



DECEMBRRRR

This is that wonderful and challenging month where the light seems to be going away, leaving us in the cold and dark. It's a time that has been honored in all cultures as a sacred time; a time to walk in what Howard Thurman calls "remembered radiance." What's also important to realize is the light is not leaving us—we are leaving the light. The earth rotates, orbits and tilts. The light is, relatively, stationary.

This time is rich in metaphor. There are times in our lives when the light seems to be going away. Jobs, relationships, youth, health may all appear to leave us. Yet, if we look at the True Source, the Light within and all around us, It never leaves. We move in relation to It. And, just as each season is rich and needed for the whole of life, each season in our life is needed for the growth of us as whole beings. And, just as each season ends, unfolding into and revealing the next, the seasons of our lives aren't permanent. Following winter is always spring.

This month we look at the many traditions of honoring this journey of the light. We'll look at Advent—the Christian practice of preparing for the birth of light. We'll sit with the Buddha, under the Bodhi tree, until the light of clarity dawns. We'll honor the real reason for the season—the sun—with a solstice dance. Of course, we'll honor the birth of the light of Christ consciousness, symbolized by Jesus of Nazareth. And we'll close the year exploring Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

During this rich and often busy month, take time to align with the quieting of the earth, settling into a deep communion with Spirit within. Happy celebrations of light!
~ Rev. David

Happenings



Sunday Mornings

At the Nova School
2020 22nd Avenue SE
Olympia 98501
Meditation: 10:30 a.m.
Service: 11 a.m.

Senior Minister

Rev. David Robinson

**Inside:
A new retreat, a new
person to meet,
Practitioner
ramblings and more.**





Sunday Talk Titles Holidays of Light

December 1st ~ Advent

We must become consciously receptive to the Light within each of us, awaiting birth.

December 8th ~ Bodhi Day

We look at lessons from the enlightenment of the Buddha, celebrated this day throughout the world.

December 15th ~ Solstice

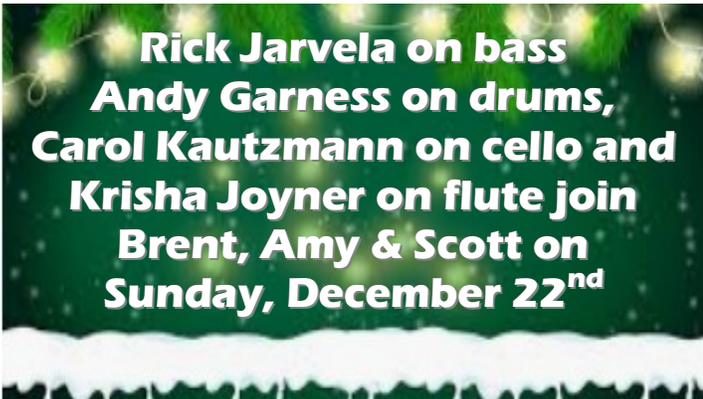
The Light returns to the earth and to our minds.

December 22nd ~ Christmas

An honoring of the birth of the Divine within and as each of us.

December 29th ~ Kwanzaa & Hanukkah

Our youth will help us celebrate the seven principles of Kwanzaa and the eight days of Hanukkah.



**Rick Jarvela on bass
Andy Garness on drums,
Carol Kautzmann on cello and
Krisha Joyner on flute join
Brent, Amy & Scott on
Sunday, December 22nd**

**What good does it do me
that the Christ was born all
those years ago if it is not
born within me?**

*Sunday,
December 1st*

**The new Coffee
Team invites you to
enjoy coffee.**



**Stay to enjoy fresh brewed
coffee & baked goodies.**

Book of the Month

*Thou Art That: Transforming
Religious Metaphor*

by Joseph Campbell

Woven from Joseph Campbell's previously unpublished work, this volume explores Judeo-Christian symbols and metaphors and their misinterpretations with the famed mythologist's characteristic conversational warmth and accessible scholarship. Campbell's insights highlight centuries of confusion between literal and metaphorical interpretations of Western religious symbols that are, he argues, perennially relevant keys to spiritual understanding and mystical revelation.

Core Council

*Spiritual Leader Rev. David Robinson
Scott Kissel, President
Laura Farris, Vice President
Rob Coleman, Treasurer
Jean-Hill Miller, Secretary
Larry Gilliam, Member at Large*

Message Phone: (360) 255-7878

Mailing address:

3701 Pacific Avenue SE, PMB 327
Olympia, WA 98501

Check us out on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/csloly

Website: www.cslolympia.org

Special Christmas Service December 22nd

Honoring this season of light, we will have a special Christmas/Solstice service on Sunday morning, December 22nd. Extra music, from both our regular music team and special guests, along with carol singing before and during the service, will provide an extra special way to celebrate this wonderful time of year.



The service will go a little longer ending about 12:15 p.m. Afterward, enjoy coffee and holiday treats. Please bring cookies or other holiday goodies to share.

Dress in your seasonal finest. Bring friends and family for a service that will incorporate some traditional Christmas themes without getting bogged down in dogma.



Deepening with the Divine A Contemplative Retreat

As the world of Nature settles into the deep contemplation known as Winter, let us also settle into the deep contemplation of Spirit within our nature.

Gwinwood Retreat Center
Saturday, December 14th 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
\$55 per person by December 1st, \$65 after
Facilitated by Rev. David Robinson
More info: cslolympia.org or 360-255-7878

Council Report

In November your CSL Olympia Core Council completed yearly evaluations for paid staff. We are blessed to have such wonderful, capable, heart-based staff serving our community. Their service plays a big role in our ongoing success.

The Core Council is planning for community growth through support of our New Home Committee and planning for future promotional and fund raising events.

We are approaching a holiday time that is traditionally focused upon joy, love and gratitude. Thank you to each of you for the love that you bring to our community and for your desire to support one another in manifesting prosperity and love. We are truly blessed to have such a loving community. Happy holidays to all. ~ Scott Kissel

Community Opportunity

If you would like to guide the **Nourishing Our Community** events into delicious fruition in 2020, see Camille Fastle or Rev. David. This annual Fun(d)raiser is where people agree to host delightful events, usually with a food aspect. People bid to attend. Training and support is available.

“All the spreadsheet templates have been created so you can step right in very easily,” Camille says. “I will be happy to train this year’s fun-raising event coordinator.”



Youth & Family Program

December youth programs explore global celebration traditions. This expanded view, incorporating various traditions, allows us to deepen our connection with the world.



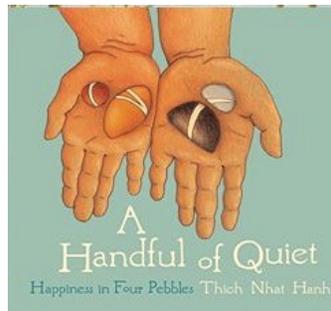
We look at different ways people across the globe celebrate Solstice, including the tradition of spending a portion of this day in quiet contemplation. We will celebrate light with some favorite Solstice activities.

Fourth Week: Christmas

Christmas is the day we celebrate Jesus' birth and honor the birth of the Divine in each of us.

First Week: The Light Within

All year we gently polish all facets of ourselves so our brilliant light can extend further into the world. As we look forward to celebrating with our families and friends, we also honor how others in the world celebrate the re-birth of light.



We look at celebrations of light from around the world and participate in games and activities in Kwanzaa and Hanukkah traditions. We also discuss the importance of making a personal connection to the world as one light.

Second Week: Bodhi Day

We look at lessons from the enlightenment of the Buddha, commemorated on this day throughout the world. The Japanese word Rohatsu marks the morning Buddha achieved realization or enlightenment.

Through our ongoing study of Science of Mind principles, prayer and meditation, we attain spiritual knowledge and insight. We will practice a few modern ways to celebrate Bodhi day.

Third Week: Solstice

Solstice, a Latin word meaning sun and sister, meaning to stand still, is celebrated by many different cultures. It signifies the return of the light.

We will read the story of Jesus' birth and discuss how his life was a demonstration of awareness of his connection to God and the living embodiment of God, just as we are. We participate in our favorite Christmas traditions and practice the gift of giving and receiving.

Fifth Week: Youth/adult Combined Service

Youth will share in some Kwanzaa and Hanukah practices with the community as a way of Honoring Spirit.

~ Adrienne Cherry, Youth Director



Youth develop attention, emotional, and body awareness with Thich Nhat Hanh's Pebble Meditation and mindful activities.



2020 VISION DESIRES OF HEART

The (new) Intentions Retreat

"We are pushed by pain until we are pulled by a vision"

Create intentions with heart. Catch your Vision, unlock your dissatisfaction as motivation, create a plan and connect with companions for the journey.

Gwinwood Retreat Center, Lacey, WA

Saturday January 11, 2020

9 am to 4 pm Saturday

\$100 per person by January 5th

\$115 after

(includes comprehensive workbook)

Facilitated by Rev. David Robinson

Info/Registration: cslolympia.org or 360-255-7878



"Christmas is a bridge. We need bridges as the river of time flows past. Today's Christmas should mean creating happy hours for tomorrow and reliving those of yesterday." ~ Gladys Taber

Christmas cookies are on the menu for the Women's Circle December meeting.

The date is December 21st from noon to 4 p.m. we will meet at the home of Jennifer Howie.

**Oh
Yum!
What
fun we
all will
have!**



Please join us in decorating cookies. Everyone is asked to bring a dozen or two unfrosted cookies. Also, colored sugars and other cookie decorating supplies. Finished cookies will be tucked into colorful bags and taken down to the Community Care Center to be given to homeless and other folks who visit the center. All CSL women are invited to attend. To be added to the mailing list please email Carol Kautzmann at: ckremedy4u@gmail.com.

Sacred Sunday Evening

The monthly meditative evening will take a break during December, since it would normally fall on the day after the Deepening with the Divine retreat. Join us at the retreat for a full day of spiritual practice. Details on page 3 of this newsletter.



Ramblings by Buffie

When I was in my 30s and 40s I became aware of a yearning in me to be part of a community of like-minded people with whom I could work, play and generally hang out. I understood then that this dream community would be where I could both be support for and supported by others when life took those unplanned turns. For a short time, my family and I test-drove a local Methodist church but I did not connect to the language and philosophy of mainstream Christianity, and eventually drifted away. Then my life, as they say, took one of those turns—divorce—and I found my next community in a group of people actively learning about themselves through healing old wounds.

Ten years and lots of growth later, I again set the intention to find that dream community. A friend introduced me to the Science of Mind, and bingo—that was it. I was truly overjoyed to find I no longer had to make it all up as I went along. In the ensuing 12 years I have grown immensely, having found my spiritual home, my people and my center. Since this is an open-at-the-top philosophy, I have no idea where it leads, only that it will be perfect for me. The love, compassion, understanding and support I always imagined finding is here now, just as I dreamed it. I am living a fulfilling, inspired and inspiring life.

Franciscan Priest Richard Rohr said “Love, the attraction of all things toward all things, is a universal language and underlying energy that keeps showing itself despite our best efforts to resist it. It is so simple that it is hard to teach, yet we all know love when we see it. After all, there is not a Native, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Islamic, or Christian way of loving. There is not a Methodist, Lutheran, or Orthodox way of running a soup kitchen. There is not a gay or straight way of being

faithful, nor a black or Caucasian way of hoping. We all know positive flow when we see it, and we all recognize resistance and coldness when we feel it. All the rest are mere labels.”

In a recent study conducted by Brigham Young University, researchers found that the two most powerful factors in a person’s life which enhance and improve their chances for a long life are having many close friends and strong social connections. This sounds like community to me.

When you understand these factors, by and large, produce happiness. That happiness, love, joy in fact is, in my belief, the very vibration of God. You do understand that being in this dream community promotes longevity too.

I know not everyone is seeking this level of connection, at least right now. Bless those who come and go, content to graze lightly of the fruit of our community. But I am so very grateful for the people who are our rock solid CSL Olympia family. Those who commit to service and show up for formal and informal activities, those who hold hands with us each week in our circles of prayer and love.

We are bigger than we really understand. We are the hands, hearts, minds and light of God, doing God’s work. We hold each other up, knowing our Unity with the One, with love and choice every day. This is all so amazingly good.
~ Buffie Finkel, RScP

Practitioners

Teresa Bielenberg
Linda Bremer
Sandy Dell
Susan Einhorn

Buffie Finkel
Marlisa Johnson
John J. Mulhall
Alex Perlman



Meet Crystal Vernon

Adventure, simple living, caring transformation; these are the concepts that stood out in Crystal Vernon's interview.

Crystal has been attending CSL since March of this year. She shared her need that the environment had to feel right before she could settle on a spiritual home. Apparently CSL filled the bill. "When I enter this spiritual environment, my entire being experiences an openness that does not appear elsewhere," were Crystal's words. She feels as if she has found her tribe of like-minded folks.

In the adventure realm, Crystal is an outdoor enthusiast. Loving nature, she has hiked, backpacked and cycled in Europe and New Zealand. Since traveling is a passion, there will be more trips in her future.

Having time to spend hours in her vegetable garden is her pleasure too. As Crystal explains it, "I enjoy adventure and experiencing it all."

Crystal's simple living policy involves another of her passions: sustainable living. She purchased a tiny home and lives in a small community of like-minded home dwellers. There are four households who share in the caring of a community garden and chickens.

The furry, four-legged friends who also live on the property fill Crystal's dog lover

needs. She likes the idea of making a smaller footprint on our planet.

Crystal cares deeply for her family. A trip to Southern California every few months to see her son, daughter-in-law and four year old granddaughter is a must in her life. "They are the light of my life," she declares.



"When I enter this spiritual environment, my entire being experiences an openness that does not appear elsewhere."

Having a close sister who has needed Crystal's care has prompted her to say, "I have found her to be the greatest teacher in my life and I do not take for granted the good health that I am grateful for most days."

The transformation Crystal has realized involves being able to move from a career of working more than full-time to a part-time job in Tacoma. "I'm seeing this time in my life as a huge transition/transformation and feel grateful every day to have this time to be available to help family where I can."

Clearly, Crystal is one who understands the value of gratitude. Let each of us show her the gratitude we have that she feels drawn to return each Sunday to CSL and for her intention to become active in the CSL community.

~ Linda Sickles

Prayer Support



Call the message phone: (360) 255-7878, ext. 4 to listen to a prayer recorded each week by a Practitioner.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry invites you to join us on Wednesday, December 11th at The Firs ~ 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The Firs is located at 426 Lilly Road NE. Our wonderful Toy Kay hosts us at The Firs which we greatly appreciate.

All yarn enthusiasts are invited to join us as we create shawls and lap robes to comfort those in our community dealing with grief, illness or loss. If you are new to knitting or crocheting or want to learn, please come. Our lovely group will get you started. For more info call Dee Bright at (951) 746.0861



The Women's Circle will meet on Saturday, December 21st ~ Noon to 4 p.m. See page 5 for more information, location and program. Women are also invited to enjoy coffee and conversation at Dancing Goats ~ 4219 6th Avenue, Lacey, Fridays ~ 10 a.m.



*Coffee & conversation
...a way to
make deeper
connections.*

Men gather upstairs at Bayview Thriftway Friday mornings, 10 a.m. to noon. Join them.

December 20th ~ Celebrating the Solstice

John & Linda Mulhall cordially invite you to join them in celebrating the Winter Solstice beginning at 6 p.m. until we're done howling at the waning moon. Friday, December 20th. Walk around the fragrant Labyrinth. Sing along to the Karaoke machine. Coffee, tea and hot cocoa provided. Bring a potluck dish to share. 5222 25th Lane NW. Call (360) 866-0575 for directions or look for a special flier at CSL.

"Seeing is believing, but sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can't see."

The Polar Express

STAFF

Brent Pendleton,
Music Director
MJ Mowry,
Sound Technician
Adrienne Cherry,
Youth Director
Teri Echterling
Administrative Assistant
Marlisa Johnson,
Bookkeeper
Karyn Lindberg,
Newsletter Editor
Message Phone
(360) 255-7878
Website:
www.cslolympia.org