

Association of Unity Churches International

Contact

Vol. 42, Issue 1

February/March 2008



New Life

Springs from Leadership

Cultivate leaders in your ministry

PAGE 8

Achieving Our Greatness

PAGE 10

**Mentors are the
Wind Beneath Field**

Licensing Wings PAGE 14

**Creating Thriving, Coherent
and Integral Churches**

PAGE 22

**PLUS: Four Keys to
Creating More Church
Income and A History
Worth Reviewing**

PUBLISHED BY



Editor-in-Chief
Supervising Editor
Managing Editor

James Trapp
Lisa Wittman
Cheryl Vestal

WRITERS AND STAFF

Bets Kirby
Barb Quinn
Bernadette Swanson
Lisa Wittman

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Joanna Carrell
Cheryl Vestal
Sally Falk, Staff Photographer

ADVERTISING

Advertisements will be considered that are affiliated with Unity ministers or ministries, or from vendors who provide items for Unity ministers or ministries. All advertising is subject to the publisher's approval. *Contact* is not responsible for claims or performance related to the products and services of our advertisers. Please direct any questions to the advertiser.

For more information about advertising in *Contact* magazine, contact Cheryl Vestal at the Association of Unity Churches International: graph@unity.org or 816.524.7414 ext. 357.

EDITORIAL PURPOSE

To support thriving ministries by providing timely, practical information for ministries and individuals.

For a free subscription, contact Cheryl Vestal at the Association of Unity Churches International: graph@unity.org.

Contents

February/March 2008

Features

8 New Life Springs from Leadership

by [Lisa Wittman](#) / Awakening the soul's purpose.

12 Community Outreach: Many Shapes and Sizes

by [Bernadette Swanson](#) / Just how much can one small group of committed individuals accomplish?

14 Mentors Are the Wind Beneath Field Licensing Wings

by [Bernadette Swanson](#) / Service can be a one-time occurrence, but not so with field licensing mentors.

26 History Worth Reviewing

by [Barbara O'Hearne](#) / Creating and being part of innovative programs feeds my soul.



In Every Issue

4 Feedback

5 Letter From the Editor

6 News From Our Chair

by Dan Holloway / How Are You Doing with Your Project?

7 President's Letter

by James Trapp / The Role of Leadership

10 Transformation Experience

by Deborah Frownfelter / The Transformation Experience will offer both comprehensive leadership development programs...and a model ministry pilot study.

11 News from Unity®

16 Technology

by Christopher Ian Chenoweth / I Came Kicking and Screaming into the High Technology World

17 Book Review

by Lisa Wittman / *Intuitive Leadership*

18 Financial Statement

20 Regional News

22 In Theory

by Gary Simmons / *Creating Thriving, Coherent and Integral Churches*

24 Resources You Can Use

25 Calendar of Events

28 Book Review

by Deborah Frownfelter / *Me to We: A Pastor's Discovery of the Power of Partnership*

30 Oops Bloops



26



20



12



To read the full responses or to read past issues of *Contact*, go to www.unity.org/ContactMagazine.

Diversity

I read your article on diversity in the recent issue of *Contact* (“Is Diversity Divisive?” by Barbara Quinn, October/November 2007 issue). If there’s one Unity church within the movement that embraces and practices diversity, Unity on the Bay (UOTB) in Miami, Florida, would be one. The fact that UOTB is located in Miami, the location alone makes it desirable for our northern friends within the US, it is the Gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean, and attracts others from various parts of the world. Although we tend to have a younger congregation (35-45 yrs.), we still have a diverse age group from 1 to 92. We even have a diverse congregation in terms of sexual orientation and family dynamics.

About two years ago I was in the process of developing our family ministry at UOTB. I contemplated and grappled with the ideas and concepts that has, and will continue to, manifest our spiritual community. The brightest point of light that broke through the fog was the beauty of our congregation’s diversity. I was looking for a statement that would recognize, honor and give our congregants a sense of belonging, more specifically our families.

Unity on the Bay’s diversity statement:

Unity on the Bay is a reflection of South Florida’s diversity, and we value and honor the families of this wonderful diversity. Our family ministry allows today’s family to be connected and supported through their transforming spiritual growth. “Celebrating Today’s Family”

We truly believe that the statement above speaks to both the congregation and the families. In essence we’re saying that all families* are welcome. (*Family means: one or more adults rearing children under the same or separate roof. Children can either be biological, adopted or under legal guardianship of adult[s].)

When I read your article it inspired me to share our diversity statement, partly because our associate minister Karen Epps thinks it’s the best thing since sliced bread.

Thank you for sharing your interest in the subject and provoking our brothers and sisters to be conscious of what our name really means.

Steven H. Butler, Family Ministry Dir.
Unity on the Bay, Miami, Florida.

Have something to say about what you have read in *Contact*? Send your comments to dom@unity.org.

Letter From The Editor

We create and support **vibrant**, diverse, spiritual leaders and communities that foster **transformation** and inspire people to make a **positive difference** in the **world**.

Our mission statement, above, says it all. We stand on the threshold of a new era for the Association. Before us lies a landscape of clouded landmarks and shrouded terrain. Yet the end point is clear. It's stated above. We are here to support spiritual leaders and communities so that people will be inspired to make a difference.

This issue, which kicks off our second year of the reformulated *Contact*, looks at ideas around leadership. We recognize that there are already great examples of leadership and community, and we bring you stories of some who have applied our existing leadership programs. We learn from these as we set about designing a new program that is integrated into all we do.

We also take inspiration from these stories. You'll learn about how an established church changed, how a new plant incorporated leadership, and how outreach happens through the leadership of one ministry. Technology also plays a part in bringing forth new models of ministry. You will also find a taste of things to come in the results of Gary Simmons' research on thriving churches.

This is only the beginning of a call to ever-widening circles of leadership and influence in our world. I hope you find inspiration and ideas for your own ministry.



How Are You Doing with *Your* Project?

by Dan Holloway, dan@unityrev.com

“So . . . how are you doing with your project?” That question is often asked at the beginning of a men’s group I attend. It is a good question. It neither judges nor criticizes, it puts nobody on the spot, yet it calls one into accountability. At least, it calls *me* into accountability. I realize that some days I do life better than on other days. Looking back, it seems that the more conscious, the more aware I am moment to moment, the better I take charge of my life rather than just pushing through it. I spend less time questioning circumstances and more time in discovery and gratitude. And the more I remember I am not doing this alone, the more my appreciation for life, as well as my responsibility *to* life, grows.

The relationships we have with God, with ourselves, and with others are all really relationships with life, and with God. We can get to know God through direct revelation, through meditation, and through happenings and conditions in our life. We can know God even more as we discern who we are, as expressions of

God, and as we choose to appreciate all those people we have drawn into our life experience. We are not here by chance. And as we are more on purpose with our purpose, we know we are divinely guided and supported.

Part of our purpose is to be here for each other. We have much to share. We are each representatives to the world of a great idea—the idea of Unity. It is an idea of oneness, of interconnectedness, and it is an idea whose time has come. We are getting to know each other more, too. Many of you have sent in your picture to our Association home office (graph@unity.org), and they are becoming available for all to see on our new website. It is my prayer that you will continue to send in pictures so we can all know one another more. I look forward to meeting you at regional conferences this spring, and at our national convention this summer. I’ll recognize you by your picture, right? And I leave you with this simple question: How are *you* doing with *your* project?



The Role of *Leadership*

by James Trapp, ceo@unity.org

When I was reminded that the theme of this issue of *Contact* was leadership, I recalled a definition of leadership that I have resonated with—the ability to get people to want to do something when they have the choice not to. This definition of leadership is applicable to any organization but it particularly applies to spiritual communities.

Effective leaders are able to mobilize people to voluntarily make progress on the hardest of challenges. This requires more than visionary leadership which is usually defined as someone with a vision of the future. It requires enlightened leadership. Enlightened leadership encompasses the willingness and ability to draw the vision from the collective community. Moreover, it inspires and empowers the spiritual community to bring the vision into manifestation.

Power of Co-Creation

Unity's co-founder, Charles Fillmore, in the *Atom Smashing Power of Mind*, noted that the latent energy power from a single atom, once released, can yield power beyond expression. Similarly, enlightened leadership can unlock the creativity and ingenuity contained within the collective community to yield high performance results for that community. A great discovery I made during my tenure as minister at my former spiritual community, was the tremendous power of co-creation. A community of people working together can achieve audacious results.

Some leadership models work on the assumption that the leaders have all the answers. Enlightened leaders operate from a different paradigm. They engage others in coming up with the answers. A major benefit from enlightened leadership is that it builds a cadre of leaders from which collective wisdom can be drawn.

Multiplication of leaders is a key factor for the success of thriving, healthy spiritual communities. It empowers the participants to continuously renew the organization, increases community ownership, and deepens the organizational consciousness. Dwight D. Eisenhower captured why enlightened leadership works when

he said: "Those who plan the battle are less likely to battle the plan." While I generally don't refer to war analogies to make a point, Eisenhower reminds us that when the members of an organization come up with the solutions, they will be motivated to make the innovations work.

A State of Being

The key role of the enlightened leader within a spiritual community—whether it is a minister, spiritual leader, board member, licensed Unity teacher or team leader—is not so much what he or she does but the place he is coming from in whatever he may be doing. It is a state of *being* in which she creates the environment that allows those who are part of the community to draw on their talents and wisdom to shape and craft the future. It is a future that calls on their need to connect with something bigger than themselves. It is the realization that the answers that we seek are already with us—all of us. Our job as enlightened leaders is to create the environment that allows for the answers to come out.

Take in and ponder the ideas on leadership in this *Contact* issue. I'm sure you'll find something of value for you and your spiritual community.



New Life Springs from Leadership

by Lisa Wittman, lisa@unity.org

“The key is awakening the soul’s purpose,” comments Denise Yeargin, spiritual leader, Unity Church for Positive Living in Nashville, Tennessee, as she experiences the first weeks in a new worship space. She remembers her earliest goal of working with the leaders in the congregation, raising their consciousness, and how this has changed the course of a ministry.

New Leadership

Our Association of Unity Churches International is embarking on a new adventure. Based on feedback from many in the movement, we have heard you say that you are very concerned about how to develop leaders, credentialed and lay, for the realities of a changing world. As we work to develop new ways of sourcing ministries, we realize that there are already great efforts taking place to cultivate leaders in ministries. Unity Church for Positive Living is one such example.

Denise was in the midst of the licensed teacher program, working as a ministerial intern, when the senior minister became ill and had to leave the ministry. It was a sad time, with great grief and loss felt in the congregation. Denise knew that leadership would be critical in helping the congregation to endure, to honor its history and use it to bring forth a new day. She began to work with Gary Simmons, then the Association’s director of peacemaking services, to bring peaceful closure and to step into the integral leadership model he had developed, based on the work of philosopher Ken Wilber.



Denise Yeargin

Refreshing the Ministry

Three and a half years later, Denise has completed the field licensing program. The first Sunday in a new space saw almost 200 in worship, about half being first time guests. The newspaper called the church to write a story about the new location. Another 150 came for the music and other programs that same day.

What happened to refresh this ministry? In order to raise consciousness of the leaders, Denise set about creating a discipleship program—a way of truly “awakening our soul’s purpose as a joyful, open, loving community,” as the reformulated mission statement says.

“Before I started the program, I put all the classes I was going to teach down on a schedule, including Unity classes and books relating to leadership. I had it out for people to see, and 27 signed up the first time,” she says. This was a great starting place for a church of about 100. The program’s success is demonstrated in the fact that, of that original 27, all still remain in leadership, except for two, who moved out of town. One of those is in leadership in another ministry. Six congregants are now training to become licensed teachers, several of whom are considering ordination paths.

Denise believes one of the most helpful aspects of leadership success is the requirement that people in leadership take credit classes and attend the quarterly training she leads. In addition, a spiritual

gifts inventory supplied by Barbara O’Hearne helps leaders to connect with their passion. “It has made a difference in the way they work together and with the congregation,” she explains. “We use the *Eye of the Storm* (by Gary Simmons), and spiral dynamics, *To Lead is to Serve*, by Shar McBee. In training, we talk about how to lead volunteers and keep them active.”

At one point, the church “threw out most of our ministries, and asked, ‘What is calling us?’” People responded by evolving new ministries that they were passionate about. Denise says that in this kind of change, you have to “pull up your boots! It may seem overwhelming at the beginning, and it’s going to take a long time. But when you look back it is so worth the journey.”

Awakening the World

The vision, “Remembering our oneness with creation, we awaken the world to infinite possibilities,” was created through lots of work in a tiered process. Starting with the board, a draft was created. Then other leaders were given an opportunity to add their thoughts. Two additional meetings were held for the entire congregation, where 85 percent included their own thoughts. They worked as a large group to create the final mission and vision. By reciting it every Sunday and including it in printed pieces, prayers and talks, Denise keeps people in alignment with it.

“This experience is exciting. I know that leadership training is what I’m here to do,” says Denise. She has seen it over and over, that “Spirit blesses you when you are willing to step up and serve on that level. The most inspiring thing is to see how people become empowered, wake up to their own soul’s purpose. People have changed jobs, stepped out of the box they’ve been living in, and they’ve been blessed beyond measure.”



Felicia Searcy (right) with board member Kay Sands (left).

Starting from the Beginning

Another example of cultivating leadership is found in the church planted seven years ago, Unity Church of Life in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Felicia Searcy, about to be ordained in the Field Licensing Program this March, is the spiritual leader. At the time the church began, Felicia was a lay person.

“Why were we here? I began with two perspectives: First, it was a way for people to grow and develop spiritually. Second, it was a way to serve our local community at large to facilitate people’s growth,” she remarks. The Association’s peacemaking and integral leadership training, led by Gary Simmons, were her first trainings. “I saw that it was something we wanted to ground our ministry in. What we put into the culture early on was that spiritual growth was an intentional decision. It doesn’t just happen through osmosis.” She decided that establishing relationships and committing her time and energy in a thoughtful way were her basic requirements.

“From the beginning, people were learning that the church wasn’t just a group to belong to, but a path in which to prepare for deeper service,” says Felicia. “Once they step into this, they’re now prepared to serve in the larger community as well.”

The Next Stage

At the six year point, the church achieved full church status with the Association. “We had bought and renovated a building, too, and we realized that our original vision had been achieved. Earlier this year, we saw that our vision had been limited, and we kind of hit a wall. We were pulling the ministry, instead of the vision pulling it,” she states. “Susan Beck (now the Association’s chief operating officer) came in August, and helped us to create a purpose, and it’s really giving us juice. ‘Loving

Continued on page 29

Achieving Our *Greatness*

By Deborah Frownfelter

In Unity, we know that God endows us with the capacity for greatness. We are full heirs to the kingdom. That capacity exists within every individual and within all of us collectively in spiritual community. Indeed, our deep inner urge, the calling of our soul, is to fully express this greatness, to create, to do something significant, to make a positive difference in our world. In *Lessons in Truth*, H. Emilie Cady says, “You want your own Spirit brought forth, in all its glorious fullness and Godlikeness, into manifestation.” When we do this individually and collectively, we bring forth heaven on earth.

Actualizing Greatness

Our new initiative in leadership and organizational development is being designed to fully actualize that greatness, as individuals and in community. The new initiative will call forth the transformational enlightened leader within us all to discern and passionately pursue God’s vision together, to co-create spiritual communities that answer our soul’s yearning to live from the glory and magnificence of the divine within and to inspire others to do so as well.



One of the key objectives in the Association’s new strategic plan is: Enlightened leaders (credentialed and lay leaders) who are mission-focused and who develop other leaders and support people in fulfilling their spiritual potential.

The leadership and organizational development initiative to achieve this objective has been dubbed “The Transformation Experience.” It is currently in the gestation stage, with the essential parts taking shape in preparation for birth. This shaping is a co-creative process involving Association home office board and staff, ministry teams, and input

from thriving leaders and ministries.

A Whole Ministry Approach

The transformation experience will offer both comprehensive leadership development programs, open to all Unity credentialed and lay leaders, and a model ministry pilot study, involving a select group of churches and centers over a three-year time period. Our goal with the pilot study group is to find out which practices have the greatest success and impact. As we learn what these are, we will share these with all of you through *Contact* and other means.

This initiative is a whole ministry approach, based upon the recognition that individual and church transformation happen together because we are all part of a spiritual and human organism that is complex, connected and ever-evolving. When each person and all parts of the ministry are aligned with divine vision and purpose, our inherent vitality and greatness are released. The process of creating alignment takes time, but it leads to a rich blessing. As we open ourselves to be our highest vision of who we are individually and collectively, we do things beyond what we thought possible.

We will keep you informed as the Transformation Experience takes shape. What an exciting time this is as we co-create growth opportunities that stimulate us to achieve our greatness!

New Unity Book Shares Secrets of Our Own

When *The Secret* came out a few years ago, it set the Unity movement buzzing about whether Rhonda Byrne's phenomenally successful book and film properly reflected Unity's third principle (the Law of Mind Action), or fell woefully short.

Unity's just-released book *Sacred Secrets*, captures that debate, giving voice to the various insights, perspectives and lessons stirred by *The Secret*. In it, some 35 Unity ministers, teachers, leaders and supporters fill in the gaps, add spiritual depth and expound on both the Law of Attraction and other spiritual principles to help readers discover true joy, peace and prosperity. Unity friend Rev. Michael Bernard Beckwith, one of the "teachers" of *The Secret*, also contributed an essay for the book, on "The Secretless Universe."

"We are extremely excited to bring this book to market," says Stephanie Stokes Oliver, Unity's vice president of Publishing. "*The Secret* whetted the appetite of many readers, giving them some insight into the Law of Attraction. *Sacred Secrets* will take them into the deeper teachings that lead to true spiritual growth."

Essays in the book discuss such

principles as the power within, alignment with God, giving and receiving, gratitude, acceptance, "being in the now," and the shift in consciousness occurring in the world. Authors describe how spiritual principles have helped them overcome personal challenges related to health, divorce, weight loss, self-esteem and relationships.

Contributors to *Sacred Secrets* include James Trapp, Charlotte Shelton, Duke Tufty, Gregory Guice, Sylvia Sumter, Ellen Debenport, Walter Starcke, Gary Simmons, Wendy Craig-Purcell, Phillip Pierson, Paula Coppel, Stephanie Stokes Oliver, Dan Rebant, Manzel Berlin, Lila Herrmann, Eleanor Fleming, Art Holt, Lori Fleming, Sandra Rae Hymel, Felicia Searcy, David Friedman, Paul Hasselbeck, Scott Kalechstein, Carolyn Thomas, Ralph Grzecki, Barbara Hadley, Susan L. Howard, Bob Uhlar, Shari Franklin, Shirley Marshall, Beverly Saunders Biddle, Kelli Jareaux, Kristin Powell, Rima Bonario and Ruth Wallace.

"The creation of this book has been a labor of love," says editor Paula Coppel, vice president of communications at Unity. "There has been such eagerness in the movement to get our messages out there. *The Secret* gave us the perfect opportunity to do so."

The book sells for \$14.95. Individual copies can be ordered online at www.sacredsecretsbook.com or by calling Unity customer service at 1.800.669.0282. For church orders at the wholesale price, contact the Unity sales department at 1.866.236.3571, or fax to 816.251.3551.

Unity® is a partner organization to the Association of Unity Churches International. It provides education, prayer through Silent Unity and publishing of *Daily Word*, *Unity Magazine* and other materials.

Community Outreach: Many Shapes and Sizes

by Bernadette Swanson, cwriter@unity.org

Just how much can one small group of committed individuals accomplish? Unity Church of Pomona, California, is determined to make a difference in its community. Through large and small projects, they are leaders in raising consciousness in their community. Jan Chase, senior minister, is committed to interfaith relationships. She helped form the interfaith group three years ago and started making connections. The group meets monthly and rotates its meeting place.



Jan Chase

Partnerships Are Key

The church partners with the Department of Child & Family Services (DCFS). Although blacks make up only seven percent of the local population, black children account for over half of the children in the care of social services. The church is a site where families can be reunited under the supervision of a monitor. Six to eight church members volunteer to open and close the church and to assist as needed.

In cooperation with Dr. Richard Rose, a local professor whom Jan met in the interfaith group, the church is part of an effort to create an after-school program to serve underprivileged teens. The plan is to



have Richard's college students mentor the teens and help with school work. A goal is to help the teens to apply to college. Also, there would be monthly life classes plus field trips. This program is supposed to start in February 2008, but ran into a bureaucratic challenge in late 2007. The DCFS has pulled the participation of the group home due to fears of lawsuits concerning the teens. The planners are regrouping.

Many Needs, Many Solutions

Neighborhood watch: The choir director started a neighborhood watch with monthly meetings. They got speed bumps placed in their neighborhood. Jan highly recommends that churches form neighborhood watches. It's a great way to meet the community and to get everyone involved.

Family support: A twenty-something was willing to bring her younger siblings into her home, but she needed supplies. The church participated with others in the community to supply her with furniture, appliances, household goods, etc. They also adopted the family for Christmas.

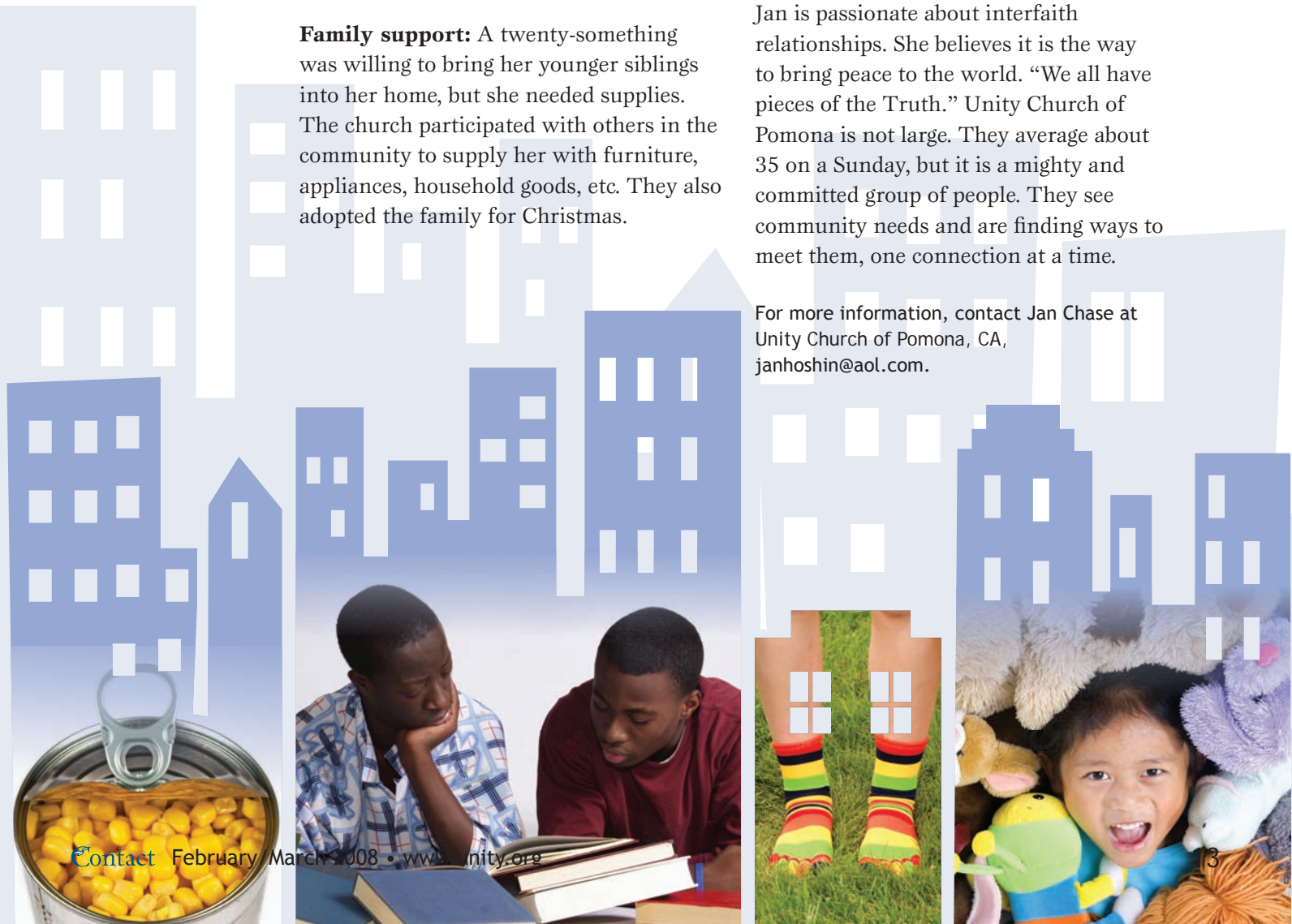
Binky Patrol (with DCFS): Around the holidays the church will fill the sanctuary with washable stuffed animals and hug love and peace into them. They also donate socks and mittens. Last year, instead of ornaments, they decorated their tree with socks to donate.

Homeless: Two members have gone to the two-day conference that Jan previously attended on racial disparity. They are now talking to the county supervisor about participating in a program to serve the homeless.

Food pantry: The church collects food for the local food pantry and they adopt families for Thanksgiving.

Jan is passionate about interfaith relationships. She believes it is the way to bring peace to the world. "We all have pieces of the Truth." Unity Church of Pomona is not large. They average about 35 on a Sunday, but it is a mighty and committed group of people. They see community needs and are finding ways to meet them, one connection at a time.

For more information, contact Jan Chase at Unity Church of Pomona, CA, janhoshin@aol.com.





Mentors Are the Wind Beneath Field Licensing Wings

by Bernadette Swanson, cwriter@unity.org

Service can be a one-time occurrence, but not so with field licensing mentors. They commit to walking alongside their candidates and their ministries for 3-4 years.

The field licensing program (FLP) allows spiritual leaders to remain in their churches while they are working towards ordination. The program was originally designed for smaller churches that would experience hardships without their leader. It now includes licensed teachers who are being groomed to take a larger role as associates within their ministry. Field licensing is also the path that ministers ordained in other faiths follow toward Unity ordination.

As a fundamental part of the program, each candidate is paired with a mentor for the duration of the process. The pair negotiates an annual contract that is designed to strengthen the skills of the candidate. There are monthly phone calls, quarterly and annual reports, credo papers, and two on-site evaluations at the candidate's church.

Mentors also commit to the annual field licensing ministry team meetings and to the ongoing review and development of the program and its candidates.

Benefits of Mentoring

Bob Fortner, co-chair of the field licensing ministry team and minister at Unity Church of Palm Harbor, Florida, says, "I saw the value of the program because I was ordained through FLP. The

March intensives always contain excellent programs, some of which the mentors attend. Getting to be a support person for a candidate and his/her church is an honor. The FLP is a wonderful way to give back to the Association and the Unity movement.

"You get to be a part of a wonderful team of dedicated ministers and you will be making a huge difference in the life of a future colleague and his/her ministry. You will also find that there are many gifts you will receive in the way of inspiration and ideas from your candidate and the rest of the team."

Benefits to the Candidate & the Association

Julie Montague, minister at Unity of the Valley in White Rock, British Columbia, served as a mentor in Canada, and is currently the 2nd vice chair of the international board and also on the Canadian board. She explains that the Canadian field licensing program is patterned after the one in the United States. They specifically want Canadian mentors because of the differences in the



Bob Fortner

laws. Canadian religious organizations have more governmental interface compared to religious organizations in the U.S.

By having a mentor, each candidate has a personal cheerleader, “someone who believes in you more than you believe in yourself,” says Julie. Bob believes that flexibility is an important characteristic of a good mentor. “We are here to support and encourage, not change how someone does ministry.”

The numbers show that over 90 percent of ministers who go through the field licensing program stay in their ministries for over five years. This results in stability for both the minister and the ministry. FLP ministers also maintain an active role in the Association stemming from their constant contact throughout the program.

The Greatest Reward

Candidates have the option of being ordained in Fillmore Chapel with their classmates and/or in their home churches. Both Bob and Julie mention the ordination of their candidates as the most rewarding moment of the process. In fact, the experience is so emotional for them that both struggle for words to describe it.

Julie, who ordained Yvonne Racine in Yvonne’s home church of Edmonton, Alberta, says, “I was sad to see the time over. I am so proud of her. I watched how her church loved her. I could see her success and the outpouring of love.” Julie feels that ordination gives a mentor that sense of completion. Her work is done.

Bob talks about the incredible impact of the ordination ceremony in Fillmore Chapel. “When I put the stole across the shoulders of a newly ordained minister, there is an indescribable bliss, an energy. I look the person in the eye and see the smile on his or her face. I also went to Moline, IL, to ordain Dean Van Wie at his church and this was incredibly powerful.”

If you feel drawn to serve as a mentor for your future colleagues, contact: Bob Fortner, Unity Church of Palm Harbor, FL, at unityph@verizon.net; or Margie Brach, credentialing coordinator at the Association home office, at credential@unity.org. Contact Julie Montague, Unity of the Valley, White Rock, BC, Canada, at whiterockunity@aol.com, or 604.538.9519.



Julie Montague

Urban Ministerial School

Vision + Persistence = Reality

by Bernadette Swanson, cwriter@unity.org
Ruth Mosley-Burden had a vision in 1978: to train Unity ministers who would serve the needs of urban populations. As minister of West Side Unity Church in Detroit, Michigan, she saw that there were distinct needs of metropolitan congregations. Through her perseverance, in 1980 the Urban Ministerial School became the only location outside of Unity Village to train Unity ministers.

The focus of this school is “to provide more ministers in the Unity movement with the ability to make the Unity principles more comprehensible to [city dwellers], and to establish a ministerial school in an urban area with an urban focus.”

Up until the recent changes to the ministerial program at Unity Institute, urban ministerial candidates studied in Detroit for three years while serving in the local community. Their final year was spent at Unity Institute. They graduated from Unity Institute and were ordained by the Association. The details of how that will continue to work in conjunction with Unity Institute are now under consideration, even while the Urban Ministerial School remains a viable and vibrant path to Unity ministry.

At her retirement from West Side Unity Church in October 2004, Ruth said, “Today I am grateful because over ninety ministers have come through the Unity Urban Ministerial School. For the future, I see more ministers, more licensed teachers, more counselors, and more support facilitators coming through our school.”

You may contact Dr. Ruth M. Mosley-Burden, founder and director (or Sheila Cook, assistant director), at Unity Urban Ministerial School, Detroit, Michigan, 313.922.0999.

I Came Kicking and Screaming into the High-Tech World

by Christopher Ian Chenoweth,
positivechristianity@yahoo.com

I have been a Unity minister for over 25 years, and many of you know the truth about me, that I'm *not* a computer person. That is a strange statement from a minister that now serves a computer ministry.

When I was serving at Unity Village I didn't have a computer in my office, or my home.

Dan Holloway, current chair of the Association board, and Al Sears, past head of the Association's computer committee, both thought it was their mission to repeatedly urge me to buy a computer. With their help, in 1995, I bought one, along with a computer desk that came in a thousand individual pieces, with Japanese instructions. If it were not for the whole maintenance crew at Unity Village, it would still sit unassembled in a storage unit somewhere.

The Computer, Not So True

After my desk was together, we placed the computer on it. I was proud; I thought it made me look smart. I showed it to everyone who came over, but what they didn't know was I didn't have a clue how to turn it on. It sat there in a special designated place as a monument to male excess.

Friends repeatedly showed me how to turn the thing on, but it didn't stick because I wasn't interested enough to hold that

information past the initial demonstration. Plus, if I did turn it on, never having learned to type greatly limited its use! When my daughter visited, and eventually moved in with me, she used it, but the thing would crash so often that we named the computer "Maybelline" (from the song "Maybelline Can't You Be True?").

When I left Unity Village, I spoke every Sunday in a different Unity church across the U.S. One Unity ministry asked for help while the minister took time off. While serving there, I prayed in the mountains surrounding the area. I never heard an audible answer to my prayers, but, I did have an overwhelming idea come repeatedly to me. "Do a computer ministry." I guarantee—this was *not* from my human mind.

The Birth of a New Ministry

How I wish I could tell you I accepted God's guidance willingly, saying, "Yes God." But I did not! I argued with God. I said, "God, this is crazy. First, God, I don't own a computer. (I had given away the computer at Unity Village.) Second, God, I don't want a computer. Third, God, if I got a computer I would *not* know how to turn it on. Fourth, God, I hate computers. Fifth, I can't type."

Today, my ministry is through my website. The journey has been wondrous, but often, it has been like being duct taped to the outside of the space shuttle. Sometimes things move so fast, seemingly out of control, until I realize again that God knows how to do everything and is in control. My main mission is to spiritually relax and enjoy the ride through cyberspace.

This ministry is strong evidence God can do anything—even through a reluctant, tech-challenged disciple. Here's a spiritual mathematical quotient that works every time: One person that doesn't have a clue how to do something + God + people God sends to help = full-blown genius.

A World of Transition

Reviewed by Lisa Wittman, lisa@unity.org

To delve into Keel's book, *Intuitive Leadership: Embracing a Paradigm of Narrative, Metaphor, and Chaos*, is to have your world view shifted. In other Association publications, we've talked about the change from a modern to a post-modern mindset. This book gives us a picture of how the postmodern world is one of story, and how we are called to be in a world of transition.

Keel says that the "emerging church" is not just looking for new methods of reaching people or to grow churches, but to engage as natives in the new world with creativity on behalf of Christ. True, Keel comes from a more traditional viewpoint, yet that's quite beside the point of understanding his book. As founder of Jacob's Well church, Keel states that he and others in the "Emergent Village" (emergentvillage.com) are seeking to live life in common, to be creative and faithful in living a life based in Scripture that makes sense in today's context. He believes that leaders are faced with profoundly different circumstances today, and therefore need new ways of leading. Since we're in transition, we are all somewhere along the continuum between modern and postmodern. It's not about a particular faith tradition, but it is about the way we approach our faith.

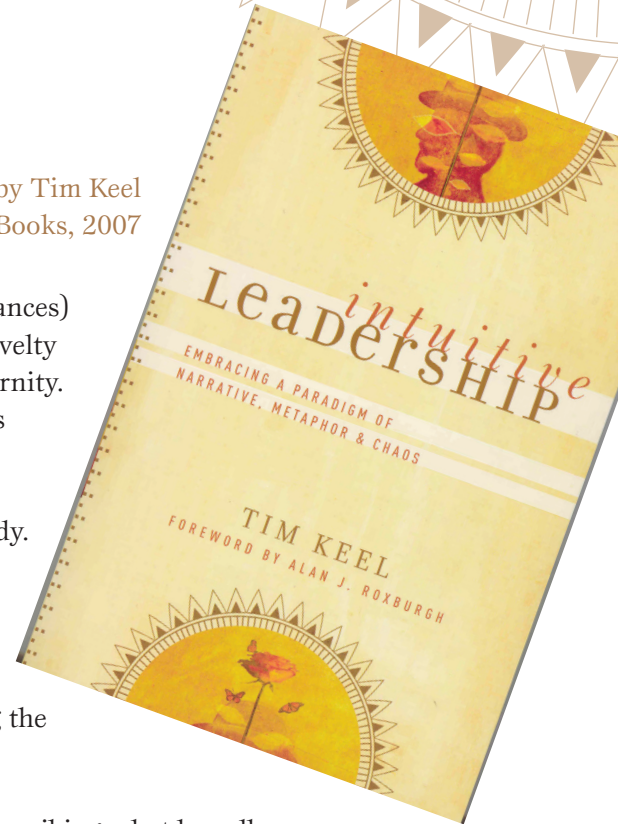
In the modern age, we moved from the importance of story to the importance of provable fact. Science, expert advice, compartmentalization (i.e., faith is one part of our life that doesn't intersect

by Tim Keel
Baker Books, 2007

with others, like work or finances) and the constant need for novelty are all characteristic of modernity. Postmodern thought includes paradox, mystery, and the idea that experience is more important than scientific study. This means that people will increasingly look for us to live our faith, and to try it on for themselves before they're interested in learning the theology behind it.

Keel wraps up the book by describing what he calls, "postures," attitudes we can adopt to help us move into leadership for what's next. For example, he talks of moving from answers to questions, control to chaos, programmer to environmentalist, and spoken to living words. I imagine every reader will find some closely held vestige of modernity to question in herself upon studying this book.

Keel deconstructs the idea that we can reduce success in churches down to a simple model that applies in another context. He says, "We must seek to get away from looking for others to tell us what everything means and what the implications are. Instead we must learn what it means to engage... The last thing we need is answers, because when we have answers, we assume the posture of an expert, and experts are a big part of the problem." Is anyone sweating yet? Through this book, we are encouraged to engage with the Spirit present in ourselves and our community.



Four Keys to Creating More Church Income



by Rev. Ernest D. Chu
Does the thought of having to “run the church like a business” turn you off—or intimidate, confuse or frustrate you? If so, you have a lot of company. Most of us have prepared ourselves to be spiritual leaders, but many

of us are not prepared to be our church’s business leader, operations director, and entrepreneur as well.

However, a church is a spiritual enterprise, and ministers are spiritual entrepreneurs. Our divine inner qualities, individually and collectively, are our spiritual assets. When we invest our assets with focus and intention and multiply them with love, our assets become the most powerful capital of all—spiritual capital.

Fundraising is like having a barrel of money, while fund development is like having a *river* of money.

If you are seeking the resources to grow your church, here are four keys to greater success:

- 1. Focus on Mission-Based Giving.** Dr. Robert Schuller once said: “There’s never a shortage of money, only a shortage of ideas.” Emphasize the greater idea of your mission. People give enthusiastically to support the mission, less so to fund overhead or deficits.
- 2. Keep Your Finances in Order.** People will generously support an organization that is a good steward of their money. You might rather focus on gaining a deeper understanding of *The Gospel According to Thomas*, but make time for—and generate the same enthusiasm for—learning to read the fine points of

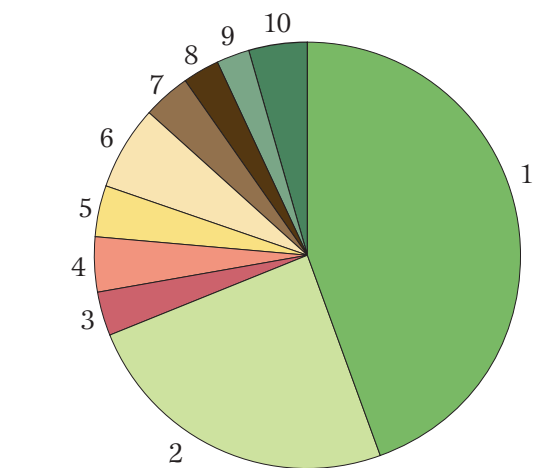
Financial Statement

FOR THE PERIOD OF
10/1/2006 TO 9/30/2007

	General Fund		Total Fund	
	(Actual)	(Budget)	(Actual)	(Budget)
Love Offerings	\$ 2,389,814	\$ 2,040,000	\$ 2,673,911	\$ 2,198,984
Grant Incomes	0	0	0	0
Program Incomes	343,539	364,135	853,324	913,111
Total Income	\$ 2,733,353	\$ 2,404,135	\$ 3,527,235	\$ 3,112,095
Program Expenses	(1,604,344)	(1,465,458)	(2,565,410)	(2,313,028)
Support Services Expenses	(687,576)	(628,054)	(1,099,462)	(991,298)
Total Expenditures	\$ (2,291,920)	\$ (2,093,512)	\$ (3,664,872)	\$ (3,304,326)
Increase from Operation	\$ 441,433	\$ 310,623	\$ (137,637)	\$ (192,231)
Less: Transfer & Others	(342,422)	(320,131)	0	0
Increase in Net Assets	\$ 99,011	\$ (9,508)	\$ (137,637)	\$ (192,231)

WHERE DOES OUR MONEY GO?

(in thousands)



- 1) Ministry (1,604)
- 2) Education (880)
- 3) Radio/Media (118)
- 4) Development (144)
- 5) Building (149)
- 6) Worldwide Ministry (222)
- 7) Church Management (130)
- 8) Peacemaking (104)
- 9) YOU (85)
- 10) Convention (158)

financial reports as a mirror of the organization's effectiveness. And keep your personal finances in order, too.

3. Unlimited Deserving. Prosperity consciousness begins first with the minister and then with the leadership.

4. Fund Development. Create a fund development consciousness rather than a fundraising consciousness. Fundraising is like having a barrel of money, while fund development is like having a river of money.

The Reverend Ernest D. Chu is an ordained Religious Science minister and former Wall Street investment banker and is the author of the forthcoming book, *Soul Currency: The Secret of Being Well Paid for Doing What Really Fulfills You* (www.soulcurrency.org).



The June/July **Contact** will feature **websites and technology.**

If you provide website or technology services or products for churches, there is ad space available for you to reach 7000 *Contact* subscribers. For ad rates and information, see www.unity.org/ContactMagazine or email graph@unity.org by March 15th.

Spirit-Based Fundraising ***Campaigns for Unity Ministries*** ***Created by a Unity Minister*** ***Using Unity Principles***

This program will

- Financially strengthen your ministry
- Inspire and increase volunteers
- Create more sacred connections
- Magnetize your ministry to its highest good
- Activate the spirit of gratitude and generosity



Rev. Cherie Larkin



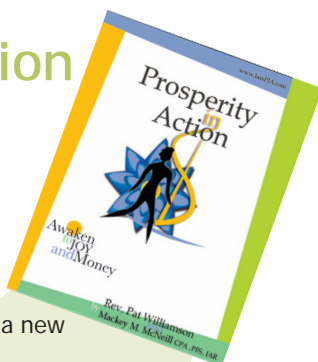
615-364-1964 • sam.cl@comcast.net
www.strategicaction.org

Prosperity ***in Action***

- Unlock your financial potential
- Manifest your dreams
- Work with a prosperity partner
- Experience the rewards of tithing

Prosperity in Action (PIA) is designed to clear your limited thinking and beliefs around money, allowing you to awaken to a new paradigm of prosperity!

PIA is a co-creation of Pat Williamson, Unity minister in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Mackey McNeill, CPA, PFS, IAR; and Spirit. Course materials are \$45, which are yours to keep and include the award-winning book, *The Intersection of Joy and Money*. The course is a six week commitment.



www.lamPIA.com

for more information contact Eva Dahm: 630.369.9824

“One of the most well-attended workshops we have ever had”

Rev. Lisa Davis, Unity of Dayton

“An amazing and gifted man, with many talents and tremendous spiritual insight”

*Rev. Alan Rowbotham, Minister Emeritus
First Unity Church, St. Petersburg*

“A sincere and glowing recommendation”

*Rev. Lawrence E. Palmer
Unity Church in the Rockies*

“Truly a blessing”

*the late Eric Butterworth
Unity Center of New York*

Successful events at nearly 70 Unity churches
Shouldn't yours be next?

www.JohnMaxwellTaylor.com

Southwest

Children in Nepal are snuggling under warm caps knitted by members of Unity Church of Mesa, Arizona. They connected with Penny Strong whose home base is in Mesa. She and her late husband, Woody, established the Pennwood Charitable Foundation that for years has helped the people of Nepal with a wide range of services from education to medical assistance and more. Some of the hats going to Nepal were knitted by young people at the church who have learned to knit through an ongoing monthly workshop. Through their project, the knitters at Unity of Mesa are doing their part to make a better world “one little hat at a time.”



Children in Nepal show off their new hats which were knitted and donated by members of Unity Church of Mesa, Arizona.

Update on Southern California fires:

The Tender Loving Care ministry at The Unity Center in San Diego offered assistance to all those who suffered fire damage. They had three families whose homes were destroyed. At least twelve others had smoke damage but were able to salvage their homes. The church was evacuated early in the week and many congregants and staff evacuated their homes as well. “We were asked to stay indoors as much as possible for the two to three weeks following the fires because of the air contamination that covered the entire county,” says Will Newsom, associate minister.

Sharon Connors (associate minister in El Cajon) remembers the “incredible good will and generosity of people everywhere.” Sharon, her daughter, son, grandsons, and dog, were evacuated and miraculously found a hotel that not only took in the dog but gave discounted rates to everyone in need. All roads to their homes were blocked by National Guard sentries so it was only after four days that they could return to find their homes spared. “In the midst of this with neighbors helping neighbors,” says Sharon, “the insurance companies were bending over backwards to get people taken

care of. I have a friend, Mary, who lost everything but she never lost her smile or the courage to rebuild. People who did not have to evacuate were volunteering to help at the football stadium and the Del Mar fairgrounds where thousands were living for a week.”

Great Lakes

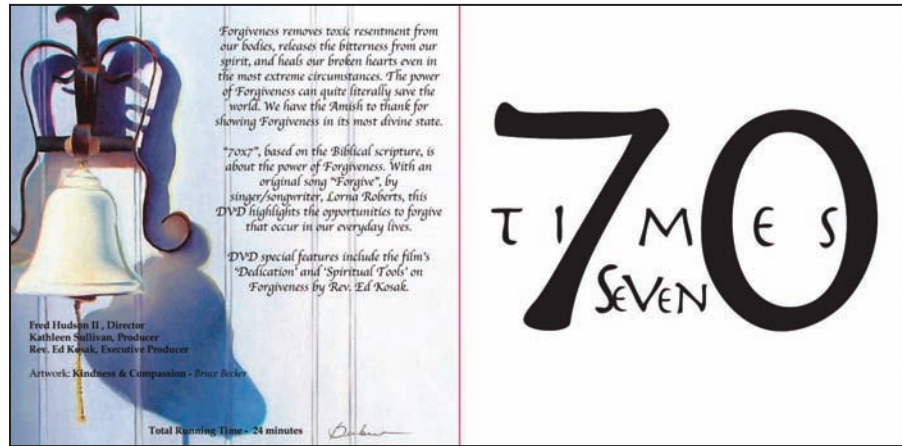


Larry Johnson on his 61-mile hike.

Larry Johnson and his wife Elaine attend Unity Christ Church of Golden Valley in Minnesota. Larry combines storytelling and hiking, often sharing Unity principles. Larry and his grandson took an amazing journey last year for Larry's 61st birthday, hiking 61 miles and talking about deep spiritual and societal issues, handing out Unity prayer for protection cards and praying for those along the way. The journey is documented on the website www.iam.mn/61. Larry planned the walk to raise awareness for several issues including: better health care for all ages; healthy uses of transit; and bipartisan, genuine total support for veterans and deployed soldiers and families. Larry says he is in the process of planning future walks.

Southeast

Unity Church of Charleston, SC has produced a DVD entitled "70x7," available at no charge. It is about forgiveness and is dedicated to the Amish people for their stupendous act of courage in forgiving the murderer of their daughters on October 2, 2006. For more information contact Ed Kosak or Michele at 843.566.0600.



Cover of the DVD which is dedicated to the Amish people in forgiving the murderer of their daughters in 2006.

International

In Memoriam: Harry Morgan, minister from Timisoara, Romania.

Eastern

"It seemed like a dream." That's what many people said after Unity Church of Christ in Teaneck, New Jersey, recently celebrated its 50th Jubilee. Many former congregants came from out of state to join in the weekend activities that included special meals, special classical, jazz and spiritual music, and presentation of a DVD on the history of the church. A highlight was the Sunday service, shared by current minister Bessie Duncan and former ministers Le Remington and Mary Alice Brown, who served the ministry for 20 years. Members report, "We are now 50 years strong in spirit and service, light of heart and full of love." (For information about the DVD and other available items, contact info@unityteaneck.org.)



Current minister Bessie Duncan (left) joined former ministers Le Remington (center) and Mary Alice Brown (right) in celebrating Unity Church of Christ's 50th anniversary.

West Central

In Memoriam: Carlton Buboltz, retired minister from Waikoloa, Hawaii.

What do Deepak Chopra, Mark Victor Hansen, Alan Cohen, Jean Houston & the retired chairman of Aetna Insurance have in common?



They LOVE this guy.
Find out why.

Meet Ernie Chu, spiritual business coach, ministry finance consultant, ordained Religious Science minister, former investment banker, creator of more than \$1.5 billion in market value for his clients, and author of the forthcoming breakthrough book *Soul Currency: The Secret of Being Well Paid for Doing What Really Fulfills You*

Call him today about spiritual business coaching for ministers and boards
954-429-3130 • www.SoulCurrency.org

Creating Thriving, Coherent and Integral Churches

by Gary Simmons, Th.D.

Ken Wilber's integral theory, as applied to Unity churches, is a holistic lens through which to view spiritual communities as living systems. Two-hundred ninety-eight Unity, Religious Science, and other New Thought churches participated in a survey designed to map key indicators associated with the four quadrants of the church: organization, relationship, culture, and consciousness; and along developmental lines within each quadrant: structures, intimacy, identity, and intentionality. These quadrants are detailed in the chart on page 23.

The study compared two groups of respondents across 75 organizational issues. The two groups included a) those that self-identified as leaders of "thriving, coherent, and integral ministries," and b) all-others. Leadership practices were examined and ranked as either level 1 whose characteristics are: survival-based, simplistic, homogenous, and minister-orientated; or level 2 whose characteristics

include: accountability, complexity, diversity, and driven by purpose. In those instances where level 2 practices were prevalent, churches reported a high-degree of organizational health. In churches associated with level 1 practices the tendency was for the community to be driven by survival.



Survey Guidelines

Survey respondents (key leaders of the church) were given the following guidelines:

Thriving: If **thriving** is all about having *more than enough* of everything needed (money, volunteerism, and capable people), and **surviving** is about just making it from month to month, indicate where your ministry is along the spectrum: Surviving / Median / Thriving.

Coherent: If **coherence** is all about clarity of purpose (shared identity and shared future) and single mindedness of intent, where everyone knows what the church stands for and where it is going, and **incoherence** is about confusion, competing agendas, or lack of shared purpose, indicate where your ministry is along the spectrum: Incoherence / Median / Coherence.

Integral: If **integrity** is about the minister / board / membership partnership where members possess the capacity to hold the leadership accountable, where membership is only available to those who are in ownership of the organization, and **out of integrity** is where anyone can

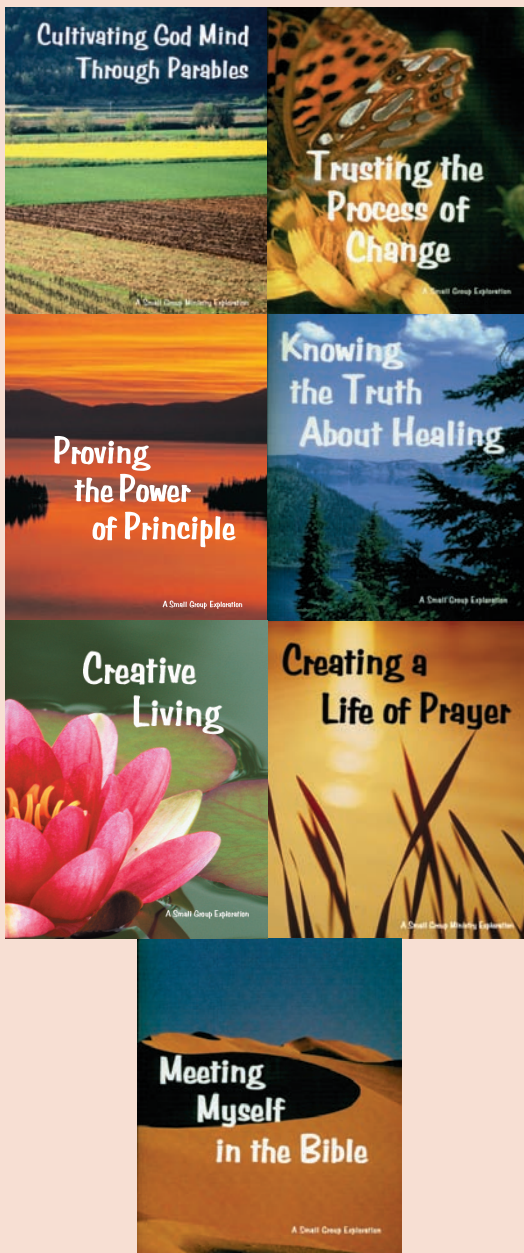
Continued on page 31



Quadrants	Level 1	Level 2
<p>Organization</p> <p>Simplex to Multiplex</p>	<p>Simplex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple new member orientation process • Minimal board member requirements • Less financial requirements for board • Utilitarian structures • Less accountability 	<p>Multiplex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex new member orientation process • Extensive requirements for board members • More financial requirements for board • Integral structures • More accountability
<p>Relationship</p> <p>Family System to Egalitarian System</p>	<p>Family System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister is primary caregiver • Family system dynamics prevalent • Church is spiritual home • Ownership ratio equals or less than 20/80 percent 	<p>Egalitarian System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tendency toward small group ministries fulfilling care-giving needs • Functional dispute resolution system • Church is a spiritual community • Ownership ratio equals or greater than 20/80 percent
<p>Culture</p> <p>Pseudo to Authentic Community</p>	<p>Pseudo Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less ethnic diversity • Identity linked to minister • Weak sense of shared identity and future • Mission less likely to be linked to social action 	<p>Authentic Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More ethnic diversity • Identity linked to ministry • Strong sense of shared identity and future • Mission likely linked to social action
<p>Consciousness</p> <p>Associative to Differentiated</p>	<p>Associative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May see the glass half empty • Eclipsed by history • Driven by financial issues • Tendency to have spiritual leaders who are not thriving, coherent or integral in their personal lives 	<p>Differentiated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to see the glass half full • Integrated history • Driven by purpose • Tendency to have spiritual leaders who are thriving, coherent, and integral in their personal lives

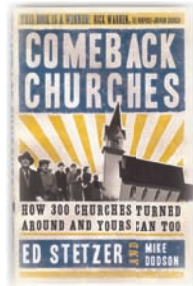
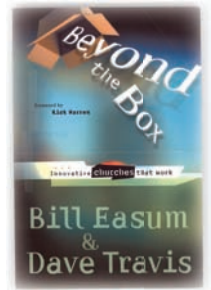
Association Resources

The Association's Small Group Ministry booklets train people for leadership positions. Group facilitators can easily follow the directions, read the prayers and meditations, and lead the group discussions and activities. Licensed teacher candidates can use these booklets as credit toward their license. Booklet themes cover Unity's five basic principles, Bible, prayer, healing, prosperity, change, and creativity. Visit www.unity.org for more information.



Other Resources

Beyond the Box: Innovative Churches that Work, by Bill Easum and Dave Travis, ©2003, Group Publishing, Loveland, Colo. Includes discussion of shifting leadership from one person to team-driven, ways to equip the entire congregation.



Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too, by Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, ©2007, B & H Publishing Group, Nashville, Tenn.

Leadership on the Other Side, by Bill Easum, ©2000, Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn. Discussion of the place beyond the Christendom era, where churches are ministering in new ways.



www.easumbandy.com, free resources and articles about church leadership.



www.churchleadership.com is the Lewis Center for Church Leadership, with helpful articles.

www.dialogonleadership.org/Heifetz-1999.html gives an interesting interview with Harvard's Ron Heifetz concerning change.



www.positivechristianity.org is Chris Chenoweth's nondenominational, nonprofit website ministry and includes daily inspiration, prayer and information about spiritual vacation retreats.

Calendar of Events



2008

February 19–23

Regional Education Consultants Conference; contact Kathy Kellogg, kid@unity.org

March 5–14

Field Licensing Program; contact Kathy Kellogg, kid@unity.org

March 28-30

Southeast NGU Spring Retreat, Unity Christ Center, Suwanee, GA; contact Tiffany Emitt, southeastngu@gmail.com

April 20-25

Skills Demonstration Seminar; contact Shirley Kennedy, ltc@unity.org

May 2-4

Northwest Next Generation of Unity Retreat, "Spirit in Action," Unity Church in Lynnwood, WA; visit www.unitynwregion.org/ngu.aspx or contact Nick Muncie-Jarvis, Northwest.NGU@gmail.com

June 9–14

Association of Unity Churches International's Unity People's Convention, Wigwam Resort, Phoenix, AZ; contact Kim Shawd, convast@unity.org

July 5-11

Adults of Unity Conference, contact Kim Shawd, convast@unity.org

July 13-18

IYOU Appreciative Inquiry Summit, contact Rachel Simpson, youast@unity.org

August 3-8

Children/Teen Ministry Week, contact Kathy Kellogg, kid@unity.org

August 9-10

Certified Spiritual Educators Intensive, contact Kathy Kellogg, kid@unity.org

August 10-15

Skills Demonstration Seminar; contact Shirley Kennedy, ltc@unity.org

September 22–25

Ministerial Candidate Admissions Interview Week; contact Jo Ann Spruill, registrar@unity.org

November 2-7

Skills Demonstration Seminar; contact Shirley Kennedy, ltc@unity.org

Integral Leadership & Church Growth Strategies

Creating Thriving, Coherent, and Integral Ministries

For Ministers, Board Members, Lay Leaders, Licensed Teachers



March 28–29, 2008
Spiritual Life Center,
Unity Village, MO

brought to you by



Register online at www.unity.org, or call 816.524.7414 ext. 259 for more information.

A History Worth Reviewing



by Barbara O'Hearne, bohearne@kc.rr.com

Launching a new direction is always exciting to me. As the Association moves into a new era of leadership and organizational development for churches, I realize that the wisdom gained from past programs will become element of our program for the future. Unity Ministers' Executive Institute (UMEI) was one such program.

Recommendations to Expand

It began with Sir John Templeton asking me "to research and make recommendations for strategies to effectively introduce the Unity

message to a broader range of individuals, enhancing the growth and influence of the Unity movement." In 1997-98, I interviewed 128 ministers and congregants across the US. The interview data resulted in a variety of recommendations. Among them: more minister post-graduate education and training in business management and church administration; team-based ministry; team leadership and small group ministry; professional church management, leadership skills, communication; and enhanced interpersonal skills of ministers.

After a year of extensive research, UMEI had its first meeting at Unity Village, in 1999, with 26 participants. Dr. Charlotte Shelton was the first faculty member. Ultimately, Ruth Mosley used Charlotte's book *Quantum Leaps: Seven Skills for Workplace Recreation* at the Urban School in Detroit.

Impact on Ministers

UMEI was funded from 1999-2002 by the John Templeton Foundation. The impact is best described by the participants at the alumni luncheon in June 2007, along with comments from others. Consistent themes that made a difference in the leadership ability of the ministers included:

Stepping into leadership—**Marilyn Muehlbach** said, "Having the confidence to step into the role of a leadership offered practical tools, group work, and the opportunity to connect with other ministers to do a project."

Raymond Shea—" [UMEI] was a turning point for me. I learned how to increase membership and still use the materials. I worked with Barbara on the transition from pastoral to program size ministry and developed a strategic plan."

Dan Holloway said, "It gave me the opportunity to go for what I wanted—the willingness to be of service."

Faculty—Bill Easum talked about "the bully in the church and I went back to my ministry and successfully addressed the issue," reported **Julie Armour**.

Personal transformation—One minister reported she heard people were transformed from the participation in UMEI resulting from "the inner knowing of who you are." "I had the ability to explore areas I was weak in and had the support of others to make changes," reported another minister.

One minister shared that experiences in UMEI is the reason she is still in ministry and successfully leading a large ministry.

Ropes course—the infamous ropes course—built confidence and helped participants to conquer their fear.

Lawrence Palmer said, “I saw colleagues who have it all together turn into very frightened people then climb the 25-foot pole and succeed.” The support from others on the ropes course was meaningful for many. For me, (Barbara) the ropes course was a huge step in overcoming fear and to this day I am grateful to many ministers who supported me.

Team projects—One UMEI member reported, “It was my first invitation to work on a team.”

Life coach— “We were required to get a life coach and I still have the same coach,” said **Pat Williamson**. **Carol Lunde** shared, “The coach helped me get the first of two books published.”

Location—the 3 and a half day program was held three times a year in different cities giving participants the opportunity to see effective ministries of all sizes, as well as interact with the minister(s), staff and some board trustees. In Oakton, Virginia, Stephen Cumbie (board trustee) gave an in-depth presentation on the ministry’s capital campaign and the planning involved in constructing a new building.

More Insights

Besides the key themes identified by participants, there were other major insights that came from the program:

Ministers became more open to exploring new ways of leading a ministry from “being a loner” and thinking “I can do it all myself” to working on teams in supporting one another. The product of one project was *Sacred Ceremonies and Heartfelt Rituals*, a CD of services which continues

to be available at the Association. (Order online at www.unity.org.)

Marciah McCartney summed it up, “The year I spent with the UMEI was one of the most valuable years of my life and my ministerial education. My experience with UMEI was key in embodying leadership skills. I believe that learning and applying leadership skills is glossed over in most of our Unity ministerial training. UMEI gave me the confidence to step more fully into the role of CEO of my church and CEO of my life.”

Our history as an organization is rich in innovation and challenges. When asked to write this article I reviewed the three-fold purpose of UMEI (1) provide a high quality executive leadership program to grow successful ministries; (2) assess, expand and enhance the leadership and executive skills of ministers; and (3) build the commitment and capacity to ministers to become leaders in the Unity movement. Many participants reported success with these goals. Of the alumni, 23 have served on regional boards and 19 on the international board of our Association. With the help from the UMEI Advisory Council, the participants, and faculty, we achieved our purpose and we did it well. Creating and being part of innovative programs feeds my soul. I look forward to the new creation.

Barbara O’Hearne has received her Appreciative Inquiry and the Practice of Positive Change Certificate. The program requirements for this include: the basic theory and practice of Appreciative Inquiry; design and facilitation of the large groups appreciative inquiry process; design and lead an AI initiative; and enhanced appreciative self-awareness and leadership. This certificate is awarded to consultants and leaders of change who have acquired the knowledge and skills to lead, design and facilitate change in organizations (churches) and communities using Appreciative Inquiry. For more information she can be contacted at ohearnekc@aol.com or 816.210.4233.



Me to We: A Pastor's Discovery of the Power of Partnership

Reviewed by Deborah Frownfelter

How can a church thrive in today's world? How can we unleash the potential of a church to transform lives?

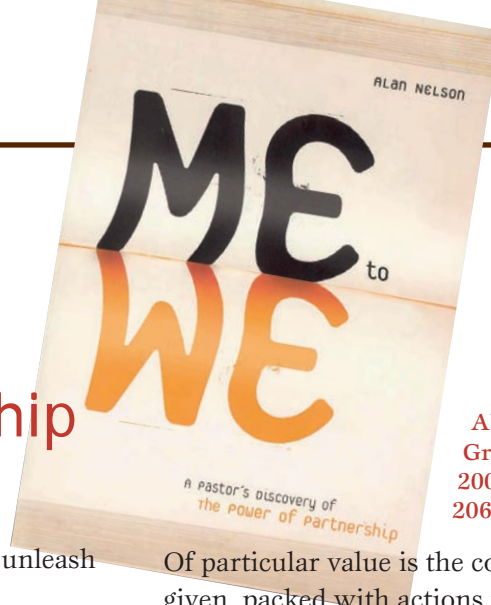
The answer to these questions, according to Alan Nelson, Executive Editor of *Rev!* Magazine, involves a profound shift in our understanding of ministry—the shift from *Me to We*, from a minister-centered to a community-centered model of ministry. In the new model, the minister serves as a catalyst to engage others to serve one another.

Nelson interviewed ministers who have discovered what it takes to catalyze spiritual growth and to involve 70-90 percent of their people in active service within and beyond church walls. Nelson weaves the advice of these effective ministers into a compelling ongoing conversation between two fictional pastors, Vernon Miller and Matt Robinson. This story style makes the book refreshing, easy-to read, authentic and practical.

Through Vernon's mentoring of Matt, we learn a valuable approach to taking our ministries to a new level of vibrancy and impact. What is shared is useful in churches no matter what their denomination or size.

The main idea of *Me to We: A Pastor's Discovery of the Power of Partnership*, is that the key to successful ministry is to develop others, to "equip" them as ministry leaders, who will in turn equip their ministry team members. As stated through the character of Vernon, "Equipping involves helping people discover their purpose and gifts and then find a place of service inside the church or outside in the community" (page 50).

Vernon first helps his colleague fully understand the need for developing an equipping culture within his church, then shares a plan to make it happen. As Matt follows his mentor's model, we come to see the critical steps, the potential roadblocks, the importance of perseverance, and the eventual rich harvest.



Alan Nelson
Group Publishing
2007
206 pages

Of particular value is the concrete roadmap given, packed with actions to take. In addition to a detailed plan, Nelson ends the book with a section entitled "More Next-Step Ideas." Included here are thirty-eight practical ideas "to help you become an empowering pastor serving in an equipping church" (page 201). Among the ideas shared are relevant Bible passages to read and reflect on, other books to read, and internet resources.

Although this book is primarily directed to ministers, anyone desiring to bring greater vitality to their church, will find valuable ideas.

I found *Me to We* inspiring, knowing that it is based on successful practices of highly effective ministers. The philosophy at its heart, the value of developing others and working in partnership, is one that I have personally experienced and championed for many years. This book reminded me of the joy of watching someone come fully alive through discovering, maturing and serving through their gifts and passion and to be able to do the same myself.

An ordained Unity minister and licensed Unity teacher, Deborah Frownfelter is Vice President of Leadership and Organizational Development at the Association home office. She has extensive experience in education, corporate training and development, teambuilding, and coaching leaders.

New Life Springs from Leadership Continued from page 9

spiritual community, empowering active leaders in stewardship in an awakening world,” she quotes. “The entire culture and conversation of our ministry shifted dramatically.”

All of this has led people to feel they are responsible to grow spiritually, in their leadership and assist in the growth of others. It hasn’t come without some scary moments. Last summer, there was a “mass exodus” of people who were originally part of the ministry. By redefining and focusing on their purpose moving forward, they’ve drawn in more gifted people, actually surpassing where they were before. The people in place now are really dedicated to taking the church to its next level.

Turning Points and Resources

Felicia feels very grateful that she’s been able to do her own work throughout this process. “It prepared me and allowed this to happen. It’s part of our leadership culture—we can’t lead unless we’re willing to deal with our own stuff. *Eye of the Storm* is a requirement for us.”

By taking Unity Institute’s online leadership course, offered by Claudell County (Association’s faculty member), Felicia is gaining more resources to add to her already impressive list. She recommends having a personal coach, the Mennonite Peace Center, Nonviolent Communication, Association conferences and trainings, along with others. All of it underlines the fundamental building block of leaders—that they look after their own spiritual health and growth.

What has been the key for this ministry? “Two things—the clarity of the purpose and vision, and it’s not personality driven. The purpose and vision resonate at a cellular level, guiding our ministry and our growth. We are addressing every area of our ministry through our goals and vision.”

Results are God’s

The greatest challenge for Felicia has been that the numbers have not grown greatly. A ministry of about 40-50, she has to remind herself that our culture of “more is better” doesn’t always apply. “We can’t evaluate our effectiveness by someone else’s standards. We’re in a small community in the middle of Tennessee. I just have to stay focused on the purpose,” she says.

And that purpose is certainly manifesting. Recently, when the congregation honored their volunteers, Felicia asked everyone in service to stand during worship. All but 2 stood, and those were new people. “It took my breath away!” she shares. By requiring a list of classes, at least 12 hours of service, concrete financial support and at least 6 months attendance, the church has found that people want to be part of leadership. It is a healthy, involved, committed group.



Unity Church of Life board member Craig Core and sound team member Daylan Jacks

Felicia also recommends reaching out to other ministers in the area for moral support. She has found them to be very generous and available to share their wisdom.

Leadership is Central

These two stories have really confirmed the centrality of leadership and growing leaders within the ministry. Our new directions in spiritual leadership formation will draw upon such experiences and input. We welcome your stories as we step forward on this journey.

Many resources to encourage leadership can be found on page 24.

Oop Bloop

We have a large ceramic bowl for the burning bowl service. The first Sunday of January, I placed a votive candle in a glass holder at the bottom of the ceramic bowl to keep the flame burning as people dropped little slips of paper into it. We keep the slips small to prevent too much fire. All went well. The weather kept many people away, so I held a burning bowl on the second Sunday for those who couldn't be at the first one. I placed another votive candle at the bottom of the ceramic bowl, but forgot the glass holder. The candle melted, the spreading wax caught fire, and we had a column of flame rising toward the new ceiling in seconds. Fortunately the tech man in the recording room grabbed the fire extinguisher, came running down the center aisle, and turned the flame into a large poof of ashes. The folks said this was a most impressive sight, to see their negatives exploded into a cloud of fine ashes and disappear!

Carole M. Lunde

Minister of Christ Unity Church, Lincoln, Nebraska



**Dreaming Together:
Co-creating Our Future**

July 13-18, 2008

What is an “Appreciative Inquiry Summit”?

An Appreciative Inquiry Summit is an event where people from an organization gather to focus on its strengths and move toward positive change. At the IYOU Summit, attendees will work in small and large groups to create a new vision for IYOU.

Participants will experience the 4-D Process of:

- **Discovery** – discovering IYOU’s identity, strengths, dreams and goals.
- **Dream** – envisioning what IYOU could be in order to expand its potential and develop a collective image of the ideal organization.
- **Design** – brainstorming a design and structure for IYOU that will fulfill the dreams of its members.
- **Destiny** – identifying the resources needed and developing an action plan to carry out the suggested design.

For more information visit www.unity.org/iyou

become a member and there is no real process where members are held accountable to competency standards, indicate where your ministry is along the spectrum: out of Integrity / Median / Integral.

Nine percent of the total survey responses indicated complete alignment with thriving, coherent, and integral (TCIM) criteria.

How TCIMs are Different

The TCIM group was compared to the all-others group. Based on practices, relational dynamics, and trends, TCIMs possess the following attributes by comparison to the all others group. They:

- are tenured by long-term, capable leadership.
- are ethnically diverse.
- are more likely to report an increase in Sunday attendance and financial support.
- are more likely to have a tiered process for becoming a voting member.
- tend to have a more challenging process for becoming a voting member and board trustee.
- require financial commitment from board members.
- have leaders who value capacity building, clear communication, healthy ways of managing concerns, accountability, leadership and membership competence, and being role models unto the congregation.
- refer to themselves as a church community rather than a spiritual family.
- are less dominated by family system dynamics and more egalitarian.
- place a high value on shared identity and shared future.

- are purpose driven and optimistic.
- commonly link their identity and purpose with community service and social action.
- refrain from projecting past concerns onto present circumstances.

The comparison between thriving, coherent, and integral ministries and the all-others group reveals a significant contrast in each of the four quadrants of ministry. Organizationally, TCIMs are structurally more complex and have a higher standard of member and trustee competence. TCIMs are more skillful in managing disagreement. They are also more prosperous and tend toward increased attendance.

While existing across the entire church size spectrum (family, pastoral, program, corporate, and mega), TCIMs are most prevalent when their leadership (minister and board) model and demonstrate principles that underlie personal integrity and coherence as well as abundance. In other words, the leaders are thriving, coherent, and integral in their personal lives.

TCIMs exist independent of size, but not independent of holistic leadership. The relationship between thriving churches and thriving spiritual leaders is not surprising. As above, so below.

To download a copy of the full dissertation, go to www.unity.org.

Global Unity A website that will circle the earth

- ♥ 250 audio lessons and 100 summary texts
- ♥ All free of charge
- ♥ Can be downloaded for listening, reading, CDs
- ♥ Can be easily forwarded to others
- ♥ Links to Unity® and the Association of Unity Churches International

www.beautifulwayoflife.com

Revs Charles & Betty Lelly
Minister Emeriti from Unity of Louisville, Kentucky

Getting to Know

Deepening Our Relationship
with God, Ourselves, and Others

You

Join in the Celebration!

Unity People's Convention

Wigwam Resort • Phoenix, Arizona

June 9–14, 2008

- Inspirational Keynotes
 - Educational Workshops
 - Magnificent Musicians
 - Exciting Exhibitors
- ...and so much more!

Register on-line and check
out the wonderful programs
and activities scheduled
for this week at
www.unity.org/convention



Association of
Unity Churches
INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 610
Lee's Summit, MO 64063

Presorted Standard
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Shawnee Mission, KS
Permit No. 220