

Learning • Living • Love
TOGETHER

Fellowship Voyages

Volume 15, Number 2 – Winter 2011/2012

The Music Within



**By Reverend
Erin Fry**

My husband once explained to me the growth of the modern singer-songwriter. He told me that back in the day, prior to recordings, there were a select few composers who published music. Other musicians would pay the composers for their sheet music and that was the primary way music was disseminated.

In the 20th century, technology made it possible for artists to write, record and distribute music easily. More and more musicians began writing and performing their own music and the modern singer-songwriter was born. Although singer-

songwriters may be influenced by other musicians, they listen to their own inner wisdom. They rely on their direct connection to Source to create music. They let the music come through them.

This same process is happening with spirituality. In the past, we had to go to specific churches or teachers in order to hear *music* or divine truth. Now we are all waking up and listening to the music and the divinity within ourselves. We are learning that we are all directly connected to Source and divine wisdom is available to each and every one of us. All we need to do is listen.

**Enjoy the gifts of
sound this season!**



This issue of Voyages is dedicated to the gift of sound. We encourage you to listen to the sound of the Divine within yourself and allow its full expression.

Join us during this Holiday Season as we experience our soul songs ringing in the New Year and a New Season of Peace and Nonviolence.



Just some of our Sound and Music Ministry team: (L-R) Gary Novak, Colleen Bethea, Doug Austin, Matt Bliton, Jim Noble, Linda Abar and Lucille Olson



FELLOWSHIP FOR TODAY

Learning • Living • Love
TOGETHER

Sunday Service

5:30 p.m.
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(Lansing Korean United
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Remembering Together



**By Reverend
Brad Miller**

Singing in community is a powerful tool for us as we remember the Truth of who we truly are. Even when we sing lyrics that seem commonplace, like “Row, row, row your boat, life is but a dream,” they can be a reminder, in a playful way, not to take our circumstances and ourselves so seriously. At this time of year, in our culture, we have the opportunity to sing Christmas carols with people we might not even know and yet we feel an immediate connection with them. We also get to see faces light up as we sing together. Could this be the “Light of Christ... shining through”? I think so!

Even more powerful are the times we sing songs in our community with words that teach us Truth principles. One of my favorites is “Spirit am I” found in the Fellowship songbook. The words are from *A Course in Miracles* and the music is by Max Raines. The melody is easy to remember and words just seem to flow. This song, in particular, is so helpful to me. In times that I am lost in my thoughts, feeling separate and alone, this song bubbles up and I hear the words bursting in me. “Spirit am I, a Holy Child of God, Free of all limits, Safe and healed and whole...”

Wow! I am so grateful for the amazing songs we share in community at the Fellowship and the powerful reminders of Truth they have become for me. Through singing with each other, let us choose to experience **Learning Living Love Together!**

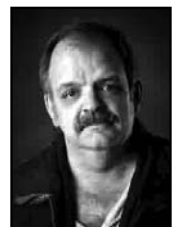
They Who Sing, Pray Twice

St. Augustine of Hippo, one of the brilliant and interesting people who has shaped the history of the Roman Catholic Church, is often quoted as saying, “They who sing, pray twice.” But the actual quote is:

“For he who sings praise, does not only praise, but also praises joyously; he who sings praise, is not only singing, but also loving Him whom he is singing about/to/for. There is a praise-filled public proclamation in the praise of someone who is confessing/acknowledging (God), in the song of the lover there is deep love.”

In this passage Augustine is saying that when the praise is of God, then *something happens to the song* of the singer that makes it more than just any kind of song. The object of the song, in a way, becomes the subject. Something happens so that the song itself becomes Love in its manifestation of love of the one who truly is Love itself.

I go to Midnight Mass at Church of the Resurrection on Christmas Eve every year, and have done so since I was a child. Something about the high ceilings, the stained glass and candles, the procession and the liturgy elevates the spirit of “Silent Night,” “Hark the Herald Angels Sing,” and all the others we sing. It’s more than emotion—it’s God in and as the song, moving in the hearts of people. It’s praying twice.



**By Doug
Kelshaw**

Our Voice —A Tool for Transformation and Peace

We come into this world with the tools we need to journey toward wholeness of body, mind, and spirit. Sound, especially self-created sound, is such a tool. It gives us access to wisdom and knowing. Our voice can heal the body and spirit, yet it weighs nothing, costs nothing, and takes up no space.

In childhood, many of us were denied our pleasure of singing because we did not measure-up to specific standards, so we relinquished our true voice, our personal sounding power.

Finding my voice has been a long journey. A major step occurred in 1992 at a workshop led by Jonathan Goldman, followed by an amazing two-year commitment with Don Campbell and the School of Therapeutic Sound and Music during which I experienced and explored many avenues of sound. The most transformational experience for me was that of toning.

The term was first used in the 1960s by Laurel Elizabeth Keyes in her book *Toning* and she describes it as “an ancient method of healing—the idea is simply to restore people to their harmonic pattern.” Since then, using the human voice as an instrument for healing has become more known, studied, and defined. Now toning is defined as “the sustained, vibratory sounding of single tones, often vowel sounds, without the use of melody, rhythm or words.”

Bypassing language entirely, toning allows us to express our heart and soul directly, quieting the over-active left brain. The practice uses pure nonverbal sound to increase the flow of breath, balance energy flow, release emotion, resolve past trauma and restore harmony to the body-mind system. And it facilitates deep breathing—to fully release sounds we have to expand the belly and diaphragm, thus inhaling more fresh air.

I use toning frequently because it’s easy, it adjusts to time and place, and most importantly, it releases and transforms pain and feelings without any analysis or mental dissection.

Some fundamentals: First and foremost, toning does not require any special skills,

vocal ability or training, and is therefore available to all. Secondly, it is impossible to make a mistake!

To begin, simply find a comfortable position where the abdomen and diaphragm can move and expand and your spine is straight. When you are ready, inhale through your nose feeling the expansion of your lower and upper abdomen and then your lower and upper lungs. Release your breath through your mouth while making one long sustained sound. This is tone! When you make the sound, relax your jaw and let it hang open. Working with vowel sounds is particularly effective—they truly create a resonance in the physical body that is felt.

How about beginning right now?

Start with an *A* as in *father*. Gently, as you exhale, make the sound *A* and repeat with each exhale several times.

Now begin to play with the pitch. With your next out breath, lower the pitch. Do this several times. Then make the pitch higher, again using the *A* sound to receive the full effect.

Your only intention is to pay attention to what is happening in your body and around you.

Now find the most comfortable pitch/tone and repeat the *A* for several more exhales, experiencing the sound of your own voice. When you are done, be still and pay attention to the silence. Notice what you are experiencing within and without.

There! You have toned! If you feel inhibited by making strange sounds, you’re not alone. One way to overcome this is to start humming and feel the vibration.

We live in a universe of sound; at the core of our physical existence we are composed of sound. Every cell, organ, and body system responds as a group to sound vibration. Wouldn’t it be amazing if we had the proper hearing apparatus? We might even be able to hear our own harmony and disharmony. The ancients knew this, and the scientific community is now using the technology to validate this premise.

Join me on Jan. 14 and have your own direct experience! (See pg. 11 for details.)



By Sylvia Hirschegger

Fellowship Voyages

An inspirational and informational publication by and for Fellowship members and friends since 1994.

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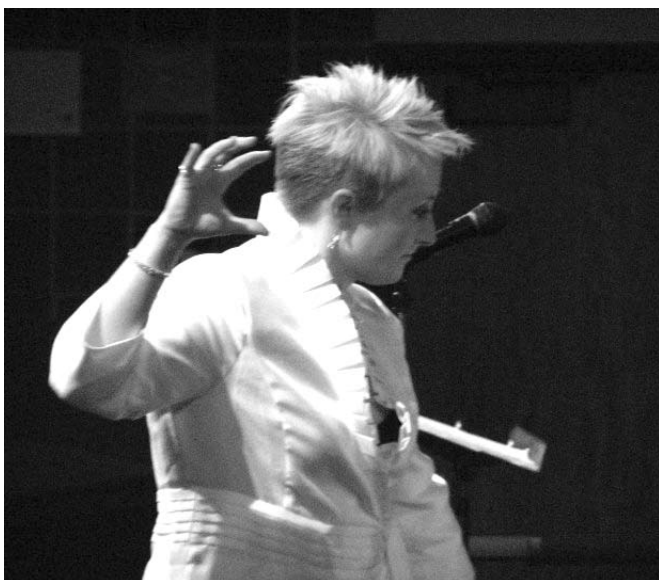
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For current events and time-sensitive news, see **FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS**, distributed via email each Wednesday. To be added to this email list, send your request to info@fellowshipfortoday.org



Music

Down in My Soul

Music is my life. And yet, when I tell people that I don't listen to music, they are usually flabbergasted. Why not? My answer varies, "because it's my job" or "most music bores me." So why am I writing this article on the Gift of Sound? To me, music is much more than a passive aural experience.

My mother was a musician, and I grew up in a very musical household. I participated in choirs at church, choirs at school, musicals, bell choir, concert and marching band, orchestra, voice lessons, flute lessons . . . and the list goes on. I loved everything musical. Naturally, I wanted to be a musician. I determined that a music education degree was my best option in college. I moved to Michigan afterward and a year later, answered an ad in the *Lansing State Journal*—there was a women's chorus looking for an interim director. I've been with Sistrum ever since.

I was fresh out of my undergraduate program and really only had my intuition and an innate musicality to stand on. Sistrum took a chance on me, and they've helped me grow into the musician/teacher I am today.

In my view, there are three stages to the directing experience. What you all see and experience is the final stage—the performance! However, the music making and soul connections begin with intuition and a concept. Many times, one piece of music will speak to

me, and I choose other pieces that work with that theme. Sometimes, the inspiration is external, like an anniversary or a festival where we've been invited to sing. Other times it is our annual concert where we can plan and contemplate our music selection several years out. Whatever the case, I mull the concept much like a piece of sand inside an oyster. Often, this process takes months.

The second stage is rehearsal. I love discovering unanticipated relevance in music throughout the rehearsal stage. It's a total left-brain activity—the research of the text, the analyzing of the form, making musical decisions, and forming a sound concept in my head. This is also the stage where I teach the piece of music to the chorus. It's where we build a relationship between each other and the music. My goal is to make learning a new song a collaborative experience. The soul of the music resides in the singers, not the director. The director assists the singer to express the emotion of the music. I simply facilitate, not dictate.

The final stage is the performance. By this time, there typically are only memorization glitches and sound tweaks here and there. By the time we are on stage, the work is done and we can have fun. I love performances because I'm past the thinking phase and am totally focused on the moment. I let the energy from the singers move



By Meredith Bowen

me, and channel that energy into a new exploration of the familiar text as the spirit moves us. There is a tremendous amount of trust between each singer and director on stage. For that moment in time, we are

constructing a relationship between the music, the audience and ourselves. The end result is a palpable energy and sound that creates a unique choral experience, never to be repeated in exactly the same way.

Every aspect in developing a piece of music feeds some part of my soul. It is a multiple-faceted evolution, and yet, a labor of love. Awareness and creative thinking start the process, analysis and teaching are the cornerstones, and the performance is the convergence of hours of time spent studying, practicing and creating.

So, why don't I listen to music? For me, music is a participatory activity, a give and take, and a process that includes analyzing and creative thinking, not a passive listening experience. The energy of the participants is the soul of the music: without it, music simply doesn't speak to me.



Visit sistrum.org to learn more about the Lansing women's chorus that Meredith directs.

Connecting to Spirit

For the last five years, I have been the music director and pianist at Unity of Greater Lansing. The job entails playing the piano during the service, and scheduling the soloists who will be singing and/or playing special music.

At Unity, we are truly blessed to have a minister who totally supports the music ministry. Kent Lederer says that *all* music is a gift from God, so I have the freedom to hire musicians who sing a variety of spiritual music—from pop to jazz to Broadway to classical. We've had brass quintets, string quartets, country trios, and all types of singers and instrumental soloists. As long as the music has a positive spiritual message, we embrace it, encourage it, and are not only entertained by it, but we are also uplifted by the wonderful messages every Sunday.

In addition to Unity, I also play the

piano a couple of Sundays a month at Fellowship For Today. Like Unity of Greater Lansing, the Fellowship embraces a wide variety of music, and the congregation is always so appreciative of the music.

For me, playing the piano is a spiritual quest. We continually seek to be one with the universe, with spirit, with God, and we do this either consciously or unconsciously. It is difficult to strive for that oneness doing things in our daily routine—washing dishes, cooking dinner, folding laundry, cleaning the attic, brushing our teeth—but if we did all these things with joy and purpose, we would come closer to knowing oneness in every moment.

There is an opportunity to express our very best in every waking moment, and, it is extremely difficult to do. This is why I play the piano and accompany



By Jeff English

singers: I feel the connection to spirit most intimately when I am making beautiful music with another soul.

The singer and I have the same goal: to express wonderful words in a way that can be done only through the gift of

music. When we are in sync and in tune with each other, it is as if we are the same being expressing the same message, saying to the universe, "Listen to this: this is power, beauty, love! This is who we are!"

Beauty manifests itself infinitely throughout the universe, and, it is in making music *together* when I see, hear, and feel in my heart and soul, the wonder of spirit through the connection that I make with the singer, with Spirit, with God.

Voices of Sistrum

“Singing with Sistrum often gives me some of my closest experiences to the Divine. For me it is a microcosm of our bigger universe. We all work individually and together to learn and build our knowledge and skills. We also need the energy that an audience offers as they participate with us. Then when we join our voices with a message that has depth, it is pure magic. What we do together is bigger than any one of us could do alone. In those special moments there is a oneness that vibrates with the Holy.”

~ Melodee Graybill

“There is something about singing with Sistrum, and especially breathing together, that feels exhilarating. As we collectively take a breath in the moment before we actually begin to sing, I can feel our merged energies becoming one powerful energy surge, and it leaves me feeling both energized and at peace. When that breath then becomes song, it unites the chorus as one voice. At times it can become an absolutely transcendental experience. It is truly the aural manifestation of Oneness.”

~ Cynthia Kruska

“Sometime during the second or third year with Sistrum, I realized that singing with a group was at times, a mystical experience for me. The drawing in of the breath, the moving of the vocal chords and the diaphragm, producing a chord or unison notes makes real the Oneness of everything. It is as though God is using each of our bodies and voices, and is breathing and speaking through us—what comes forth is the music.”

~ Barb Siler

Sistrum is Lansing's women's community chorus and lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, queer and transgender women are welcome. Membership is open to women with varying musical skills, political interests, physical abilities, religious beliefs, racial identities and life experiences. Sistrum holds open rehearsals in September and January. Stay tuned for details on Sistrum's next concert at the Fellowship. Their Christmas concert is Dec. 16 and 17 at 8 p.m. at Dart Auditorium.

Composing: The Art of Opening to Inspiration



By **Lucille Olson**

My adventure with composing music began when I had time on my hands and I was in a good space emotionally—ingredients essential to my creative process. The ideas, though, come in many ways.

I began composing New Thought songs in 1980 while attending a class taught by Amalie Frank, our associate minister at Unity. We were using her book, *The Consciousness Building Handbook*, when I got the idea to write a song for each chapter. “Our Thoughts are Prayers” was one of those early songs. It’s now sung at the Fellowship Sunday service each week following the meditation.

“Don’t Put Your Limits” was written in response to a letter I received from a relative who chastised me for my association with “that Unity cult.” He asserted that if I continued on this path, I was headed straight to the “hot place.” I obviously did not agree with that assessment. Neither did others, judging from the popularity of the song! The

words—“Don’t put your limits on my God, don’t tell me what I must believe”—just seem to strike a chord in people.

I have also written songs based on affirmations. “God is in Charge” was the result of saying an affirmation that Amalie had given me. While I was out walking in the park, I was saying it with the rhythm of my steps. Soon I found myself singing the tune “God is in charge of my life and affairs and only good can come to me.” It lifted my spirits so much I had to write it down when I got back to the house.

Many times I have been inspired in my dreams, but I have to get up and write down what I’ve heard, otherwise it’s not there in the morning. When I was living in Denver, Colorado, I was awakened at 2 a.m. with the song “Everything Changes.” I got out of bed and wrote for three hours to complete the words and music. When I had finished, I commented to Spirit that it had really been fun but I needed my sleep to get up in time for work. That day, around noon, the boss told me there was not enough work for me and I was let go. Now, I no longer had to go to work in the morning! Spirit has a very funny sense of humor. Soon after, everything did change, and I moved back to Michigan.

“Sing Your Song” was also a middle-of-the-night experience. I felt it was a personal message to give me confidence that I was OK even though I didn’t seem to fit with the rest of the world around me. “Sing your song. Sing your song. Sing it loud and clear and strong. And if the world doesn’t seem to understand, that’s OK. Just sing it anyway.”

When I am writing in the night or feeling particularly inspired, I feel like I am in a zone or a time warp taking musical dictation. At such times, the creative process is fun!

I write songs because I enjoy the creative process and I have also found that my composing is often meaningful, uplifting and an inspiration for others. When I have time to develop an idea and am in a good space, it is a pleasure. I feel that most of the inspired songs I write have a message for me personally. They are also gifts from the Universe that I get to share with others.

“Don’t Put Your Limits On My God’ is my favorite Fellowship song. I remember singing it the first time I visited the Fellowship. It helped me feel right at home.”

— Mary Molloy



Fellowship For Today’s songbook, *Sing Your Song*, contains forty-two songs. Of these, Max Raines composed music for thirteen of them and Lucille Olson wrote twelve—certainly, our most prolific composers! If you are interested in purchasing a songbook, please contact the Fellowship office at 517-337-4070 or email info@fellowshipfortoday.org.

Max Raines:

The Man Behind the Melodies By Diana Mitchell

At our Sunday services, we frequently sing beautiful songs such as “Spirit Am I” and “Forgiveness Offers Everything.” Many of us recognize that the words are from *A Course in Miracles* but not everyone knows about the man, Max Raines, who set the ACIM words to music.

Jim Noble, who worked closely with Max to get his music to a wider audience, reminisces about Max’s musical beginnings: “Max and Tomie, his wife, both played music in the USO in the South Pacific in World War II.” Max played jazz piano and Tomie played the marimba.

Although they had met in college several years earlier, they re-met when their bands crossed paths on their tour of Manila and they were married on ship.

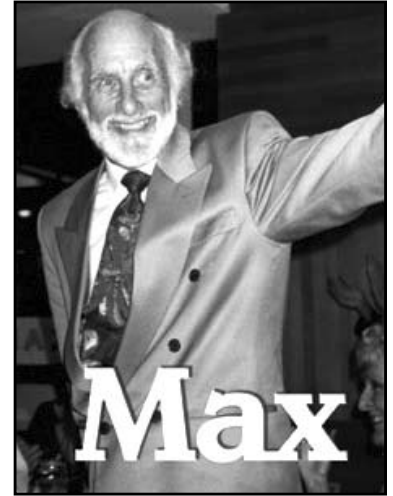
Max and his family moved to East Lansing in 1965 when he joined the faculty at Michigan State University in the Department of Educational Administration. He loved his professional life working with MSU students. Thus East Lansing was the Raines’ ideal hometown. He stayed at the university until his retirement in 1993.

Jim explains, “Max had pretty much tucked away his music while his university career was flourishing, but in the early 1980s he and Tomie started studying *A Course in Miracles*. He began writing music based on the lessons from ACIM. I would meet with Max almost every week at their home and I could hardly wait for a new song to memorize, to get the words and lessons into my mind.”

Doug Austin, who often plays Max’s music, has a tremendous respect for the music that Max composed. He remembers, “Max had an incredible gift for creating beautiful melodies and interesting harmonic progressions to support the melodies. I never knew whether Max would start composing with the harmonic progression, and then work a melody into it, or vice versa. I wish now I had asked him.

That’s why, when we hear or sing his music, the songs feel so right and natural.”

Doug remembers, “Max was compelled by a voice within to set ACIM words to music. But at that same time, I think he was a bit shy about releasing it to the world. It was Jim Noble who saw the beauty and importance in what Max was creating, and would push (nudge) Max to let Jim sing it, and later record it. I recall several times being at Tomie and Max’s to hear a new creation being played by Max. He was excited about performing it, but also quite on edge about exposing it to an audience. I think we at the Fellowship tend to take



♪♪♪ *Just Your will, Lord, in my mind.*
Just Your will, Lord, in my mind.

From “A Song for Meditation”

for granted what beautiful music Max created. I certainly haven’t heard all of the ACIM musical adaptations out there, but from what I’ve heard, Max’s settings are the most sophisticated and memorable.”

Max’s songs are favorites among many Fellowshipians. Phyllis Nix says, “My favorite of Max’s songs that resounds in my heart and soul is ‘A Song for Meditation’ with the words *Here I am Lord, Here I am*. With this song, I can go to that place within and feel pure Love.”

Jim says that memorizing Max’s songs, “. . . has created a garden in my heart.” He believes, “We, at the Fellowship, owe Max an incredible gift of gratitude for his perseverance and his gifts of songs to the Fellowship.”

The next time you hold the Fellowship songbook in your hand, page through it, and notice the musical gifts that Max has given to us!

I Love Chanting!

For me, there is nothing like the magic of chanting with a group of people. I can feel buzzed for days following such an experience!

Several of us recently spent an evening in Cleveland, chanting with Deva Premal in an auditorium of several hundred people. The energy in the room was profound! Something about the experience allowed us to let go and go beyond the music itself, to a deeper experience of pure vibration. As we were all doing the same thing: intoning, breathing, and moving to the same rhythms, our vibrations came into synch and the resulting experience was powerful beyond words.

Vibrations align themselves to stronger vibrations, so even if you're having a truly rotten day, it becomes difficult to hold onto those negative feelings during a Kirtan experience. Even when I briefly stopped chanting in Cleveland, I could still feel the shift of this combined resonance activating the spirit that exists within us all.

Because the power of chant resonates so deeply with me, I wanted to bring the experience to the Fellowship community. At another Kirtan event, I met Dr. Kumar Arun, who now co-leads the every-other-Wednesday Kirtan group in Lansing.

Dr. Arun comes from the Vedic tradition where chanting is done in Sanskrit. He feels that for Kirtan to be a meaningful spiritual practice, it must begin with devotion. In order to

gain the full experience of the chant's power, he explains, it is necessary to learn the proper pronunciations of the Sanskrit words so that the vibration resonates at a high level.

He explains that when chanting is done continuously and the chanter surrenders to the experience, the power of the mantra creates not only a vibration (of invisible cosmic energy) within the chanter, and within the other attendees individually, but it charges the whole environment. This continuous chanting is simply melodious, uplifting, calming, leads to a meditative state of mind, and creates joy resulting in a powerful sense of unity in oneness consciousness.

One first-time attendee at a local Kirtan described his experience as "feeling like all the separate individuals in the room had just disappeared ... there was only one person there."

I can't think of a better way to explain it than that! Even when I chant alone, it can cause my heart to open. I truly appreciate chant for the effect it has on my spirit and my soul-self.

We are just beginning a Kirtan group here in Lansing, and we'd love to have you join us. We meet on alternating Wednesdays from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Fellowship Office. If you have specific questions about Kirtan, you can also contact Dr. Arun at kumar2786@hotmail.com



By Denise Wootton

Rhythmic Alchemy: The Power of Drumming

Sound and music have been used since ancient times for healing and transformation. Shamans in the past and present across many traditions also use chanting and drumming in celebrations, rituals and ceremonies. Recent research indicates that drumming accelerates physical healing, boosts the immune system and produces feelings of well-being, assists in a release of emotional trauma and reintegration of self. Drumming improves brain integration and synchronicity.

I have been drumming for over 20 years, and beyond its impact on eye-hand coordination and physical exercise, I am continually amazed by both its healing capacity and the spiritual gifts it brings. From the first time I put my hands on a drum, I was hooked. Drumming is a magical and sacred experience that has the extraordinary power to touch something deep and powerful within me.



By Reverend Karen Arndorfer

Karen Arndorfer and Rob Curtner will lead a drumming service on January 29 as our opening for the Season of Peace and Nonviolence.

Robert Lawrence Friedman, MA, author of *The Healing Power of the Drum* says, "The part of us to which the drum speaks knows only inner peace, self-expression, and that which is our very basic life force. Drumming creates an island in time, where all else is shut out except the rhythms that issue forth

from your fingertips at your pace, expressing your feelings at that present moment."

Drumming is a spiritual practice where I enter a meditative state in which I am placed squarely in the here and now, become centered and balanced, feel the energy of my body shift as negative feelings are released and a peace washes over my whole being. I help my drumming students to rediscover the rhythm within them and reawaken to their own rhythm, to tap into the healing quality of the vibration of the drum, and to feel the freedom and joy that music and rhythm provide. What more could any of us ask for?

The Drum as Ally on Our Spiritual Path

I grew up loving to hear family stories and some were about my mother seeing spirits. One story involved my mom, along with her mother and two sisters, all staring through the kitchen window, mesmerized by the spirit of her deceased grandfather. There he sat on the porch railing, smoking his pipe, Austrian hat perched on his head, as if he'd never left.

I didn't know what to make of her experiences, but I believed.

I also grew up Catholic, and loved the ceremony of the Catholic religion in the '50s and '60s, but as I got older, I could not love the church dogma or politics. And they never addressed such things as my mom's seeing spirits or the fact that spiritual abilities are gifts that many people possess.

Perhaps like many of you, I became a spiritual wanderer. I read and involved myself in practices such as yoga, tai chi, Earth-based feminist spirituality, a bit of Buddhism, meditation, esoteric healing and Reiki. I loved it all, and kept practicing and seeking. Years passed.

And then... I was invited to a shamanic drumming circle.

I don't remember exactly what I was told about Shamanism at that momentous lunch-hour discussion. I only knew that I really wanted to experience it! Well, that first drumming circle led to years of training in the practice of Shamanism, wouldn't you know it?

What did I find so powerful about this practice? Shamanism is the oldest known spirituality—over 40,000 years old. This healing practice forms the deepest taproots of the tree of spirituality that has grown since that ancient time—taproots that still contain the truest and most enduring understanding of the mind-body-spirit connection. This is the gift shamanism



By Kate Durda

has for us, the descendants living today!

Shamanism provides powerful tools and practices for living, and information that our ordinary level of consciousness can't access. For example, the shaman would locate the deer or other game for the tribe,

divine a new spring for water when the old one dried up, heal illnesses, retrieve someone's soul which was "lost" through deep trauma, discern which plant was medicine, and even help a deceased person's soul "cross over" to the other side.

By altering their consciousness, shamans were able to access this information in the hidden world of energy referred to variously as the dreamtime, spirit realm, non-ordinary reality, or even by quantum physicists as the universal field. Accessed only through dreams, or near-death experiences, this field usually is not accessed at will unless by an experienced spiritual practitioner such as the shaman, who enters this realm through the shamanic journey.

DRUM as ALLY

In my first drumming circle, I experienced the shamanic journey undertaken to the steady accompaniment of the drum. Drumming itself has the ability to excite or calm us, and bring people together. However, shamanic drumming done with intention, in the context of shamanic practice, allows direct access to the realm of spirit, the world of energy.

The shamans knew, and we even have scientific proof, that a steady, rhythmic drumbeat (a type of sonic driving) facilitates a remarkable shift in consciousness through which the shamanic practitioner experiences increased insight, creativity, and feelings

of wellness. One journey, and I was hooked!

Shamanic practice is accessible to everyone for personal healing and wellness. And with practice and vocation, shamanism can be a remarkably powerful healing practice, focused on the most basic level—energy. Everything is energy and energy includes past and present; therefore the scope of shamanic healing is all encompassing.

Through the experience of shamanic journeying and Shamanism, I now understand my mom's experience of seeing spirits! I also found what I was seeking—my spiritual practice! One that calls me home, restores me to oneness, energizes and heals me, and allows me the opportunity to serve my community as a shamanic practitioner.

If you too would like to experience this practice, accessible to everyone, please join us at the next Introduction to Shamanism class, December 3, 2011, in the Lansing area. To learn more about this powerful spiritual practice, see articles we have posted on our website, www.SpiritWeavers.net



Sharing Our Memories

Surprisingly, my most memorable Fellowship “gift of sound” was not a musical moment at all. It was an early October morning expedition to Haehnle Bird Sanctuary northeast of Jackson. A good-sized group of us arrived at the bird sanctuary well before sunrise with our portable chairs, thermos bottles and cold-weather gear. On arrival we found ourselves enshrouded by a heavy fog rising out of the wetlands that lay before us. As the sky gradually brightened, we listened to the birds rustling about as they awoke and began to fill the air with their calls of greeting to the new day and to one another. The fog continued to hang low and heavy, hiding the birds from our view and hiding us from them as well. Because of our invisibility the Sandhill Cranes flew directly over our heads. The sound of their wings flapping only a few feet above us was a magical surprise, as these great birds headed out to glean the local grain fields. I’ve returned to Haehnle each autumn, attempting to relive that first experience. Although each visit is certainly lovely, I have yet to enjoy one as glorious as that morning shared with my Fellowshipian family.

– Mary King

A favorite musical memory of mine was some years ago when we were still meeting at the UU church. At a Christmas Eve service Jim Noble led the choir, Beth Monteith spoke and Gary Novak created a mobile of white lights on the ceiling. It was the total effect of spectacular music, moving lights and the sweet message of Christmas that still lingers in my mind as an outstanding spiritual experience.

– Grace Menzel

I have recently had the opportunity to hear Jim Noble sing at two memorials, each time accompanied by Doug Austin. The combination of the two of them brought tears to my eyes. Jim is so exquisitely professional with every touch he puts on a song and he sings with such emotion and conviction, I always know he means the words as he sings them to us—like he’s giving us a sweet gift. I feel connected when I listen to them. I love all the musicians of Fellowship. It’s one of the reasons that keeps me coming back and staying connected.

– Cindy Zuker

My favorite music experience happened on my first visit to the Fellowship. Jim Noble was singing. But before he started, he closed his eyes and I could see a wonderful sense of peace come over him. He brought that same sense of peace to the song. I came back the following week to see if it happened again. It did. Beth spoke and I have been coming back ever since.

– Dave Dubuc



Singing as Community Outreach

By Julia White and Julia Freije

Music fills the air as the New Thought Community Choir lends their voices and enthusiasm to a fun-filled evening of music and singing at assisted-living and rehabilitation facilities in the Lansing area.

The choir arrives at the facilities with song sheets in hand and joyfully encourages the residents and their friends to join in the sing-along. Everyone participates in various ways; some sing, as others clap, sway, or swing their arms in rhythm to the well-known oldies.

It is just plain fun to see the residents responding with huge smiles and twinkles in their eyes, obviously having a ball. We highly recommend this to anyone who wants to experience a rewarding hour of musical merriment. Even if you can’t carry a tune, you can sit with the residents and hold song sheets for them or just smile with them and sing off key. They just love that we are there. And so do we.

This monthly musical outreach event is under the direction of Lucille Olson, who plays the piano and leads the choir, which is composed of Fellowshipians and Spiritual Renaissance Unity members.

If you are interested in joining us, check the e-announcements or talk to Lucille or a choir member.

Meet Fellowship School of Ministry’s Newest Class



Back row (L-R): Phyllis Jolly, Mary Barth, Mary Sabaj, Rev. Brad Miller, and John Christensen. Front row (L-R): Carol Boyer, Rev. Denise Wootton, Lucille Olson, and Diane Blakeman. Photo by Rev. Erin Fry

Please join our students as they lead the annual Burning Bowl ceremony at the Sunday service on Jan. 1.

We Fondly Remember You, Dear Ones

Meriem Titus 1917–2011

Arlene Price 1924–2011

Kathleen Coe 1925–2011

C.B. “Sonny” Smith (Beth Bogue’s husband) 1925–2011

Calendar of Events & announcements

Holiday Calendar

- DECEMBER 11**
Cookie Walk for the Red Basket Fund that helps members facing a financial challenge, following Sunday service. 5:30 p.m.
- DECEMBER 16**
Holiday Party and Brad's 50th Birthday! 4 – 8 p.m.
 Bob and Diana Mitchell's House, 264 Ruby Way, Williamston
- DECEMBER 21**
Solstice Service, Fellowship office. 7:30 p.m.
- DECEMBER 24**
Christmas Eve Service 9:30 p.m.
- DECEMBER 25**
Sound and Silence Service 5:30 p.m.
- JANUARY 1**
Burning Bowl Service 5:30 p.m.

Calendar

- DECEMBER 6**
School of Ministry Open House 6 – 7 p.m.
- DECEMBER 20**
Applications for School of Ministry due
- JANUARY 7**
How to Keep Your Resolutions
 Workshop with Rex-Montague-Bauer 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- JANUARY 10 – March 13**
School of Ministry Winter Term
- JANUARY 14**
Toning Workshop, Sylvia Hirschegger. 9:30 a.m. – noon
- JANUARY 19**
Patient Power: Introductory Course on Preparing for Your Doctor's Appointment, Char Brooks 12 – 2 p.m.
- JANUARY 29**
Drumming for Peace Service 5:30 p.m.
 Karen Arndorfer and Rob Curtner opening the 2012 Season for Peace and Nonviolence
- JANUARY 30 – APRIL 4**
 Season for Nonviolence. This year's theme: *End the War Within*
- FEBRUARY 4**
Patient Power: Introductory Course on Preparing for Your Doctor's Appointment, Char Brooks 1 – 3 p.m.
- FEBRUARY 11, 18 & 25**
Patient Power: Get the Healthcare You Deserve, Char Brooks 12 – 1:15 p.m.
- FEBRUARY 12**
Awaken to the New Paradigm
 Workshop with Rex-Montague-Bauer 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- FEBRUARY 12**
Sunday Service: Laz Slomovits Rumi Concert 5:30 p.m.

Are you ready to step out of your story and change your life?

Level I: Fundamentals of Personal Empowerment

Winter Term Open Enrollment Fellowship School of Ministry

Dates to Remember:

- Winter Term Informational Open House Dec. 6, 6-7 p.m.
- Application Deadline. Dec. 20
- Winter term begins. Jan. 10

For more information, call 517-337-4070, or email info@fellowshipfortoday.org.

For more information, or to register for any events listed, call the Fellowship office at 517-337-4070 or email info@fellowshipfortoday.org. Also visit fellowshipfortoday.org for information, dates and times.



Visit our website fellowshipfortoday.org and learn more about our spiritual community!!



~ OUR SUNDAY SERVICE ~

5:30 p.m.

**2400 E. Lake Lansing Road
 East Lansing, MI 48823**

(Lansing Korean United Methodist Church)

**Sunday Service Calendar
 can be found at:
fellowshipfortoday.org**



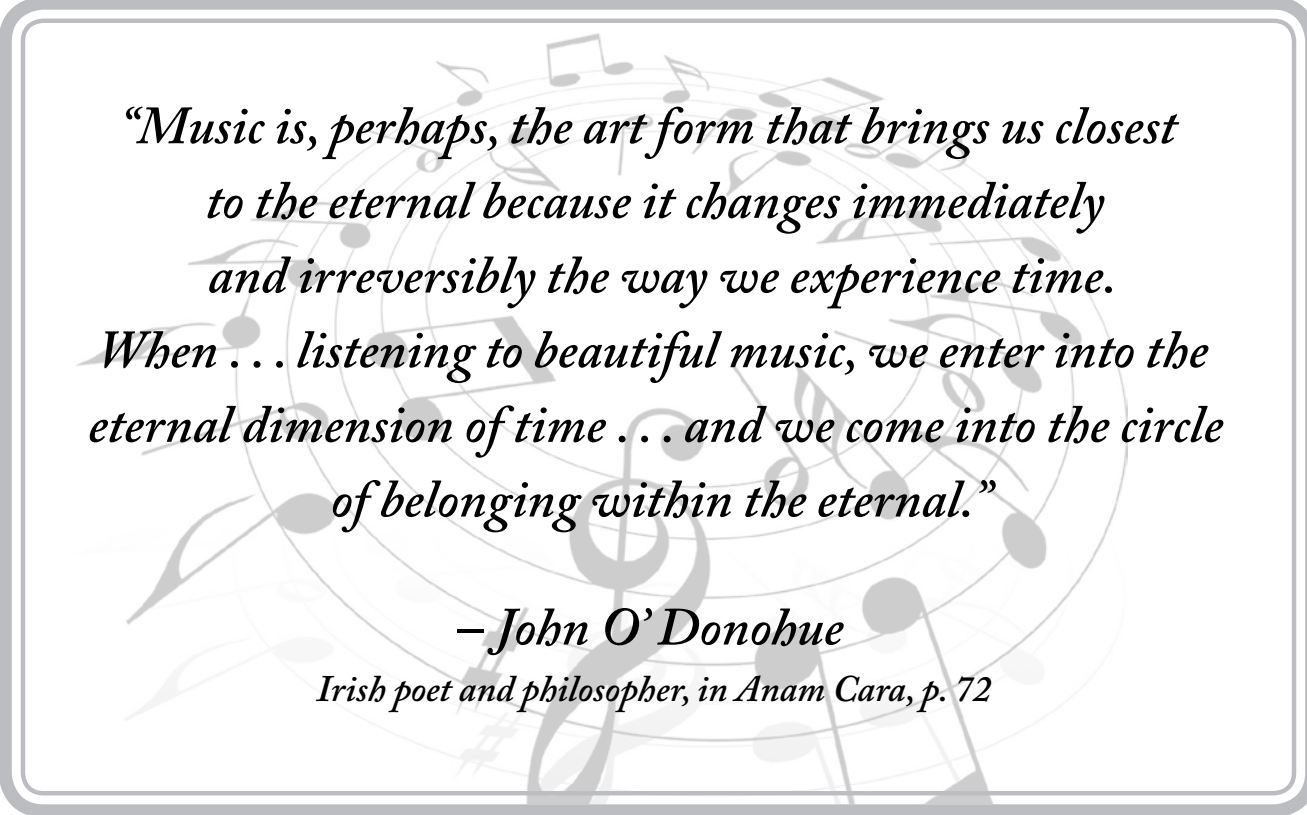
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“Music is, perhaps, the art form that brings us closest to the eternal because it changes immediately and irreversibly the way we experience time. When . . . listening to beautiful music, we enter into the eternal dimension of time . . . and we come into the circle of belonging within the eternal.”

– John O’Donohue

Irish poet and philosopher, in Anam Cara, p. 72