

# On the Spiritual Side

## Caroline Oakes: Mind and Spirit

### Practice can significantly improve our relationship potential

How many times do we all use excuses like these for behavior we're not proud of: "That's just the way I am," or, "Hey, I'm just wired this way, okay?"

Well, it looks like we're only partly right: Yes, certain behaviors are "wired" into our brains. But in recent, exciting research confirming the "neuroplasticity" of our brains, neuroscientists have proven we are not completely hard-wired. We can actually re-shape our own internal wiring.

We can break out of old, destructive patterns that can hold us back from what we're wanting in our

closest relationships.

To this end, in her book "Rewire Your Brain For Love: Creating Vibrant Relationships Using the Science of Mindfulness," Dr. Marsha Lucas, PhD and psychotherapist, is our teacher, guide and coach.

As Dr. Lucas explains, we all do have certain unique, not always helpful, patterns of behavior that play out in our closest, most comfortable relationships. During conflicts, we often overreact or set up ways to avoid or retreat.

Many of those patterns are defenses we set up for ourselves

when we were young. They may have served us well then, and even protected us from feeling emotional pain.

But these defenses can often get in our way in our current relationships, causing real hurt, anger, and deep frustration.

If not addressed, our emotional defenses continue in a constant, endless loop that plays itself over and over again, ultimately limiting how fulfilling or ultimately meaningful our close relationships can be.

In "Rewire Your Brain," Dr. Lucas not only offers sensible

explanations on how past experiences shape our brain, she also explains how new experiences can shape our brain in new ways.

And that is Dr. Lucas' invaluable gift to us: In "Rewire Your Brain," she offers her readers practical, hands-on steps toward literally rewiring new and positive patterns of behavior into our brains (and into our lives) with mindfulness practices a few minutes a day.

With her professional and yet personal and caring guidance, we learn practices that establish brain patterns that actually "wire" us to

be less reactive, more empathetic to ourselves and others, and better able to see the "big picture."

I've given this book to several friends and colleagues, and each person has gotten back to me with the same response: "Wow - everyone should know about this."

*Caroline Oakes, a Bucks County resident, has a master's degree in Ascetical Theology and is writing a book on the prayer practice of Jesus, mindfulness meditation, and the human spirit. Follow her on Twitter @carolineoakes. oakes.caroline@gmail.com*



### Scouts celebrate with sponsor

Rev. Bob Hoeksema of Pleasant Ridge Church of Danboro stands with Boy Scout Troop 175, which the church has sponsored for 40 years. The troop celebrated and participated in a worship at the church Feb 10.

### BuxMont Unitarian presents yearly choir concert

The BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Street Road in Warrington holds its annual concert at 2 p.m. March 3.

Titled "A BuxMont Music Extravaganza: Come, Grow With Us," the performance reflects a shift from the annual choir concert to a concert that embraces the diversity of the fellowship's

music program.

Since the founding of the adult choir in 1991, BuxMont has seen tremendous growth in its music programs. During the past year, two new volunteer ensembles have started up, making a total of seven instrumental and vocal groups.

The music program includes a

wide range of styles, from pop to classical, jazz to folk, and traditional to contemporary hymns. It reflects the diversity of cultures in the local and global community.

Tickets purchased in advance are \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors and children. Tickets purchased at the door are \$12 for adults and \$6 for seniors and children.

## HAPPENINGS

### Newtown temple hosts women's service, party planning event

The Women of Shir Ami, 101 Richboro Road, Newtown, welcome Shabbat using a service written in honor of the 100th birthday of Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 1. The service occurs simultaneously in WRJ-affiliated congregations around the world.

Shir Ami's service is being led by past and present women leaders of the congregation. An Oneg Shabbat follows services.

The temple hosts its annual Party Planning Showcase 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, March 3, featuring vendors, including caterers, D.J.'s, photographers and party planners. Admission is free. For information, call Shir Ami at 215-968-3400.

### Doylestown church offers noontime concert

Doylestown Presbyterian Church, 127 E. Court St., Doylestown, hosts the second of three Celebrate the Arts Brown Bag Music Lenten offerings at noon, March 6 in the sanctuary, featuring baritone Neil McDonald.

Visitors are invited to bring a bag lunch. Refreshments will be served following performances. A free-will offering will be received.

The visual arts display, "Looking at God's People and Places in the World" by Louise Pearson continues through March 31 in the Celtic Cross room when sanctuary building is open.

Information: 215-348-3531 or on the church web site.

### New Hope church holds evening services

St. Philips Episcopal Church, Chapel Road and Route 32, New Hope, offers evening prayer Monday through Saturday in the season of Lent. The service

begins at 7 p.m., and all are welcome.

Sunday services are at 8:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., with an adult forum between the services at 9 a.m. The second service includes music.

### Lambertville church presents Evensong service

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church, York and Main streets, Lambertville, N.J., presents its monthly Evensong service at 4 p.m. Sunday March 3. It features the works of Herbert Howells.

St. Andrew's choir will sing "Lord, for Thy Tender Mercy's Sake" by Richard Farrant, "O Gracious Light" by Robert Lehman, "Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis" and the anthem "Like As The Hart" by Herbert Howells. Also featured will be service music by William Smith of Durham and the earliest known musical setting of the Lord's Prayer in English composed by Robert Stone in 1550.

The congregation will join in singing hymns and chanting psalms and prayers.

For information, contact 609-397-2425 or stan-drews@snip.net. Everyone is welcome.

### Newtown church shows faith-based film

Lutheran Church of God's Love, 791 Newtown-Yardley Rd, Newtown, hosts a showing of the movie, "Fireproof," a story of triumph, honor and forgiveness, at 5 p.m. Sunday, March 10. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children ages 5 to 12.

Kirk Cameron stars as Caleb Holt, a heroic fire captain who values dedication and service to others above all else. However, the most important partnership in his life, his marriage, is about to go up in smoke.

The film explores one man's desire to transform his life and marriage through the healing power of faith and fully embrace the firefighter's code: Never leave your partner behind

### Readington, N.J., church holds tower dedication

Readington Reformed Church, 124 Readington Road, Readington, N.J., is replacing the tower on its National Register building utilizing grants from the Hunterdon County Historic Preservation Fund, along with savings.

Visitors are invited to attend the dedication at 10 a.m. March 8. Dignitaries from county and local government have been invited.

Established in North Branch in 1719, the Dutch congregation moved to Readington Village in 1738. Among its Colonial ministers was Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, progenitor of one of New Jersey's most famous families.

Dr. Jacob Hardenbergh served the congregation throughout the Revolutionary War, when his inflammatory patriotic sermons caused the British to put a fine of 100 pounds on his head. Hardenbergh went on to become the first President of Queen's College - now Rutgers University.

As the congregation outgrew its first church in Readington, a larger church was erected but was later destroyed by fire. A third church built in 1864 is still in use.

Readington Reformed (Dutch) Church is the oldest continuous congregation in Readington and one of the oldest in the United States.

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Yardley  
Solebury  
Newtown  
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Plumstead  
Fallsington  
Doylestown  
Buckingham  
Wrightstown  
Southampton  
Lehigh Valley  
Quakertown, NJ  
Middletown (Langhorne)

# Quaker Life

## More than a breakfast food.

For more information on Area Quaker Meetings and their Worship times contact:  
Holly Olson • 215-860-9747 • hollybqc@verizon.net

# Worship Directory

**SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Sunday, March 3, 2013  
*The Rev. Dr. Tyson Frey, Sr., Pastor & The Rev. Dr. Lois Wilson, Associate Pastor*  
9:30 am Worship / Communion / Baptism / Sunday School  
10:30 am Fellowship & Refreshments / Nursery Service Available  
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