



Association of Unity Churches International

Contact

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October/November 2008

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With People Outside Your
Walls and Regional News

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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.

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Thriving in Unity

In reponse to the article “Thriving in Unity” (August/September 2008 issue):

Well, I’m surprised again by the *Contact* message. In particular this sentence in the “Thriving in Unity” article: “With the looming specter of tough financial times ahead, we must be even more vigilant in our practice of principle.”

First, what is this statement affirming about our world? What power you give it. When faced with his disciples’ getting wrapped up in questions about the material world, Jesus is quoted as saying, “What is that to you? Follow me!” (John 21:22)

But let’s don’t affirm a looming specter of any kind. It’s not in my future and I hope not in yours!

Roger Lachele
Licensed teacher

Editor’s note: Our purpose in using the phrase “looming specter” was intentional. A “specter” by definition is a ghost, a phantom, an apparition. Any perception of lack is simply that—a perception. Yet, we acknowledge that this “phantom” may

cause fear for some. We couldn’t agree with you more that our role as Unity ministries and spiritual leaders is to “practice our principles regularly, including remembering the Source of our good.” This is at the heart of Thriving in Unity.

Perspectives

In response to the “Perspectives” article (June/July 2008 issue):

I cannot believe what is happening, in the movement, at the present time. At the beginning of the year, the use of the cross was questioned, and now in this present issue, “Is Jesus My Way-shower?”

Unity was founded on the teachings of Jesus. Papa Charles and Mama Myrtle revered Him, and for the life of me, I cannot imagine either of them raising that question. More and more, we seem to be slipping away from what they taught and believed. We are adding to the confusion of our congregants, in consciousness, when in keeping up with the times, attempt to be more diversified. Do not misunderstand me. I believe in studying, learning, and opening up to other religions and spiritual groups, as long as Unity comes first!

Joanne M. Dator
Unity minister

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

Letter From the Editor

W

Welcome to this issue of *Contact!* We have heard so many inspiring stories over the years about what is happening in ministries outside the United States, we decided to give you an issue full of them.

Our strategic plan calls for building partnerships worldwide, and there are certainly fruitful partnerships spreading Unity across the globe. We tell the stories of many African ministries, of Spanish-speaking ones, and of those in Europe. There is effective outreach in all corners of the world.

Many folks also weighed in on our “Perspectives” article, and we’ve included lots of opinions here and online for you to see. Don’t miss the update on how support of worldwide ministries is happening through great teamwork. This issue’s purpose is to help us all realize the connections of Unity that reach all around the planet to bring about a world that works for all.

Lisa Wittman, Supervising Editor
lisa@unity.org



Bringing Unity to the World

by Marilyn Muehlbach
unlimitedmtm@netzero.com

Imagine the world with an expanded Unity presence and consciousness . . .

Vision

Centered in God,
we co-create
a world that
works for all.

Unity is a dynamic movement on the cutting edge of spiritual evolution. I believe Unity has a pivotal role to play on our planet. The universal spiritual principles we teach

in our Unity churches really can, when put into action, lead to transformed lives and a world that works for all.

Our Unity churches draw people from three different points on the spiritual path. **We attract those seeking:**

- **A place of acceptance and healing** when they are hurting, lonely, and feeling beaten down by life, a place that will give them a hand up, not just a hand out.
- **A place of spiritual support** where they can ask big questions, learn from and with other spiritual seekers, discover practical tools to make life work better, practice spiritual principles in every day experiences, broaden their perspectives and stretch their minds, deepen their connection to the Great Mystery that we call God.
- **A place to share, celebrate and give back** in gratitude for the goodness of life through teaching, praying, listening, supporting and becoming actively involved in a thriving spiritual community.

The Association of Unity Churches International is here to support our Unity ministries and leaders with practical programs and services that allow our churches to offer hope, opportunity, and transformation to these seekers.

Our new strategic plan is designed to take us to a new level. It could lead to exponential growth and have a dramatic impact on world consciousness. It outlines innovative and focused services and programs to (1) grow Unity and create a worldwide presence, (2) enhance leadership and organizational development, and (3) positively impact the human condition.

To roll out this plan, we need your participation and contributions. Check out *Thriving in Unity* at www.thrivinginunity.org to see how you can become involved.

In ancient times farmers brought their grain to the storehouse where it was stored and later ground into flour. The farmers would pick up the flour as needed, leave 10 percent of the grain to support the storehouse, and sell the rest. The Association is the storehouse that supports the work we do as ministries and Unity leaders. If your church and the 950 other Unity churches each tithed just 5 percent of their income (half of your 10 percent tithe) to the Association storehouse, we would be able to roll out the entire *Thriving in Unity* program by the year 2012.

Imagine what the world could be with a greater Unity consciousness expanding exponentially . . .

UNITY X 10 = Good
(UNITY)¹⁰ = Even Better

Spirit is rising in each of us. Together we are creating a world that works for all.

Mission

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

Developing Unity's Presence *Throughout the World*

by James Trapp, ceo@unity.org

Our Association assumed responsibility of worldwide ministries in 2001. Since that time the scope of our worldwide ministries and centers has grown and expanded. All the while, our Association, particularly our field ministries, has been devising ways to connect and work with our worldwide members so that we can collaborate with communities beyond the borders of the United States.

There are approximately 240 centers, ministries, and study groups outside the continental United States. The communities span the continents of North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia. Worldwide, there are thirteen national schools and eleven associations of Unity leaders. To carry forth our vision of being centered in God to co-create a world that works for all, we must work as one energy field. By deepening and unifying our connections worldwide, we will help facilitate the realization of that vision.

While many of our American field ministries partner with our worldwide centers, representatives from our Board of Trustees and I will periodically meet

with worldwide leaders to deepen our understanding of how Unity is evolving outside the continental United States. We will vision with those spiritual leaders to discern how leaders can be empowered to develop Unity's presence in the different regions of the world. Equally important, greater bonds will be established among spiritual leaders as well as with our board and home office.

With input from our worldwide membership, we are looking to create a World Council. The purpose of the council is for representatives from various regions of the world to meet in order to share successes and develop ways to ensure consistent portrayal of Unity principles. At the same time, we will affirm the cultural uniqueness of each community while assuring effective local governance. The concept of the World Council is based on the notion that "theology is universal; governance is local." The input from our worldwide membership will enable us to co-creatively develop how this will be an operational reality. As always, if you have suggestions for worldwide ministry or how to better our Unity movement, feel free to email me at the above address.



Serving in *God's Garden*



by Juan Enrique Toro,
jet@unitycostarica.org

It has been said that when God held a meeting with representatives of all nations to generously distribute the land on planet earth, a humble *campesino* was late. By the time he showed up, God had given away all of the land. A tear slid slowly down his face. Seeing the man's sadness, God's heart was moved and He tenderly said, "All I have left is the garden that I was saving for myself, but you may have it instead; you may have Costa Rica."

One evening shortly after our ordination as Unity ministers, Rita Marie and I were exploring options for ministry in Latin America. When I mentioned that Costa Rica had no army, those words seemed to hang magically in the air between us. That day, we joined our destiny with the destiny of a country that identifies with peace. Over 15 years later, we are still immersed in the "Eden" archetype that lies at the heart of Costa Rica and we celebrate Unity services in an open air garden.

Unity minister Diane Plamondon pioneered Unity in Costa Rica about 17 years ago. The ministry continues to grow despite the daily devaluation of the local currency and despite the fact that Costa Rica is Catholic by law.

Two Cultures and Peace

Unity-Costa Rica's vision was to share our Unity message with the citizens and offer a spiritual home to the English-speaking ex-patriots who reside here. To this day, Unity-Costa Rica remains one of the few fully bilingual ministries in our movement. Over the years, we have learned the importance of honoring the oneness of the congregation and also the individuality of the two cultures and languages within it. For this reason, we have separate times for Spanish and English services and also have bicultural events in which everyone interacts. For example, our dance parties bring people together in an atmosphere that transcends language.

By following her own guidance, Rita Marie discovered that her niche in Costa Rica would be peace education. She founded the Rasur Foundation in 1997 for that purpose and, in 2003, initiated its main project, the Academy for Peace of Costa Rica (www.academyforpeacecr.org). The mission of the academy is to empower every Costa Rican child to pass the practice of *BePeace* to the next generation. The *BePeace*



Juan Enrique Toro
with wife and
cominister Rita Marie
Johnson

practice builds social and emotional intelligence through a combination of the HeartMath method for “feeling peace” and Nonviolent Communication for “speaking peace.” This work is supported by Unity volunteers, including myself as a trainer, and is one of our community outreach programs.

Prayer

We are also proud of having established an affiliate of Silent Unity in Costa Rica. This prayer ministry has become a part of Costa Rican culture. The Spanish version of the *Daily Word* is also printed locally and is the best calling card for our teachings.

Unity-Costa Rica has been a pioneer in establishing spiritual tours. We began by offering Celestine Prophecy tours and are developing a new tour at this time for both individuals and groups.

Connection

One of the major challenges that international ministries face is feeling connected to the greater Unity movement.

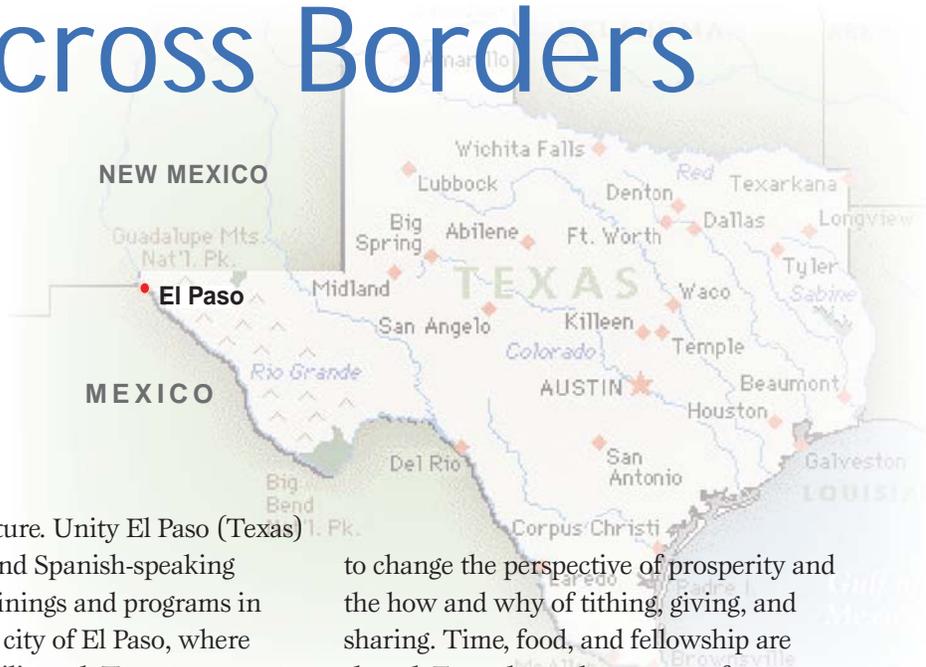


Outdoor Sunday service at Unity in Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica.

We decided to be proactive in this regard and committed to attending the Unity convention every year and to supporting the Association. Even though Unity-Costa Rica is a small church, it made a major contribution by funding my participation on the Association board and as Chair for a total of eight years.

Five years ago, we had just moved the church to a more rural setting immersed in nature. When the gardener employed at this property saw our Unity sign, he pulled a 1965 copy of the *Daily Word* out of his pocket saying, “Are you the same Unity that publishes this little book?” Once again our guidance had been confirmed. These amazing coincidences have happened repeatedly over the years as Rita Marie and I found our spiritual destinies were being fulfilled here. Let us all join in supporting those ministers who are now called to expand the Unity movement around the world, fulfilling its destiny and their own.

Service Across Borders



by Diana Isaac, revdi@sbcglobal.net
and Leiris Morillo

Spirit has no differences in language or culture. Unity El Paso (Texas) is committed to both its English-speaking and Spanish-speaking congregants and offers services, classes, trainings and programs in both English and Spanish. This reflects the city of El Paso, where more than 80 percent of the population is bilingual. Twenty percent of the church's congregation drives across the border from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, each Sunday to attend the 1 p.m. Spanish service and many stay for workshops and classes. The English service is at 11 a.m. with simultaneous interpretation. This has grown from one Spanish service a month in 2000.

Think of every type of special service a church may do—burning bowl, candlelight service, white stone ceremony, baptisms, weddings, funerals, quinceañeras (Sweet Fifteen) and holy unions—offered in both languages or a combination of both. Then throw in daily and Wednesday night prayer services, spiritual counseling, printed materials and the website, and you get the idea of the scope of this commitment.

We consider all who come through our doors a vital part of our prosperous spiritual community. It is important to note that the growth of the Spanish ministry is in consciousness. They come as a “pack” in families and bring friends and neighbors. They love to have



Leiris Morillo



Diana Issac

activities involving food and family. The classes are filled to capacity with twenty to twenty-five. They love the classes and are “hungry” for more. In terms of prosperity, we have been teaching 4T and it's beginning

to change the perspective of prosperity and the how and why of tithing, giving, and sharing. Time, food, and fellowship are shared. Even the exchange rate of money is a consideration, one hundred pesos is ten dollars, so we also have to deal with the exchange and what it means for them and us.

This has been a growth process for our ministry. It is important to note that it's not just about speaking Spanish, it's about understanding the culture. We are blessed to have two bilingual ministers with bicultural experience and understanding of the population.

For ministries thinking of beginning bilingual ministries, I recommend constantly reminding themselves “what we are here to do, who we are here to be, and who we are serving.” Be cognizant of what the general community wants and also your congregation. A commitment from all parties is crucial and there needs to be an understanding of what inclusion and togetherness really mean.

It has transformed who we are as a ministry, it has expanded us both literally and figuratively. Unity El Paso continues to thrive, grow, and prosper as we see Spirit manifesting in each person who shows up and gives of what they have to give.

An Invitation to a *Life—Changing* Event

by Charline E. Manuel, charmanuel@msn.com

In 2004, when I read that Unity would be presenting at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona, Spain, I knew I had to go. Charles—and possibly Myrtle—attended the first Parliament in 1893. My thinking was that if they thought it was a good idea then, it was worth checking into. As I watched Unity's presentation at the Parliament, my heart was full. I felt proud to be a part of Unity. I left Barcelona changed, and it changed our ministry in Miami. That same year we started our Global Prosperity Project, an opportunity to experience the prosperity we teach in Unity by expanding our community service across continent divides.

As we prepare for the 2009 Parliament in Melbourne Australia, I see Unity showing up in consciousness and numbers, contributing a powerful presence to the conference. I imagine Charles and Myrtle being proud of our journey, increasing from two Unity to 1,000 New Thought delegates.

At the 2009 Parliament, December 3-9, eight New Thought organizations will collaborate to present a unified identity on the international stage: the Association of Unity Churches International, Unity Institute, Agape International, Association for Global New Thought, United Centers for Spiritual Living, Religious Science International, Affiliated New Thought Network, and Universal Foundation for Better Living. We are planning a pre-conference New Thought series of activities for December 1 and 2.

The Parliament will offer interactive discussions, workshops, panel discussions, religious and spiritual observances, training sessions, artistic performances and more. The programs will address a number of crucial topics from religious and spiritual perspectives, including: healing the earth, reconciling with indigenous peoples, overcoming poverty, sharing wisdom in the search for inner peace, securing food and water for all people, **and** building peace in the pursuit of justice. His Holiness the Dalai Lama will deliver the closing address.

I encourage you to give this trip your prayerful consideration, open it up to your congregants, and allow transformation to emerge. Even amidst the appearance of a troubled economy, we are blessed to have a teaching that reminds us:

“The Inexhaustible Resource of Spirit is equal to every demand. There is no reality in lack. Abundance is here and now manifest.”
(Charles Fillmore)

We are establishing “host churches” around the country for coordinating group travel. For more information about the Parliament conference visit: www.cpwr.org. If your church would like to serve as a host, contact Charline Manuel at charmanuel@msn.com.

More information will be posted on the Association website in the coming months at www.unity.org.



James and Angela Trapp, Charline Manuel, Michael and Ricki Beckwith attending the Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona, Spain.

Giving Is Prosperity's First Law: *A Living Lesson*

by Barbara O'Hearne, ohearnekc@aol.com

After attending the 2004 Parliament of the World's Religions meeting in Barcelona, Spain, Charline Manuel, minister at Unity Center of Miami, Florida (www.unitycenterofmiami.org), was inspired to make a difference in the world. "I returned from the conference feeling a bit overwhelmed. With such massive challenges such as clean water, food, educational opportunities—what could be done? What could I do? What could my church do and how?" she asks.

Millionaires for Haiti

Visioning with 25 congregants on a larger vision of true prosperity, the church came up with a Millionaire Series as the church's fall program. In the session, the people discovered their own prosperity would not be complete until there was a global shift of consciousness where every person on the planet had water, food, education, and health care.

In the fall of 2004, an eight-week Sunday series based on Catherine Ponder's *The Millionaires of Genesis* led to the ministry's "Global Prosperity Project." The congregation was asked to donate over and above their regular giving and tithes to build a school in rural Haiti, provide school supplies to 300 children and college scholarships to four young Haitian men. The children in the church contributed their own ideas on raising money and gifts to send to Haiti. Reaching their goal of \$10,000, two congregants went to Haiti to deliver the donations and reported back to the congregation on the success of the program.

Haiti and New Orleans

The next year using the *Millionaire from Nazareth* by Catherine Ponder, the Global Prosperity Project was expanded to include donations toward a Habitat House in New Orleans (\$7,000) and to continue the education programs in Haiti (\$5,000). Again, congregants went to both locations to deliver the donations and reported back to the congregation. In a joint project with Children of Haiti Enhancement Foundation, Inc., 600 children in Haiti attended a two-week camp in 2007 and 800 this past summer. For some children, it was their first camp experience and the first time they ever had three meals a day.

Clean Water in Mali

Charline's daughter was married in Mali, West Africa. In researching the country, she learned there was a high mortality for children under five and a need for clean water. Twenty-two congregants joined her to meet the people in Bamako, Mali, West Africa, and in 2007 the church financed a clean water system that now provides access to water for over 1,000 people.

I interviewed two women who went to Mali, Maria Ferrer and Cheryl Pestaina. Maria shared her experiences of going to a school in Bamako and delivering school supplies, the children in villages walking with them, holding their hands



In 2007, Unity Center of Miami financed a clean water system that now provides access to water for over 1,000 people in Mali.

and “wanting to connect with us in a very loving way. We went to the site of the well and saw the pipes to be extended from the city.” The women of the village are responsible for getting the water, which they carried in jugs on their heads, along with babies on their backs. The men were able to work on the well project, helping to support their families: it was truly a local project. Maria says, “We grew as a church and that was their gift to us.”

Cheryl fulfilled a childhood dream of going to Africa, representing her grandparents and parents in a familiar place, and understanding the oneness with other people at a deeper level. As a result of the trip, she has been inspired to do her own projects. The group attended a Catholic Mass and when passing the peace, she says, “I could see the oneness and energy moving in the church.” Although there was a lot of poverty, the people seemed happy.

Both women talked about the blessings of being in Mali and doing something for another community. They came back as different people and have a desire to return to do more.

Wells, Books, and Computers

Charline reports they are currently in negotiations with a chapter of Engineers Without Borders to finance another clean water system in a rural area of Mali. Their goal of \$20,000, in addition to financing another well, will furnish the library with French books and five computers for the school in Bamako, Mali. They are also collecting general education books in French for Kenseff, Haiti, and Bamako, Mali.

By asking each congregant to set the intention to give at least \$200 as a charitable gift over and above their tithe, money has “flowed into the program seemingly with ease.” As a result of the



Children of Mali attend school with some of the supplies Unity Center of Miami provided.

Global Prosperity Projects, the congregants in this pastoral-size ministry now serve beyond the walls of the church and have a bigger view of the world. They will continue their annual Millionaire Series each year and introduce the Global Prosperity Series for the year. Charline says, “As their world got bigger the challenges in the church got smaller. We came to a greater understanding of the scripture, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ The inner joy of a prosperity consciousness is discovering that giving really is prosperity’s first law.”

Also see Charline’s article about the Parliament of the World’s Religions on page 11.



Small Graces Continue to *Blossom...*



by Diane Scribner Clevenger
revdianesc@aol.com

Our film team for *A Gift For The Village* left Roanoke, Virginia, last summer for Jomsom, Nepal, a tiny village high in the Himalayas. Filmmaker Tom Landon, artist Jane Vance, videographer Jenna Swann, outdoor expert Jason Swann, photographer Sherrie Austin, teacher Reba Hoffman and I went with clear intention.

With the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in hand, our vision was to deliver a 7' x 5' legacy painting by Vance of the life of Amchi Tsampa Ngawang Lama—a revered Buddhist monk and healer—to the remote province of Mustang and document the celebration of the painting's arrival, an unprecedented gift in many ways.

Nepal was breath-giving for me. Small graces continue to blossom, humbling me with their monumental size in the mind of my heart and how that moves in our world. . . .

Bob, a Californian filmmaker dedicated to human rights, especially children's, brought me to Emma Taylor's Sunrise Children's Village, home for 70+ children who'd otherwise be street orphans where drugs, etc., abound. After school they excitedly ran into my arms, another person to love in a safe place to live. Through donations from people like you and me, they learn they're worthy of living mindfully. We snacked on trail bars I gleaned from friends, did homework,

laughed, danced clean in monsoon rain, and gave thanks for food to share. Ready for bed, we gathered for meditation. I asked if they knew sign language and heard a hopeful, "Not yet!" I signed "I," they signed "I." "L," "L." "U," "U," then, giggling, they realized it meant "I love you." I cried joyfully as a teenage girl led prayers, even the three-year-old was in lotus position. Kissing goodnight room-to-room, one tiny girl looked deeply into my eyes and, imitating my crying, smiled broadly and signed "I love you." A year later, sculptor and Unity member, Dave Wertz (ametalsoul studio), is in Kathmandu serving a year with these beloveds.

I wear sandalwood Japa Mala prayer beads rather than a watch now. The strand reminds me of the many paths to God. Sunil and Sarita strung them in Kathmandu—soon they stayed with us in our home, lit





Legacy painting by Jane Vance of the life of Amchi Tsampa Ngawang Lama, a revered Buddhist monk and healer.

candles with our community in Roanoke, and served the homeless here by our side. So 'far' has come so near—in Namaste.

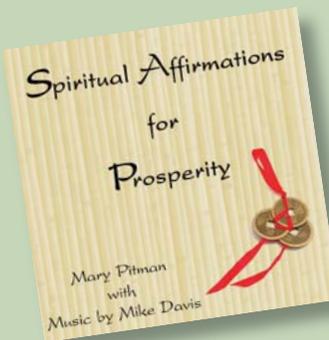
Unity raised \$2,500 + toward \$50,000 to produce this film. For more info and blog, go to www.agiftforthevillage.com.

Diane Scribner Clevenger is minister at Unity of Roanoke Valley, Roanoke, Virginia.



Nominations or self-nominations for election to either the **Association Board of Trustees** or **Leadership Recruitment & Development Team (LRDT)** may be sent to the team chair Michael Petty, mkpetty@comcast.net. Please include a resume (if available) and a paragraph stating what gifts you feel the nominee would bring to the board or LRDT. See www.unity.org for qualifications and additional information.

Affirming God's Word



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One European View of Unity



by Verena Pickart Demont,
pickart-demont@bluewin.ch

Q: What is your ministry like in Switzerland? Do you have a weekly service or classes?

A: Since Unity is not operated as a church in Germany and Switzerland, I facilitate workshops/seminars, give lectures, and write articles for the German *Unity Magazine* "JA."

I was ordained in 1996 and am a part-time teacher in adult education classes at different institutions. I am engaged in "training trainers" in a Swiss-wide institution (Migros Klubschule) where I teach the different facets of relaxation (theory and practice) and meditation to the public.

I also wrote two spiritual books: *Die Antwort liegt IN dir* (*The Answer Lies Within You*) for adults; and *Es gibt immer eine Lösung* (*There Is Always a Solution*) for children.

I do counselling, facilitate weddings/funerals/christenings, pray with people on the telephone, and am engaged in the German Unity correspondence course.

Q: Where/how/whom do you serve?

A: I serve in different places in Germany and Switzerland. In Germany, at the Unity Retreat Center "Haus Lichtquell" in the Black Forest, I have been teaching a weeklong seminar around Unity's World Day of Prayer for 12 years now. I also do a weeklong Christmas seminar with my husband Louis Demont.

In Switzerland, I now teach mostly in the Zurich area. Earlier, I was also in "Unity Lichtzentrum" in Bern.

I serve everybody who comes! To the activities that are announced under the



Verena Pickart Demont has written two spiritual books, one for adults and one for children.



Group of Unity folks in Switzerland.

name of Unity, more spiritually-interested people come. The programs “training trainers” are not designed to be spiritual, so the focus is not on spiritual issues. However, how can you teach meditation without being spiritual? So part of my ministry is, to quote Emerson, “What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say.”

Q: Who else works with you?

A: I am working on my own. Our monthly Unity study group consists of 7 women. We have a prayer circle at the beginning, then we work on a chapter of a book. Right now it's *Love Without Conditions* from Paul Ferrini. We close with a meditation.

Q: What are your greatest blessings and challenges?

A: Both challenge and blessing: to stay always focused on God's presence. Challenges: Since Unity is not a church here, some people are suspicious that it is a cult. Much of the literature is in English. The name “Unity” for non-English-speaking people is “too foreign.” The title “minister” is even more difficult. We have the word “minister” in the German language too—however only for government employees. Blessings: To be together with other “Truth-seekers” on the path where we grow together in love.

Verena is a Unity minister serving in Oetwil, Switzerland.

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus

Trip to the Holy Land!



Howard Caesar

A pilgrimage with
**Howard Caesar and
Mary Manin Morrissey**
Feb. 11 - 24, 2009



Mary Manin
Morrissey

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or log on to www.unityhouston.org/unity-events/holylandtrip/

Space is limited. Don't delay!



Radio Messages and the Unity Church Nigeria

by Amos Kalu, revdran_kalu@yahoo.com

Unity first came to Africa in the 1920s, via the new medium of radio which included broadcasts by Charles Fillmore. In 1926 the *Kansas City Journal* reported that WOQ, Unity's radio voice in its early days, was being heard in Nigeria. Unity's growth in Africa was a home-grown phenomenon, a result of the commitment and enthusiasm of Truth seekers there. The tradition of informed sharing in Nigerian culture helped spread the word, not only through organized ministries but through spontaneous communication of Unity message through radio, tapes, and word-of-mouth.



Above: Amos Kalu standing in front of Unity Church Nigeria. Right: Unity's Radio tower circa 1920's

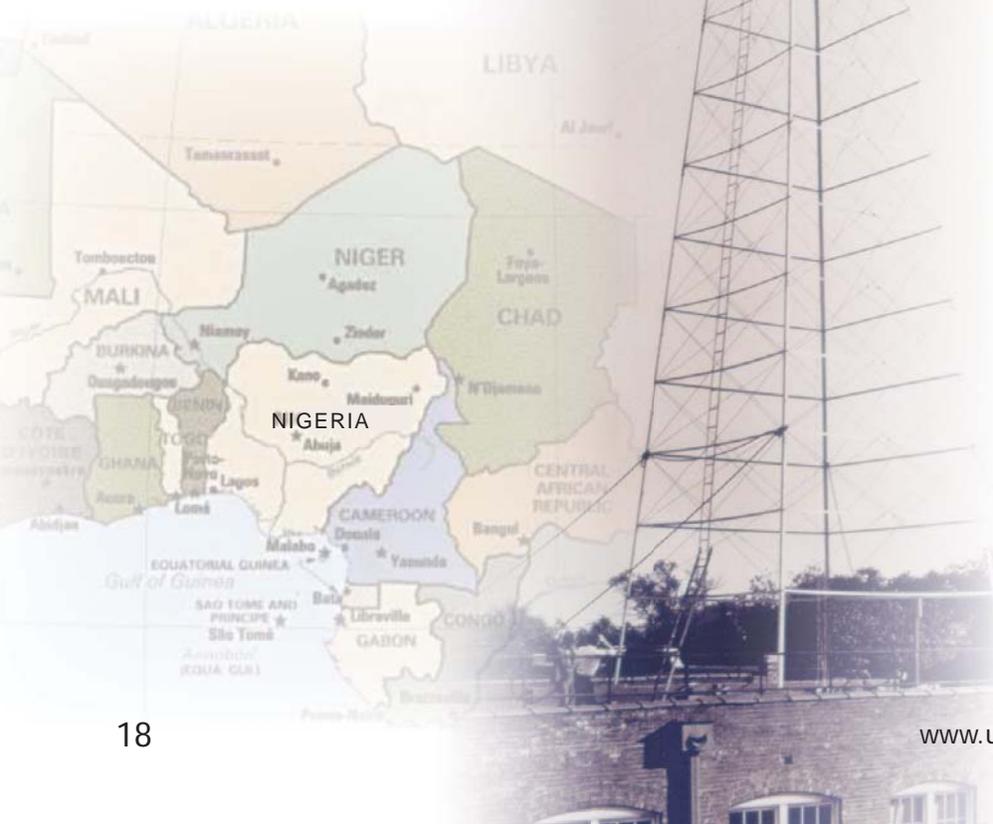
Miracles and Radio

In the 1920's Peter Nwankwo of Akanu Ohafia was known as Rock of Ages (Nna Rock) for practicing Unity principles. He did many wonderful things using these principles—healed the sick and rode his motorcycle on top of Calabar River to enter a ship he halted through the power of Unity prayer.

Whatever was the source of these miracles, radio message, *Daily Word*, or other Unity literature, I believe the Unity message has the power to perform miracles and heal wounded hearts through God, the source of all things.

Minister Awa Njoku gathered and healed people practicing Unity principles. He and Amos I. Okoli resigned from their teaching professions when they received books and pamphlets from Unity ("America Wonder," it was called in those days because of wonderful manifestations that resulted from practical applications of Unity principles).

Because of Awa Njoku's enthusiasm in Unity work, many people followed him, including: Amos I. Okoli, Eme Onwuka, J.



U. Eke, Okpa Agwu, Samuel Uba Oti, J. B. Khalu, O. E. Udony, E. O. Ebuta, Omeaku Okwun and Amos N. Ogwo who founded the Unity Centre of Practical Christianity Aba. Many others followed. Hence, Nna Njoku, as he was known, became the founder of Unity Movement Nigeria.

Churches Spring Up

Amos Kalu, now the Grand Patron of Unity Church Nigeria, changed the name from Movement to Church in 1995 when he was the president of Unity Church because of many political Unity movements. Radio has been a strong tool in spreading the message worldwide. He used radio messages which he tagged the Unity Church Hour. This was the first Unity Church radio broadcast in Nigeria through a John Templeton (of the blessed memory) radio grant awarded in 1999 through the Association of Unity Churches International.

Through this period of Unity Church Hour radio broadcasting messages, many people joined Unity Church Nigeria. Even before then, so many things happened within our church: including

establishment of Unity School of Religious Studies in Nigeria on November 11, 1987, now renamed National School. Also, the establishment of Silent Unity in Nigeria on August 27, 1997. Many Unity churches have been springing up, all through radio media and other sources. We thank God for our Association of Unity Churches International.

Unity Church Nigeria's past and present presidents are as follows:

- Awa Njoku 1928 – 1970
- Samuel Uba Oti 1970 – 1974
- Jonah Ukaegbu Eke 1974 – 1989
- Anya Kalu Udochu 1989 – 1995
- Amos Ndukwe Kalu 1995 – 2001
- Okon Ebong 2001 – 2006
- Udo Igwe 2006 – date

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Unity Dominican Republic, Santurce, Dominican Republic

Building Bridges

by Bernadette Swanson, Bernadette@unity.org

When minister Lisa Davis adopted her first daughter from Russia, she wanted a way to stay involved in the Association's work without having to attend the January meetings. The next week, the opportunity for Lisa's former church, Unity of Dayton, Ohio, to become a sister church to Helen Wilcox-Evwaraye's church in Nigeria showed up. The church gave some financial aid, but the most valuable resources shared were Unity books, which are in short supply in Nigeria.

Other Nigerian churches found out about this relationship and wanted help too. What started eight years ago in Nigeria with one church is now spread across Africa under the program named Building Bridges. Unity of Dayton and Lisa's current church, Unity Church of Portland, Oregon, each have a chapter.

Lisa and Helen (who is now in Lima, Ohio) are co-chairs of the ministry focusing on Africa. Their vision is to create sister churches between the US and Africa.

Unity Church of Portland sends prayer letters to Nigeria. Their children also write letters to the African churches. Building Bridges sends cassettes and CDs of classes. They receive back beautiful Nigerian clothing and letters from the grateful recipients.

Books = Progress

A ministerial student in Benin was able to complete only three courses in two years. Why? Lack of books. Building Bridges has

set up an account at Unity® to help pay for books. Currently the program sends books to 63 churches in Nigeria, plus 10 others on the continent. The books take anywhere from two weeks to three months to arrive.

Computers Ease Correspondence

Amos Kalu, minister, is the director of the national school in Nigeria in addition to heading up Nigeria's Silent Unity and *Daily Word*. Currently, he is the only minister in Nigeria who has been trained in the United States. Udo Igwe is the head of the Association of Unity Churches in Nigeria. Both attended the convention in Phoenix this year and were given laptops to assist them with their work back home.

Building Bridges helps with the airfare, visas, and other expenses. Years ago, Amos was only permitted a two-week visa. More recently, he is allowed to stay longer. The last time Building Bridges attempted to bring ministerial students over for study, they were denied. The events of 9/11 have affected all student travel.

One of the goals of Building Bridges is to equip the Nigerian ministerial students with laptops. This would allow them to more easily take their classes online. Right now, most go to Internet cafes and wait in line for computer time.

Rev. Lisa Davis is the minister at Unity Church of Portland, Oregon. She can be reached at LD4love@aol.com or at the church at 503.234.7441.



Lisa Davis, minister of Unity Church of Portland, Oregon

Unity Movement *Ghana*

by Harry Kudiabor, hkudiabor@gmail.com

Unity came to Ghana in the 1950s. Until 1985, the name of the movement was Unity Study Group, led by Esther Ocloo. In those days the group didn't have a minister. In 1985, Beau Sackey, a Unity student, was invited by Unity Village to understudy the principles of Unity teachings. He also studied the operation of a Unity church at the Unity Centre of South London, under the leadership of Harry Kudiabor, Unity minister.

Foster McClellan, director of the former Overseas Department at Unity School, ordained Beau Sackey at the Unity Centre of South London in 1985. After ordination, Beau Sackey returned to Ghana. He joined with Esther Ocloo at the Unity group for a short period, after which he and other members of the group joined together to found the Unity Church of Accra in the year 1985.

Registration of Unity Movement Ghana

In the year 1999, Harry Kudiabor, a retired Unity minister and founder of the Unity Centre of South London, returned to Ghana, his birthplace. Harry met with both leaders of the group and the church to form the Unity Movement Ghana. The movement was registered the same year, 1999.

Transfer of Silent Unity and *Daily Word*

It was not very long before the printing of the *Daily Word* and the operation of the Silent Unity prayer ministry was transferred to Unity Movement Ghana.

In 2001, Unity School transferred its responsibilities for the overseas ministries, centres and groups to the Association of Unity Churches International. A National School was then initiated in Ghana as well as an Association of Unity Leaders (AUL). By the way, before the advent of the Unity National School, Unity School was responsible for training licensed Unity teachers. As a result, five licensed Unity teachers completed their training under the leadership of Harry Kudiabor. These licensed Unity teachers have become the backbone of the National School, directed by Kwesi Erskine-Graham. The majority of these licensed Unity teachers are the members of the board of the Unity Movement Ghana.

Unity Board Meeting

The board meetings of the Unity Movement Ghana are held four times a year. The last general meeting took place in June 2008.



Should We Pursue Those

Thanks for your responses! We had so many submitted, below are excerpts. The entire article for each submission may be found on our website www.unity.org under Publications.

I have tried contacting those who have left the church and have found it to be difficult and frustrating. When people just leave without notice, in my experience, they are generally not forthcoming about their reasons for leaving. If I was able to speak with them, I did not have a good conversion rate for getting them back to church. I was often met with excuses and defensiveness. I don't recommend it.

—Sandra Weisner, minister
sweisner@columbus.rr.com

One of the greatest challenges I have experienced in ministry is losing congregation members.... If a long-time congregant is suddenly absent, it is wise to check in on him or her to see if everything is okay, to see if there is any way you can be there for them; any way the church can help... [but] chasing after runaway congregation members is about as wise as chasing a runaway lover. If he or she wanted to be with you, he or she would. Rejection is God's protection. To try to hang on to everyone, adapting and people-pleasing, is to adulterate your own church's mission, vision, values and core beliefs; to water them down. It is counter-productive to the health, growth, and well-being of your church.

—Alicia Leslie, minister
revali@sbcglobal.net

I do feel as though some outreach needs to be done. I don't push it though. I have had a few people not write or call back and I've just let them be.

—Ed Kosak, minister
minister@unitychs.org

If a person leaves our church due to stress or disagreement, we are not doing our job if we do not continue to love and support them. Of course there are other reasons people leave, like they are drawn to another church because the other church better meets their needs, or they are attracted to another path, but if they leave because of conflict, we owe it to them to love them and support them in recovering from their disappointment, even if they do not return. And to do this requires pursuing them. Jesus said if you have 100 sheep and one goes astray then go after the one. That is pursuit.

—Joseph Byrne, minister
josephbyrne42@yahoo.com

People leave churches for many reasons, and the decision to pursue them or not should be based on spiritual discernment and prayer.... It is important to keep in mind that churches are organic and dynamic and that building relationships is important. While we cannot be all things to all people, we must be alert to whether we are meeting our congregants' individual spiritual needs.

—Coco Ramos, minister
iamcoco@cfl.rr.com

Who Leave the Church?

My strong opinion is that ministers, board, congregants should not necessarily chase those people who left the church.

—**Harry Kudiabor, minister**
hkudiabor@gmail.com

If we are to grow as an organization, we must become willing to see the good in attrition and act accordingly.... People move on ... this is a fact of life.... We are an organization of acceptance where we do not turn away people for any reason including their wanting to leave.... It is ours to hold the high watch and honor the decisions of others.

—**James C. Parker, minister**
Communicate2000@earthlink.net

All thru my various job positions (sales person, executive secretary, program manager, social worker), I was trained by business experts to *recognize my customers & to meet their needs as best I could*. Although churches are not classified as businesses, we're still in the business of meeting the needs of *our customers*.... If we cannot meet their needs for spiritual growth, new ideas, socializing, emotional &/or prayer support, shared intimacy & group fellowship, safety in the church, & opportunities for service to others, we might as well close our doors now.

—**Shirley L. Geer, spiritual leader**
shirleygeer@hotmail.com

I start from the vantage point of being 100% responsible for the results I create. When I notice that someone leaves my congregation, I see it as my obligation and spiritual opportunity to seek to understand why. That does not mean that I am able to resolve it, but at the very least I seek to understand.

—**John Butler, licensed teacher**
peacemakerheart@gmail.com

I know a man who had attended a Unity church for over ten years. One day, he was rushed to the hospital and in long-term care for over ten months. He was very disappointed that he wasn't missed. He felt hurt that no one reached out to him in all that time. One could say that he could have called the church himself. He was elderly with vision and hearing impairment, and perhaps had no easy access to a phone. He had no family still living to intercede. A story like this indicates that there is a need to maintain community bonds and support in the infrastructure of a Unity church.

—**Diane Stark, minister**
childoasis@hotmail.com

....It's a good thing that people leave. They need to leave.... for themselves and often for the church. If the church focuses its energies upon building a more loving and inspiring ministry, some of them will be back. The others are blessed to move on.

—**John Considine, minister**
RevJohnConsidine@aol.com

Going Deeper with Deepak

Unity teams with Chopra to explore Jesus' essential teachings

Move over, Oprah and Eckhart: Here come Deepak and Wendy!

Beginning Oct. 15, Unity.FM (www.unity.fm) will present a special six-part Webcast featuring Unity minister Wendy Craig-Purcell interviewing spiritual leader and author Deepak Chopra on "Jesus and the Awakening to God-Consciousness."

The interviews, filmed before live audiences at Craig-Purcell's Unity Center in San Diego, July 29 and 30, are based on Chopra's book *The Third Jesus: The Christ We Cannot Ignore*; however, the interviews delve more deeply into contemporary spiritual issues and also include some discussion about Unity and its teachings.

At one point, Chopra refers to Unity co-founder Charles Fillmore as "a visionary." He also says "more people should get involved with Unity" and praises it as one of the most progressive spiritual movements on the planet.

The interviews were patterned after Oprah Winfrey's Web series with author Eckhart Tolle last spring. "It was an honor and a joy to interview Deepak, and I think the quality of the content is very high," said Craig-Purcell. She said the Web series "offers Unity the chance to be on the leading edge of a new wave of spiritual discussion."

The topics for the six half-hour segments are: 1) **Oct. 15:** Who Is Jesus and Why Does

It Matter?; 2) **Oct. 22:** Opening to the Path; 3) **Oct. 29:** A New Way of Being; 4) **Nov. 5:** When the Rubber Hits the Road; 5) **Nov. 12:** What to Expect When You're Expecting Enlightenment; and 6) **Nov. 19:** Jesus Without Dogma. Each segment will be offered for one full week before it is replaced by the next one.

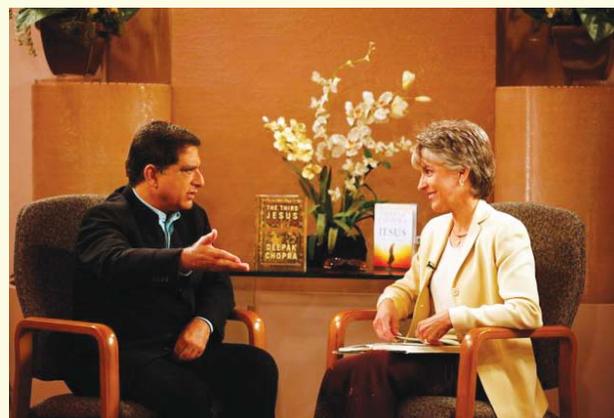
In *The Third Jesus*, Chopra writes: "The crisis in Christianity is a challenge to action. Twenty-five years ago, few observers predicted that reactionary religious forces could become as vociferous and powerful as they are today. Social divisions are more bitter than ever. Actually applying Jesus's message couldn't come at a more important time."

In the Webcast, he states, "Religion has become buying someone else's religious experience instead of having your own." He said one should rely not on belief in God as much as "the experience of God."

Unity will release the interviews, along with an audience Q&A filmed during the taping, in DVD and CD form after the Web series. Chopra has also approached PBS about running all six interviews as mini-series during an upcoming pledge drive.

Chopra's next book, *Jesus: A Story of Enlightenment*, will be published in November. He will give a talk and conduct a book-signing at Unity Village on Nov. 17.

Editor's note: Wendy Craig-Purcell also offers materials to ministries for studying *The Third Jesus*.



Unity minister Wendy Craig-Purcell interviews Deepak Chopra on his book, *The Third Jesus* for an upcoming pre-recorded six-part Webcast on Unity.FM (www.unity.fm).

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.

High-Tech and High-Touch

Sure your ministry inspires folks who attend church! Here's how to connect with people outside your walls.

by Russell Duckworth

At Unity Church of Dallas, our monthly newcomers' class is an opportunity for asking questions about the Unity movement and our church community. It had been awhile since I sat in for one of these classes, and I was pleasantly surprised to find the four- or five-person group I expected ballooned to more than 20 people in July.

Virtual Experience

As the discussion continued, I was again amazed to learn that 35 percent of that group had decided to attend services based on their virtual (online) experience with our church. Providing online access to our ministers' audio library of talks and sermons created enough interest to call potential congregants to the action of attending services.

But there's a more proactive approach to building community. Electronic communications can entice and invite individual members and guests to attend other events and activities. I know. You've placed notices in the weekly service bulletin, announced the event a kazillion times from the platform, stuck posters on every door, and offered discounted prices for early registration. And then ... not such a good turnout, eh? Of course the inevitable

comment from congregants the following Sunday: "I wish I'd know about that event! I would have been there, for sure."

Personal and Proactive

Of course, it's become very common to send email invitations, whether using a desktop email program or an online tool like evite. But what about a personal email invitation? Consider the effectiveness of receiving an email that says "Hey Russell, just wanted to remind you about the special concert we're having this Friday at 7 p.m. at Unity Church of Dallas." It's even more effective if it's signed by and has the reply-to address of your music minister or senior minister. We used this method to market a recent Friday event at Unity Church of Dallas and increased attendance by eight times the annual average attendance for that venue. I know!

Now what? Take the next steps! Get your service audio on your website. Then look into your church's database system to see if it is email-enabled, or look at the documentation with Microsoft Outlook about creating a mail merge. Be creative, and watch your community grow.

Russell Duckworth serves as IT and project manager at Unity Church of Dallas. He is happy to answer your virtual ministry questions at Russell@russellduckworth.com.



What's Happening in Worldwide Support?

An Update from Our Association of Unity Churches International



by Susan Beck, susan@unity.org

A lot is happening in our Association of Unity Churches International in the area of worldwide support. In fact, it's a time characterized by high energy and dedication, not only by our staff, but also by our ministry team volunteers and especially by our worldwide partners. Here's an update.

Worldwide Support Leadership

First, we are pleased to share the news that Xiomara Malagon was promoted to the position of Director of Worldwide Support. Xiomara, an ordained Unity minister, was previously our Worldwide Support Coordinator. She has been doing a brilliant job of interfacing with leaders in our Associations of Unity Leaders within the countries that are home to Unity ministries, as well as the National Schools and the International Ministerial Program candidates, and she richly deserves this promotion.

We would also like to acknowledge the accomplishments of our former director, Carmen-Venus Baerga, over the last several years. Her work has supported Unity leaders in establishing the structures and capabilities that are currently in place within the worldwide Unity movement. We thank her for coordinating the Spiritual Education and Enrichment session that,

with the support of the National School from Colombia, was held in Mexico City in July 2008, and the Skills Demonstration Seminars held at the National Schools in the Dominican Republic and Colombia, South America, this year. We wish you all the best, Carmen-Venus!

Accomplishments

The many accomplishments within our worldwide Unity community are a tribute to the great work everyone throughout the movement has been doing. Here are some highlights:

January 2008—three ministerial candidates ordained, and eight were licensed as Unity ministers. Five new candidates admitted into the International Ministerial Program.

June 2008—eight applications for ordination and three for licensing as Unity ministers sent to qualified candidates. Candidates now in the International Ministerial Program from Colombia, Benin, Dominican Republic, England, Germany, Guyana, Jamaica, and Nigeria.

Since April 2008—administration of the International Ministerial Program for Spanish-speaking candidates was transferred to Escuela de Cristianismo Practico, the National School in Puerto Rico.

July 2008—a new ministry was approved in Victoria, Australia.

September 2008—Xiomara accompanied our board during their successful meeting in the Dominican Republic.

Worldwide Unity Movement Ministry Team

Another initiative which has proven highly successful this year is our new Worldwide Support Ministry Team. This team of volunteer ministers, licensed teachers and lay people was established in January 2008 to support ministries worldwide. Led by Mindy Lawrence and Patricia Brown, it has already blossomed with the addition of five sub-teams. Both leaders have extensive experience in the worldwide ministry and support arenas.

Sub-teams and leaders are:

- Spanish—Luzette Rivera and Roberto Sanchez
- Africa—Lisa Davis and Helen Wilcox-Evwaraye
- English (outside USA)—Kristin Powell
- German—Lawrence Palmer
- French—Yves Lafontant

Also, Reverend Suely Douglass has let us know about her desire to start a Portuguese sub-team. There are many dedicated volunteers working on these sub-teams now, and they are always happy to accept additional volunteers. Please contact Joann Landreth at our home office if you would like to join one of these sub-teams.

The Worldwide Support sub-teams have done great work with leaders in the countries they are supporting and have surveyed, evaluated, and prioritized the needs that they identified. They developed goals to make the greatest impact on ministry support and presented them to our home office for incorporation into our strategic plan. The team has also created action steps to achieve each goal and the budget that must be allocated to accomplish them.

Sister Ministries

This team has suggested that some of the support for worldwide ministries may be achieved by inviting our ministries to participate in a “sister ministry” program. Team members are reviewing and expanding a manual for sister ministries that was originally designed by a group working with Lisa Davis when she was minister at Unity of Dayton, Ohio (She is now at Unity Church of Portland, Oregon). Sister ministries may support each other in many ways, starting with prayer. This might even extend to visits to the sister ministries and many things in between. Once this sister ministry program is designed and approved by our Board of Trustees, we will get the word out so ministries may participate if they wish to partner with a sister ministry somewhere else in the world.

Overall, our Unity ministries, Associations of Unity Leaders and National Schools worldwide are very important to our Unity movement. We are joining efforts as we work to honor our vision: “Centered in God, we co-create a world that works for all.”

Worldwide Unity Movement

	Ministries	Leaders
Argentina ²	7	4
Australia ²	2	8
Austria	2	2
The Bahamas	1	2
Barbados	1	1
Benin	1	1
Bermuda	1	1
Canada ²	23	36
Colombia	4	6
Costa Rica	1	3
Cuba	3	3
Dominican Republic ²	5	10
Ecuador	1	1
England ²	11	26
Ethiopia	1	1
Germany ²	27	34
Ghana ²	6	11
Guyana ¹	10	25
Haiti	2	2
India	1	1
Jamaica ²	5	9
Mexico	10	15
Netherlands	1	1
New Zealand ²	4	2
Nigeria ²	62	121
Peru	2	3
Puerto Rico ³	11	31
Romania	1	1
St. Croix	2	1
South Africa	1	1
Spain ³	1	2
Sweden	1	1
Switzerland	12	12
Tanzania	1	1
Thailand	1	1
Trinidad and Tobago	6	11
Venezuela	1	1
Zimbabwe	1	1

¹ Association of Unity Leaders

² Association of Unity Leaders and National Schools

³ National Schools

Information is based on the records available at the Association Home Office.

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Purpose, Will You
Know Which **Path** will
Take You There?

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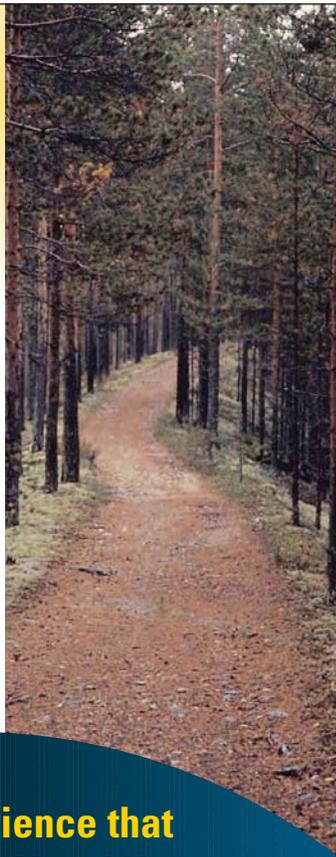
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A View of Unity in South Africa

by Thandi Nhlengetwa,
reverendthandi@hotmail.com

I founded Unity Center of Love and Light in March 2002. My intention was to do a radio ministry. I presented my first national radio talk on March 10, 2002. I got my first five students through that radio talk. One of them, Khosi Jiyane, is now doing a PhD in Parapsychology. She cites that radio talk as her inspiration. That radio talk also won me the Association Pathfinder Radio Award in 2002.

Our ministry began as a teaching ministry focusing mainly on classes and developing Unity leaders in South Africa. In 2006 our church, through the sponsorship of Unity Church of Fort Worth (Paul Roach, senior minister), sent our first student to Unity Village to study SEE towards licensed Unity teacher training. Now about five of our students have over 100 credits towards being licensed Unity teachers.

Expanding With Compassion

In response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa, our church became involved in the care of orphans, by giving food parcels to orphaned children and spiritual care for people living with HIV/AIDS. That was done through our Compassionate Hearts Ministry. We also had a one-baby-at-a-time outreach project. E.J. Niles and Rachel Ritz were two of our sponsors for this project.



Our church meets every Sunday 11 a.m. at Cida City Campus in Central Johannesburg. We are still a small church, 20-35 people, and we are a loving community.

My vision is to have a Unity radio presence in southern Africa, and I would very much like to work with www.unity.FM. We envision growing Unity to other major cities of South Africa like Durban and Cape Town.

Thandi is the founder of Unity Center of Love and Light (www.unitylovelight.com) in Johannesburg, South Africa, where the theme is: "Love is our message Light is our Path." She is also a cofounder of the New Thought Alliance of South Africa.

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– Rev. Ron Scott
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Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny

IYOU Vision Statement:
As a Spirit-led youth movement, we empower individuals around the world in their spiritual journey.



by Jane Simmons, jane@unity.org

From July 13 through 18, 125 stakeholders in International Youth of Unity (IYOU) gathered at Unity Village for an Appreciative Inquiry Summit. Many thanks to all who participated!

Facilitated by Barbara O’Hearne and Russell Heiland, the highly successful Appreciative Inquiry Summit drew from the rich experience of former and current YOUers, sponsors, parents, regional and international officers, regional consultants, ministers and Association home office staff.

The people who attended from the United States came from 24 states, representing every region from coast to coast. Our international Peace by Piece delegates traveled from Canada, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, and Spain. Our beloved friend, LeRoy White, blessed us with his music.

Our intention was to take the best of our past experiences in YOU and bring them into the present as we co-created a new vision for our International Youth of Unity. Looking for the good helped us to discover not only what we loved and valued about IYOU, but also brought forth an attitude of gratitude that rekindled friendships and connected the participants in a loving, harmonious way.

Moving into the design step, we were able, through the power of Spirit’s guidance,



to create a new vision and purpose for IYOU—one that will bless our regions, our movement, and our world.

Purpose Statement

We manifest our vision through these eight intentions:

- Worldwide service
- Clear communication using technology
- Practice and promotion of spiritual principles
- Leadership
- Events
- Prosperity
- Supportive Community/Connections (through unconditional love and acceptance)
- International Development

A team representing all stakeholder groups has been formed in order to explore and determine the structure to best support the vision and purpose. The work is in process and, at present, the structure for the event states:

- The International Youth of Unity event will be held annually at Unity Village, Missouri.



2008 International Youth of Unity at Unity Village, Missouri

- The planning team to create the event will consist of the International YOU Coordinator, eight regional representatives (six YOUers and two adults) and one international representative.
- The annual conference will become a program designed to learn leadership skills and deepen spiritual practice for youth and sponsors.

In addition, action teams have been created to focus on initiatives for each of the purpose intentions. These teams are exploring

such innovative ideas as creation of a “leadership ladder” method of training, grant research, high technology communication methods, online classes, worldwide service trips, and exchange students. As those plans develop, we will share more information with you. We are so grateful for all of the dedication, commitment, and support for IYOU that has been shared through the Appreciative Inquiry process and we are excited about moving forward with this vision to help create a world that works for all.



◀ Peace by Piece Program Delegates and Association staff



Appreciative ▶ Inquiry Summit planning team

Book Review

Organic Community

“Anyone with a leadership role in the church can find useful information in this book...”

Organic Community
Joseph R. Myers
Baker Books, 2007
171 pages

Reviewed by Rachel Simpson, Rachel@unity.org

“It is not the *product* of community that we are looking for. It is the *process* of belonging that we long for.”

If you stopped by my office and I only had time to share one quote with you, the above quote is what I would share. It makes me sizzle inside and it is, essentially, what this book is all about.

Organic Order is defined as community based on environment. The reader is encouraged to become an environmentalist and create spaces for their church community to thrive. While at first glance this may seem to be solely aimed at small groups or other particular ministries, Myers’ approach encourages finding the passions of the community and using those as a foundation for the whole church. His evidence supports that this approach not only keeps people in the church, it also creates places for them to become more involved and invested.

Drawing from his extensive small group experience, the author explores nine concepts illuminating how people relate and behave in the world and in church communities. Each chapter presents a new perspective to each concept, some of which are: participation, measurement, growth, and coordination. Myers invites the reader to consider what may be counter to common wisdom on each of these ideas as he supports his point of view in a friendly, easy-to-read manner. As the organic approach to each topic is introduced, so are examples of what it looks like in practice, as well as how it fits into the bigger picture of church community.

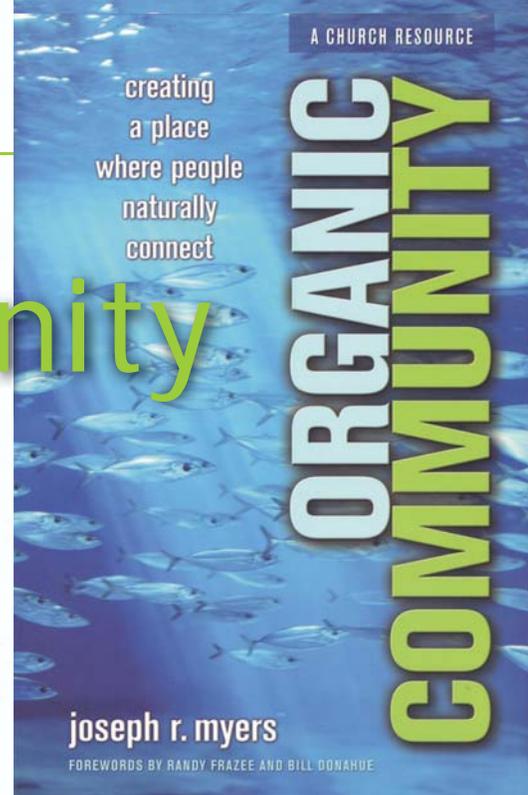
Progressing through the book, the reader will find useful tables that illustrate the different approaches to community. Each

chapter weaves the new idea into the ideas presented before while Myers invites the reader to implement them organically.

Anyone with a leadership role in the church can find useful information in this book from the spiritual leaders to board members to group leaders and staff. Be warned though, this is not a how-to book for those searching for step-by-step instructions. Rather, *Organic Community* is a guidebook, understanding that healthy, sustainable, organic communities are not a destination but a journey, one that will be different for each community.

Myers leaves us with this question: “What can the church do to assimilate itself into people’s lives?” instead of “How can we assimilate people into the church’s life?”

Rachel, a longtime Unity student, is the Young Adult Specialist at the Association home office as well as a current Unity Institute student. She has been championing Next Generation Unity (NGU) for over seven years and participated on the small group ministries creation team.



Financial Statement

FOR THE PERIOD OF 10/1/2007 TO 6/30/2008

	Actual (YTD)	Annual Budget
Love Offerings (Undesignated)	\$ 1,912,733	\$ 2,792,621
Love Offerings (Designated)	142,113	55,700
Grant Incomes	276,945	550,444
Program Incomes	<u>453,930</u>	<u>922,474</u>
Total Revenues	\$ 2,785,721	\$ 4,321,239
Less: Tithe Paid (on undesignated donations)	<u>(214,433)</u>	<u>(279,262)</u>
Program Expenses	(1,867,985)	(3,137,378)
Support Expenses	<u>(800,565)</u>	<u>(1,344,590)</u>
Total Expenditures	\$(2,668,550)	\$(4,481,968)
Increase from Operation	\$ (97,262)	\$ (439,991)
Increase in Net Assets	<u>(365,838)</u>	<u>380,335</u>
Capital Expenditure and Adjustment	371,526	317,532
Net Cash Flow	<u>5,688</u>	<u>697,867</u>

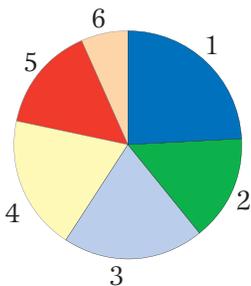
In order to fully implement the programs called for in the strategic plan, we must reach our budgeted funding. The current revenue shortfall is \$1,535,518.

DOES OUR ASSOCIATION TITHE?

10/1/2007 to 5/31/2008

Unity Institute	32,311.94
Silent Unity	17,654.40
Unity	12,259.00
Spiritual Life Center (Unity)	25,000.00
Subtotal Unity	\$87,224.24
Complaint-Free World	\$18,602.44
Unity work in South Africa	7,842.55
<i>The Secret</i>	6,342.55
International New Thought Alliance	17,288.00
Association for Global New Thought	22,024.49
Academy for Peace of Costa Rica	12,685.09
St. Luke's South Hospital	1,500.00
The I Am Foundation	25,370.17
Total	\$214,433.02

WHERE DOES OUR MONEY GO?



- 1) Education, Leadership & Ministry Development
- 2) Minister & Ministry Services
- 3) Communications
- 4) Administration/Building
- 5) Executive Office
- 6) Tithe

Calendar of Events

2008

October 13-16

Southeastern Regional Conference, Stuart, FL; contact Charline Manuel, charmanuel@msn.com

October 13-16

South Central Regional Conference, Unity Village, MO; contact Wendy Burroughs, revwendy@liveyourgreatness.org

October 17-18

Thriving Ministry Model Workshop, Oakland, CA; contact Susan Brecker, 510.547.1979, ext. 311

October 20-24

Great Lakes Regional Conference, Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN; contact Pat Anderson Williams, yes_godis@hotmail.com

November 2-7

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

November 7-8

Thriving Ministry Model Workshop, Westlake Village, CA; contact Dr. James Lockard, 805.495.0105

November 14-15

Thriving Ministry Model Workshop, Falls Church, VA; contact Rev. Trish Hall, 703.560.2030

2009

January 9-10

Thriving Ministry Model Workshop, Murrieta, CA; contact Rev. Patricia Campbell, 951.304.0268

January 10-17

SEE Hawaiian Cruise; contact www.SEEOurWorld.org

January 19-29

SEE in the Field; contact Sandra Cousens Kale, therevkale@hotmail.com

January 26-29

Association Mid-Year Meetings, Unity Village, MO; contact Bets Kirby, bets@unity.org

January 30-31

Thriving Ministry Model Workshop, Unity Village, MO; contact Cathy Christy, cathy@unity.org

June 8-12

Unity People's Convention, Overland Park, KS; contact Kim Shawd, kim@unity.org

Eastern

Unity Church by the Shore in Neptune, New Jersey has held a “Butterfly Release” as a fundraiser for the past two years. **Joanne M. Murphy**, leader, says, “Much to our surprise, the first year we had approximately 200 enthusiastic attendees who bought butterflies. The majority were non-Unity so we had a table of Unity literature, church service and class information. We had two of our church singers/musicians perform and before we went to the area in the park to release them, I gave a short talk explaining that the butterfly is a symbol of transformation and how our thoughts (spiritual law of attraction) create our life, etc. We then walked down to the lake area and had the mass release. It was truly a spiritual experience—beyond anything we could have imagined!”

According to an Native-American legend: If anyone desires a wish to come true, they must first capture a butterfly and whisper the wish to it. Since the butterfly can make no sound, it cannot reveal the wish to anyone but the Great Spirit who hears and sees all. In gratitude for giving the beautiful butterfly its freedom, the Great Spirit always grants the wish. So, according to the legend, by making a wish and giving the butterfly its freedom, the wish will be taken to the heavens and be granted.

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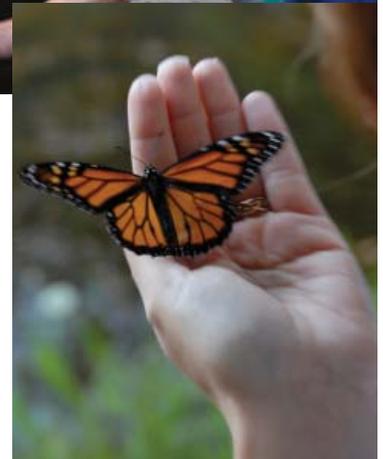
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Butterfly Release Day at Unity Church by the Shore in Neptune, New Jersey (photos by Matt Denton)



Donald Jennings, with his loving family, accepting the Light of God Expressing Award. Don was to receive this award at the 2009 Convention.

Northwest

The Northwest Region holds their annual conference at the Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in the Columbia River Gorge near Portland, Oregon. This year, attendees were there for Earth Day and worked on sacred service projects including help with completion of a labyrinth and pulling mustard garlic—an invasive non-native species. The setting is a scenic 100-acre forested sanctuary high above the river. Menucha is a Hebrew word meaning “ever-changing stillness.”

In Memoriam: **Donald Jennings**, minister from Poulsbo, Washington; **Robert Wasner**, minister from Folsom, California

Canada

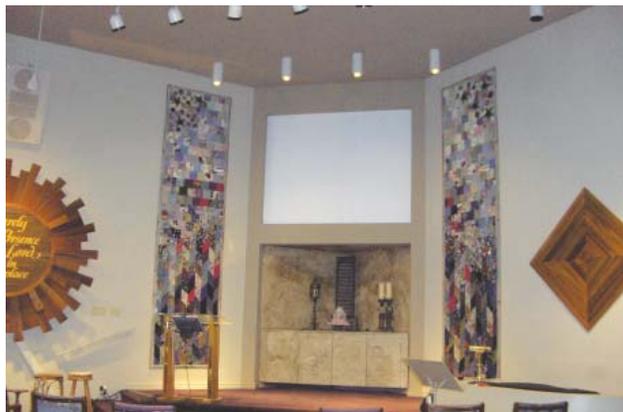
A unique feature at **Unity Kitchener** are two 15-foot quilts which frame the apse in our sanctuary. Designed by Leslie Buck, “The Tree of Life” quilts are a creation of the community—both in materials and in labor. The congregation



Putting on the finishing touches of one of the 15-foot quilts on display in the sanctuary of Unity in Kitchener

was invited to donate fabrics special to them—baby clothes to aprons to prom dresses—within specific color guidelines to complement our sanctuary. A passionate quilter, Leslie offered her services not only to design the quilt but also to teach others the art of quilting. She arranged the

fabrics by hue and intensity and sent packages home with volunteers. As the pieces grew in size, the sewing sessions took place in the lobby of the church. Leslie organized a day with our Uniteens to dye fabrics and create fabric flowers to embellish the quilt. The addition of pieces of jewelry donated by the congregation was the final touch, the “bling!” symbolic of a sparkling river flowing through the wall hangings. The gigantic quilts are mounted on copper piping, reflective of the church’s monthly water blessings.



The two 15-foot quilts adorn the sanctuary of Unity in Kitchener.

Southwest

Good news for **Christ Church Unity of El Cajon, California**, when retired, founding minister **Arthur Hammons** announced to the congregation that the church mortgage would be paid off thanks to the legacy of Elsie and Cleo Stater from their estate in the amount of \$361,000. The Mortgage Group, made up of members of the congregation who have been paying the monthly mortgage for the past 20 years, celebrated the news along with current minister, **Sharon Connors**.



One of the several beautiful stained-glass windows of Christ Church Unity in El Cajon, California

Unity Church of Sun City, located in **Sun City, Arizona**, and serving mainly seniors in Western Phoenix, is building community and spreading



Unity Church of Sun City’s team members of “Walk Across Arizona.”

the word about Unity. More than 90 members, some in walkers or wheelchairs, signed up to “Walk Across Arizona.” Led by ministers **Sharon Bush** and **James Yeaw**, the nine teams competed against each other and each intended to walk 430 miles, the distance across Arizona. They accumulated enough mileage to walk across America! Unity Church of Sun City fielded the second largest team in Arizona.

In Memoriam: **Arleen Aull**, minister from Encino, California

Great Lakes

In Memoriam: **Stanley Grubaugh**, minister from Jackson, Michigan

West Central

In Memoriam: **Nellie Fleming**, retired minister from Cameron Park, California

International

In Memoriam: **Ralph Seeling**, minister from London, England

A *Financier* of Prosperity

Editor's Note: In July, financier and philanthropist Sir John Templeton made his transition. Sir John was an ardent supporter of our Association of Unity Churches International. Over many years, Sir John has supported the Association faithfully with over \$5 million cumulatively, through his John Templeton Foundation. Our former CEO, Glenn Mosley, built a friendship with Sir John and serves on the board at the foundation. We were saddened to hear about the loss of this great man. Below, Unity minister Susan EngPoole of Louisville, Kentucky, whose church once received a gift from the Templeton Foundation, shares her tribute to Sir John.



Sir John Templeton

by Susan EngPoole, susane@unityoflouisville.org

For years on my refrigerator, I kept a picture of Sir John Templeton posing with me while in the Bahamas with the Association of Unity Churches International People's Convention. I realized that he is one of the most humble, generous and kind billionaires that anyone could meet. That picture always inspired me to remember the principles that Sir John stood for.

Unity will miss Sir John Templeton who recently made his transition at the age of 95, but his legacy lives on. He was one of the great investors of the 20th century and his name is at least equally known for giving money away. Queen Elizabeth knighted him for his philanthropy.

Raised as a devout Presbyterian, his parents gave him a subscription to the only children's publication offered at the time, Unity's *Wee Wisdom* magazine. By age 11, he was already reading *Weekly Unity* and *Daily Word*. As an adult, he subscribed to Unity's *Good Business* magazine.

"If we become increasingly humble about how little we know, we may be more eager to search."

—Sir John Templeton

Teaching Calculus & Unity

Sir John was a sophomore or junior in high school when he decided he wanted to go to Yale, which required four years of high school math. He asked his principal if it would be possible to get a teacher for Calculus and Trigonometry. His principal told him that he (Sir John) could teach it, and the principal would create the tests and grade them. And that is what happened. Including Sir John, there were eight boys in the math class in their senior year, all of whom passed and all of whom were accepted into a university.

Sir John's father was a Tennessee farmer and just getting by, so John worked on neighboring farms to earn money to go to college, after he had already worked on his father's farm during the day. He did receive a small academic scholarship, but he mostly worked and paid his own way through Yale as he went along.

When the Association of Unity Churches International was established in 1966, there were only 189 Unity ministries, and Sir John would seek out Unity churches wherever he traveled. He would listen to Unity's Charles Neal on the radio and he'd quote prolifically from the books of Charles Fillmore. We can see how the teachings of Unity's co-founder Charles Fillmore have influenced Sir John's life. Charles Fillmore's approach to his religious faith was to use science as a tool to prove truth.

Sir John opened every business meeting with a prayer. He espoused that heaven and hell were not literal places; he believed in the divinity in humanity and he did not believe in the literal translation of the Bible. He insisted on high ethical standards in business, believing that a lack of them would lead to failure.

Spiritual Progress

He believed that spiritual progress is the most urgent issue facing humanity. He set "The Templeton Prize for Progress towards Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities," the world's richest individual prize to be higher than the Nobel Prize. The purpose was to redress the fact that no Nobel Prize was given for religion—for ideas that include philosophy and exemplary conduct relating to love, gratitude, forgiveness and creativity. Mother Teresa of Calcutta was the first recipient, receiving it six years before she won the Nobel Prize.

Ten years ago, Sir John envisioned the Templeton Foundation's board meeting to be held in Beijing, China, although that culture would not accept a philosophy to reconcile science and religion. Sir John's philosophies on life included keeping an open mind, and everything changes. Incredibly, the board meeting will be held

in Beijing in October 2008 where Glenn Mosley will continue his involvement, now under the direction of Sir John's son, Jack.

Due to a lack of interest in consumerism, Sir John lived relatively frugally. His home lacked opulence, he drove an ordinary car, flew economy class, and didn't find time for pleasure. He felt it was "far more important to be useful." He worked 70+ hours a week in most of his adult life. For the past four or five years, he worked six days a week, six hours per day on Foundation business. He said that tithing was "the single best investment" anyone could make. He gave away \$10 for every dollar he spent.

Reflection of Understanding

I am proud of Sir John's association with Unity. His life is a reflection of his understanding that God is unlimited Source responding to our desires to create our reality. He proved Unity's truth principles. He was named by *Time* magazine in 2007 as one of the 100 Most Influential People under the category of "Power Givers" for his "pursuit of spiritual understanding." We are blessed with Sir John Templeton's legacy of sharing and understanding God's unlimited supply of good.



Susan EngPoole

Unity of Lake Orion “Looks for the Good”

by Gregory Guice, unitylakeorion@aol.com

A few Sundays ago we announced to the church body that we were planning to join the Association of Unity Churches International in their “Look for the Good” campaign. The church members immediately began to realize the value that this program would bring to our church community. One person stood up and said, “Let’s do it.” He pointed out how important it is for us to demonstrate this idea of “Looking for the Good.” Just as he was speaking, another member shared this wonderful affirmation, “God Is Good, All the Time!”

The Launch

From that moment on, our campaign was launched—not just for our church—for we knew that this campaign had the ability to bring our entire neighboring community into a collective synergy of “Looking for the Good.” We saw it as a positive response to all the negative thoughts and actions that are generated in our community and across our country—as an opportunity to express God as the divine goodness within us all.

The next thing we knew, our spiritual community began to organize around the question, “How do we begin?” A committee was established and we decided to focus our attention on making this campaign a collective event that would involve several aspects of our community: schools, businesses, families, civic organizations, and other faith bodies.

Our first step was to purchase wristbands that proclaim “LOOK FOR THE GOOD—IT’S ALL GOOD.” These simple bracelets were used not only as an initial fundraiser, but by wearing them every day, they remind us that, indeed, “It’s All Good.” We also erected a large banner in front of our building that invites the public to join us in “Looking for the Good.”

Gathering the Community

The following week we hosted a “Look for the Good” booth at a Community Expo that featured over one hundred local business and civic organizations. During the Expo we began sharing our campaign with as many people from our community as possible, talking about the value and importance of this campaign. We invited organizations and businesses to join our community effort. By the time the Expo drew to a close, we had over thirty organizations and businesses, as well as individuals from our community, say “Yes” to joining our “Look for the Good” campaign.



Unity of Lake Orion’s “Look for the Good” Committee looks at ways to get its committee involved in this new project.



The new banner in front of Unity Church of Lake Orion invites the public to join in "Looking for the Good."



We took advantage of this energy and requested the opportunity to make a formal presentation before the local township board of trustees. We expressed how this focuses on the positive attributes of our community, our leaders, our children, our families, and ourselves. We shared with them that this campaign is non-denominational and goes beyond politics. It is a guideline for living our everyday lives. It means not dwelling on what is wrong, but what is right. We took to saying that we change the world together if we begin to see the good in those around us and work towards *being* the good.

Since that time, our "Look for the Good" campaign has been endorsed by several organizations. We have established a collective committee that is composed of members of our community, from all aspects of life. We have declared October 2nd as "Look for the Good Day." On this day we will highlight and honor those individuals and organizations that are reflecting and striving to do acts of good in our community. This day was chosen because it was also declared by the United Nations as the "International Day for Non-violence." On this day, we will present the winners of our "Look for the Good" essay contest, and host a community rally that will celebrate those organizations that are working at establishing the various points of good in their organizations and our community.

Several organizations are now joining with us in establishing additional plans for this campaign to benefit our community. Our local cable television network is working to create a program titled "The Good News Show," which will feature events and individuals that are striving to do good in our community. One church organization is now presenting the idea of sending letters to our troops stationed in Iraq. These letters will let our troops know that we're seeing the good in them and praying for them.

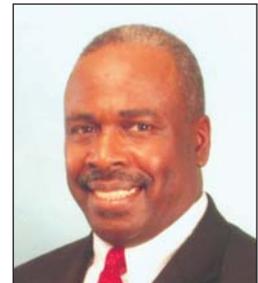
Being the Goodness

The exciting part to all of this is that our local Unity community and churches are working together in this campaign. Unity of Lake Orion, Unity of Rochester, Unity of Pontiac, Westside Unity Church of Detroit, and others are striving to make this effort a Unity movement. We see this as an ongoing campaign to help change the consciousness of our community.

Eckhart Tolle states in his book, *A New Earth*, "You do not become good by trying to be good, but by finding the goodness that is already within you, and allowing that goodness to emerge. But it can only emerge if something fundamental changes in your state of consciousness."

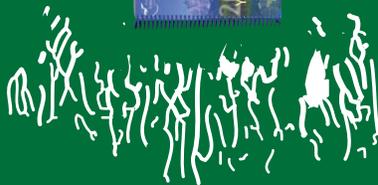
We hope that our effort will help to stimulate the goodness that is in you and your desire to join in Unity's effort to change the world by changing ourselves and "Look for the good!"

Gregory Guice is the minister at Unity Church of Lake Orion, Michigan.





The Association Yearbook will
be making its transition in 2009.



Our Association yearbook has served us well for many years. With better ways of conveying this information, the 2008 edition is the last one to be printed. Here's why:

- To give you the latest information. With the on-line directory, you'll have the most up-to-date information available all year long.
- To be better stewards of your tithes and gifts, we conserve money and time.
- To be better stewards of the earth by neither using more paper and fossil fuels, nor creating more waste.

Comments or questions?
Send them to lisa@unity.org.



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