# Esperanza
## HOPE INTERFAITH CENTER & SEMINARY

**Spring 2011**

Issue Number 5

## *~ Boundless Spirituality & Joyful Celebration*

**Rev. Maria Pierre**

**Rev. Maria's services include, but are not limited to:**

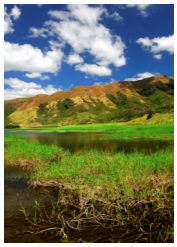
- Retreats & Workshops
- Weddings
- Celebrations
- Ceremonies & Funerals
- Counseling / ACIM
- Speaking Engagements
- Spiritism
- Mentoring
- Interfaith Seminary
- Business Events
- Workplace Chaplaincy

## Seminary Minister Training Program

Esperanza Interfaith Center & Seminary expanded its seminary's minister training program. As non-denominational leaders and counselors, trained interfaith ministers support the spiritual needs of individuals, couples, and families of all faiths and beliefs.

"I am delighted to bring this groundbreaking ministerial training to the Tampa bay region," said Rev. Pierre, who received her interfaith training through the New Seminary of the United Kingdom.

A fluent speaker of English and Spanish, Rev. Pierre will also be offering bilingual coursework. The 2011 curriculum will include monthly classroom work and study groups, visitations to local churches and temples, shamanic circles, structured reading of sacred texts, academic compositions, and group spiritual direction. In April, Rosa Dobles Cetlin will be providing Hinduism coursework to students. Brahma Kumaris, Daughters of God, is a modern Hindu sect, worldwide, connected to the United Nations and focused on peace. Seminarians will also be visiting services at Hindu Society of Florida. This year's coursework will be conducted on-site, but Rev. Pierre plans to offer distance learning to students in 2012.



**Seminary Open House**
**April 17, 2011**
**4-6 p.m.**

All those with an open heart and mind are encouraged to attend the Seminary's Open House on April 17, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

## Soul of the Leader Mini-Retreats

Esperanza Interfaith Center will be hosting Soul of the Leader Mini-Retreats this spring. Spiritually-minded individuals are invited to experience prayer, meditation, and sharing, in a gorgeous lakefront setting. Love offerings are $20 members, $25 guests and $30 walk-ins.

**April 22, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.:** Presenter, Louanne Walters, will share how she thrives on the wonder and joy of seeing people embrace within the unknown, and discover newness.

**May 20, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.:**
Guest presenter Catarina De Hoyos-Gilbert will discuss approaching work with a sense of joy, openness, and acceptance.

Spring events will be sponsored by Ersula K. Odom-McLemore, President of Sula Too LLC & Netdirect2U. LLC.

**www.sulatoo.com**

Register at least a week in advance via our website or contact Rev. Maria at 813-293-9410.

**www.EsperanzaInterfatihCenter.com**

**~ HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL**

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# I love myself, I love my life… *Childhood revisited*

## *Dear Interfaith Friends,*

Are you happy with yourself as you are today, or are you waiting on happiness until you reach some far off goal? Will you be happy when you are thinner, wealthier, healthier, romantically involved or more famous? Do you appreciate yourself and your life with the gifts and blessings you hold today? Or is your life not enough, somehow not living up to the definition of satisfaction and happiness which you acquired as a child and young adult? Are you passing this idea of waiting on tomorrow for satisfaction and happiness to the children in your life?

We adults have a tough time figuring out life for ourselves, let alone teaching life and love to children. Sometimes I may pass the job of teaching children self-love and self appreciation to others like their peers, teachers, coaches, and ministers. Along the way, the lesson of self-love can be lost. I need to have learned the lesson first, before I can teach it to others, especially children. When teaching children, I try to place myself in their shoes and remember how it was when I was a child. What did I hear and perceive? How did I feel about myself and the world?

As a child, I learned to appreciate through my spiritual values. I was a happy child, fully expressing Spirit. But early on, I became confused because others told me that my expression of Spirit and my spiritual values were wrong. I listened to this erroneous judgment and criticism and my expression of Spirit closed off. Originally, I was taught to honor and respect myself through my religion and spiritual practice. I was taught three religions and spiritual paths. I spent my early childhood in Puerto Rico where my mother was a curandera (shaman healer). She practiced the old ways of Taino Indians-the indigenous people of Puerto Rico, Christian Spiritism from her Spanish heritage, and the Yoruba African religions of the slaves and Latin American Catholicism. Francisca, my mother, taught me to honor myself through nature by using the healing power in trees, water, air, fire and plants and to celebrate in relation to my ancestral spiritual guides. At weekly shaman healing circles, Yoruba singing and chanting were performed melded with Catholic prayers. The purpose of the healing circles was to receive communication from our ancestors and helpers who had passed on to the Spirit world.

My mother taught me to love myself by teaching me to heal with herbs and shamanic rituals. My ancestral Spirits showed me to love myself through their constant return from the other Realm, their advice and wisdom. The Catholic culture taught me prayers and the spiritual process of Master Teacher Jesus, forgiveness, acceptance and love of myself and love of my community.

As a child, how did you come to love and appreciate yourself? Did you have differences in thought, belief and action that needed to be reconciled for you to truly and fully appreciate and love yourself? Did people say one thing and do another? Children compare core beliefs to new systems from: teachers where intellect and logic reign; sitters where sharing and waiting your turn are the rule; religious leaders where dogma and rules about God and law must be obeyed; and spiritual teachers where prayer, meditation and experience of the divine abound.

> Know that you are whole and complete as you are right now. Teach the children that they are whole and complete right now.

Are you living self-love and self-appreciation? Are you telling children spiritual lessons or are you living those lessons? I urge you to take some time to ponder and reflect on your childhood history of learning self love and self appreciation. Reconcile any confusing ideas that keep you from finding happiness and enjoyment of yourself exactly as you are. Do not teach children to wait until they have achieved goals before they can love themselves. Know that you are whole and complete as you are right now. Teach the children that they are whole and complete right now. Discover a spiritual, emotional and physical practice that proves to you that you are whole and complete right now.

Learn it, live it, enjoy it. Your example will be the perfect teacher for all the children and adults around you.

I appreciate my shamanic gifts and my western intelligence and logic. I try to live this self-appreciation and self-love everyday. I pray that your protector spirits show themselves clearly to you, guide you and give you peace. May you love yourself and love your life today. Namaste, Shalom, La Paz de Dios, Amen.

*Many Blessings / Bendiciones,*
*Rev. Maria Pierre, Interfaith Minister*
*Ministra de Interreligiones*

Esperanza
HOPE
INTERFAITH CENTER & SEMINARY

***~HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL***

## ~Boundless Spirituality & Joyful Celebration

Esperanza HOPE INTERFAITH CENTER & SEMINARY

## Hope Heard Round the Bay

At Esperanza Interfaith Center & Seminary, we offer hope to all who come to rest and relax. Our members span across Florida, from Sarasota, Inverness, Lakeland, Orlando and the greater Tampa bay area. It's truly a hidden treasure with all of its instructors, the lakefront setting, and the boundless spirituality.

Be sure to join us for one of our upcoming open houses to meet our Founder, Instructors, and other Supporters of the Center. All those with an open heart are welcome.

### Center & Seminary Open House Dates:

**Sunday, April 17, from 4-6 p.m.**
**Saturday, July 16, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m,**
**Sunday, August 21 , from 4-6 p.m.**
**Sunday, October 16, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

# MEMBERSHIPS

**Increase hope, peace and joy throughout our communities.**

Abundant (Full Members): $75+

Ascending (Professional Members): $50

Associate (Student or Hardship Members): $25

Cherub (In Kind Donations)

Checks payable to Esperanza Interfaith Center
1217 Leisure Avenue, Tampa, FL 33613
or visit us at: **www.EsperanzaInterfaithCeter.com**
Click on Fees & Memberships
to be one of our special angels.

## *Calling All Angels!*

### Facilitator Needed

- Facilitator needed for our Fall Festival in conjunction with the Lightworkers Alliance.

### Ongoing Volunteers Needed

- 12 Angels (Steering Committee)
- Chairman (Head angel)
- Treasury angel
- Fundraising angel- tithing
- Website/Technology angel
- Marketing angel
- Capital Campaign angel
- Media/PR angel
- Directory angel
- By-Laws angel
- Ushering angels
- Retreat angel

Esperanza
HOPE
INTERFAITH CENTER & SEMINARY
1217 Leisure Avenue
Tampa, FL 33613
(813) 293-9410

# Upcoming Events at Esperanza Interfaith Center

## April 17, 2011

**Seminary Open House**
**4/17, 4–6 p.m.**
Learn about our Seminary!
Open Houses are also set for:
**7/16** from 11 a.m.-1 p.m,
**8/21** from 4-6 p.m.
**10/16** from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

SUNDAY

## April 22, 2011

**Soul of the Leader**
**Mini-Retreat, 9:30—11:30 a.m.**
*($20 members, $25 guests and $30 walk-ins)*
Presenter
Louanne Walters:
Secrets to Vitality.

FRIDAY

## May 20, 2011

**Soul of the Leader**
**Mini-Retreat 9:30—11:30 a.m.**
*($20 members, $25 guests and $30 walk-ins)*
Presenter
Catarina De Hoyos-Gilbert:
Living in Joy.

FRIDAY

## August—October

**Soul of the Leader**
**3rd Friday Retreats this Fall**
**9:30–11:30 a.m.**
*($20 members, $25 guests and $30 walk-ins)*

See website for presenters.

3rd FRIDAYS

## November 4, 2011

**Special Retreat**
**Mini-Retreat 9:30—11:30 a.m.**
*($40 members, $50 guests and $55 walk-ins)*
Presenter
Dr. Mo Pertik,RN, Ph.D.:
Winning Your Audience Over.

FRIDAY

## November 19, 2011

**Interfaith Festival**
**Noon—5 p.m.**
*($20 members, $25 guests and $30 walk-ins)*
Save the date and join us for our annual festival and Interfaith Celebration!

SATURDAY

**Visit our website to REGISTER IN ADVANCE for upcoming events!**

**www.EsperanzaInterfaithCenter.com**

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