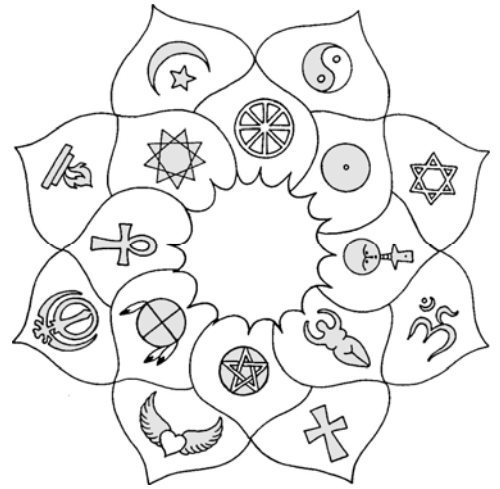


Dances of Universal Peace

The Dances of Universal Peace are a joyous, multi-cultural way to touch the spiritual essence within ourselves and others. The Dances use sacred phrases, chants, music, and movements from many spiritual traditions from around the world to promote peace and create an integrated experience of body, mind and spirit. There are no performances or audience: new arrivals and old hands form the Dance circle together. All are welcome. Dances are easy to learn and are taught to the whole group each time.



Samuel Lewis and the Dances

This music and dancing is to increase Joy, not awe toward another person, but bliss in our own self. This is finding God within, through experience. ~Samuel Lewis

In his last years (starting around 1965) Samuel Lewis was inspired to create practices he called the “Dances of Universal Peace and Walks.” Besides his recognized mastery within the Sufi lineage, Murshid S.A.M. participated in deep spiritual apprenticeships in the Kabbalah, Buddhism and Hinduism, and with the sacred dance mentor Ruth St Denis. His writings include Christian mystical poetry, as well.

Welcome to Dance

- ☉ The focus of the Dances is open-heartedness, sincerity, meditation and prayer, **more than doing things exactly right.**
- ☉ Usually the Dance meeting begins with a **guided walking meditation.** This may serve as a transition from the bustle of the day, to being present within one’s own body.
- ☉ **All dances are taught:** words, melody, movements, meaning. It’s ok to ask questions and...if you don’t get all the words at first, **it’s OK to hum or mumble the words.**
- ☉ **Take care of your body.** Only do the motions that feel comfortable; adapt any that aren’t. For instance, dancers can stand still instead of turning, or hold waists instead of shoulders. Please *do* keep moving in the line of direction, to support the Circle as a whole.

(continued on back)

- ☉ Usually **hands are linked with thumbs to the left** (left palm up, right palm down...again, adapt this hold, if needed for your physical comfort). This aids in synchronicity of movement, allowing the circle to move as a whole. It also allows the flow of energy from the heart to hand to heart around the circle of dancers.
- ☉ **At the end of each dance we share a moment of silence.** This is useful to become aware of the effect of the Dance on one's internal state.
- ☉ Sometimes the dance leader will call out "***On the Breath.***" During this time we are not singing, but rather breathing the sacred phrase. This open space allows us to go deeper into the prayer, and deeper into ourselves. If you wish to hum, please do so quietly so that others may continue to bathe in the silence.
- ☉ **People come and go occasionally during a dance.** However, you can only join a *partner dance* (which has already started) by bringing a partner in with you. Similarly, if you want to drop out of a partner dance, you need to take your partner with you or things can get confusing! If, during a *partner Dance*, you find yourself without a partner, step toward the center of the circle and you will likely find a partner there.
- ☉ **A \$5-10 donation** (to cover rent and incidental expenses) is requested, but your presence is valued whether or not you contribute economically.
- ☉ During Dances and instruction periods, **please refrain from side conversations.** Hopefully our social break times and the period following closure of the Dance meeting will allow the interpersonal connections to take root. Sign up sheets for the **community email list** are also available (next to the donation jar) to help support this.
- ☉ We do need to clear the building by **10pm sharp**, so the caretaker (who lives in the building) can lock up and get some sleep! Please take your conversations outside well before 10pm.
- ☉ **Personal boundaries vary.** If gazing directly into others' eyes is uncomfortable, consider focusing on a point mid-forehead (third eye). Hugging is a widely enjoyed form of greeting in the circle, but it, too, is a personal choice. Again... adjust contact (during and after the Dance) to support your own boundaries and please do your best to respect others' spatial needs.
- ☉ **More information** can be found at:
www.SeattleDUP.org

