



The Messenger

Unity Church in Albany • 21 King Avenue • Albany NY 12206 • 518-453-3603

Halloween Is Coming... What Are You Afraid Of?



By Rev. Jim Fuller

MOST CHILDREN love to listen to and tell scary stories. Some children like their stories more scary, others less, but most enjoy the sense of suspense and surprise. It is a form of play, of make-believe. As teens we may love scary movies, even if they do lead to nightmares. In a few weeks we will celebrate what has come to be the annual festival of scary things, Halloween. As you read this article, I invite you to explore your current relationship with scary things and with fear.

Let's begin by noticing what we *like* to be scared by. Do you love roller coasters or other amusement park rides? Their only purpose is to thrill (scare) us. Do you read thriller stories or watch scary suspense movies? Do you enjoy haunted houses at Halloween? Now let us consider what we do *not like* to be scared by. Do scary dreams interfere with your sleep or bring up images that leave you feeling unsettled? Do certain situations or sounds set you on edge? Do you have difficulty being in high places, small places, hospitals or elevators?

You are a creative being, an eternal being, a powerful being. You are constantly connected with the intelligence and power of God. So how is it that you can feel fear? One possible answer is that you feel fear because, just like children, you are attached to make-believe stories that include fear. Do you tell yourself that you are mortal, weak and competing with others, possibly even with God? Do you tell yourself that death is real and something to be feared? Do you tell

yourself that what happens to you comes from something outside of you some "other source?" Spiritual Principle reminds us that whatever we tell ourselves, over and over, will become our experience, even if it's just make-believe.

How can you find relief from the scary stories and fearful images that intrude into your life? You can begin by abandoning scary storytelling, even for fun. Next you can begin to approach some of your smaller fears with a quiet and attentive mind. Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh reminds us that by mindfully noticing and then mentally "touching" a fear we create an opening in consciousness that may allow us to experience insight and transcend the fear. Years or even lifetimes of telling scary stories, over and over, may have produced some strong patterns of fear in you. Fortunately it only takes a few seconds for all of that fear to dissipate when you bring the clear light of quiet attention to it.

Many years ago I had a great fear of death. I had specific fears about dying in the rain and cold. As a child, some of my earliest reoccurring dreams were of dark places where I wandered alone. Years later I began to address my fears, at first by reading books about death and dying. Many were not very helpful, but a few were and those led to more helpful books and

"What are you afraid of?" cont. on page 3

Advocates for Welcoming Congregations

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS continues reaching out in new and powerful ways to the larger community and making Unity's presence felt in areas where light and healing are needed. In September, the Board voted unanimously to join Advocates for Welcoming Congregations (AWC), a local interfaith group that seeks full membership for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) persons in the faith community.

AWC believes that all spiritual seekers should have a community that nurtures their spiritual growth by being welcoming, affirming and inclusive. This fits in well with Unity Church's vision to awaken and embrace the Christ in all persons. Many GLBT people have felt victimized or rejected by some faith communities. With our message of "Christ Within", we actively proclaim that Unity Church in Albany recognizes and celebrates that All Present Spirit in every person.

AWC recently sponsored an interfaith service at the Unitarian Universalist Church for June Pride month and sponsored a showing of the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So" about reconciling Biblical scripture and the issue of gayness.

For more information, contact any of our Trustees or Ellen Elting at 459-0616.

Pride in the Pulpit

AT THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING, the Board voted unanimously in favor of having Unity Church at Albany join Pride in the Pulpit. This organization's mission is to build a network of congregations and leaders of faith throughout New York State to advocate for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) persons and their families. Pride in the Pulpit is made up of hundreds of congregations and leaders of faith representing a broad spectrum of denominations and faith traditions. As members of Unity Church where our mission is to awaken and embrace the Christ within, we feel called to be part of the love and healing that is needed in our world at this time. By joining Pride in the Pulpit, we will be linking arms with others and together we will openly advocate, work and pray for healing, justice and equality for the GLBT community and the world.

Because this is a new type of outreach activity for this church, the Board wants to make sure that individuals in the congregation have an opportunity to provide input and/or ask questions. Toward that end, the Board is inviting your feedback on or before October 31, 2008. Please feel free to contact any of our trustees with any questions, thoughts or other feedback you may have.

On October 11th, we will be having a Church cleaning day. All are invited to come and help in cleaning our Home. We will be cleaning from 9:00 am until we are done, so drop by and spend a while with us as we take pride in cleaning our home.

Spreading The Message of Unity

WORD OF OUR CHURCH is getting out into the community through the help of several individuals and thanks to a designated donation for such purposes. See what has been going on:

- A Unity presence at the Interfaith Service put on for June Gay Pride Month by the Advocates Welcoming Congregations (AWC) held at the Unitarian Universalist Church
- An information table at the Capital Pride Festival in Washington Park
- An information table at the African American Family Day Festival
- A new and improved website: unitychurchinalbany.org, although still in process, check it out!
- Advertisements regarding upcoming classes have been placed in the next issues of Healing Springs & Wisdom magazines
- Church listing in Pride newsletter
- Advertisement for upcoming classes is in the process of being placed at The Spectrum Theater



Unity table display at
African American Family Day
Festival

What are you afraid of?

Continued from Page 1



helpful people. One day at church a man shared his two near death experiences with me. As I learned more about these other people showed up to share their near death experiences. Since then I have had similar experiences in prayer. All of this has deepened my understanding of the relationship between my physical body and my eternal self. As a result many of my fears have diminished or dissolved.

Many of our deep fears are related to our fear of death and dying, and our belief in mortality. That is why Halloween with its skeletons, ghosts and graveyards is the perfect time to explore your present beliefs and fears. You may want to set an intention to heal your fears. You can begin by simply observing your fearful feelings whenever they naturally arise. If you will approach this observing from a spiritual perspective, a God centered perspective, many helpful people, situations and insights will also show up for you. This will happen because you are a powerful creative spiritual being and whatever goal or purpose you intend must come to be. Are you through playing make-believe with being sacred? What positive goals and purposes will you intend for yourself?

After a recent memorial service a woman stopped me

to talk. She was moved by what I had said about eternal life. She shared that several years ago she had a near death experience. She said that she now *knows* there is nothing to fear in death, that death itself is not real. She appreciated hearing me give voice to that truth. Her face and smile were radiant and I thanked God for providing me with one more reminder of what is real and true. The Gospel of Thomas is one of the earliest collections of Jesus' teachings. In it Jesus encourages, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will reign over all.

What would it be like to reign over all fear? Are you willing to prayerfully step toward your fear and learn that it is without substance? Will you embrace the messengers that show up to help you do this? Whatever goals you intend with conviction must come to be. If your purpose is the end of fear, it will happen for. If you are scared to death of death, let me recommend two books as a starting point: *Life After Life* by Ray Moody and *No Death No Fear* by Thich Nhat Hanh. Why not let Halloween be time you choose to step out of fear and into life?

May this Halloween be the time we consciously choose to stop scaring ourselves, even "just for fun." And in setting that intention, may we find release from the "ghosts" of the past and of the future.

Unity Book Club News

The Unity Book Club is dedicated to reading and discussing books by Unity and New Thought writers. This year we will allow two months for reading each book. We also invite you to join us for Sunday lunchtime book discussions facilitated by Reverend Jim. As you read each book please remain alert for ideas that trouble you, delight you, or raise further questions. Your observations and questions form the core of our book discussion meetings.

October/November reading: *Christian Healing*, by Charles Fillmore (book discussion on 11/23)

Our Mission Statement:

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

Treasurer's Report

January - August 2008

(All figures are Year-To-Date)

OPERATING FUND

Income	\$100,590
Expenses	103,091
Balance	(2,500)

CAPITAL FUND

Balance	\$2,150
---------------	---------



Dates to Remember

“You Can Heal Your Life,” The Movie

**FREE Film Showing on our two big screens:
Wed. 10/1 @ 7:00 PM, Sun. 10/12 @ 1:00 PM,**

“You Can Heal Your Life,” Weekly Classes

**Eleven-week series begins Wednesdays at 7:15
-8:30 pm, October 8 – December 17**

Louise Hay has one simple message to share: The body, like everything else in life, is a mirror of your inner thoughts and beliefs. Every cell within your body responds to every thought you think and every word you speak. This class will focus on healing through affirmative prayer and changing our inner patterns of thought using ideas from her bestselling book.

We encourage you to read the book (at least the introduction and first chapter) before attending the class. Books (including audio books), affirmation cards and other materials are available in our bookstore.

“You Can Heal Your Life through Affirmative Living” Sunday Worship Series begins October 12th

A Course In Miracles Study Groups

**Sunday, 7:30 PM: at Unity Church
Mondays, 7:00 PM: in Delmar, call 439-1775
for details**

St. Francis Day - Blessing of Our Animal Companions

Saturday, October 4, 2007 9:30 AM

Unity Church of Albany

ALL ARE INVITED TO CELEBRATE the blessing with their animal companions at the Bradford Street Lobby of Unity Church, rain or shine. (In case of rain, the ceremony will take place in the sanctuary.)

We ask that all animal companions be properly leashed or in appropriate carriers for their safety and to maintain a “peaceable kingdom” for all two-legged and four-legged creatures in attendance. For health reasons and out of respect for your pet, we ask that if animals have any illness or injury they be brought to this service in a carrier, so that we may limit stress and not further compromise the health of your pet or another’s.

Refreshments will be available for all animal and human participants.

“How To Deal With The Ego - Other People’s and Our Own”

**An ACIM based workshop with Jon Mundy, PhD
Sunday, October 5th 1:00 – 4:30**

Jon Mundy, Ph.D., is an author, lecturer, and as Dr. Baba Jon Mundane, a standup philosopher-comedian. He’s been teaching university courses in Philosophy and Religion since 1967 and is currently an adjunct professor at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. He is the publisher of Miracles magazine, author of eight books and senior minister emeritus of Interfaith Fellowship in New York City. He met Dr. Helen Schucman, the scribe for A Course in Miracles, in 1973. Helen served as Jon’s mentor until she became ill in 1980.

**Advance registration \$25; \$30 at the door. No
one turned away who cannot pay.**

Dates to Remember



Quest Study Group Begins

Monday October 6th

If you are looking for a practical way to understand and integrate Unity's New Thought Teachings, this study group is for you! The Quest is a 48-week series of lessons that explore Unity teachings and your own spiritual beliefs. Each lesson includes a brief reading and questions/exercises to reflect on. The weekly study group is your opportunity to discuss the readings and share your discoveries with others studying the Quest. Our study group will meet on Mondays from 6:00 – 7:00 PM. The first meeting will be an orientation to the Quest. Please purchase your set of Quest books and read the introductory sections in both books prior to this meeting. Quest book sets are available in our bookstore.

Fall Clean Up Day

Saturday October 11th 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

You are invited to join us as we tidy up our building for the fall.

Music, Poetry, Stories and More!

Unity Church Coffee House

October 18th at 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Come early and sign up to sing, read a poem, or share whatever talent you choose. Or come at 7:30 and just enjoy the show. We will open with a short drumming circle so bring a drum if you have one. We will have a few drums to share. Family and friends are always welcome. Coffee and refreshments will be available. This event is supported by your love offerings.

Pot Luck Lunch

Sunday November 2nd, noon-2:00 PM

Bring a dish to share, catch up with old friends and make some new ones. Family and friends are always welcome at our pot luck lunches.

Fall Retreat

November 21 & 22

See story on Page 7

Thanksgiving Day Lunch

Thursday, November 27th 1:00 – 5:00 PM

Reverend Jim and Kay invite you to join them for Thanksgiving Day lunch at the church. We ask that everyone sign up and bring a dish to contribute to the meal. (This helps anticipate the number attending, and what they are bringing.) We will make sure that there is turkey, pumpkin pie and all that you would expect for a Thanksgiving feast. We gather at 1:00 to welcome each other and set up the meal. Lunch begins at 2:00.



December Dates:

- **Church Christmas Party: December 13th 7:00 PM**
- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: December 24th 5:30 PM**
- **Christmas Day Lunch: December 25th 1:00 – 5:00 PM**
- **New Year's Eve Burning Bowl Service: December 31st 5:30 PM**

Prayer Care Team Update

If you would like our Prayer Care Team to hold you or a friend in prayer please use our new phone or email: 453-3603 extension 13 or unityalbanyprayer@yahoo.com.

Written prayer requests may be placed in the "Answer Box" in the church lobby. All requests will be prayerfully held for 30 days. All prayer requests are strictly confidential.

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney

Laura Higgins



Laura Higgins has always been willing to jump in and lend a hand where needed, or many cases to take a leadership role in those areas she finds interesting and even challenging. Thanks in part to Laura; our new, greatly enhanced sound

system, as well as our power point program is now operational. Not only was she willing to take on the challenge of learning how to operate the system; but has now been teaching others. Over the years her friendly, if sometimes, cock-eyed sense of humor, and her love for service have brought a smile to many a face in our church community.

I FIRST CAME TO UNITY in the early 90s when the church was still on Madison Ave. I knew people from Recovery who attended so thought I would give it a try. Apparently that first go-round was not my intended time. As I am sure for many like me, who grew up in a rigid Christianity, Unity's ideas seemed a little *out there*. Despite my recovery background you people were way too 'huggy.'

I returned to Unity in 1997 and this time I stayed. Though I still struggled with some of those 'way-out concepts,' I knew Unity was where I needed to be. Unbelievable as it may seem I didn't speak much for quite some time; it was enough for me to just sit through the service.

One Sunday as I was leaving the church I noticed that the grass was pretty high and the yard looked a bit unkempt. I'm not sure if it was my perfectionism or some push from within that made me ask Arthur if I could mow the lawn. Of course he said yes and I was off to my first act of service at Unity. Though it may have looked like I was doing a lot for the church, the reality was that mowing the lawn was doing a lot for me. Those weekend days of tending the lawn gave me a lot of time to be with what? God above? No not really! I was learning more about what I know today to be the God-presence within me. Despite the noise of the lawnmower, I learned to listen and commune inside myself. What a healing experience that was for me!

As time went on, I noticed people ushering. They would greet folks, new and old alike, and generally help the church service run smoothly. I thought I would really like to usher, but once again my old church thinking led me to believe that only "special" people like the old-time *church deacons* could be ushers. Despite feeling not quite worthy of the role, one Sunday morning when the scheduled ushers didn't show up, I stepped in and handed out the bulletins and gave hugs to people one of the best parts of ushering as they arrived. Ann DeClue, who was the Usher Chairperson at the time, invited me to be an Usher. I was so excited that someone *like me* could actually be an Usher. I loved it!! Again, I received so much back from what I gave. I got to meet people, connect with people, and I loved those hugs. Talk about learning to feel loved!! Wait a second wasn't I the person who thought "those" people were too 'huggy?'

Thinking back on my 10 years of being at Unity I would have to say that every act of service has been a gift. Even participating in the community is an act of service that has brought change to my life. Some will remember that years ago the Peacemakers were invited in to help us resolve a conflict within our church. I didn't quite understand the issues but I was drawn to be part of the process. I had been dwelling in the 'land of the wounded, hurt, and misunderstood for many years,' but, by being part of that process I learned so much about forgiveness, self-responsibility, communication, and the principle that says; although we may each see things differently, we are still ONE in spirit. That internal shift gradually, gently, put an end to years of suffering and changed my thinking forever! WHAT A MIRACLE!!

Though I've been blessed with many opportunities to serve here at Unity, I would like to share one last act that has also changed my life. Undoubtedly, many of you like me had come to believe that we could not or is it should not sing. I so bought into that idea that I couldn't even sing the Peace Song without my voice breaking. At the time Ann Roberts was leading the choir and I became a member. There were no tryouts, everyone was welcome. Slowly, while being surrounded by many loving people, I learned to trust my voice again as a beautiful expression of Spirit. That Spirit continues on in the present-day format of the 4th Sunday Singers. I can't tell you how much JOY singing has brought to my life, not to mention the love that enfolds the entire group.

I can only wish for each of you the healing, joy, and GOOD VIBRATIONS I have received from the blessings of service.

Remembering Loved Ones through Scrapbooking

FREE BEGINNER'S SCRAPBOOK class 7 pm on Thursday, October 9.

SACRED SCRAPBOOKING ON THE SUBJECT OF LOSS:
Six consecutive weeks beginning Thursday October 16th at 7 pm. \$115 if paid by Oct. 5, and \$125 if paid by Oct. 16.

Registration is required.

Please contact Lisa Morrell at 766-7601 to register.

THESE INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS will inspire creativity, and provide healing, as we gain a better understanding of how our loved ones live on through our minds and hearts, and how we can continue to honor this relationship. This will be accomplished through journaling, scrapbooking and discussion.

As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker of 18 years, I have worked in many different settings with people of different ages and backgrounds. Since loss touches all our lives my clinical practice has provided me with a great deal of experience in the area of grief and loss. However, I believe it was my personal experience with multiple losses combined with my professional background and love of scrapbooking that inspired the development of this program.

There is no prior scrapbook experience necessary for these workshops. The free class is open to anyone who is interested in learning scrapbook basics; however you must register for the class.

For those that would like to continue to experience, sign up for the six consecutive classes beginning on Oct. 16. Basic scrapbook supplies will be provided but participants are also free to bring their own.

Church Directory

INTEREST HAS BEEN EXPRESSED in starting a church directory. Haven't you been wanting to put a face with a name or vice versa? Well, here's your chance to participate! Photos for the directory will be taken in-between the two services and after the 11:00 a.m. service each Sunday during the month of October. Look for our photographers at those times if you wish to be part of the directory.



A Spiritual Retreat

COME JOIN US FOR A TIME OF REFLECTION, alignment with the Divine, and experiential learning.

With time for personal reflection, along with some community building and engagement, facilitator Barbara Wisnom will take us on a 24-hour spiritual journey that will nourish and sustain our inner worlds, while bringing us into closer connection as a community—and having some fun, too!

Dress comfortably, bring a journal, and join us on this fall retreat!

Dates: November 21-22

Times: Begins at 5 pm Friday and ends with dinner on Saturday evening.

Location: Dominican Retreat & Conference Center, 1945 Union Street in Niskayuna, NY

Please pick up your registration form in the church lobby this Sunday. There are a limited number of rooms available, and reservations are now being accepted.

Food Pantry Reminder List

(clip and carry this list with you when you shop)

These items are especially needed because they are not covered by food stamps.

Infant Care:

- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- _____
- _____

Kitchen:

- Dish soap
- Sponges
- Paper Towels
- Window cleaner
- _____
- _____

Bathroom Items:

- Toilet paper
- Tissues
- Bar Soap
- Razors
- Shaving Cream
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Band-aids
- First aid antiseptics
- Feminine products
- _____

Laundry:

- Detergent
- Fabric Softener
- Bleach
- Dryer Sheets
- _____
- _____

Other:

- _____
- _____



Unity Church in Albany
21 King Avenue
Albany, NY 12206

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit No. 713

Phone: 518-453-3603

Fax: 518-453-0117

E-mail: unityalbany@yahoo.com

Web page: www.unitychurchinalbany.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Welcome Home!



FINDING OUR SPIRITUAL HOME — 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!*

Unity Newsletter

Articles for the December/January edition of the newsletter can be submitted to Denise Klein at katzr3@nycap.rr.com by Sunday, November 16th. Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.

Board of Trustees

President Jacquelyn Hawkins ('09)... 393-1627
 Vice Pres. ... John Frederick ('10) 486-5689
 Secretary Heather Diddel ('11) 475-9604
 Treasurer Don Raux ('09) 877-5928
 Trustee Bonnie Kriss ('10) 373-2135
 Trustee Pamela Coles ('11) 729-3207

Worship Schedule

Services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.
 Nursery care is available at the 11 a.m. service