



Contact

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Feedback

Contact editors,

I thank you for the magazine; it does actually help me get a feeling for what's going on in the wider Unity movement. One thing that seemed curious about this past issue (April/May 2008), though, was that there was nothing (that I could find) about music in there.

I function with a three-pillar model for success: ministry program, music program, and youth program. I felt as if this time the magazine was intended for ministry only. There was a little bit for youth leaders on the back page, but nothing for the worship arts leaders. It seems to me that a music minister would have had much to contribute to a discussion about how the foundational principles are relevant and contemporary. What are some examples of foundational principles in today's service music? What are some new ways to sing old hymns? Who are the truly Unity-specific top touring artists, rather than the general wider New Thought or positive musicians?

One other more philosophical point I noticed, though it's not truly a criticism, more an observation. The basics themselves were not ever listed in the issue: 6 principles, 4T's, any of that. I know that all ministers have a slightly different idea of what's really foundational about Unity's teachings. However, if we are to achieve what Trapp is calling the "shared vision," and if we are looking to expand *Contact* (and the movement) beyond the circle of

the familiar, if we want it to grow, it'd be wise to actually mention these things overtly and explicitly. Are we hiding our assets, obscuring our message? Or are we clear about it and can we say it again and again?

Thanks for listening, and again thank you for the magazine.

Erin McGaughan

Seattle Unity Joyful Arts Ministry

Good Morning!

Your April/May 2008 issue of *Contact* was, as always, wonderful. Seeing the picture of the first ordination class of Unity in 1933 was a very special treat.

What got my heart strings moving was the article "Unity is a Cult." Rev. Jim Marshall wrote that "calling Unity a cult ... provided a beautiful opportunity to write an article refuting that statement ... take every opportunity to get Unity out there and make it known in the community where you live ..."

My spiritual calling for the past three years has been to take Unity to Muslims, who consider Christianity polytheistic. It's been rewarding to dialogue with a Sunni Muslim (who heads the World Muslim Congress on the internet) and promote Unity's monotheistic teachings. But most rewarding had been dialoguing with the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam for the past three years and breaking down the barriers that separate us—the barriers being primarily their fear of Christian proselytizing and contempt for polytheism.

The Ahmadiyya (ah-ma-DAY-a) sect was founded in 1889, the same year Unity was officially founded. Many of these Muslims have immigrated from Pakistan where their sect was persecuted for their unorthodox beliefs

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about Jesus surviving the crucifixion and his second coming. It has taken considerable prayer and perseverance to establish rapport with this sect of Islam. Rapport has been established and they now trust us and respect Unity teachings; they respect our monotheism, our willingness to accept them and our interest in their teachings and eagerness to dialogue. While at times their English is a bit difficult to understand, we just slow down and make sure we do understand each other. Ahmadiyya Website is: www.alislam.org

Now, Rev. Steve Colladay of the Unity Church of Christianity on Greenville in Dallas, Texas, has gotten involved. I have encouraged Ahmadiyya to expand their dialogue with Unity churches in Austin and Houston. They are now attempting to do this, with Steve's help. I am also prayerful that the Association will help with this endeavor in Texas and throughout the U.S.

Most important—Muslim men and women are separate—meeting in different rooms and often at different times. Therefore there is a need for both female and male Unity ministers and teachers. The Ahmadiyya females have

more time to dialogue than males. The Muslim females must be involved. Namooode Sahar, a Muslim female in Houston, is the Texas Regional Secretary, and is willing and eager to help organize female groups in both Houston and Austin. If you need her email address, let me know. We began in the Dallas area only because Muslim females were willing! At our first interfaith meeting in January, 2005, we had close to 100 in attendance. Muslim women eagerly came in from Houston and Austin. The men are now equally enthusiastic.

We are on firm ground with interfaith with this group of Muslims in Allen (Dallas metroplex). Peace depends on dialogue, respect and trust. Unity's unique teachings are helping to bring peace from a Christian perspective.

I will be happy to furnish a list of topics that we have covered in dialogue during the past three years, along with papers disseminated to these Muslims, if this is needed. I pray the Association will help in this peace movement.

Marylou Ghyst, LUT

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