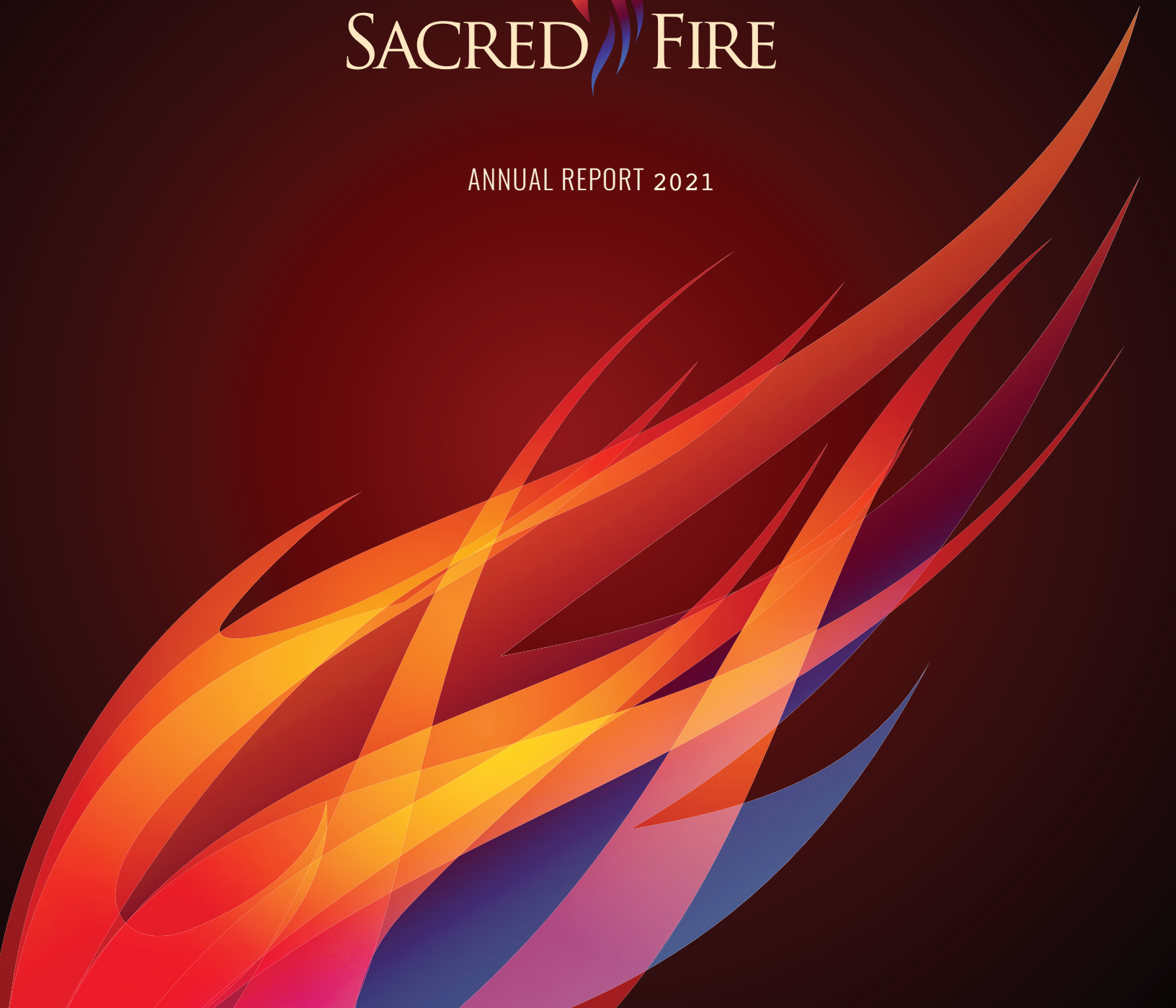




SACRED FIRE

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you for your support of Sacred Fire! Without your participation in our Community Fires, Lifeways programs, and Fire Speaks events, and your financial contributions and volunteering we could not have been as successful as we were in 2021. Your support helped us navigate through the impacts of the pandemic and I am deeply grateful for this investment in our mission just as I am deeply inspired by the stories of healing and transformation that come to me from the people who are touched by our programs.

Our mission is to burn away the isolation of modern life through the connective and transformative energy of fire. Simply put, we are dedicated to helping people. So many of us are navigating the challenges of a world that prides itself on being “more” connected electronically, and yet people are starved for the richness that can only come from the deep connection of being in person and expressing whatever is in our hearts to each other. This is what Sacred Fire is all about – bringing people together to share their lives, their hearts, their wisdom, their worries and to feel transformed by having done so.

What I hear from many of you is that being with fire brings a centeredness, a sense of possibility and belonging. Sitting around a fire together, burdens get lighter and we become more alive. We connect to our emotions and our vitality. We experience the grace of being witnessed by others and discover our common humanity. This is the wisdom of fire. It is the same wisdom that glows at the center of our Lifeways and Fire Speaks programs.

Sacred Fire provides an opportunity to step back from the hustle and bustle of life and to experience the earliest form of self-care: that which is rooted in the collective well-being of group, community, and ultimately the world around us.

For some perspective, we need to remember that our ancestors lived much more difficult lives than we do now in many ways and they survived great challenges. They were able to carry on because the human spirit is resilient and strong. With your continued support, the transformative spirit of fire as expressed through our simple, yet profound programs, can benefit everyone so that our collective future can be healthier, more balanced, and meaningful.

Larry Messeman
Executive Director
Sacred Fire



COMMUNITY FIRES & FIREKEEPING

Community Fire gatherings – which include monthly community fires, men’s and women’s fires, and specialty fires – are at the core of Sacred Fire’s offerings. In 2021, with COVID-19 still a concern, many of these Community Fires were held virtually and some in person and some hybrid. We had 6,000 people attending these gatherings in nearly four dozen locations in eight countries across the world. They experienced the oldest form of help available to humanity: the spiritual presence of fire and its ability to lighten the burdens of everyday life, build human connection, and provide a sense of meaning and purpose to our lives. These qualities were all the more important at a time when so many people were feeling isolated and alone. In 2021, we also found new opportunities to help touch people around the world. We piloted our on-line Kindling the Heart program that allowed people to join us and have an experience of what a sacred fire has to offer. We will be scheduling this program on a more regular basis in the future to give people everywhere an opportunity to understand the importance of our work and appreciate its ability to transform lives.



“With love, we can see the person through the lens of their full potential.”

Sylvia Law

We also welcomed a new Director of Firekeeping, Sylvia Law. Sylvia hails from the Scottish Borderlands and she brings a great passion and enthusiasm for the work. With an emphasis on expanding our efforts to recruit and train new Firekeepers this year, we developed a curriculum that includes 12 videos to give new Firekeepers a deep understanding of their role, homework to better understand the concepts, and in-person training to practice the skills and sponsorship from an experienced Firekeeper when hosting their first Community Fires. The candidate then attends a five-day training and initiation – after which they are officially recognized as Firekeepers. Their learning will continue with experience and will be supplemented by annual retreats. It takes a lot of effort to train Firekeepers who will then host monthly fires for the communities and people where they live. This approach allows us to substantially ‘scale up’ our Firekeeping training to facilitate greater numbers of new Firekeepers and therefore, more opportunities for people everywhere to come together in this special way.

With the new curriculum, we began training our first new group of Firekeepers since the onset of COVID-19. This group will be initiated in early 2023. They include people from Australia, Canada, the U.K. and the U.S. We are already preparing for our next group of trainees and are inspired to be receiving constant inquiries about becoming a Firekeeper from people around the world!





Lifeways educates and inspires individuals, families and communities to rediscover ways to live aligned with the natural world and the pattern of the human lifecycle. Lifeways holds a vision of a world where people support each other to move through the stages of life with courage, dignity and purpose, giving birth to deep wisdom as they age.

In 2021, we pioneered a series of on-line programs to engage people on aligning their lives with the natural cycles. The programs included a 5-part series Living Life Aligned with Nature; a 2-part series on LifeWork for Women; a 3-part series on Courage for Couples; a 2-part series It's Never Too Late to Heal and finally Death and the Circle of Life. Over 400 people from around the world attended these programs.

“Now more than ever, I must embrace my heart, embrace the fire in me, to truly live harmoniously with the world.”

In order to build out the ambitious vision of supporting people to live wisely through the full human life cycle from birth to death, we formed new committees to research presenters and to create program standards. Our goal is to become an international hub for speakers and teachers who share our vision for supporting the natural and grounded unfolding of our lives. We are building a framework for a Lifeways program that will be available to people around the world that includes both on-line training, and in-person programs rooted in local communities. Our long-term vision is to launch a new movement that brings awareness of the link between wisdom and well-being to people everywhere.

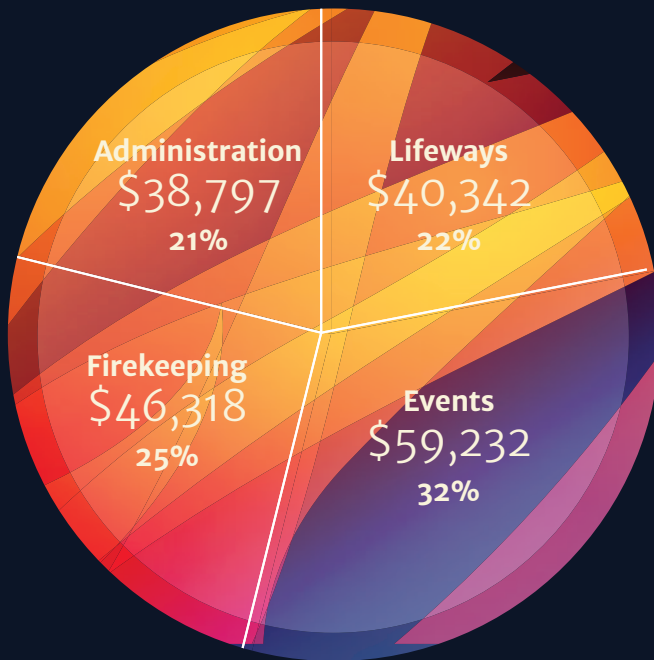
COMMUNITY EVENTS

Our most unique and valuable offering at Sacred Fire is the opportunity for people to experience the wisdom of the God of Fire, Tatewari, at our Fire Speaks events. While unusual for our modern, westernized culture, this is a phenomenon that is recognized in many traditions. Using the body of Don David Wiley – the founder of Sacred Fire – the God of Fire (known as Grandfather Fire in many indigenous traditions) is available for teaching and to answer the most fundamental questions about what it is to be human, the challenges of these times, and how to move forward to a more fruitful future. Grandfather's teachings about living a life of Heart have helped thousands find clarity and courage to meet life's challenges and discover the joy of true connection.

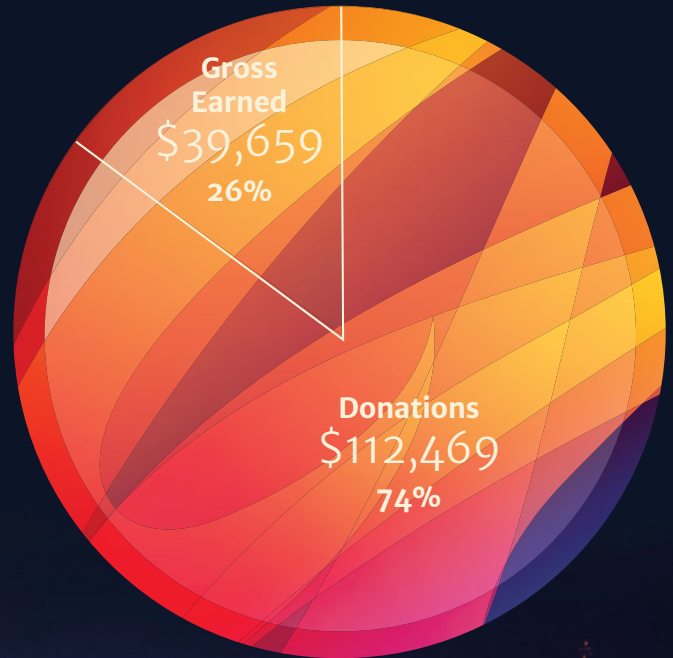
“I appreciate everyone I have ever sat around a fire with. I'm especially grateful for the precious relationships that I've developed through the Sacred Fire community.”

Using appropriate local COVID-19 protocols, and limiting attendance for spacing requirements, we were able to safely offer in-person Fire Speaks events in 2021. Nearly 300 people attended six events this past year – a 50% increase from the year before with 25% of participants new to this program. An audio recording is made of Grandfather's teachings at each of these programs and we plan to make this guidance available in both book format and through on-line offerings.

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE



Expenses 2021
\$184,689



Revenue 2021
\$152,128

"The biggest impact the fires have blessed me with is the valuable tools that still help me in my day-to-day life a decade later. To put it simply: Remembering to listen to my heart and not believe everything that my mind has to say."





LAWRENCE I. MESSERMAN, PH.D.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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