

Thank you, Annie and good morning, everyone.

It's been my greatest blessing to be a partner, friend and admirer of Rev Anne Zapf for 43 awesome years.

Twenty-five years ago, Church President Anne Zapf revealed that I would succeed her at the end of her nine-year term in 1993. Back then, we were all disappointed by the outcome of our 9-year federal suit which we ended in 1991. The U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the Texas District Court's ruling, denying our request to be exempted from prosecution for possession of Peyote, or permitting Peyote Way Church to purchase the sacrament from Government authorized distributors, as are members of the Native American Church. Our pro-bono ACLU lawyers explained the ruling to us like this: The Court is saying, "We're not discriminating against you racially. We're discriminating against you politically. since there is not enough Peyote, and since Congress meant only Native Americans to be exempted from prosecution."

We were pleased that the Court found us to be "sincere" since that probably led to the Graham County Assessor's office granting property tax exemption to our 160-acre Church after 20 years of paying the property taxes under protest. It was good to know that our neighbors accepted us as a Peyotist Church open to all people, but it didn't solve our problem of sacrament supply. So, in 1992, we built the first of 3 Sacramental Greenhouses at the Church in Aravaipa Valley. We called it the "Peyote House".

We had, at that time, no more than 100 rooted sacramental plants growing in planters that we made in the Mana Pottery studios, along with cuttings supplied by members of the Native American Church who were sympathetic to our situation. Today the Church has at least 15 thousand healthy rooted plants 2-3 inches in diameter that supply us with transplantable cuttings and tens of thousands of seeds annually. Most of the plants are growing in the "Grandchildren's Greenhouse",

a 18' X 20' Quonset style greenhouse built in 2005 and the new 20' X 36' Greenhouse we call the "Mana" house, which we began constructing in November 2016. It took us a while to find the right mix of sunlight, water, and pest control for growing Peyote at the 4000 ft elevation of our Church land.

We give many thanks to our son Joseph, and to Native and non-Native Peyotists and to our Deacons, whose love and interest in Peyote propagation helped us to achieve this balance. I'm pleased to report that since 2014 almost all the Holy Sacramental plants are thriving and producing many beautiful flowers, seeds and self-started baby peyotes.

It was in early 2015 when Rev Annie and then first degree clergy member Luke Heidt began experimenting with methods of germinating seeds under lights in the original but now termite infested Peyote House. These efforts produced around 300 tiny plants that are now 1" or more in diameter and have been transplanted into the Mana House.

I used to spend most of my time with a small brush in my hand decorating Mana pottery to support the Church and our family. I now spend at least 1 day per week from late February to late October hand pollinating Sacramental flowers with a #2 brush. Peyote is bisexual, its flowers have both male (stamens) and female (carpels/pistils) parts.

During the warm seasons, a healthy Peyote plant will produce several flowers that bloom and close daily for about four days. The flowers start to open around 10 am and begin to close after 2 pm, so it's during the hottest hours of the day that we can be found gently tickling the flowers with brushes moving pollen to the female stigma and then we move on to the next flower. Buzzing like a bee is fun too. When pollinated the flower will stop blooming and then slowly produce a small red seedpod that contains at least 6-10 tiny black seeds similar in size to poppy seeds.

In February, 2018, while Deacon Luke Heidt and then Deacon trainee Akbar Nazary were cleaning a guesstimated forty thousand seeds from all the collected dried seedpods, we received a phone call from a member who joined the Church in the mid 80's and is a horticulturalist. He said he wanted to donate LED lights, shelves, his time, and an additional 40,000 seeds that he had procured from Germany.

The Board agreed to his proposal, so we postponed plans for creating much needed Deacon housing and a new kitchen/dining facility and began preparing the old Peyote House for large scale Sacramental seed germination. We rewired the Peyote House and set up 6-5 level Chrome planter shelves with LED grow lights.

The Church also purchased a soil sterilizer and two Dosatrons. The Dosatron is a piston driven device that injects a measured amount of organic vinegar into the greenhouse water line. The vinegar lowers the Church ground water pH from 7.3 to 5.1 which is about the pH of rainwater. We started half of the seeds during the Summer solstice and the rest around the Fall Equinox.

This project was funded by savings from Spirit Walk donations, last year's fund raiser and a couple generous donations from clergy members. The donations received from the 40th Anniversary fundraiser will hopefully make it possible for Peyote Way Church to achieve Sacrament Sustainability by 2020.

In 2018, we germinated at least 40 thousand seeds, increased the stockpiles of planting medium, transplanted most of the rooted stock into deeper planters containing a new planting mix, cleaned the cistern, built a 5-star latrine, trained and ordained 2 deacons and provided 230 spirit walks for church members from March until November. In 2019, we germinated 60,000 more Peyote seeds that we gathered and cleaned from the Church's sacramental plants and we trained and confirmed Deaconess as Clergy of the Second Degree. Together we facilitated 249 Spirit Walks

for Church members, provided many tours of the Church land for curious nonmembers and hosted a couple large groups of student herbalists.

Last but not least in importance to Annie and me, was the Graham County Sheriff's invitation to Peyote Way Church to advertise on his Annual calendar for 2018 and 2019.

Friends, Peyote is a very misunderstood and understudied Master Plant.

It is among the slowest growing plants on our planet. It isn't planted in the Spring and harvested in the Fall. In nature it could take at least 10-12 years for a seed to develop into a seed producing plant. It has a very small natural bioregion, extending from the Southern tip of Texas to about 300 miles South of the Rio Grande river in Mexico. Despite Peyote's use by Native peoples in the Southwest both for healing and spiritual purposes prior to the invasion of Europeans in the Western hemisphere the United States Controlled Substances Act of 1970 defines the Holy Sacrament Peyote as a Schedule One Dangerous Drug. This means a citizen needs a permit from the Drug Enforcement Administration to possess, grow, consume, or study it. To me and many others it is this foolish and outdated law that poses the biggest threat to Peyote's future.

The consumption of Peyote for bonafied religious use will only be a problem until cultivation and possession are decriminalized. Annie and I have lived, worked, consumed, shared and raised three fine people around Peyote. It is not dangerous. In fact, it is anti-addictive, with the ability to heal the body and spirit.

My fellow Peyotists are not Peyote's problem but as long as our U.S. laws permit its consumption without legalizing cultivation, Peyote will continue to be endangered to the point of extinction in the United

States. Fortunately to my knowledge cultivation of Peyote is legal in Canada and most of Europe and several Asian countries. In the United States the sacred nature of Peyote is shrouded in our five hundred years of war, racism, genocide and ignorance.

When Annie and I first visited the Aravaipa Valley in South Eastern Arizona in the Fall of 1976, we were on our honeymoon looking for a shortcut to Tucson on dirt roads that would avoid I – 10. We took the Aravaipa Klondyke Rd north through the ghost town of Klondyke and followed the narrowing dirt road, crossing the clear gentle stream several times until our '65 VW squareback could go no farther without getting stuck. We parked and walked to the Creek, disrobed and sat down in the shallow cold water. In a few minutes tiny fish appeared and nibbled at our feet, the canopy of leaves from towering Cottonwood trees shaded the spot and the breeze rustling the leaves accompanied the songs of many birds.

I had visited holy places in Britain, Europe, Central Asia and Southern India. So, it didn't take long for us to realize that we were in a very special and holy place. A place that was so far off the beaten path that its natural beauty had not yet been forever changed by what we had been taught to see as progress.

As the sun lowered towards the steep western canyon wall, we got ready to go and I heard myself saying, "We will be coming back to this place. I don't know what we will be doing but we are coming back."

I won't go into the details of sexual assault, police violence, false imprisonment and deportations that Annie and I experienced before and after I was arrested on charges of trafficking marijuana during our honeymoon in Costa Rica--suffice it to say that I wasn't trafficking and by the time we were reunited, after five months separation, we were pretty wounded in our hearts and inner spirits. I thought Annie had every

reason to dump me since I had been unable to protect her, but a few days after our reunion-after practicing yoga next to a creek near her parents' home north of Philadelphia – she took my hand and looking deeply into my eyes, asked the question, “What’s next?” I smiled, and said “Let’s go back to the Southwest and find a teacher” and in a few months we did.

I should add here that while I was airborne, returning to the U. S. from Costa Rica, I silently vowed I would never again eat meat, drink alcohol Or coffee, never work for wages again and that I would dedicate the rest of my days in this world to service. I shared this information with Annie, which she quietly absorbed. I realized that this proposed life of service would not lead to enough financial stability to support offspring. Annie was 24, and said she was not ready for children. I did not want her to risk her health taking chemical birth control, so I made an appointment with a urologist to be sterilized by vasectomy. That took place around my 25th birthday in my hometown of Reading PA. A few weeks after the surgery, Annie told me she had missed her menstrual period but that she was not pregnant. That remained the state of things for the next 15 years.

On our journey to the Southwest we abandoned our musician friend Who did not want to quit smoking, drinking or eating meat. I signed the title of the old VW bug he and I had rebuilt in PA, over to him, we said our goodbye’s and Annie and I were left on the side of the road in Alpine, Texas. This was the third time in my short life that I had – in biblical words – cast my burden upon the lord. The first time was when I quit my studies at Temple University the day after Richard Nixon was reelected.

The second time was when I gave up all my material possessions and followed a group of Shiivite sadhus after a 3-day Datura experience by the river Tungabhadra, near the ruins of Vijayanagar which is now called Hampi, in Karnataka Nadu in South India. So, starting out in Alpine Texas where, by the way, Sul Ross State University has recently

Begun studying Peyote with DEA approval, we continued hitchhiking West.

The very first vehicle to stop in response to our beckoning thumbs was an old pick-up truck with Oregon tags, and a single bearded driver. He asked where we were going and I told him “Coronado National forest north of Willcox” The driver hesitated while he looked me in the eyes and said, “Well you better get in cause that’s where I’m going.”

He was looking for someone to share the driving and keep him awake with stories while he drove-which I did gladly. Along the way, the driver who visited the Church just last year, began to tell us about an Apache artist who had a Church in the Aravaipa Valley of Arizona. How he had left from there in an unsuccessful attempt to find Peyote growing wild near Presidio and Shafter, Texas.

He said he had met the artist called Mana after he had discovered and rescued a ninety-four-year-old man who had pinned himself against the wall of his shack while attempting to move a refrigerator in a ghost town near Tombstone.

The old man’s name was Eugene Yoakem. He was a veteran of the Spanish American War in the Philippines and a white Peyotist who was a friend to another so-called mixed-race man called Apache Bill Russell. Mr. Russell was also a WW1 veteran and Peyote Road Man who owned a nursery on Oracle Rd. Both of these men were friends of Mana’s part Apache father, who had died a few months after his son’s birth, 13 years after being gassed in a battlefield in France. Both Yoakem and Russell introduced Mana to the Holy Sacrament Peyote.

When we arrived at Mana’s Church, we stopped to read the hand painted plywood sign that stood next to the ramp of a 3-cable suspension bridge that spanned the dry creek bed of the Aravaipa. The sign read “Church of Holy Light, Universal Life Church, Alternative Lifestyle Research Center.” I told Annie “This is the place!”

We then drove on and parked next to a long single-story ranch house that had a big sheet of plastic covering an 8 ft gap where there seemed to have once been a full-length sliding glass door. As Joe, our driver announced himself, he pulled aside the veil of plastic to reveal a small room with many shelves holding unfired pottery and two tables also filled with many ceramic mugs, bowls, ashtrays, and 6” cones that I later learned would become wind bells.

There were two young men working at one table while at the other sat a very fit middle-aged man holding a brush to a ceramic bowl clothed only with a towel over his lap. He had his long dark hair twisted into a knot at the back of his head held in place by a red head band. He wore only a small round silver medallion hanging from his neck. The medallion was embossed with two intersecting infinity signs at right angles inside a circle.

After Annie and I were introduced to everyone Joe left the room with the two younger men leaving us alone with the elder, Mana Pardeahtan Trujillo, who had a vibrant pair of blue green eyes that looked deeply into my eyes and Annie’s, reminding me of the penetrating gaze a few of the Sadhu holy men had fixed on me in India. He asked what we were looking for, so wanting to be at eye level with him, as there were no extra chairs, I crouched down across the table from him and said that we wanted to help row a boat as far away from normal as legally possible and that we would work at anything he said was necessary. He chuckled, flashed a beautiful smile our way and returned his eyes and brush to the black design he was painting inside a small bowl. Without looking up again he said there were a lot of freshly harvested apples that needed to be processed in his new Vita Mixer then bagged and frozen for Winter storage. He said we could camp out until he had to go to Phoenix to sell pottery to pay for the land and get supplies.

So, for the next week Annie and I Vita mixed a freezer full of apple sauce while observing the production of at least a couple hundred pieces of hand painted twice fired Mana Earthenware. We also learned from a large photo scrapbook and others that Mana had run away from his adoptive Irish Catholic family in New Jersey to join the British Merchant Navy in 1944-then transferred to the Royal Marines and was badly wounded by a bomb explosion on the North Sea Island of Heligoland during the last days of WW 2.

After partial recovery in liberated Hamburg Germany, he was transferred in 1946 to Ft Ord California for Army Ranger training. Plagued by blackouts - migraine headaches - and sleeplessness he was again hospitalized and honorably discharged in 1947. Soon after this he returned to New Jersey and was informed for the first time, by his family that he was adopted. He learned that his birth mother was a Jewish immigrant who was 14 years old when he was born, and his father was part Apache and had left him an inheritance of \$30,000. The bank documents had the names of Eugene Yoakem and William Russell on them as witnesses.

We had noticed that every piece of pottery he signed carried two dates: the present year and 1948. When we asked him about it, Mana told us that 1948 was the year he started to become a better man. He told us that after he received a partial installment of the inheritance, he bought a motorcycle and had it chromed, then drove it to the Southwest in search of the men who knew his father. He met Eugene Yoakem who was a silver and turquoise miner and the sole resident of Courtland Arizona. Yoakem soon took him to Tucson and introduced him to Mr. Russell at His nursery. Mr. Russell was a Peyote Road Man or minister of the Native American Church. Both of the elders who were combat veterans recognized Mana's restlessness and inner wounds, so they took him to an isolated area northwest of Tucson near Redington Pass-handed him a bag of dried Peyote -told him to make a camp and fast for a day then eat the

Peyote during the next night, staying by the campfire. They would return for him on the third day.

That experience, the first of many, and many more Native American Church Peyote teepee meetings began Mana's winding path to being asked to serve as a Roadman for a Wedding Ceremony in 1961. It was around this time he said that a newspaper reporter introduced him to Timothy Leary. Dr. Leary knew of Mana's status with the Native American Church and told him about a powerful chemical that he and many others thought could also be used as a religious sacrament. He wanted to know if Mana agreed. All Mana told us about his first LSD 25 experience was that he was "sure glad to have had Peyote first."

He soon became a charter member of the League for Spiritual Discovery headquartered in Millbrook, NY. We also learned that Mana and other non-Indian Korean War veterans and mixed-race members of the Native American Church successfully chartered an "All Race Group" of the Native American Church in 1966 that was revoked the following year. Mana was arrested at his studio in Denver CO, in Dec 1966, for criminal possession and distribution of Peyote. He was acquitted of all charges the following June 27, 1967. The Denver County court ruled "the defendant used Peyote in 'honest good faith' in the practice of Peyotism, a bona fide religion."

Soon after this ruling the Colorado legislature rewrote its Peyote statute to read that ceremonial use of peyote is protected by the free exercise clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Similar laws were soon adopted by neighboring states NM and AZ citing the language of exempting from prosecution those whose use or possession of Peyote was in sincere pursuit of bona fide religious faith. This bona fide religious faith clause became the legal foundation for the creation of the Peyote Way church of God.

Annie and I had our first two Spirit Walks in November and early

December of 1977. My first experiences were pretty tough-lots of discomfort and nausea which later bloomed into feelings of inner strength and compassion towards all. I now call such initial experiences which are not uncommon to first timers, house cleaning or preparing the temple of one's body to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit to a Peyotist is not a figment of one's imagination or hallucination. It is the all-encompassing feeling of oneness that lifts your ego into the boundless and compassionate Divine self.

I have seen Peyote help end addictions to heroin, cocaine, speed, alcohol, and tobacco. If a person first has the intention to change, Peyote can be a catalyst leading towards a healthier mindset and lifestyle.

Annie and I would take a Spirit Walk every two months in the early years while we were learning the supply, production, and distribution of Mana pottery that enabled us to pay for the land and everything else. Early on I asked "Mana, how do you get used to the taste?" He told me to break off a very small piece of dried Peyote and place it between my cheek and gums and just let it dissolve during the course of the day. So, I did just that almost every day, for about two years prior to being arrested in Richardson Texas for possession of Peyote along with Rev Annie and Deaconess Norah Booth.

We spent one night in jail before being released on bond. That eventually led to Peyote Way's nine-year civil court case with the Federal government and the State of Texas as defendants.

Remember I mentioned having had a vasectomy? Weeell. .. a few months before we were arrested Annie said I was healing. I scoffed at the idea –shelved it and kept working towards paying the Church mortgage and buying land in South Texas where the Church could grow its sacrament.

Thanks to the Peyote Way Church signs all over our fifteen-year-old truck, we were arrested Nov 13, 1980 in Richardson Texas for possession

of Peyote, and Annie delivered the first of our three children in the house we built together on July 14, 1981, almost nine months after we were arrested for possession of Peyote. This is why I believe that micro dose amounts of Peyote can be very tonic and restorative to an injured body or soul.

It is very humbling to serve the Holy Sacrament Peyote.

These days I am practicing Article of Faith #4 of the Peyote Way Church Articles of Faith, that reads “as long as Peyote is an endangered species it is more blessed to grow the Holy Sacrament than to consume it”

The seeds we are planting now, with care, might one day enable many church members of the next generation to receive the Holy Spirit and live the Peyote Way.

I recently realized that Annie and I came back to Arizona in 1977 to find a teacher and in fact we found five:

Peyote, Immanuel, and our three children Joy, Joseph and Tristan.

It has been our prayer for many years that Peyotists of all races and rituals work together for the benefit of Peyote. Today I pray that we will all work together for the benefit of Peyote and all plant sacraments so that with our help they can bring healing and peace to this world.

Thank you.