and Divine grace.

An awakening of our connection with the oneness of everything allows us to deepen our relationship with our loved ones, ourselves, strangers and with our Source.

This spiritual tool supports a state of mind that is more capable of self inquiry, less prone to judgment and

PEACE *and the* Oneness Blessing

By Bob Mitchell

less fragmented and conflicted. Thus, the Blessing can help a person become more prepared for many consciousness-raising processes and practices.

A Blessing given is also a Blessing received, demonstrating to both that giving and receiving are the same.

Local healing practitioner and Oneness Blessing giver, Linda McMahan, reports that, “The Blessing for me has created space in my mind and in that space is the peace which is the Presence.”

If the external world is a reflection of our internal world, then inner peace can create peace in the world. Happy people create a happy world.

For Oneness Blessing schedule and info, see page 11.

Instant Peace

We recently completed a three-month road trip across the entire southern tier of the United States. I drove a van and my husband rode his bicycle.

On one occasion, somewhere around the ninth week on the road, I was waiting for my husband at a checkpoint, and I decided I needed to find my tennis shoes. Now! Sandal weather was over. It was just plain cold outside!

Our van was filled to the gills with more camping gear than you can imagine: food, coolers, coats, paper plates, towels, napkins, wipes, water bottles, souvenirs, tire pumps, spare parts, batteries, coffeemaker, two-way-radios, gps-ipods-phones-battery chargers, trash bags, hand cream, pillows, sandals, shower shoes and much, much more.

"Where *are* those shoes? I saw them three weeks ago just behind the coffee pot box. Where the heck is the coffee pot box?"

Through the process of searching for the shoes, I yelled, "If I have to move that box one more time to get to that bag that's lying on that blanket that's probably covering those shoes, I'll..."

And then I saw the shoes. But I couldn't reach them without climbing into the back of the van and lying on a suitcase that was blocking the way.

"I just can't do this!"

Then I grabbed at them, and almost got them, but not both of them. "Oh my God... I really can't *do* this!!!!"

Then, a miracle happened. I envisioned my ACIM (A Course in Miracles) discussion group and felt what I feel when we are together. Then, I had a new thought, "Of course you can because you *are* doing it!"

Strrretch.

"Got it!"

What had happened was a miracle. What had happened was instant PEACE. And what happened after that was that I was sitting quietly and joyfully when my husband arrived.

Wow. How easy was that?

In an instant, my thoughts stopped inflaming my actions and my actions stopped inflaming my thoughts. What a relief I felt. I had to smile. Suddenly, "Aren't we lucky to be able to have this adventure?" came to mind.

Visualizing my ACIM family reminded me that I am never alone. That image and the feeling that came over me evoked this thought: "I could see peace instead of this.

I could see peace instead of this!

PEACE. Let it begin with me.



By Kathi Proudfoot

Pictured with her husband, Wendell, on his cross-country bike trip.



By Beth Bogue

Nonviolence Technique

After the spree of shooting violence in Tuscon, Arizona, two weeks ago, I was feeling a tremendous sense of anger against Sarah Palin. I felt that her posting on Facebook of a number of Democratic U.S. congressional districts in cross-hair targets, including that of Arizona congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, had created such a climate of hatred that it had likely influenced the young man, who is obviously mentally unstable, to engage in his shooting spree.

I found myself obsessing about her hateful act and also about her numerous incidents of hateful speech. I could not seem to get her out of my head. She seemed to be taking over my consciousness and I knew this was not what

I wanted to happen.

During this same time I happened to find a short statement by Eric Butterworth in my documents on non-violence. He made a reference to "right" consciousness and posed the question: What would I do if I were in my "right" consciousness? Obviously I was in my "wrong" consciousness and I felt that it was "eating me up."

Finally I allowed my intuition to guide me. I began to visualize Sarah with rays of sunshine glowing around her and I sent her my blessing. I am still trying to maintain this image when I think of her. Later I sent her an e-mail: "Dear Sarah, I know that the divine spirit lives in your heart. Let it shine so that you can do the wonderful things you were meant to do." May we all strive to be in our "right" consciousness.

Perspectives of Fellowship members

Fellowship members responded when asked, "How do you find peace?"

Barb Siler

For some years I have said inwardly, "The Peace of God is all I want. I seek His will today." I was mostly clueless on how to actually get to that place of peace. Then I heard at a Gary Renard workshop: "You are Christ, pure and innocent. All is forgiven and released." That resonated with me and I am able to remember and use it often when I experience a negative emotion like dismay, anger or fear. Saying this inwardly reminds me of who I really am, and the purpose of forgiveness while living here on the planet.

Practicing forgiveness in this manner eventually leads me to a place of profound gratitude. I now thank Holy Spirit, the voice for God, often throughout the day. Being grateful in this way brings me to an inner atmosphere of peace and joy. Experiencing these small, momentary events feels like I am walking and talking with God and improving my conscious contact with a power greater than myself and thus "real-izing" a long-time goal.



Lucille Olson

There is a small chapel at Unity Village that I used to go to when I lived there. The energy in that place was so very peaceful and welcoming. I felt as if I were surrounded by angels and I could sense their presence the moment I entered. At the front of the room was a large maroon velvet curtain. Above the curtain in big gold letters were the words, "Peace, be still". The image of that chapel room is indelibly printed on my mind. Whenever I feel I have lost my peace, I recall that image, take a deep breath, and relax while I repeat, "Peace, be still," in my mind. Invariably, I begin to feel like I am in that room again, in the midst of mighty companions, and my serenity returns.

Gary Novak

If I wake up in the middle of the night, or if something is bothering me and I can just feel the anxious tension building, I repeat over and over, "I choose the peace of God." I can feel the muscles in my face and shoulders relax. I can feel my breathing relax. In the middle of the night, when I wake up, I always fall back to sleep in the process of repeating, "I choose the peace of God." I don't think about the problems, I don't think about missing a deadline, all I think about is choosing. Choosing the peace of God.. Over the years, it's been remarkable how it's become a cue for my brain to relax and choose peace.

Joyce Palmerton

I like music so I use music. When I am just having a down day, then music will do it for me. It doesn't have to be just a jivey song I am singing, but it needs to be positive.

Peace



Bob Mitchell

If I have general anxiety that I can't move away from, I close my eyes and breathe. I remember a beach in the Virgin Islands, my happy place, and go there. I meet my inner child, hug him, and play with him, and that takes me to peace.

Christopher Peters

My spiritual practice of peace is the prayer of St. Francis. I incorporate it into my morning meditation, saying, "Allow me to be a vessel of peace." Most days, that becomes my mantra. As situations come up, I question myself and my actions. "Am I being a vessel of peace?" By asking that question, I can be still and move forward in peace. I've learned that I prefer the results I get when I have chosen peace.

Beth Monteith

After years of reciting and reflecting upon the 23rd Psalm, I began turning it around. Instead of speaking it, or hearing it in my 'inner mind' as, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want..." I began hearing it as, "I Am your shepherd, you have no wants...." In other words, I hear it now (and often recite it now) as the Divine One's personal message to me. I hear it as total reassurance from my Creator and True Self. In that mental/spiritual/psychological space of being re-minded of the powerful truths that my shepherd is right here with me, leading me, that "I have NO wants"; that I can "fear NO evil" even in the valley or shadow of death, and so on, I experience uplifting assurance, a sense of "all is well," in other words, PEACE. It's wonderful. The key to experiencing such peace lies in my personal choice to use this practice.

Deb Canja

"Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." A beautiful prayer, isn't it? Our deepest desire is for peace—for ourselves, our families, our communities and our world. Yet, often our lives are not peaceful. Our relationships are stressful, our co-workers difficult, finances tight, health fragile and tragedy can seem to be everywhere. In the face of all of that, how do we begin to really "let it begin with me"?

The answer is easier to find than you might think. In fact, you already have the keys to peace within you. In 1986, in one transcendent moment, the answer was given to Byron Katie and she has spent the last 25 years sharing it with the world. She calls the process "The Work" and it is a way of identifying and questioning the thoughts that rob you of your peace and the peace of those around you. You can experience the happiness of undoing those thoughts and allow your mind to return to its true, awakened, peaceful, creative nature through "The Work."

Everything you need to know is available for free at www.thework.com.

Mary Barth

A practice that helps me reach a sense of peacefulness is to close my eyes and let the words, "Be still, and know that I am God," (Psalms 46:10) resonate within me. The power in this beautiful phrase always takes me to a deeper, calmer place.

Simple Peace

An interview with Elise Harvey, by Cindy Zuker

It's no coincidence that Elise Harvey's computer log-on is "peace elise." Indeed, her lifestyle is the embodiment of peace as much as her name rhymes with it. A self-proclaimed peace activist all of her adult life, this 72-year-old Fellowshipian gladly shares her views and experiences of modeling peace as a service to the world.

Q: Was there a defining moment or experience in your life that set you on the peace path?

Elise: In 1955, when I was 17, Peace Pilgrim came to my college, the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware. She was on one of her walks and she spoke at the college. I told her I wanted to go with her and she said, no, she travels alone (see page 9).

That encounter impacted me in many ways, and since that time I have joined any peace activity that was happening, and if nothing was, I made something happen. I've always lived close to college communities. In every community there are peace groups and each peace group has its own flavor.

This helps me recall some of the wonderful people I've met. Some of my best friends have been peace people. A peace person is someone who looks you in the eye when they speak to you, and they want to know what you want to accomplish and how they can help you with it.

Q: How does your lifestyle reflect your beliefs as an agent of peace in the world?

E: I live simply. It is what I aim for all the time. I love to ask people what simplicity means to them because it really gets them thinking. I've always been very pleased to know people who live simply. I hope I inspire people

by my lifestyle, to live simply.

That's why meeting Peace Pilgrim was so incredible—her life was simplicity personified. The friends of Peace Pilgrim send me a case of her books any time I ask, to give away and share this message. They will do this with anyone for free, but giving them a donation is always nice. (peacepilgrim.com)

Q: How would you describe simplicity?

E: We all have to eat, simple is healthiest. That's why I'm so healthy at 72—I've been eating simple food all of my adult life. This is better for our communities and the world, everything.

Q: I know you've chosen to live without TV. How do you spend your time?

E: When I can't get in the garden, I read and listen to National Public Radio. I go to the library every week or two and look through their new books. I bring home the ones that speak to me.

There's one I came across I even bought, which is very rare for me. It's called, "Disconnect—the truth about cell phone radiation, what the industry has done to hide it, and how to protect your family," by Devra Lee Davis. I bought it to be able to share the information. *I do not have a cell phone!!!*

And NPR is my background company. When I'm listening to an interesting program, I fold peace



cranes. I always fold during Garrison Keillor's Prairie Home Companion.

Q: How did learning to fold peace cranes become such a part of your life?

E: In 1986, back in Delaware, a friend asked me if I would like to teach children how to fold origami peace cranes at a community day activity. She taught me to fold and since that day it has been a cornerstone of my life.

It would be fun to count all the people I've taught to fold. It has enriched my life so much. The sweetest smiles I've ever seen are on a child's face when they succeeded in making a crane. To smile is to feel good, and I've made many children feel good. I've empowered them to make peace with their fingers. And it is a true deep blessing to see the smiles.

When I was about to turn 50, I made myself 1,000 tiny peace cranes that I can wear (40 strings of 25 each, hooked together). I've also made and given 1,000 to the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, Morris Dees (co-founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center), and Elizabeth Kubler Ross, with whom I lived as a cook for her volunteers one summer. It takes a long time to make 1,000 cranes.

You can learn more about the meaning and symbolism around the folding of peace cranes, by looking up the story of "Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes," about a girl



who lived in Hiroshima. The monument erected in her honor is a message of peace instead of bombs. I have a picture of that monument a friend took for me. It is very dear to me.

Q: Do you have a spiritual practice?

E: To be as close to the earth as I can. I'm much more spiritual in gardening season. I feel deprived of the earth in the winter, so I have to talk about it, think about it and look at pictures of gardens.

The sunflower is my favorite flower

because, other than its beauty, it is a symbol of promise. The very thought of a sunflower seed makes me smile. I can hardly wait to get in the garden.

And I've always had sunflower houses in my life (a ring of sunflowers that forms a shelter in the middle), and now my daughter plants sunflower houses for her daughters.

Gardening is my major spiritual practice. To replace the lawn, I planted all native Michigan plants in my front yard.

I find peace in living simply and gardening. That is my spiritual practice.

Peace Cranes Come to Life



**Ben
Townsend**

Ben Townsend may have been a young child when Elise Harvey taught him to fold peace cranes, but it stayed with him. And he refined the art later in life...

"I had a job at a library when I was a student and I would get very fidgety with my hands sitting still. I eventually watched some YouTube videos on origami. There was an endless supply of paper from receipts when people checked out books. I would feed out a little bit of receipt paper, fold a crane, then put the crane in a drawer. After

a while, the drawer was full and I brought them home and used them to decorate my apartment. Eventually, I started using colorful origami paper and the decorations became more complex.

"I feel like folding brings me peace because of its symmetry and vitality. There is something very mathematical about folding cranes, but the result is so organic. You start with a piece of paper that is just an object, but in the end you have something that is alive."



Ben is Fellowship member Gene Townsend's son. He lives in Brooklyn, where long, railcar-style apartments are common. See these photos and more of Ben's art at his blog: <http://homesosurreal.blogspot.com/2010/04/paper-crans.html>

About Peace Pilgrim:

Peace Pilgrim walked more than 25,000 miles across this country spreading her message—"This is the way of peace: Overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, and hatred with love." Carrying in her tunic pockets her only possessions, she vowed, "I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace, walking until given shelter and fasting until given food." She talked with people on dusty roads and city streets, to church, college, civic groups, on TV and radio, discussing peace within and without.

Her pilgrimage covered the entire peace picture: peace among nations, groups, individuals, and the very important inner peace—because that is where peace begins.

She believed that world peace would come when enough people attain inner peace. Her life and work showed that one person with inner peace can make a significant contribution to world peace.



From the booklet, "Steps Toward Inner Peace," by Peace Pilgrim. Learn more at peacepilgrim.org.



By Grace Menzel

A Path to Peace

Reflections on Letting Go

January 30, 2011

A Looking Glass Sanctuary Early in the walk

As I stand on the frozen wetland that adjoins the Looking Glass River, a wisp of wind catches my eye. Undulating across the icy surface, the wind invites the snow to dance. Twirling and swirling upwards they conspire with the sun to unveil a treasure trove of diamonds hidden beneath the blanket of snow. For one magical moment these gems twinkle at me before the snow covers them again. Oh my! Meanwhile, the chickadee, dogwood and willow all stand witness to this gift.

Nature can bring you to stillness. That is its gift to you. When you perceive and join with nature in the field of stillness, that field becomes permeated with your awareness. That is your gift to nature.

~ Eckhart Tolle

January 30, 2011

A Looking Glass Sanctuary Later in the walk

Traipsing down the path worn weeks earlier by work day volunteers, I notice a Queen Anne's Lace donning a fresh cap of snow. This crown so elegantly cradled on the dried arches of her flower, adds a flare to her otherwise drab winter garb.

I accidentally jostle her stem with the tip of my snow shoe. Ever gracious, she gently bows, releasing her crown to its earthly destination. Then she rises up, between here and there, to her newly found position. I am moved by her ease of letting go and her resilience. It is everywhere present in nature— infinite examples of embracing and releasing.

This reminds me of the ease with which the Fellowship embraced the vision to purchase this land as a place to walk in nature, meditate, and pray and to hold in perpetuity for future generations.

After six years of living into that dream, in 2006 we purchased the land that is now known as *A Looking Glass Sanctuary*. Entrusting this treasure to the Michigan Nature Association was truly an act of letting go—releasing it to them, guardians of our vision.

*One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.*

~ William Wordsworth,
"The Tables Turned," 1798

*Look deep into nature, and then you will
understand everything better.*

~ Albert Einstein

February 12, 2011

FFT Steering Committee Meeting Sometime later

Today I will let go of my role as Steering Committee chair—turning over the lead to the capable and wise, Denise Wootton.

A mixture of joy and sadness enfolds me on this occasion. After two years of navigating the sometimes turbulent waters of change at Fellowship, I am emotionally ready to have Denise take the helm. Yet the thought of leaving this committed, hard-working and fun team of leaders who shared this journey with me moves me to tears.

On a spiritual level, I am challenged to let go of my attachment to being "in the know," a sense of importance or maybe even power (ha!) that comes with this kind of position. While there have been abundant spiritual lessons in this process, letting go of the illusion of "knowing" is the real work that will continue long into the future.

Like the Queen Anne's Lace, I offer a deep bow of gratitude to all my dear Fellowshipians for this gift of service in this blessed community. Now I think I will join the chickadee, dogwood and willow to witness what comes next.

In the end these things matter most:

How well did you love?

How fully did you love?

How deeply did you learn to let go?

~ The Buddha

Namasté, Grace



Calendar of Events & Happenings

SUNDAY SERVICE & SPECIAL EVENTS

A SEASON FOR NONVIOLENCE



Jan. 30 – April 4

Peace Perspectives – This portion of our Sunday service during the Season for Nonviolence (SNV) offers diverse points of view from various healers, spiritual leaders and peace activists from throughout the Greater Lansing area.

Vedic Meditation Lecture – On Friday **March 4**, at 7 p.m., join us for a free introductory lecture on Ancient

Vedic Meditation to cultivate individual inner peace to help form the foundation for global peace.

Annual Membership Meeting – Sunday, **March 6**, following service. Stay informed. Your participation and input is important!!

Infinite Connection Therapy – Sunday, **March 20**, following service. This is a wonderful tool you can use during meditation, times of fluctuation in your life, manifesting your desires, or any time you need to connect with your peace and power within.

Peace Concert – On Sunday, **April 3**, we will begin to close the Season for Nonviolence through song. This concert is dedicated to the memory of Vee Nash.

Visioning Peace – Our final event for SNV will be Monday, **April 4**, at 6:30 p.m. Lend your consciousness to create peace in the world.

WORKSHOPS & GROUPS

Held at the Fellowship offices unless otherwise indicated.

Nonviolent Communication Consciousness Building Groups – Sundays at 10 a.m. and Mondays at noon, using Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication Process. Everyone is welcome, drop in any time—through Monday, April 4.

Heartdance for Peace – Sunday, **February 27**, 11 a.m. at the Heartdance Studio. heartdancestudio.com

Chanting for Peace – Wednesdays, **February 23 through March 16**, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Byron Katie's "The Work" – Create peace within. This event will be offered twice: Saturday, **March 12**, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., and Wednesday, **March 30**, 6 – 9 p.m.

Soul Collage for Inner Peace – This event will be offered twice: Wednesday, **March 23**, 6 – 9 p.m., and Sunday, **March 27**, 2 – 5 p.m. Space for 10 people per workshop, so please register in advance.

Tapping for Peace – "EFT" Emotional Freedom Technique, Saturday, **March 26**, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

A Course In Miracles Study Group Schedule:

► Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m., 10th Floor, Boji Tower, corner of Capitol and Allegan. Parking in Tower Parking Garage at Capitol and Allegan will be validated. Facilitated by Beth Monteith & Doug Austin. Call Doug for more information, 517-377-0838.

► Tuesdays, 7 p.m., 2237 Luwanna Dr., Lansing, MI. Call Dan Maynard or Carol Krauz for more information, 517-719-0003.

► Wednesdays, 9:15 a.m., Fellowship for Today office. Call Brad Miller for more information, 517-505-0782.

► Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m., Fellowship for Today office. Call Bill Diedrich for more information, 517-332-0176.

► Thursdays, 7:30-8:45 p.m., Fellowship for Today office. Call Jeff Tombouljian for more information, 517-980-1504.

Oneness Blessing (Deeksha) Schedule:

► Mondays, 7:30 p.m. – Linda McMahan's home, 2520 Devonshire Ave., Lansing 48910. (Mt. Hope & Penn.) Space is limited so please confirm attendance at 896-4822 or email: lindamarie1@comcast.net. Love offering.

► Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., Fellowship offices. Love offering.

► 1st Sunday of each month after Fellowship service, 7:00 pm. For information contact the Fellowship office, 517-337-4070. Love offering.

► For more information about the Oneness Blessing visit: www.onenessuniversity.org

~ OUR SUNDAY SERVICE ~

5:30 p.m.

Korean United Methodist Church

2400 E. Lake Lansing Road

East Lansing, MI 48823

(1/4 mile east of Saginaw on Lake Lansing Road)

Sunday Service Calendar

can be found at:

www.fellowshipfortoday.org

Check out our new website!

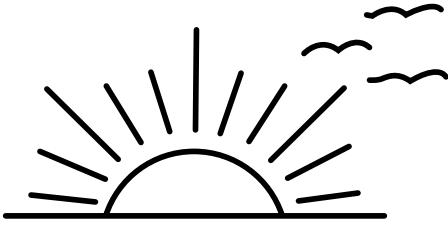
~ FELLOWSHIP OFFICES ~

2722 E. Michigan Ave., Ste. 101,

Lansing, MI 48912

517-337-4070

info@fellowshipfortoday.org



FELLOWSHIP FOR TODAY

2722 E. Michigan Ave.
Suite 101
Lansing, MI 48912

Address Service Requested

Learning • Living • Love
TOGETHER

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lansing, MI
Permit No. 628

*“The most valuable possession you can own is
an open heart. The most powerful weapon you
can be is an instrument of peace.”*

- Carlos Santana

*“There is no road toward peace;
peace is the road.”*

- Mahatma Gandhi