



# Unity

February 2017—March -17  
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Unity Church in Albany • 21 King Avenue • Albany NY 12206 • 518-453-3603 [www.unityalbany.org](http://www.unityalbany.org)

## A Journey of Spiritual Discovery



**Welcome to the New Year!** You've participated in the burning bowl ceremony and placed last year's negativity in the fire. You've attended the white stone ceremony and have your new name that you're meditating about every day. What now? How do you proceed?

*Keep going! Keep moving! Don't stop what you have started!* Adjust what needs to be adjusted. Evolve your practice. Think of this as a Journey of Spiritual Discovery.

Actually, your life has been and will continue to be an ever-evolving journey of spiritual discovery. Each life endeavor is a stepping stone for you to create a life with greater meaning; a life that you are passionate about living. Howard Truman states, "Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive." Isn't this why we attend church? We're sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Many people affiliated with Unity love to quote Charles Fillmore's affirmation, "I fairly sizzle with zeal and enthusiasm and spring forth with a mighty faith to do the things that ought to be done by me". It's time that we stop just affirming this. We must, as the fifth principle of the five principles states, "live it." Allow yourself purge, purify, and go deeper in this year's journey so that you can find your passion and live it!

Don Miguel Ruiz's book, "The Four Agreements, A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom," gives you wonderful tools to keep moving. These four agreements are simple, yet may not be easy to integrate into your life initially. Delving into the Four Agreements: Be impeccable with your word; Don't take anything personally; Don't make assumptions; and Always do your best; is a great tool for

your spiritual journey. The simple concepts of the four agreements provide an inspirational code for life; that aides you to live a more authentic, free and joy-filled life.

Just as you are being invited to go on a spiritual journey, the ministry itself will be going on its own journey of discovery. Now that I've been here a full year, and have a good feel for how this ministry operates. I've been asked, "What is next for Unity Church in Albany? How are we going to expand? Do we want to do things differently? How do we want to show up and be seen in the Capital Region?" The answers to these questions are not for me, Rev. Crystal, to answer. They are for this community to answer and create. Before I was hired as your minister, Unity Church in Albany started a process stating what you wanted this community to be. We will look at that information and see what still rings true for us, what needs to be adjusted and what needs to be added.

How we will proceed is evolving now. It will take more than a year. Just like our personal journeys, the ministry is ever evolving. This is a great time to consciously co-create how this ministry will grow. I will leave you with these words from Don Miguel Ruiz, "God is life. God is life in action. The best way to say, "I love you, God," is to live your life doing your best. The best way to say, "Thank you, God," is by letting go of the past and living in the present moment, right here and now. Whatever life takes away from you, let it go. When you surrender and let go of the past, you allow yourself to be fully alive in the moment. Letting go of the past means you can enjoy the dream that is happening right now."

### Mission Statement

*The mission of Unity Church in Albany is to awaken to and embrace the Christ in all persons through prayer and service.*

# President's Corner

By Lois Crommelin

## Martha & Mary



I have found myself often caught up in the doing. The busy worker, Mom, Grandma, gardener, housekeeper. Active and Productive. I don't always understand the Reflective & Learn type. The ones that sit and meditate and listen to the Teacher. Perhaps this is also true in reverse.

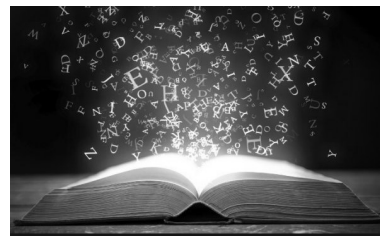
The Martha and Mary story clearly depicts to us thru the scriptures, that these sisters metaphysically represent the Yin and the Yang of the female personality. I think it's important that we marry these 2 types of personalities to become a whole Being, both spiritually and physically. Therefore, recognizing where your personality falls is important.

In Luke 10:38-41 Living Bible we read:  
*"Martha was the jittery type. And was worrying over the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, 'Sir, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits there while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me'. (vs 41) But the Lord said to her 'Martha, my dear friend, you are so upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it-- and I won't take it away from her!'"*

I know that sometimes I tend to be a Martha. It's so easy to get caught up in the business of this world. This is where Unity Church has helped me find my Truth and learn Meditation. And it's for

us to be concerned about our own walk while leaving situations for Him to control. There are many classes, Sunday messages, prayer project, meditation times, book club and workshops that are continuously being offered here. They will feed your Reflective & Learn side. There are many opportunities to volunteer to develop your busy productive side. All of this helps us focus on the Truth of who we really are. We are the Light of the world. We are Children of God. We are each an Expression of God. We are Love. We are Loved. We are Enough. We have Enough. We are Abundant. We are Prosperous. We are Joy filled. We are Blessed! We are Happy. We are Peace. Keep on affirming yourself with all the abundant Truths of Who you are! Walk in this.

I appreciate all who have helped me within



our Unity Church, over the past 11 years. I'm quite a different person from when I walked in these

doors, all confused, yet searching for a God that would resonate to me personally. It may sound redundant to say that I found home here since many have experienced the same. Here there are many opportunities to be various combinations of both Martha and Mary.

As we prepare for new Board Members to come on to serve, I ask that you hold this Ministry in prayer for PROSPERITY of ALL KINDS to bless us, including all who enter through our doors.

# How Sweet The Sound

By Rev. Roger Mock

## Shadow or Light



**A**s I am typing this on the morning of a Presidential Inauguration (by the time I finish it will have been a done deal), it feels as though I stand with

my feet on separate sides of a fault line that is beginning to widen. Time to make a choice. Now. Love or fear. Hope or despair. Darkness or light. Which do I affirm? Of course, I know which I would want to choose in each instance when it's stated that way. You do as well. The question is, what am I really choosing in this moment, and in this moment and in the next?

You may not have felt as uneasy as I did on that morning, but I think we all must see that our ship of state is now being steered into seriously uncharted territory. The canopy of trees above us is thickening and overgrown, darkening the path ahead and, um, what the devil is that rushing sound in the distance? Seriously, do you hear that? That's one direction my mind has been trying to pull me at times in these post-election days — into the murky shadows. And yet, and yet — another sound begins to overtake the rumbling and tumbling of my imagined cataract. It's the sound of voices raised in solidarity, a swelling chorus filled with hope and resolve, spirit and moxie. It's the roaring of a lion stirred from its long slumber. And that's where I am choosing to place my attention this morning.

It's more of a lioness, actually. Tonight, at

around midnight my daughter and my daughter-in-law will drive a couple of hours to board a bus to Washington D.C. to join the Women's March there with hundreds of thousands of other women and men. Their passion and willingness to be part of this defining moment gives me great hope and stirs my own resolve to find more ways to show up for equality, justice and inclusion in 2017 and beyond. So Emily and Allison — thank you for answering this call. Thank you each for being a light in this world, a “soul on deck,” and for standing up for what is good and right and just and loving. You give me hope and courage and you help to shift my attention from the shadows to an illuminated path.

**Stand Up and  
Show  
Your Soul!**

“One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires ... causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these — to be fierce and to show mercy toward others, both — are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity.”

*Clarissa Pinkola Estés*

And you know what? If the election had swung the other way, this wouldn't be happening. And it's what needed to happen. That lion that represents our active, concerned, engaged-with-reality, fierce-when-we-need-to-be self needs to be awake now. We were, as Ms. Estés wrote, made for these times.

## Events Calendar

### Looking for a Spiritual Community?

Join us at 1 of our 3 Sunday Services  
9:00 am | 11:00 am | 6:00 pm  
Summer (Memorial-Labor Day) ~  
10 am | 6 pm

### Ongoing

#### Prayer and Meditation

Wednesdays, 6:30 – 7:00 pm in the downstairs fellowship hall or in the sanctuary.

Sundays 10:15-10:45 am in the large upstairs classroom. Jerry Patel and friends offer Sunday morning meditations each week between morning services. The regular practice of meditation builds peace and calmness within and helps us strengthen our awareness of our connection with the Divine. Group meditation makes the process easier and helps us move more deeply into the meditation experience. **Please arrive before 10:15 am** as the doors will close to hold the silence for this sacred gathering.

#### Get Fit and Stay Centered

Mondays at 5:00 pm  
Kripalu Yoga  
Deborah Foss (944-9858 for info)



Mondays, 6:30-7:30 pm  
Creating Heaven on Earth  
Jakob Spearfisher

The group follow the chapters of the book “The Four Agreements” and offers a chance for each person to relate to his or her personal challenges with maintaining these four agreements in their life.

Sundays, Matinee at the Spectrum  
Unity Movie Group

The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month, join a group of congregants meeting at the Spectrum Theater to go to a 3:30 or 3:40 movie. There is a signup sheet available at the Bradford St. lobby.

### Ongoing (cont'd)

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the Month  
Unity Hiking Club

Join us for a fun hiking experience. Each hike will be different, and details will be provided prior to our climb. Even if you can make only one occasionally, we'd love to include you on the list. It's a wonderful way to commune with God in His church ~ the great outdoors! Contact Ann Marie Burke or Paul Frament for more information.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month  
Friendship Sunday

Bring a friend to 11 am service and perhaps a dish to share for after the service.

### Current Classes

Tuesdays, 10:00-11:30 am  
Tuesday Book Study Group  
The Fourth Gospel, Tales of a Jewish Mystic  
Join us as we delve into “*The Fourth Gospel, Tales of a Jewish Mystic*” by John Shelby Spong. Books available in the library. Please join us on Tuesdays! Contact Jane Bloom if you have questions at [janeb915@gmail.com](mailto:janeb915@gmail.com) or 802-430-4490.

### Upcoming Classes

Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 10 am–4 pm  
Forgiveness and Healing: A Course in Miracles Experiential Workshop  
John Kane

This workshop is focused on experiencing forgiveness and healing as described in A Course in Miracles. The Course teaches us that the body is innocent and its natural state is health. Forgiveness leads to recovery of that natural state.

Tuesdays, 10:00-11:30 am, Date TBD  
Tuesday Book Study Group  
Friends in High Places by Rev. Tom Shepherd  
This book is a compendium of those who have influenced the new thought movement, going back to the 1st century. Watch the bulletin board for the date. Let Jane or the office know if you need a book.



# Audio/Visual Equipment

By Terry Bailey



**O**ver the months, we've had numerous people provide input about our sound abilities. With the equipment we previously had, it was

difficult to address sound issues. I am really pleased to share with you that in December 2016 we were blessed with some new sound and video equipment. This new equipment allows us to provide an even better listening experience for you at our normal Sunday morning services as well as during our music ministry on Sunday evenings. We've also re-positioned the speakers to give you a more uniform listening experience.

As we continue to grow, we've occasionally been blessed with more people than our sanctuary can hold. This often occurs for our special services like Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve and Easter services. With our new equipment we are now able to live stream to the large flat screen TV in the Fellowship Hall. Now more people can enjoy the services without being cramped and possibly creating safety issues in the sanctuary. We can also live stream to YouTube for folks who can't attend these services. The new equipment will give us lots of flexibility as we continue to grow our congregation.

We have had some growing pains with this new equipment. We appreciate everyone's

patience as we learn and adjust to the new system. As always, we are grateful for any feedback concerning the A/V system. Please let us know if it is too loud or too soft. We will try to adjust accordingly. Feedback has been provided concerning the view from the camera used for streaming the services and we are looking to correct that. Note that, at the time of composing this article, we have made arrangements to meet with the sound system supplier and one of the top issues to be resolved is getting the wireless hearing assistance devices working properly.

And concerning safety, we ask that you refrain from walking behind the back pew on the side with the sound. It's very crowded with all the great equipment and we would appreciate it if you could use other aisles to move about the sanctuary.



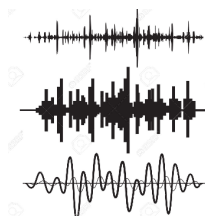
*Not too intimidating, right?*

The audio/visual team is always open to adding new members. A familiarity with PowerPoint and sound systems is helpful, but not a requirement. Contact Terry if you are interested.

A big shout out to the A/V team! They are:

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Cindy Moorcroft | Michelle Henry |
| Sam House       | Ted Kriss      |
| Paul Frament    | Mudhar Muhi    |
| Fred Elfenbein  | Cheri Warren   |

and your fearless leader,  
*Terry Bailey*



## People to Know

### Our Board of Trustees

Lois Crommelin, President  
 Orisa Skipper, Vice President  
 Ernie Klemm, Treasurer  
 Bonnie Kriss, Secretary  
 Deborah Foss, Trustee  
 Nancy McClearn, Trustee  
 Paul Frament, Alternate

### Our Staff

Rev. Crystal Muldrow, Senior Minister  
 Jane Bloom, Licensed Unity Teacher,  
 (LUT) and Director of Youth  
 and Family Ministry  
 Rev. Roger Mock, Music Director  
 Barbara Zeller, Office Administrator



*Did you know that you can attend  
 Board of Trustees meetings?  
 They are held on the 3rd Thursday of  
 the month at 6:00 pm in the library.*

Upcoming:  
 February 16  
 March 16



*Editor's Note: Feel free to submit photos, articles,  
 prayers, and/or poems for publication to Bonnie  
 Kriss, tedandbonkriss@hotmail.com.  
 Deadline for submission  
 is 3/20 for the April—May  
 newsletter.*

## 2017 Board Nominees

**Sally Decheine**

**Josephine Faruol**

**Paul Frament**

**Sam House**

**Elaine Lasda**

**Karin Reinhold**

Attend the Annual Membership Meeting on  
 Sunday, March 5 to cast your vote on who you  
 would like to see fill (1) one year term, (1) two  
 year term, and (2) three year terms, plus and  
 alternate on our Board of Trustees.

We will also be voting on ByLaws changes.

Your input is important!

*\* All are welcome to attend the Annual  
 meeting, however, only members can vote.  
 Thank you for your commitment to and lov-  
 ing care for Unity Church in Albany!*

## In Memoriam



*Audrey Madison, Co-Founder of  
 Unity Church in Albany*

*Milene Sower, Long Time Member of  
 Unity Church in Albany*

*“We love you, we bless you, and we  
 behold the Christ in you!”*

## Events Calendar *(cont'd)*

### Upcoming Classes *(cont'd)*

**Wednesdays, March 1—April 5, 7:30 pm**

#### Keep a True Lent

Rev. Crystal Muldrow

Observe Lent the Unity Way. Unity believes that we can keep Lent best by denying Ourselves, not "things", but negative thoughts and feelings. And, through prayer and study, we can contemplate the victorious Christ and attempt to be more like Him.

### Upcoming Events

**Sunday, February 26, 9 & 11 am Services  
Concert, 12:45 pm**

Admission: \$20 Advance, \$25 at door

#### Linda Worster



Linda is dedicated to her life as a songmaker, vocalist and musician. She has performed in many coffeehouses,

colleges, churches, healing centers, cafés, and clubs; and opened for many well-known artists including Livingston Taylor, Harry Chapin, Noel Paul Stookey (of Peter, Paul, and Mary), Leo Kotke, David Bromberg, Joan Baez, Richie Havens, and Taj Mahal.

Her music and lyrics proclaim the joy and explore the struggle of inner discovery. They are alive with the vitality of her dedication to seeking and discovering the magic and the mysteries of life. [www.lindaworster.com](http://www.lindaworster.com)

**Sunday March 5, 12:20pm  
Annual Meeting**



The meeting will include brief reports from Rev. Crystal the board members. It will also include the election of four

trustees plus and alternate to serve on the church board. Proposed changes to the church bylaws will also be up for vote. Only church members can serve on the board or vote for trustees. The meeting itself is open to members and non-members alike.

**Sunday, March 19**

#### \$mall Business Fair

If you have a small business and would like to share information about it, please consider participating in the \$mall Business Fair in the Fellowship Hall between both services and after the 11 o'clock service. This is a fabulous, well-attended, and successful event for all involved. If you don't have a small business, come anyway and enjoy what others have to share!

**Thursday, April 13, 7:00 pm**

#### Maundy Thursday

Join us for a simple service with a big impact. The service focuses on the metaphysical/symbolic meaning of Maundy Thursday. Everyone is welcome to participate in foot washing, or hand washing if you prefer. Communion-in-Prayer is done inwardly with spirit and prayer rather than wine and bread. Guests are always welcome.

**Saturday, April 22**

#### Earth Day Concert-Answer the Muse

This Ithaca-based ensemble will join us for an Earth Day concert and celebration with a journey of original songs, rock songs you know and love (completely remixed!) and more presented in a theme based theatrical style.



### Youth and Family Ministry

We bid a fond "see you later" to the Cole children, Najahry, Jahcory, and Yeshua and hope to have them back in the summer.



Stay tuned for more news from the Youth and Family Ministry!

## Food Pantry in Albany

### Christmas Giving

By Paul Frament

**E**ach year during the Christmas season, our Unity congregation collects food and paper goods and delivers them to the Sister Maureen Joyce Food Pantry in Albany.

This year, under the leadership of Dottie Frament, we collected cash and checks instead, and delivered the total amount collected (\$1560) to the Regional Food Bank to be deposited into Sister Maureen Joyce Food Pantry's account. This is a more efficient way to help the SMJ Food Pantry for two reasons.

First, the Regional Food Bank can provide food for very low cost. Here are some examples: a box of macaroni and cheese that costs \$1.15 at a supermarket is only \$.10 at the food bank; a pouch of fish (usually mackerel) is \$.16; and a pound of ham is \$.15. At these prices, our Unity contribution goes a very long way. The Food Pantry can also purchase paper products from the Regional Food Bank. One of the popular items is adult diapers. Again, the cost is very low.

Second, when the Food Pantry purchases from the Albany Regional Food Bank, they purchase items that will provide a complete meal. On a typical day, the Food Pantry offers 3 or 4 main dish selections such as ham, chicken, & mac & cheese, a potato/carb selection, and 2 or 3 canned vegetable options. So our donation delivers complete meals, instead of just assorted cans/boxes of food. Gail, the director of the Food Pantry, said that customers can usually receive 2, maybe 3, days of complete meals.

Using some of the prices shown above, it seems that a dollar can provide one meal for a family of 4. Then, our \$1500 can provide 30 meals for 50 families. It seems hard to believe. This must be what the "Miracle of Loaves and Fishes" felt like.

Small amounts of money from each individual or family, when added together, can make a significant difference for those of our neighbors who are in the situation of needing support to provide meals for themselves and their families.



Our friends at the food pantry have informed us that there current needs are personal items for babies, men, and women.

*Thank you for your support to this wonderful ministry!*



Each year at Christmas, our church community adopts a family in need. This year, two very large families have been gifted. They were all so very appreciative!

## Way to go Unity in Albany!

### Youth and Family Ministry

We have launched a new year-long curriculum, "Children on the Quest". This is a Unity curriculum that takes youngsters through a comprehensive list of Unity teachings and principles. Children will be well versed in Unity by June! Ann-Marie Burke continues her development of Yoga and Meditation practices monthly with the children and Ann-Marie Lanesey holds down the fort in the Pre-school with our ever expanding contingent of the younger set!

#### Wish List

- ♥ a few old shirts to use for painting smocks
- ♥ dress up clothes, scarves, hats etc. to use for dramatic activities
- ♥ legos
- ♥ a small table for the preschoolers to use for table activities
- ♥ plastic tubs for toy storage



By John Daubney

## Spotlight On Service



### Peggy Kaufmann

*For those of us who tend to be on the shy*

*side, getting involved in service can definitely be cathartic. There is something powerfully ascendant about breaking through that protective shell of protection and doing something we haven't done before. We are all so much more than we think we are and Peggy Kaufmann and others have experienced that phenomenon by bravely stepping out to give of themselves in service here at Unity. Thanks Peggy; you provide us all a role model for what we are capable of, with what you do for others.*

I first heard about Unity through friends in recovery over ten years ago. As a 12 step recovering person, I found that Unity was a natural extension of the spiritual work I'd been doing.

I grew up in a small town in West Virginia, and attended a Methodist church because it was the church in the neighborhood that my parents chose. But as a young adult, I rejected all organized religion and was turned off by the mention of God. Through my years in recovery, however, I gradually became more open and receptive to the idea of God, as I developed in my spiritual program. I also learned about the concept of service through many years of active service in my recovery programs.

What I immediately liked about Unity was that it was spiritual without being religious in a dogmatic way. I also heard familiar concepts that I had learned in recovery, such as "let go and let God". For many years, I came to Unity sporadically but not in a committed way. It's been in the past several years that I've become more involved. I started to usher, I took the membership classes and became a member, I participated in Wednesday meditation and

classes, and I came to love kirtan as a mode of meditation. I started to see Unity as my spiritual home. Then when Rev. Jim and Kay announced that they were moving on, I was afraid that my home would change. But then Rev. Crystal became our new minister and I was overjoyed. I was able to recruit her to co-officiate at my wedding this past September, which was amazing. As a result, I've had the privilege of getting to know her more and feel a deep connection.

I also went to the Unity retreat and loved it. Through all of this, I've grown in my spirituality immensely, and I feel more at home at Unity than ever. In addition, I've participated in the Albany Peace Project from the beginning, as well as the subcommittee bringing mindfulness meditation into the schools. I had been doing meditation in my classroom for years, independently, so it was really nice to connect with others who are interested in the same thing.

For me, becoming more involved at Unity has also meant becoming more visible, which as a relatively shy person, is a challenge for me.

But the more involved I've gotten, the better it feels. I love getting to know people more and feeling connected. I recently retired from teaching, and one of my primary goals is to get more involved in Unity. My first step was to take on the adopted family project this past Christmas and I really enjoyed doing that. I've also spoken to Rev. Crystal about my interest in community outreach and other ways to become more involved.

I've gradually learned through my participation that I have something of value to give to this community and it's been a wonderful growth experience for me. Unity has truly become my spiritual home. So if anyone is considering getting more involved but hesitant in any way, I'd say go for it in any way you feel comfortable and let it grow from there. The personal benefits of service are amazing.





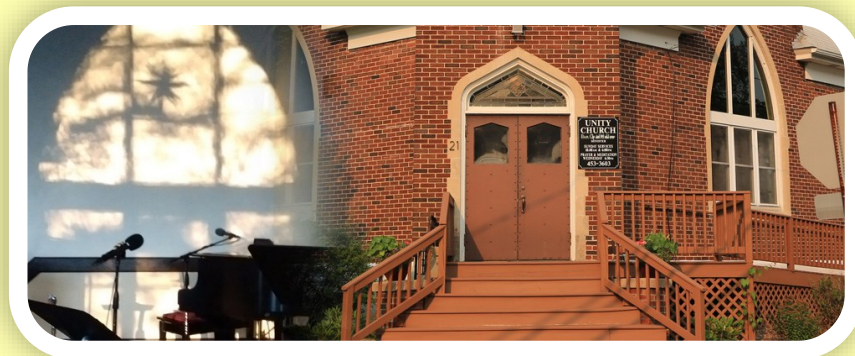
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*Sent with love and blessings to:*

**Address Service Requested**

*.. a positive path for spiritual living*



A place to worship, grow spiritually, feel loved and accepted— is no small matter. In our spiritual family, we know there are many paths that lead to God. We believe that Spirit led you here. Our desire is to share Christ's love with genuine heartfelt warmth. We are a gathering of all kinds of people with various backgrounds, life-styles, and life-stories. Growing together we worship, we serve, we laugh, we cry, we learn, and we reach out to our world with life-transforming truth. We aspire to live as Christ and be receptive to Spirit as it calls us to Life. Our name says it all; we are a Unity of believers celebrating and participating in inclusive worship. If you've been praying, searching and hoping for a place to belong, we say again—***Welcome Home!***

## **Sunday Worship Schedule**

### **Sunday Mornings**

at 9:00 am & 11:00 am

*Youth classes are available during the  
11:00 am service*

### **Sunday Evening "OneSong" Service**

at 6:00 pm each week

*Multi-faith service with music, meditation  
and sacred chant*