

The Magic Tree 2017

Flier 14

The nightly hours of the Magic Tree through January 6th are dusk to 11:00 PM.

Thanks to the The Village of Cherry Hill Business Association for hosting the official Magic Tree every year since 2010. Another word of thanks to the nearby residents who graciously live with the nightly noise of the crowds that come to enjoy the tree. Thanks, too, to all of you who come for a dose of colorful light and inspiration. While I or others light other “magic trees” around town and elsewhere, it is here at Cherry Hill that the official Magic Tree resides. I volunteer the time to light this tree. Cherry Hill provides the space, the electricity, and helps with the purchase of the light sets through a generous donation. The Village of Cherry Hill hosts the Magic Tree for the sole purpose of continuing the gift of holiday cheer that the annual lighting of the Magic Tree brings to the community. The opinions expressed in this flier and on the Magic Tree website (magic-tree.org) are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect those of The Village of Cherry Hill or any of its residents, businesses, or customers. Visit the Magic Tree Facebook page and please remember to express your thanks to the businesses of Cherry Hill without whom the official Magic Tree would not have such an accommodating home.

Will Treelighter

This is the 8th year the official Magic Tree has been here at Cherry Hill. Prior to that it was at our home where in 1995 I began doing the kind of tree lighting that has developed into what you see now, which makes this year's Magic Tree the 23rd. Each year I just kept putting more and more lights up, doing more and more of the branchlets until I was lighting every branch of the tree. The tree is an *ornamental* (appropriately enough) cherry tree. It has over 46,000 lights on it that took 68 hours to put up. (It will take about the same amount of time to get the lights back off the tree and properly put away and organized for next year's Magic Tree.) Each year I enjoy developing a new scheme of colors. Although it can be difficult to find enough time to do all the tree lighting I do, it is play and such a joy to be up in the tree (on ladders) while the lights are on. Surrounded by glowing electric colors imagination is getting a steady current of energetic creative inspiration.

Have you ever wanted to fix all that is wrong in the world? What if you had a magic wand that could do just that? People often think that God could wave a magic wand and fix everything that is wrong and they ask why doesn't He just do it. They're mad at God for allowing horrible things to happen and then figure, surely God does not exist if such awful things are allowed to take place.

Now imagine if you did indeed possess the magic to fix the world, to make it a perfect place. Would you do it? You might say, that's a funny question, of course I would. But what if it occurred to you, that if you did, that that would take away everyone's freedom of choice? What then? Would a perfect world be better than the one we have if all we had to do was give up our freedom of choice to have it? Most I think would agree, that despite the problems we face in the world today we don't want someone, or even God, to wave a magic wand and make everything better if it means giving up our freedom to choose for ourselves what it is we want or will seek, or pursue.

So where does that leave us? Right where we are! How *can* the world be fixed, repaired, healed, perfected if we don't *want* God to do it all for us leaving us no choice. We must do it ourselves. No one of us can do for everyone else what needs to be done, because each must do for themselves if there is to be freedom. But we can do the little bit that each of us can do for ourselves and the ones around us, because everyone can use a little encouragement from their neighbor. Nothing earth shaking, just small moves of thoughtful helping, friending, sharing and daring on the part of each of the willing and we *can* magic a new world into being.

For me, what we call God, is not aloof in this - Love is God. Absolute Perfect Unconditional Everywhere Present. Our freedom as individualizations of intelligent consciousness is tantamount, but love is what we are ultimately made of if we consider carefully the wellspring of life. What is the magic wand that God can wield to heal the world? It is us! - as we seek to deploy love, Love amplifies our efforts. We can do whatever we like to try and make the world a better place for everyone, but we must obey the rule: you can't take away anyone else's freedom by direct action, nor by incidental action. It's golden.

Sometimes the world seems so big though, and each of us so small. It is daunting, the amount of miserable things that happen in the world. Our own little selves do not seem to be able to supply a very significant contribution to fixing the world and that can be depressing and distressing. Sometimes our own lives are such a mess of mistakes and wrong turns that we feel impotent to effect anything good for ourselves let alone others. I wrote the following poem to address this sense of impotence in the face of problems large and intimidating. I hope you can take your time with it to get to the meaning behind the words.

(The poem was originally in three line verses. A slash indicates a new verse.)

Ultimately Speaking

by Will Treelighter December 2014 - October 2017

I am not the world. I am not the nation. I am not the city or the town I call home. / I am not the house I live in. I am not the car I drive to town. Nor am I the clothes that convey a tone. / I am not the food I eat; not the stomach or the bowels; not the lungs or the heart or the muscles or the bones. / I am not the brain or the synapses; not the cells, molecules and atoms so well organized into a whole. / I am not the body I walk around in. I'm not the school where I go to learn. Nor am I the job I perform. / I am not the classes I take; not the grades I make. The tests of fate so often my mistake cannot possibly be myself to date. / Ultimately speaking, losing or winning, I'm not the game I play. Nor my performance my making. / Not my acts, my successes or my failures; not my feelings of satisfaction, hope or love; hate, fear, trepidation - no, not my defining edge. / I am not the thoughts I think. Neither the ones given by others or the ones I myself create. / I am not my intuitions, my hunches or my inspirations. All these are but the streets and avenues I explore. They are not I so I'll never mind what to adore. / Though I cannot put my finger quite on it - that which marks what ultimately "I" is, I am I. And I simply am. / Om. I Am. Amen. / I observe all that pass through these windows and doors. Growth in awareness is what such disguises are for. But I'll not let them blind me, their beauty - or gore. / Everything is just as it is. There is nothing I need do, but walk with Me and in each moment I will cue. / Walk with Me in the pouring rain. Rest in Me your stress and strain. Quench your thirst in Me and ease your pain. / Be My hands and feet and I will heal. Be My heart and mind and the divine I reveal. Be My presence for thus into the world I've come to deal. / Never minding what to abhor. Down all these streets and avenues I explore. Beauty is the window I see through and love, the door. / Intuitions guide attentive illumined mind. Hunches of heart, direction of soul to find. Inspiration sends upon the mountain path with feet of hind. / Quiet thought proves out that I exist. All creation in Me, My faculty, it persists. Universe unfolding My story, I'll not resist. / I Am that I Am whether I succeed or fail. Love and hope stand in sharp relief to hate and fear, their wail. And guide me forward with the abyss beyond the pale. My ultimate game, to know my Self anew, born afresh each moment, in density, emerge, time due. Into, at first, ephemeral awareness of my eternal true. / Turning fleeting to enduring is the class I aim to pass. Gradations of mastery liberate from flesh bound morass to my all inclusive, singular, only begotten cache. / I make a body and go to school to ascertain the rules anew so lawfully I'll perform the job I come hear to do. / Brain, electro-chem function, my computing machine; an atomic cooperative community life stream; my body a whole world of its own, a team. / Bones, lungs, heart, muscles and spleen; bowels, stomach, the food consumed mirror in the mien my attentive intention as sun is reflected by moon. / I am clothed in raiment of light; my vehicle of powered transmission sight. My house, everywhere present, of love divine a-flight. / My city is golden with glory. The Unmanifest becoming manifest my story. My state, perpetual bliss, pure being, punctuated with light, starry. / My nation is peopled with droplets of the Only Begotten One. My world brings all tribes to my table as planets 'round the sun. My fire, to share the world over, my heart open wide, undone. / For I am not just I, one drop, but everyone. In heart-mind welcoming enabled into the light We come. / Together we wear away the blinders to reveal a world at one. And that which began as ephemeral dream in full awareness firm and eternal become.

Love's in everything, beauty is its signature,

Will Treelighter