



The Messenger

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

The Mission of Unity



By Rev. Jim Fuller

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

WHILE THIS IS A GREAT MISSION STATEMENT there is actually a tiny flaw in it. A couple people noticed it shortly after we created the it and our board of trustees recently recommended making the correction. The tiny flaw is the absence of the word "to" after the word awaken. As our current mission statement reads we are attempting to awaken, as well as embrace, the Christ. A more correct version of the statement would be: "The mission of Unity Church in Albany is to awaken to and embrace the Christ in all persons..."

The truth is the Christ in us is never asleep, although we are often asleep to its presence. This is metaphorically alluded to in the Bible story of Jesus (the Christ) and his disciples (our minds in training) getting caught in a storm (fear) on the Sea of Galilee (changing appearances of the world.) Throughout the story Jesus was always in the boat, comfortably resting. The disciples became terrified and said to Jesus, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" Once they turned their attention away from their problem and toward Jesus the storm quieted "Peace be still" and all was still. All it took was for the disciples to awaken to the presence of the Christ there with them and fear turned to peace. The Christ is always present and awake, even if we aren't. We are recommending that

our mission statement be amended to read: "The mission of Unity Church in Albany is to awaken to and embrace the Christ in all persons through prayer and service."

Regarding prayer and service; it is important to have these working together. If the disciples had decided to be in service to Jesus (Christ Mind) rather than calling on him to be in service to them, their boat probably would have sunk. If from our human perspective we decide that we know how to save or serve or awaken others, we will have little real success and may actually hinder those we seek to help. Before we reach out to serve others we must first reach in and find spiritual direction.

And that doesn't mean just saying a prayer and then doing what our human minds have already decided to do. It means taking the situation, as we see it, into prayer and asking what is mine to do, when is the right time, how shall I begin?

True service is more than just keeping tidy bandages on the oozing wounds of others or opening chains of soup kitchens. These are noble efforts and do help relieve the outer suffering of others. Many dedicated groups are already engaged in doing just these things. But un-

As we wake up to the spiritual fact that the Christ is already present in all we will automatically understand how to be of service to others.

The President's Corner

By John Frederick



FALL IS MY FAVORITE TIME OF THE YEAR. Crisp leaves; crisp air. The colors of fall, reds, yellows, gold against the backdrop of a clear blue sky. The busy-ness of the season as children return to school and people everywhere pick up after the laziness of August. The anticipation of the upcoming holidays: Columbus Day (also my birthday),

Halloween and November's Thanksgiving.....

Colder and shorter days signal us to close up the house and turn inward. They also signal me to turn inward spiritually. A spiritual hibernation, but awakening rather than a going-to-sleep, to focus on my inner landscape and cultivate my personal relationship with God while the outer world prepares for its yearly rest. I think it is wise that the Celts held Samhain (our Halloween) to be the end of the year and the time when the veil was the thinnest between our world and the world of the Spirit.

Myrtle Fillmore in her book "How to Let God Help You," says, "Though personal to each one of us, God is IT, neither male nor female, but Principle. God is "the Principle of life, love, and intelligence." God is Intelligence; the One Mind that is the Unity of all people, all races and all genders.

"A full realization of this great truth would do away with all selfishness, the cause of all the misery on earth." The true life of all people is One Life; everything else is illusion. The "seeming differences in people are caused by selfishness or desire for something separate and apart from God." (Myrtle, 25)

I continue to practice focusing on this principle of Oneness, one-Life, one-Mind, one-Love and find it in me. I can then find it in the people around me. First in those to whom I have an affinity (that's the easy part); and then in those who present me with a challenge. I remember that God loves them too, and is personal to them, just as God is to me.

Here's is hoping that you have a blessed fall, filled with the Presence of the Spirit.

Sound Training...please see Diane T. if you are interested in running the sound equipment. Training date will be mutually agreed upon. A few more volunteers would be appreciated!

In Memory of Ann Roberts

Long time church member and former music director Ann Roberts passed away in the early hours of the morning on September 12th. Her obituary appeared in the September 13th Albany Times Union. Most people at Unity recall Ann as an accomplished pianist. She was also an avid artist and poet. Her daughter, Christine, sent along a poem that Ann wrote when she was only 15. We share it here in remembrance of Ann.

"Joy"

*The inner feeling of joy we have
When we help, love, when we are loved
Is reflected in the ease of the sway of the trees
God's hand has stirred the breeze.
Thank you Lord for making me alive
Alive in You as with your people
To love sincere, to survive we must thrive
To be at peace, below your steeple*

Unity Bookstore

OUR BOOKSTORE IS OPEN after the 11 am Sunday service and volunteers are there to assist you. There is also a lending library - books are lent out for 3 week period. You can place special orders and donate your used metaphysical/new thought books to the library for others to enjoy. If you can not find a particular book, daily word, CD, or special card, please ask for our assistance. We now take credit cards for your convenience.

- First Sunday:..... Genie
- Second Sunday: Vicky
- Third Sunday:..... Geri Ann
- Fourth Sunday: Debbie
- Fifth Sunday: Vicky

Volunteers are needed! Please contact Geri Ann at 445-1180 or Rev. Jim at 453-3603. Your help would be very appreciated.

One Way to Give: the Food Pantry

As always, your donations to the food pantry are much needed and appreciated. If you are looking for another way to help our local pantry, volunteers are always welcome to pick up food from local restaurants, help with unloading the trucks at the pantry, or volunteering at the thrift shop.

If you have time during the week, and feel the desire to help our food pantry in another capacity, please contact Diane T. at 280-4311 for more details.

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
- _____
- _____

Bathroom Items:

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

Kitchen:

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

Laundry:

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

Other:

- _____
- _____

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 15th.

All contributors please note that this is an earlier than usual deadline, because of the Holidays!

Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.

The Mission of Unity continued—

til we have learned to address the spiritual causes of sickness, sadness and hunger we really haven't begun to fully serve. Unity has always operated from the perspective of; heal the mind first and all else will fall into Perfect Order. Originally the Unity Inn in Kansas City operated as a free kitchen, but its purpose was always to teach. The Inn showed people that healthy vegetarian food could help support a healthy spiritual lifestyle, and that by putting God first there would always be plenty for everyone.

At one point Jesus' disciples complained about the woman who anointed him with costly ointment. They said that she could have sold the ointment and given the money to the poor. Jesus replied, "You always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me." (Mark 14:7) Since life is based on consciousness, we may always have some with us who see themselves as poor. Our first priority is always to prayerfully "awaken to and embrace the Christ." Putting ointment on the Jesus symbolizes prayerfully anointing or blessing the Christ that's here. If we fail to do that, we won't realize that we have the Christ to help us either. And if we can't see the Christ in us or in the other we really can't help resolve the underlying cause of our problems. As we wake up to the spiritual fact that the Christ is already present in all we will automatically understand how to be of service to others. At first we may be called to simple acts of service such as holding others in prayer or offering someone a ride. As we become more attuned to the Christ in all people, that Christ in us may nudge us to move into more powerful or more personal acts of prayer and service.

*May we all learn to awaken to and embrace the Christ in all persons (including us) through prayer and service.
Amen*

Are you interested in submitting your email address for a church distribution list? Send it to minimom45@aol.com or see Diane T. This is a helpful way to get news to all congregants.

COMING EVENTS



“How To Find and Live Your Purpose” a workshop with Cary Bayer



Sunday, Oct 4 at 1:15 PM

IN THIS WORKSHOP, How to Find & Live your Purpose, coach and author Cary Bayer helps you gain a clear sense of the reason you are here and the important role you have to play in life. It will teach you of your two-fold purpose: your spiritual (or inner) work, as well as your material (or outer) work.

It will also help you discover a service that you can provide for others that grows organically out of your heart and soul. This activity is deeply enjoyable for you, and brings your God-given talents into the world. This work can also bring a revenue stream into your life (perhaps part-time for now) that can augment your current income stream and perhaps, in time, become a mighty river to replace it.

Living Intentionally From Innocence

**Unity Church Fall Retreat, October 9-10
(Dinner Friday through Dinner Saturday)**

One of the most extra-ordinary experiences in life is the offering and accepting of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a restorative process of reclaiming our innocence. In the intimate loving interchange of forgiveness, the voice of condemnation is silenced and shame loses its power to keep us prisoner in the fortress of our own guilt. We are set free to love and be loved once again. The universe celebrates every wayfarer who has returned from the self imposed exile of judgment. As forgiven beings, we become participants in that celebration. The more we celebrate, the more joy-

ful we become. Through information sharing, music, meditation and laughter, the story of living a life of innocence unfolds effortlessly. Retreat participants will return home refreshed and empowered with practical ways to enhance the joy in life.

John Chupka, a practicing psychotherapist and spiritual mentor, will lead our retreat. John is the director of The Forgiveness Center, a spiritually based practice of psychotherapy and transpersonal education. To learn more about John visit his Web site at www.forgivenesscenter.org. You may also wish to visit the web site inspiremetoday.com where John is listed as an illuminary speaker. Click on the archives for his name and listen to what he has to say about living a happy life.

Location: The Dominican Retreat Center in Schenectady, NY

Registration fee of \$165 includes four meals, private room, and all retreat activities. For more information contact Geri Ann at 445-1180.

The Practice of Thriving

**Wednesday evenings at 7:15 PM - October 7
through November 11**

THE ASSOCIATION OF UNITY CHURCHES has just released a new six-week program based on Eric Butterworth's book, *Spiritual Economics*. They requested that we give it a try, and so we will.

For those in our Book Club who read *Spiritual Economics* and asked for more on it, here is the Universe's answer to your request. For those who haven't read it yet, here is your opportunity to not just read the book, but to look at how you can put it into practice in your life.

Eric Butterworth was a protégé of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore. He remains one of Unity's bestselling authors of all time. He has a clear and insightful way of helping us get into the universal flow of life, truth and joy.

This class will be facilitated by Rev. Jim.

Unity 101

October 11 – November 29

Would you like to join Unity Church or to learn more about us? If so we invite you to participate in the six-part class we call "Unity 101." Our fall class will meet Sundays from 12:30 until 2:00 PM starting October 11th. This class is open to everyone. It is required for those wanting to join the church. Please know you are not required to withdraw your membership from other churches to join Unity. Our purpose is to advance spiritual consciousness, not to convert.

To become a member we ask that you attend worship services regularly for at least six months, read a short booklet on Unity and attend Unity 101. If you haven't already done so, please read Unity, A Quest for Truth by Eric Butterworth prior to the first class. This booklet is available in our bookstore. If you have questions about membership or the class, please call or speak with Reverend Jim.



Bring A Friend Sunday (and Pot Luck)

Sunday, October 18th

Most of us found Unity when a friend invited us to join them for church. Bring A Friend Sunday is your opportunity to pass along this blessing to another. We will celebrate our friends during the service and then gather for a pot luck lunch in the fellowship hall. It's a great way to meet and share new friends and great food. And of course our potlucks are open to everyone.

Thanksgiving Day Lunch

Thursday, November 26th 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.

**Town Meeting
November 8th**

This is an open forum for questions and discussion. Reverend Jim will give a brief report on recent and planned activities. The meeting will take place at 12:40 in the fellowship hall and is open to members and non-members alike.

Fall Cleanup Day

**Saturday, October 17th from
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

Let's get our church home clean and tidy for fall. No need to sign up, just show up and help where you can. No special skills required!

Unity Church Christmas Party

Saturday, December 5th at 7:00 – 10:00 PM

**Open to members & non-members
Light refreshments will be served**

\$mall Business Fair

January 17, 2010

DO YOU HAVE A SMALL BUSINESS that you would like to promote within our church community? Although it may be difficult to consider what you might be doing on an early winter Sunday, please consider sharing your business interests with your church community. If you have a small business to tell us about and/or are interested in helping to organize this event, please contact Bonnie Kriss, tel 373-2135 or tedandbonkriss@hotmail.com.

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney

Roger Mock



There are men and women who serve others through their volunteer activities in our church and in other venues, and then there are those who, through their chosen livelihood, lovingly and passionately give of themselves, in sharing their talents and gifts. Such a person is our Music Director, Roger Mock.

His passion and talent for choosing just the right music, performing, collaborating with other musicians, and for leading have blessed our congregation and soulfully complemented each week's service.

I HAD BEEN THINKING about the issue of service for me at Unity on the very morning John asked me to do this column; in particular, about the apparent dichotomy between doing something from a place of service and doing something that you get paid to do. Somehow in our society we are taught that these two things are separate. Reverend Jim touched on this in his Labor Day weekend talk; about striving to do your job, whatever it is, from a place of service.

I've been a church musician since age seventeen or so, and maybe of all the aspects of my life it's the one where I feel most myself; where I feel like I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing. I had been leading music for a lot of years at Catholic churches, especially St. Vincent de Paul in Albany. About fifteen years ago, when my own spiritual path was shifting in different ways, I felt led to take a break from that role and reassess things.

One of the first things I did was to attend a couple of Unity services which were then being held just down the street from St. Vincent's on Madison Ave. I don't recall where I heard about Unity, but I knew *Course in Miracles* students sometimes gravitated there, and I had recently become one myself. I also attended a Unity-sponsored concert by singer-songwriter Linda Worster at that time. I learned something important from Linda's performance, and it has to do with the concept of service through music. It sounds obvious,

but I realized that more can happen in a musical performance than just what is rendered as audible to the ear. I experienced a tangible spiritual sharing through her; the gift of her music and her person on a soul level, I guess you could say. It was a big "aha" moment for me as a musician.

Since then I've tried to be conscious of this when I perform or lead music, especially in the context of worship. It's a bit of a juggling act, to tell you the truth. There is always the performance part – getting the notes and words right, and playing the instrument well. Plus there is so much of the ego involved in performing music publicly and boy, does our society like to encourage that! (*American Idol*, anyone?) Over the years I've made so many mistakes in public performance (I could tell you stories...) and hit so many "clams" that the ego doesn't have much of leg to stand on anymore, thankfully! And now and then I can tell when that "Linda Worster effect" is happening through me, and when it does it is usually confirmed by someone who has been a recipient of the gift. To quote a favorite songwriter, Bruce Cockburn, from his song *The Gift*:

*The gift keeps moving
Never know where it's going to land.
You must stand back and let it
Keep on changing hands*

The gift, the service, is not actually us. It's something that we allow to move through us when we get our own agenda out of the way. Yes, there's a giving of self that happens, but when we're really on the beam, there's also a giving of Self with a capital "S". That is the kind of service that I aspire to as a musician.

There's another hat that I wear at Unity, that of webmaster for www.unitychurchinalbany.com, and there's a service aspect to that for me, too. When I first began working on the site, Heather Diddel asked if I could provide lyrics of songs used at service since we were no longer printing them in the weekly bulletin and sometimes people liked to be able to access them after service. I've been putting them up on the site for a good year or more, so there's quite a large collection by now. I take extra care to provide links to recordings of most of the songs as well as links to mp3 downloads. Music has been so hugely important to me in my spiritual journey, I'm sure it must be for others as well. A lot of the music I have found that

A Singing Farewell to Jackie Hawkins



As Jackie Hawkins prepared to depart for Unity Village, her friends in the church gave her a rousing farewell with a personalized version of "Hit the Road Jackie!"

Church at Thatcher Park



Our annual Church in the Park service at Thatcher Park included beautiful vistas, and a delicious potluck.



Roger Mock continue—

feeds me is well off the beaten path, so I'm striving with the website to give people a way of finding it for themselves. You could go on there now and build yourself a little iTunes library of songs that nurture you, for example.

I'm attending Unity's Sound Connections conference this month. The theme is "Music Speaks Louder than Words", the title of a song by Harold Payne. The chorus says it so well, and I'll close with that:

*Music speaks louder than words.
It's the only sound that the whole world listens to
Music speaks louder than words.
When you sing, people understand.*

"As a spiritual being, I am not defined by my work, but my work is an important aspect of my life's expression. Every service I provide is a service to God and to others. 9/3/09 – The Daily Word

Unity Church Cares

THANK YOU to everyone that has signed up to volunteer for our new *UnityChurchCares* ministry. This information is located in the Bradford Street Lobby. As our list of helpers expands, so will our capacity to help others in need.

Have you noticed our new, pink mailbox mounted on the wall? This is for our "heartfelt" request cards that may be filled out and placed in confidence in our mailbox. A committee member will check the mailbox regularly, and help link volunteers to those in need of a card, a phone call, or a visit. Email requests may be entered into our account at unitychurchcares@yahoo.com.

At this time, the primary need is for transportation to and from church. If you live in the area of Niskayuna, Delmar, Lake George, Rensselaer, or Troy, there are church friends that would appreciate a ride to Sunday service. Please see Diane T. for more details.

In the meantime, training is being prepared for volunteers who wish to visit others. More details to follow regarding this training.

If anyone hears of a reason to send a card or make a call for support or congratulations, remember *Unity Church Cares*.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Finding your 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!*

WORSHIP SCHEDULE.

Services at 9:00 & 11:00 AM
Childcare at the 11 am service

Board of Trustees

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