

Reflections, Music, & Events

Volume 3, Issue 7

JANUARY 7, 2014

2014 Sacred Circles

First Sunday

Potlucks
2:30—5:30 p.m.

March 2

Introduction to
The Art of Stress Relief

April 6

Yoga for You! Creating
Optimum Health at Any Age

May 4

Ahhhh... Aromatherapy!

June 1

Writing Wrongs

July 6

Reiki for Relaxation and
Healing

August 3

Creative Crafts to Release Stress

September 7

STRESS! Let It Go So You Can
Flow

Join Us!

Our Father's House

26210 Emery Road
Suite 309
Warrensville Hts., OH 44128

Questions? ... contact

Shirley A. Nelson

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~ Creating a Beautiful World ~
One Sacred Soul at a Time



Are You Listening?

Shirley A. Nelson (San)

When we were kids, my siblings and I loved the summertime. On days when it was wickedly hot, ice cream was everyone's favorite treat and we squealed with delight at the sound of the bell from the Good Humor Man's ice cream truck. For children, hearing that ice cream truck bell signaled the arrival of something really good and as adults our needs haven't changed. We still listen for the sound of the Good Humor Man whether we are desirous of ice cream, an increased income, better health, better living conditions, better relationships, etc. It may not be an actual bell that will ring, but it is a signal that leads us to our highest good and we can only hear it when we're listening.

Are you listening for the still small voice? Can you hear it when it's whispering in your heart and letting you know what to do about the issues in your life and important decisions that you are making? Like the Good Humor Man, our good is on its way to us and can be attained as soon as we open our hearts as well as our ears to listen for guidance from that holy place within.

God is abstract, therefore you may be led to do something that does not make the popularity list. However, as your faith deepens and your ability to discern expands, you become more sensitive and aware of the signals in your life that are leading you to your highest good.

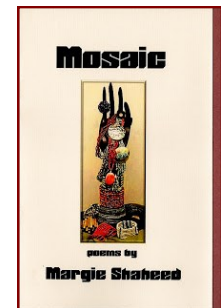
Being able to listen intently within and without is a gift. If you do nothing else this year, I hope you make it your business to be a better listener to your own self and to others.

According to writer and genealogist Paula Underwood Spencer "If you want to be truly understood you need to say everything three times, in three different ways, once for each ear and once for the heart." Try applying this idea the next time you pray—say it for your ears and your own heart, and be sure to do the same when you're listening to another. You will invariably notice that, contrary to popular belief, listening is active not passive, and requires as much (or more) energy as talking.

More has been written about the art of listening in a new column titled "Listen for the Word" by William E. Seifert-Kessell (pages 3 & 4). Another new column is "Book Nook" which will feature books and/or events around town each month.

Happy New You!

Book Nook



MOSAIC

MOSAIC poems by Margie Shaheed is a collection of eleven storytelling poems that are spiritually uplifting and is a word coming of sorts that pays homage to the Goddess who resides in each and every one of us. As well, many of the poems speak to the African philosophical theme of birth, death and rebirth.

As I read MOSAIC I was lead to the rhythm of the drum, our essential breath and heartbeat. I welcomed the voice that captured clearly the music between the notes—pictures painted with words that touched the depth of my soul. And for Yoruba practitioners, there are several poems dedicated to the Orisha.

Attached in an excerpt from the chapbook, a poem entitled, *Rapture*. Margie will be featured in a public reading this month and will lead a free poetry workshop at the Warrensville Heights library. Dates and times are listed.

To purchase a copy of MOSAIC go to the publisher's website at www.nightballetpress.com.



The Many Faces of Prayer ~ A Healing Balm in the 21st Century ~ Shirley A. Nelson ~

The Many Faces of Prayer

A New Year Prayer

Dear God,

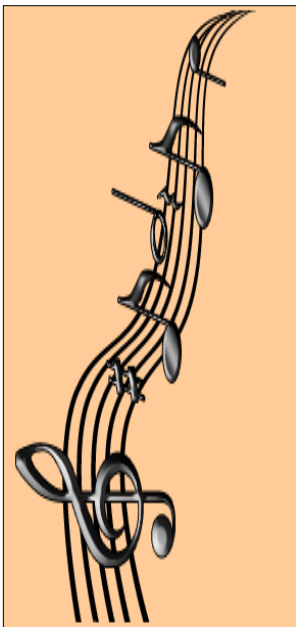
In this New Year I want to cook up a batch of happiness and get an award winning prize for my recipe. I might have stirred up a mess, or two, in 2013 and ask you to forgive me for all those concoctions, but movin' forward I'm not adding any more nuts to my life 'cause I'm not trying to make a fruit cake. Please give me a little guidance along the way so I can create something that's full of love and positive vibrations. I'll sprinkle in some laughter along with some

joy and mix it with some good music to spice it up more. I'll throw in a dash of kindness, and patience, and compassion to add a little substance and a natural sweetener to cut the bitterness of life.

I learned from last year's disasters when I bit off more than I could chew and will keep my measurin' cup close by so I don't make too many promises that I can't keep. In this New Year, I ain't mixin' up nothin' that's gonna' bring me down—not gonna' be burdened by those heavy negative calories. I got my eyes on the prize and have

left the past behind. In this New Year I'm leavin' out fear and judgment and blame and shame and creatin' new space for a whole new game. The ingredients we need to live a good life don't need to be mixed with a whole bunch of strife. If you want to cook up a batch of happiness too, just jump on board 'cause this prayer is for you.

Thank you, God, for my beautiful life and a recipe for happiness that's nice and light. It's full of those nutrients that's good for the soul and the things that keep us healthy and whole.



Sacred Music Pick of the Month

Wynton Marsalis

An all time favorite, Wynton Marsalis is a jazz enthusiasts dream. He's known mainly for playing the trumpet and he got his start with the New Orleans Philharmonic Orchestra at the age of 14.

His latest album, *The Spiritual Side of Wynton Marsalis*, is a collection of 15 songs from seven albums plus a piece from gospel legend Marion

Williams featuring "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" from a previously unreleased track. Other songs include "To Higher Ground," "Awakening", and "Oh We Have a Friend in Jesus".

Marsalis' music has always had a spiritual connection whether it be jazz or gospel however his spirituality took shape largely outside the church.

In a quote from the liner notes inside his latest album

he says: "Music lifts us out of the human problem of me versus you, and us versus y'all, and brings us to the understanding: 'all of us.'"

As long as there is democracy, there will be people wanting to play jazz because nothing else will ever so perfectly capture the democratic process in sound. Jazz means working things out musically with other people. You have to listen to other musicians and play with them even if you don't agree with what they're playing. It teaches you the very opposite of racism and anti-Semitism. It teaches you that the world is big enough to accommodate us all.

~ Wynton Marsalis

SIT-UP ~ Stay Tuned Spiritually In Tune for Universal Peace



Happy New You!

"Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

— Helen Keller

"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right."

— Oprah Winfrey

"Character is the ability to carry out a good resolution

long after the excitement of the moment has passed."

— Cavett Robert

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

-- Eleanor Roosevelt

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."

— Albert Einstein



"We are the authors of our destinies. No one can see the vision any clearer, believe in and work any harder to make it a reality more than the visionary."
— Nike Campbell-Fatoki

Water the Seeds Not the Weeds

Just a Thought



Accentuate the Positive

This is a suggestion about the coming New Year—that is to say how to properly start the New Year. Before we pull the curtain down on 2013, let us all mine the gold that we discovered. Now I know that some of you believe that it wasn't that good of a year and you are so glad that it's over but I beg to differ. I refuse to believe that there is anyone out there who cannot find one victory, one bright spot, one something that made you smile that originated from something that you did. Now mind you, it does not matter how small you think it is, what's important is that the event transpired from your life in 2013.

Now I want you to do something that most of us don't do enough of. Give

yourself credit and pat yourself on the back for contributing to the betterment of your life and the peace of the world.

Understand that every act of kindness, every act of joy, every small or large accomplishment coming from you contributes to the greater good of this whole planet. This is how you ride into 2014. You stand on whatever good you did in 2013 and contemplate, reflect, and feel good about the things you did in 2013 that helped you and others enjoy more peace, love, and joy in life.

I want you to make some time to celebrate who you are and the things you did to make your life and those around you better in 2013. Make that the platform you stand on as you enter the New Year. I am not naive. I know you made mistakes and mis-steps. So what! The lessons you have learned from your mis-steps are good for your soul. Although some of you may not understand what you learned from those

mis-steps, know this, everything we do in life good or bad, well intentioned or mis-intentioned informs us about who we be and helps us to grow whether you realize it or not. Now, once again, I would like us all to accent the positive and let that be the floor we stand on as we enter the New Year.

So, if you add a sprinkling of forgiveness for the things you still feel bad about and a dose of encouragement for the things you accomplished, you will not have to worry about any New Year's resolutions. Life is like that. The next step you need to take to have a meaningful 2014 will come to you. Why? Because you are standing well on solid ground. What is this ground? The acknowledgement of past good deeds from the previous year. What you focus on grows so choose to concentrate on those things that expand you and grow you in the way that you say you want to be. Happy New Year!

Peace ~ Rashid



Rashid Reaves,

Retired fire fighter and paramedic... Planting sacred seeds to enrich your heart and soul. . .

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Listen for the Word

Listening is an integral part of any spiritual path, as well as part of effective communication. But aren't praying, chanting, reciting inspiring verses more important? Why listening? And why listening *for* the word instead of listening *to* the word?

Listening is not often considered a very important part of communication. On some level we know that listening needs to happen, but consider how much time we spend talking rather than listening.

Talking certainly seems to hold a place of pride over listening. As children, our parents reward our ability to talk. And while they admonish us to pay attention (i.e. listen), how often did they reward us when we actually did listen? In daily conversation, how often do we find ourselves anxious for the chance to hear what the other person has to say, let alone actually listen to them (there is a difference, which we will address in future articles)?

More likely we can't wait

until the other person gives us the opportunity to interject our ideas, and get our point across. Talking seems so much more active. Listening seems so passive. In fact, true listening is highly active and not easy to accomplish.

Twenty-five years ago, I had a psychiatrist as a client. He was amazed by what he thought were my intuitive abilities to pick up on various elements of his troubled life. He asked me to teach him how to do what I did. *Continued on Page 4*

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SAN's Sacred Circle

*"You really can
change your life and
live your dreams
starting on day one."*

~ Bob Reina

**Be the Peace that you
want to see . . .**

SAN's Sacred Circle was established in 1998 as a lay ministry, grass roots, spiritual support group to nurture and develop sustainable practices for emotional healing and spiritual growth and to cultivate an overall sense of well-being within participants.

Inner wisdom is the compass that bridges your humanity and divinity and everyone has access to this amazing tool that lovingly guides and directs us. Access to the "still, small voice within" occurs through music, meditation, quietness, prayer, dance, and creative art inspired activities. In an environment that is sacred as well as playful, workshop participants connect body, mind, and spirit using their inner compass to transform their lives.

*Peace & Blessings ~
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Certified Life Skills Coach
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William E. (Will) Seifert-Kessell

*Semi-retired
psychotherapist and
behavioral consultant*

*Join Will for a year
long series on
communication, with
one lecture/presentation
a month at
Office Net Central
2720 Van Aken Blvd,
Suite #210, Cleveland,
OH 44120*

*The first one is "Hello,
I Must Be Going" and
will be held on
Saturday, January 18,
2014 from 10:00 am
to Noon.*

Cost \$25

*Questions / Comments
Email
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kessell@juno.com*

Listen for the Word (cont'd)

What I did was to actively listen to him. When I taught beginning therapists in practicum courses, the hardest thing to get them to understand and practice was the skill of active listening. Talking seems to have so many more advantages.

Once again, an active posture is at the core of the difference between listening *for* the word versus listening *to* the word. I admit that I get bored, and let my mind drift when I'm merely listening *to* someone's words. My mind wanders all over the landscape. But when I listen *for* a word, listen for words of instruction, guidance, inspiration, I come away with something more valuable than the mundane things my mind normally accepts. Listening *for* the word means engaging in expectation and anticipa-

tion of something we know will enhance our life and growth. We know the word is present and that if we but listen actively, we will find it, sometimes in the most unexpected of places.

What is this "word"? That depends on what we need to grow spiritually. It may be a word of support and encouragement. It could be a word of comfort or inspiration (I cherish these the most). It might even be a word of challenge or rebuke (I like these the least, but often find them the most valuable in my spiritual growth). At this time of the year we may be anticipating words about miracles (lamps burning for eight days on one day's supply of oil), or words of renewal (a month of penitence and

fasting), or the Word made Flesh and dwelling among us. And where will you find these "words"? It's more a question of where won't you find them. Try the people you live with and among. Try the stranger you pass on the street. Try the most difficult person in your life.

But wherever you try to find the word remember to do so with expectation and anticipation. Listen *for* the word.

Next month, a story about Frank.

