

Inspirations

December 2019

Coming Events



**Winter Solstice
Meditation & Labyrinth Walk**
SATURDAY • DEC. 21 – Noon – 8:30 P.M.

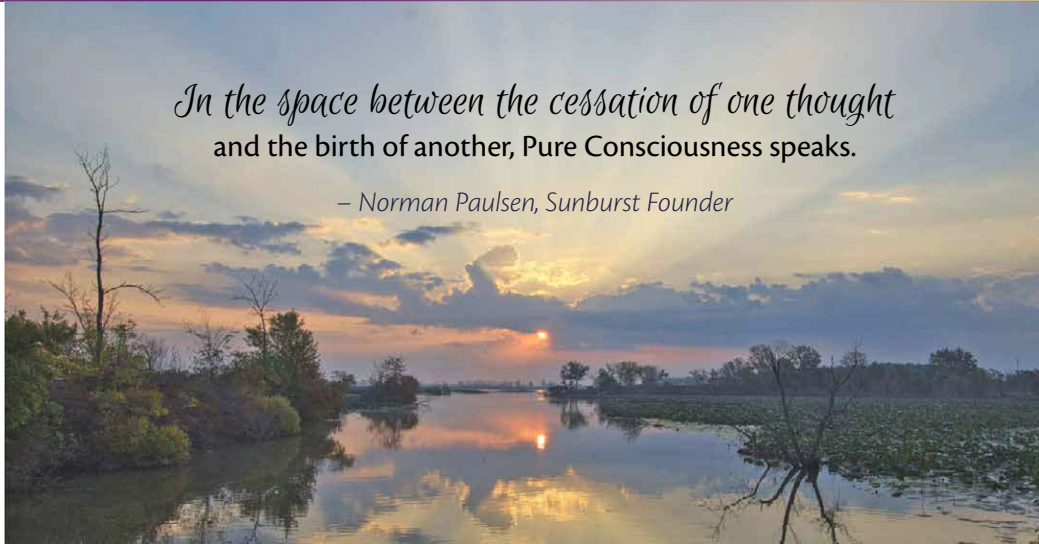


**New Year's Kriya Retreat
Transformation • Meditation**
THURSDAY – SUNDAY • JAN. 2 – 5, 2020



**Dive Into Silence
Weekend Retreat**
THURSDAY – SUNDAY • FEB. 20 – 23

See page 4 for more events

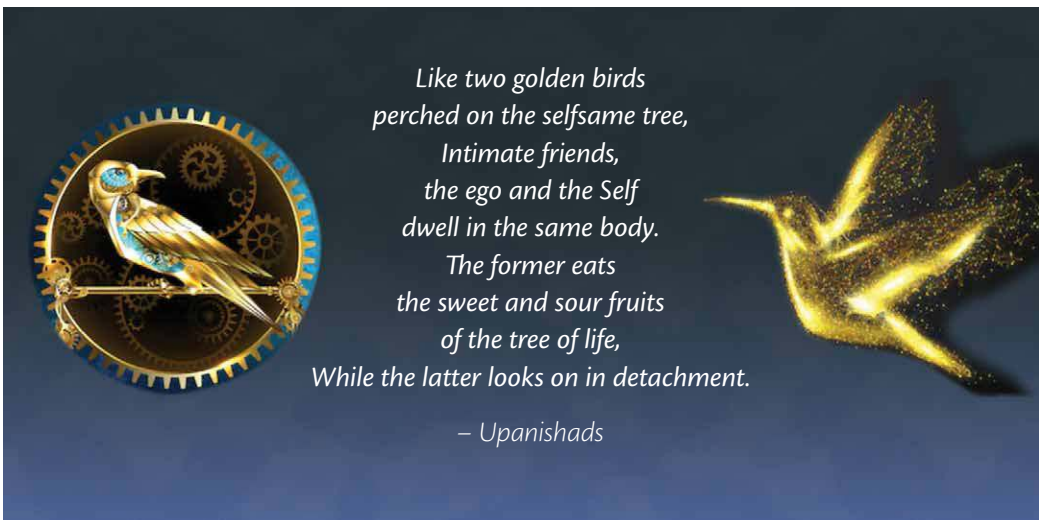


*In the space between the cessation of one thought
and the birth of another, Pure Consciousness speaks.*

– Norman Paulsen, Sunburst Founder

*As I contemplate Autumn
surrendering to Winter, I witness the flow
of change within myself, embracing shorter days
that allow more time for introspection.
By the time December arrives, the earth
has begun to rest—a natural time to take stock
of the season which has just passed.
In Feng Shui, winter is represented
by the water element, and intuition,
the inner knowing that guides you
into a space of trust.*

– Letha Kiddie, Sunburst



*Like two golden birds
perched on the selfsame tree,
Intimate friends,
the ego and the Self
dwell in the same body.
The former eats
the sweet and sour fruits
of the tree of life,
While the latter looks on in detachment.*

– Upanishads

The Gift

Once upon a time, there was a man who worked very hard just to keep food on the table for his family. One particular year a few days before Christmas, he scolded his little five-year-old daughter after learning that she had used up all of the family's only roll wrapping paper.

Money was tight, and he became even more upset when he saw that the child had used all of the paper to decorate one shoebox, which she had put under the Christmas tree. He also wondered how she could have bought whatever was inside.

Nevertheless, on Christmas morning the little girl brought the gift-wrapped shoebox to her father excitedly exclaiming, "This is for you, Daddy!"

The father was embarrassed, and regreted how harshly he had scolded her. Though hesitant, he was curious, and slowly opened the shoebox. Peering inside, he found it was empty. "What kind of package is this? It's empty!" he blurted out.

The little girl looked up at him through tears and whispered: "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was all full."

The father was humbled. He fell on his knees, embracing his precious little girl. He asked her to forgive him for his hasty words.

It is said that the father kept this special shoebox by his bed for the rest of his life. Whenever he was discouraged, or faced difficulties, he would open the box, take out an imaginary kiss, and remember the love of the beautiful child who had given it.

In a very real sense, each of us has been given an invisible box filled with unconditional love and kisses from our children, family, friends, and our divine Creator. There is no more precious possession that anyone could receive.

– Anonymous



FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Norman Paulsen

A Sunburst Christmas

Editor's Note: At Sunburst Sanctuary, each year we set up a Christmas tree in our lodge. On it, we arrange the colored lights in a rainbow, just as they exist within our inner "tree of life." We start with red around the bottom, orange for the next tier. Then, in turn, are lights of gold, green, blue, violet, and a white star at the top. It is a meditation just to look upon this beautiful tree! - Ed.

It feels so wonderful to gaze upon our representation of the *Christ tree of life* in all its rainbow of colors. I remember years ago, when I first arrived at Master Yogananda's monastic order and learned to meditate. I saw the spiritual eye for the first time as a ring of gold fire, inset with opal blue, tinged with green. Way off in the center I saw a bright white star shining. I realized that those colors were directly connected to the energy centers in my inner-dimensional tree of life, in my spinal column.

How important color then became to me. Previously, I had simply noticed it, whereas now observing it was thrilling. I was observing each color's living vibrational energy. Each color was a part of the Divine Being with whom I was becoming acquainted.

All these colors exist within us, inner-dimensionally. Our sacred spinal column, the tree of life within us, with all its colors and dimensions of consciousness, is watered and fed with the breath of life, the breath of God within each one of us.

What a wondrous thing it is to contemplate that the kingdom of God is within us, as Jesus said. We are God's children, each one of us a reflection of this whole creation. We are wearing it, carrying it, living in it.

What is the real meaning of the Christmas tree? Each year we decorate that *Christ tree of life* with colored lights, but how many of us realize we have been given that outward symbol to represent our tree of life within? The true meaning of Christmas is the understanding of who we really are.

This is why we meditate, so that our souls can awaken to their own divinity, each and every one. Divine Spirit wishes each one of us a brilliant Christmas, that our doors of understanding may be opened wide, and our spiritual vision may be expanded to see the whole spectrum of colors, all dimensions of consciousness, filling all space and time, right within us.

A Personal Relationship With The Divine

Sibylle Custer, Sunburst

There is an old story told to students of the Divine. It is said that there was a beautiful, thriving orchard, where people went. One group of people found enjoyment in counting the fruits, measuring the branches and twigs, noting the colors of the leaves, and other details.

But then there were also people who went into this orchard just to pick the fruit, eating it with total enjoyment and love. This story is meant to symbolize how we can approach the Divine.

There are certainly thousands of things our minds can tell us about the Divine. But Norm, Sunburst's Founder, was definitely no twig counter. He believed in experiencing our Creator directly, and he talked about it often. All the experiences he shared were meant to give us a glimpse of what it's like to really know God.

Even as a young child, one of his first questions was: "Has anybody seen God?" He wanted to see that Being. He wanted to get a hold of our true Mother and Father. He said he wanted to put his arms around Her, wanted to hear from Him. He was desperate, crying out to the Creator. His constant pleading and searching was rewarded; he saw God.

First he saw God as Divine Mother. Divine Mother was talking to him and encompassing him with the infinite love that poured forth from her. Then he experienced God as a brilliant light, that spoke to him. He came face-to-face with God, a personal, all-loving being.

We all struggle with our concept of God, and Norm knew that. We are human beings and usually perceive God as human. Somebody said, If the Buffalo had a religion, they would perceive their God as a Buffalo. If fish had a religion, it would be a big fish.

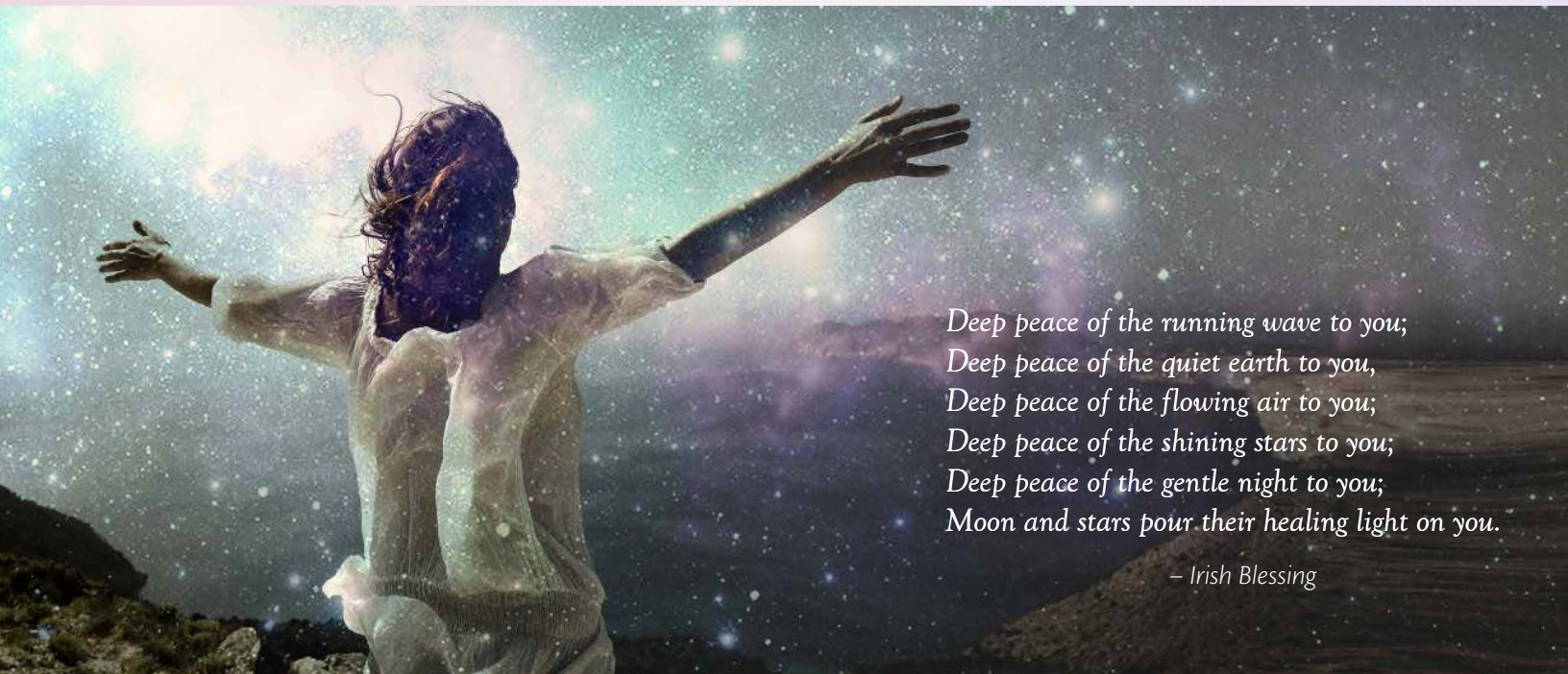
As humans, the best way we can approach our Creator is to put our human feelings towards him, towards her. In the beginning, we don't know that love is meant for the Divine, and we attach it to physical beings and things. But the purpose of our love is to experience the Divine. We can practice this love as we do in our relationships.

For example, we can think of God as our friend. The love that we feel for a friend or partner, we can put toward the Divine. Just as you or I open our hearts to a true friend and know that the friend will never blame us for our faults, but will always try to help us, so love flows between us and our friendly Creator.

Thus we develop a relationship with a friend that is always near, the friend to whom we may freely tell all the tales of our lives, the friend before whom we may place the innermost secrets of our hearts with the greatest insurance of safety and support.

The joy which comes of a love that we direct towards our Creator ultimately surpasses the joys of a relationship with another earthly being. We can go to that meeting place right inside of us. This is where Norm contacted the Divine in his most intimate and personal experience, and that is where we can do the same.

*Dear Spirit,
You know our struggle here.
As our love reaches you,
We know You reach for us with love.
Please talk to us
So that we know it's You talking.
Please touch us
So that we know it's You touching us.
Please let us taste
The blissful experience of You.
Let us unite in love
And know we are one.
Amen*



*Deep peace of the running wave to you;
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you;
Deep peace of the shining stars to you;
Deep peace of the gentle night to you;
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.*

– Irish Blessing

Events

HOLIDAY FAMILY GATHERING

Join Together in Holiday Spirit!

SATURDAY • DECEMBER 7 • 4 – 8 P.M.

Holiday crafts, Christmas tree trimming, and cookie decorating. All supplies provided. Bring a dish to share for 5:30 P.M. potluck dinner; salad and soup will be provided.

For details see: sunburst.org/holidays

WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Meditation, Dinner & Labyrinth Walk

SATURDAY • DEC. 21 • NOON – 8:30 P.M.

Celebrate the return of the light! Extended quiet meditation, connection with friends new and old at dinner, and a luminaria-lit labyrinth walk under the stars. Participate in all or part.

sunburst.org/solstice

KRIYA YOGA MEDITATION RETREAT

Transform Yourself – Transform Our World

THURSDAY – SUNDAY • JAN. 2 – 5, 2020

Learn scientific meditation practices in the lineage of Paramahansa Yogananda. New Year's ceremony, sacred silence, discussion, and pristine nature. sunburst.org/new-year

DIVE INTO SILENCE

Weekend Retreat

THURSDAY – SUNDAY • FEB. 20 – 23, 2020

Explore the joy of quietness at this group silent retreat. Guided walking and sitting meditations, pristine nature, and more.

Beginners welcome! sunburst.org/silence

KARMA YOGA PROGRAM

Selfless Service • Spiritual Practice • Community

Infuse daily actions with Spirit as you work, meditate, and participate in cooperative community. Activities vary, such as cooking, gardening, cleaning. Apply for up to 2 weeks.

sunburst.org/karmayoga

Pre-registration is required for most events.

For more information and to register, call 805.736.6528 or visit: sunburst.org/events

WEEKLY MEDITATION GATHERING

EVERY SUNDAY 10:30 A.M.

Enjoy live, spirit-filled music, an insightful talk, quiet meditation, inspired company, and a delicious vegetarian meal. Children's program is available during quiet time. Yoga is offered at 9:00 A.M. 1st and 3rd Sundays.

sunburst.org/sundays

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News



Exciting Changes!

Starting January 2020, the Sunburst Monthly Inspirations will be transformed into a new format, in order to better meet the needs of our readers across the globe.

To make sure you don't miss anything, you're welcome to connect with us at www.Sunburst.org to receive email notification of new posts, and more. Thank you for your support in the evolution of our newsletter to: sunburst.org/blog



Sacred Geometry Workshop

Craig Hanson, Sunburst's Sacred Geometry expert, led a multi-faceted event called "Exploring the Divine Signature." The November workshop included a slideshow and discussion, a short hike to recognize the geometry found in nature, and a creative activity related to patterns found in pinecones and sunflowers.

All that we see and experience in this life is a reflection of God's creative power.



Halloween

On the evening of October 31st, Sunburst's youngest resident, Eli, went trick-or-treating from home to home on the ranch. Together the Wirtz family was dressed as Milk and Cookies. Eli (the little milk carton) declared: "I'm milk, and I'm organic!"



Wedding Celebration

Sunburst was honored to host the wedding and reception of the son of Greg and Elena Anderson. Rick and Vanessa De La Cruz wed on November 1st. The Temple looked magnificent, and the reception foods created by Sunburst were amazing. Rick and Vanessa are wished a lifetime of love and happiness together.



www.Sunburst.org

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