

Franklin College hosting Spirit & Place event

By RYAN TRARES | DAILY JOURNAL
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Food has a power unlike anything else to bring people together.

From uniting families during special occasions to holidays to helping strangers become friends, sharing a meal is one of the oldest and most universal of social interaction.

When people eat together, they're not only enriching their bodies — they're nourishing their souls.

"All religions," said Rev. Hannah Adams Ingram, director of religious life and chaplain at Franklin College.

To spotlight the unique role food plays in community, Franklin College will host "Come to the Table: Interfaith Understanding Through the Culinary Arts" on Nov. 9. Attendees will enjoy a tasting reception featuring food from different faith traditions, from Tibetan dumplings called momos to challah bread integral to Jewish communities.

Afterwards, people can enjoy a presentation by Adrian Miller, executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches and award-winning author of "Soul Food: The Surprising Story of an American Cuisine, One Plate at a Time."

"Being able to explore faith

traditions through the lens of food seemed really interesting to us," Adams Ingram said. "Our whole philosophy the past couple of years has been not to tell people about different religions, but let's show them, connecting them with something cultural."

The event is part of this year's Spirit & Place festival, and offers a unique approach to the festival's theme: "Nourish."

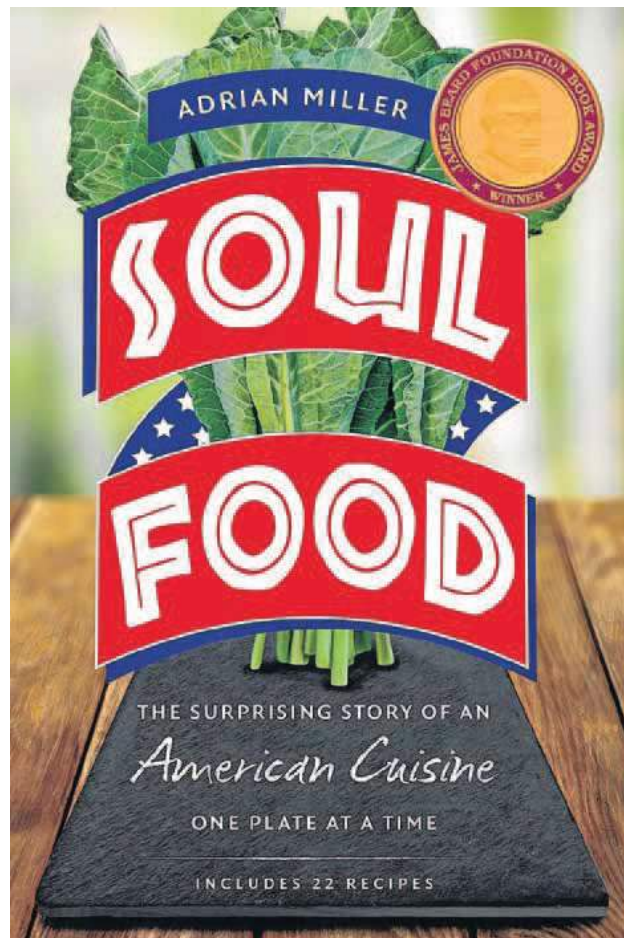
"Franklin College the past couple years has been very intentional in terms of creating events that tie to the theme of Spirit & Place, and they've been incredibly thoughtful about implementing the arts and religion into those events," said Erin Kelley, program director for Spirit & Place.

Spirit & Place is a yearly event focused on helping grow the human spirit. Developed as a community project managed by The Polis Center at IUPUI, it was established in 1996 to be a catalyst for community engagement.

This is done through creative collaborations. Dozens of area organizations, agencies, churches and other groups work together to put on more than 25 individual events as part of the festival.

"We are an experiment in radical trust. I have no idea

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Pictured: Adrian Miller, executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches and award-winning author of "Soul Food: The Surprising Story of an American Cuisine, One Plate at a Time," will deliver the keynote address during "Come to the Table: Interfaith Understanding Through the Culinary Arts" on Nov. 9 at Franklin College. **SUBMITTED PHOTOS**



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Participants take part in the Weaving the Web event, part of the Spirit & Place Festival in 2022. This year's festival will take place through Nov. 12, with a variety of events all planned around the theme of "nourish."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis will host "Forest Bathing to Nourish the Mind, Body, & Soul," a guided walk through the cemetery's arboretum on Nov. 12.

FOOD

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until a few months before the festival how many events there are going to be, who's going to be in the festival, what things are going to look like," Kelley said. "So it's a huge gamble every year, but every year since 1996 it's worked."

"We genuinely invite people to bring their whole selves to the table. We're the only arts, humanities and religion festival that we know of, so we're rooted in those three disciplines. We invite people to bring that all to the table," Kelley said.

Each year, a theme is chosen to tie the festival together. That central concept is broad enough to allow groups to interpret their own take on it, and submit proposed activities that can be featured during the festival.

Past festivals have looked at themes such as risk, play, identity and origins. This year, the festival is built around the idea of "nourish."

"The theme comes out

of reflection on what that lockdown, COVID-19 experience has been like, that we're still working through," Kelley said. "We purposely wanted to choose a theme that would allow people that time for that reflection on us as individuals and as communities need to nourish ourselves — especially nourishing ourselves and our families and our loved ones during difficult times."

Events during this year's festival approach that theme in a variety of ways.

The Sapphire Theater will stage "Facing Grief: Nourishing Loved Ones Through Loss," where the audience will practice reacting to loss and supporting those they love. Indy's Kitchen, a commissary kitchen in Indianapolis, invites people to prepare lunch with a group of strangers and eat it together, all in silence, before reflecting on the experience afterwards.

"How to Eat with Tuning Forks" at the Garfield Park Arts Center on Nov. 11 involves people collectively

creating a soundscape by eating lunch in front of microphones, banging on kitchen percussion, and talking about the foods that nourish them.

"Forest Bathing to Nourish the Mind, Body, & Soul" takes place at Crown Hill Cemetery on Nov. 12, features a 60-minute guided walk through Crown Hill Cemetery's Arboretum that will nourish an appreciation for the benefits of nature.

"Every year, I'm surprised and amazed at the creativity out there, and how people interpret this theme. They take it in directions that we don't even anticipate," Kelley said.

Many of the events tie interfaith issues together with food, she said.

Interfaith dynamics have been a focus of Franklin for many years, and special events bringing people of different faiths together has been an opportunity to apply for Spirit & Place, Adams Ingram said.

In 2020, the college

IF YOU GO

Spirit & Place

What: A celebration of the arts, humanities and religion that features special events and activities curated by community organizations to explore a central theme.

Theme: Nourish

When: Through Nov. 12

Events not to miss

"Come to the Table: Interfaith Understanding Through the Culinary Arts"

Details: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Nov. 9, Napolitan Student Center, Franklin College

An engaging evening of food, fellowship, and exploration is the focus of this event, built around how different faiths interact with food and spiritually. Enjoy a tasting reception followed by a presentation from Dr. Adrian Miller, award-winning author of "Soul Food: The Surprising Story of an American Cuisine, One Plate at a Time." Registration is requested by Nov. 6, and can be done at Franklincollege.edu/interfaitharts.

"Delicious Silence: Cooking, Eating, and Community Care Without Saying a Word"

Details: 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Nov. 5, Indy's Kitchen, 2442 Central Ave., Indianapolis

Prepare lunch with a group of strangers and eat it together, all in silence. Afterwards, reflect, via facilitated mindful dialogue, on your communal experience and what it means to nourish and be nourished.

"How to Eat with Tuning Forks"

Details: Noon to 2 p.m. Nov. 11, Garfield Park Arts Center, 2432 Conservatory Rd., Indianapolis

Collectively create a soundscape by eating lunch in front of microphones, banging on kitchen percussion, and talking about the foods that nourish you. A live musician playing ambient chords along with some "kitchen percussion" will play in the background with the sounds of eating, story sharing, and music blending together into a recorded soundscape. **"Forest Bathing to Nourish the Mind, Body, & Soul"**

Details: 1 to 2:30 p.m. Nov. 12, Crown Hill Cemetery waiting station, 3402 Boulevard Place, Indianapolis

Enjoy a 60-minute guided walk through Crown Hill Cemetery's Arboretum that will nourish an appreciation for the benefits of nature. "Forest bathing" promotes interaction between humans and wooded spaces. Led by a guide certified by the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides and Programs, this event invites you to listen to nature, savor the sounds and smells of the outdoors, and be mindful of the ways nature can nourish the mind, body, and soul.

28th Spirit & Place Public Conversation featuring Michael Twitty

Details: 4:30 to 6 p.m. Nov. 12, The AMP at 16 Tech, 1220 Waterway Blvd.

Close out the Spirit & Place Festival with an exciting and new format for The Public Conversation featuring culinary historian and author Twitty and the hosts of "Black Girls Eating," Tanorria Askew and Candace Boyd, for this live audience podcast recording. Audience members will be given a chance to interact with each other and the speakers during a book signing and reception catered by vendors located in The Amp.

traditional dumplings, challah made by a Jewish baker and halal food vital to Muslim food practices, made by the Original Chicago's Pizza and Curry in Franklin.

Following the tasting is a presentation by Miller, a food writer, James Beard Award winner, attorney, and certified barbecue judge who lives in Colorado. He's also the current executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches — the first African American, and the first layperson, to hold that position.

Miller will help lead a panel discussion by representatives by other faith traditions.

Also at the event, the Interchurch Food Pantry will be recognized by the City of Franklin for its 40 years of service to the community. The organization will be honored for its leadership and mobilization of nutrition resources to serve those in need.

"We felt it was important to acknowledge food insecurity at an event like this as well, because I think that's a connecting point for different religious folks," Adams Ingram said. "Not just that food is good, but making sure everyone has food is a world and ethical concern."



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