



The Messenger

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

Three Special Valentines

IT'S FEBRUARY and soon it will be Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day is important to me for two reasons, first it's my mother's birthday and without her where would I be? Second, it's a day dedicated to remembering and celebrating love and friendship. In a world where so many people feel disconnected and isolated this is greatly needed. Taking time to tell someone "I care about you," "I value you," or "I love you" blesses both them and you. I encourage you to send Valentine's Day cards or make Valentine's Day phone calls to people you care about. Tell them that you appreciate and care about them. If this feels a little awkward, perhaps it's just because you don't get enough practice saying this during the rest of the year. Why not start practicing now?

Jesus is remembered to have said, "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." What if we took this teaching personally and began expressing our love for one another? Sending a card or making a call to say "I love you" or "I care about you" is a great way to start.

I also want to encourage you to send Three Special Valentines this year. The first Special Valentine will be a card sent to a friend or family member that you have been out of touch with for a while. Perhaps you regularly spent time with this person in the past, but due to changes in your life or theirs you no longer see one another. Send this person a Valentine's Day card (or a Friendship card) and tell them how much their friendship meant to you. Express appreciation for the part they played in your life. A simple "thank

you for having been an important part of my life" will do. The point here is not to rekindle the relationship, but to express love and appreciation.



By Rev. Jim Fuller

The second Special Valentine will not be a card or a call; it will be a prayer. Think of someone that you wouldn't want to send a Valentine's Day card to, someone you don't hold loving or caring feelings for. Say a Valentine's Day prayer for this person. When Jesus was teaching about how to achieve heaven and happiness he said, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you." This may feel like a tall order, but the results can be truly powerful. A sincere prayer for another can heal deep wounds in you both! Jesus went on to explain, "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? Even the misdirected love those who love them." He concluded, "Be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate." Offering a simple prayer of caring and compassion for a soul that is lost and suffering blesses you both. A simple but powerful prayer you might use is this:

May you be held in compassion.

May your pain and sorrow be eased.

May you be at peace. Amen

Offer this prayer as a Special Valentine to one of the difficult people from your life.

The third Special Valentine will be for a Friendship Valentine activity at church on February 14th. Please

Continued on Page 3

The President's Corner

By John Frederick



THIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR that used to be my least favorite: mid-January. Winter is a long stretch ahead, with Spring nowhere in sight; Christmas is over with all of its glitter, music and joyous atmosphere (although I have not yet taken down my tree and decorations).

It is getting lighter by the day.....but you can't really notice it. Snow, cold, work and dark seem like they are the only game in town. However, Unity teaches me that I don't see the world the way it is....I see the world as I am. My peace of mind is not dependent on what outer appearances seem to be. It is a function of what my inner dialogue, my inner thinking, tells me it is.

I am grateful for my time at Unity Church in Albany because, little by slowly, this "Unity Truth" has taken root and grown in my mind and in my heart. I have been given (however rudimentary) "eyes to see."

Gratitude comes over me in waves: for health (no longer taken for granted), a good job, a warm home with a roof, a dog, friends, good food, warm clothes, time to work, play and rest.

Snow and dark become friends that allow me to huddle inside and enjoy being still. Work is a blessing, not a drudge. The long stretch of winter is a gift that gives me peace and freedom. Cold, walking home, lets me know that I am truly alive.

Thank you, God for your gift of new eyes to see "old" things in new ways. To see — to choose to see — past appearances and find the joy and peace in nearly every situation.

Board of Trustees

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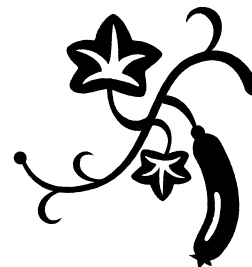
John Daubney's Sweet Potato- Squash Comfort Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 Large Butternut Squash,
- 2 Large Sweet Potatoes
- 1 29oz. can of Pumpkin
- 1 Large Sweet Apple
- 2 cups of apple juice
- 1 cup of vegetable or chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter
- 2 teaspoons of white vinegar
- ½ teaspoon of allspice
- ¼ tsp. cinnamon
- 1 small bay leaf

To roast vegetables - Halve and remove seeds from squash; slice and remove peels from sweet potato; Halve and remove seeds from apple. Place all the above in a baking dish and brush with olive or canola oil, salt, and pepper and roast in a 375° oven for about one hour or until soft.

Then place cooked veg. and apple in a soup pot and barely cover with juice or broth. Add spices, pumpkin and bring to a boil over high heat; reduce to simmer and mash vegetables and apple. At this point, after removing Bay leaf you can blend all or part of the mixture in a blender for a rich, creamy texture or simply mash with a potato masher. Continue to cook until full flavor develops. Add juice to thin to your desired consistency. Serve as-is or top with vanilla yogurt, sour cream or a dab of butter and sprinkle of nutmeg. This soup gets even tastier after a few days in the refrigerator. Enjoy!!!!



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. We now have a phone request line as well; listen for the voice mail option to press 14 to leave a confidential request.

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, Troy or Half Moon, there are church friends that would appreciate a ride to Sunday service. Please see Diane T. for more details.

In the meantime, training is available for volunteers who wish to visit others.

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

Financial Vision for 2010

PLANNING AND HOLDING A FINANCIAL VISION for our church is one part of the work of your board of trustees. The board invites you to join them in holding a financial vision of \$200,000+ in donations and other income for 2010. This is modest increase from last year’s income of \$194,196. This vision will allow us to pay salaries, maintain our building, and continue our many activities and programs. We are grateful to know that our thoughts and intentions are creating our reality. We thank each of you for your financial and prayer support during the past year, and we thank you in advance for helping us hold and achieve this financial vision for 2010.

Three Special Valentines continued—

purchase or make a Valentine’s Day card to share with someone in our congregation. This should be a Friendship Valentine, not a romantic one. Inside the card please write a personal message of appreciation and caring. I suggest that you think about how you have felt loved, appreciated, or supported by people of our church. Now write a note to an imaginary “friend” expressing appreciation for what you have felt. Thank them for their love, caring, support, acceptance or whatever positive feelings you have experienced. Sign the card “your friend.” Don’t write your name in the card and don’t put any name on the envelope. Put the card into the blank envelope and bring it to the church on or before February 14th. On the Valentine’s Day we will randomly pass these cards out to everyone present. Each person will receive a message of love and appreciation that reflects the genuine feelings of the people in our congregation. I invite you to accept whatever message you receive as a special message of love specifically intended for you.

May we all feel and express love for one another each day.

May every day be a Valentine’s Day for each of us.

Amen



5th Sunday Service: Celebration of Our Youth

EVERY 5TH SUNDAY of the month, Youth Education classes stay in the sanctuary for the service. Reverend Jim has set aside these Sunday’s to offer a special message for children, and the Inner Child within each of us. Plan on coming to these services and bringing the children in your life: family, friends, relatives, neighbors, and join in the Spirit of Light, Life, Love and Laughter as we Celebrate our Youth!

- May 30, 2010
- August 29, 2010

Sunday Afternoon Films

“Amazing Grace with Bill Moyers”

February 7th 12:30 – 2:00 PM

“Amazing Grace with Bill Moyers” is an inspiring look at a song that’s been recorded by more popular artists than any other hymn. From pop singer Judy Collins to opera star Jessye Norman to gospel singer Marion Williams and folk singer Jean Ritchie, these very diverse and moving performances were recorded on location across America. Along with the music the artists reflect on the power that “Amazing Grace” has had in their personal lives.

New Class with Reverend Jim

What Are You?

**Wednesdays, February 10 through April 7
(9 weeks)**

Imelda Octavia Shanklin was a Unity minister and writer in the early 1900’s. Imelda was trained and ordained by Charles and Myrtle Filmore, Unity’s co-founders. She worked for Myrtle Filmore from 1909 until 1925. In that year she was appointed editor in chief for all Unity publications. Her book *What Are You?* was first published in 1929. Written in a clear and understandable style, each page is filled with powerful ideas and teachings. Join Reverend Jim as he reexamines this New Thought classic.

Unity Book Club reading

“Let There Be Light: The Seven Keys”

by Rocco A Errico

February 21st

The Bible is more than anything else a Near Eastern account of spiritual events and teachings. Let There Be Light: The Seven Keys opens the door to the ancient Aramaic world from which the Bible emerged. Bypassing doctrinal creeds and rigid interpretations, Dr. Errico presents a broader understanding of Scripture without the restrictions of literal explanations. This book equips the reader with seven key insights to understand the allusions, parables, and teachings of the bible: (1) The Aramaic Language, (2) Idioms, (3) Mysticism, (4) Culture, (5) Psychology, (6) Symbolism, (7) Amplification.

Rev. Jim will lead a book discussion on February 21st.



Calendar

Musical Artist & Presenter:

Charley Thweatt



February 28 & March 1

Charley has been a favorite with Unity groups since the early 80’s, when he took a leap of faith and left his budding architecture career to tour full time with his spiritual concerts and workshops. The biggest influences on Charley’s spiritual path have been Unity, *A Course In Miracles* and seven years of touring with Alan Cohen’s workshops and retreats. You’ll find his many CDs and more about his transformative work at his website: www.musicangel.com.

“Chants Encounter” Concert & Spiritual Workshop

Sunday February 28th at 1:15 PM

Music is powerful. And in the hands and heart of this musician, our walls melt and the room becomes one.

Come join in this fun and moving evening program of music and connection with lots of opportunity to participate and sing along.

During some of Charley’s songs, we will touch into that sweet inner place of peace. And during others we will shift into full out joy and joining. No two concerts are alike. It’s always an in-the-moment event, with Charley listening for which song he is guided to play next.

In the second half Charley will switch gears and lead us in a short spiritual workshop exercise to take us deeper into who we are and see that in each other. Amazing moments are available in this experience, and in a very brief time you may even feel that sense of inner connection that usually comes only after attending an entire weekend retreat!

Admission: \$15 in advance and \$20 on the day of the event.

“The Heart of A Course In Miracles” Workshop

Monday March 1st at 7:00 PM

A Course In Miracles is a beautiful and powerful self-study spiritual course, which has inspired millions since it was published in 1975. This evening class is perfect both for first-timers, who would like an introduction to this material, as well as long-time students of the *Course*. We will use discussion, *Course In Miracles*-inspired music by Charley and two amazing workshop exercises to bring alive the principles found in this work. It's one thing to hear and read this information. However, the real power comes when we embody it through our own experience. And that's what will happen in this workshop. Charley has been learning from this material since the early 80's and is eager to share what he calls his “Course's Greatest Hits.” Plus, the connection and sense of oneness that floods the room will be profound. We will go beyond thinking about these principles. We will know them from the inside out. Come play!

Admission: \$15 in advance and \$20 on the day of the event.

Annual Meeting

Sunday March 7 at 12:15 PM.

This year's Unity Church Annual Meeting will be held Sunday March 7 at 12:15 PM. The meeting will include brief reports from Reverend Jim and board members. It will also include the election of two trustees to serve on the church board. Only church members can serve on the board or vote for trustees. The meeting itself is open to members and non-members alike.

“For The Bible Tells Me So”

March 14th 12:30 – 2:00 PM

Does God really condemn loving homosexual relationships? Is the chasm separating Christianity from gays and lesbians too wide to cross? These questions and more are answered in this award winning documentary which brilliantly reconciles homosexuality and Biblical scripture revealing that anti-gay bias is based on a misinterpretation of the Bible.



Dr Jon Mundy

Sunday, March 21st

9 & 11 AM Worship Services &

Sunday Workshop: 1:15-4:15 PM

“The Inner Teacher: Practicing the Principles of A Course In Miracles”



Jon Mundy, Ph.D. is an author, lecturer, minister, and as “Dr. Baba Jon Mundane” a standup philosopher/comedian. He met Dr. Helen Schucman (the scribe for *A Course in Miracles*) and Dr. William Thetford in 1973. They, along with Dr. Ken Wapnick, introduced Jon to *A Course in Miracles* in April 1975 – 15 months before its publication. Helen served as Jon's counselor and guide until she became ill in 1980. He was cofounder in 1981 of the New Seminary for the training of Interfaith Ministers and in 1989 the cofounder of Interfaith Fellowship. He currently serves the Unitarian Universalist Church in Middletown, NY, as their permanent part-time pastor. He has authored 8 books including “What is Mysticism?” “Missouri Mystic,” “Awaken to Your Own Call: A Comprehensive Introduction to A Course in Miracles,” “Listening to Your Inner Guide,” “The Ten Laws of Happiness,” “Money and Jesus,” “Search for the Center,” and “Learning to Die.” You can learn more about Jon at www.miraclesmagazine.org.

\$20 (by March 18th) \$30 thereafter

Future Events:

- **April 25-26 - Dr Michael Mirdad** (www.grailproductions.com).
- **Sunday Worship (9 & 11 AM)**
“Living The Christ Life”
- **Sunday Workshop (1:15-4:15 PM)**
“Understanding The Purpose Of Life's Tests”
- **Monday ACIM Gathering 7:00-9:00 PM**

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney

Sam House



It has been a delightful journey into the land of Unity for Sam House. You can see the evidence in his great smile, upbeat energy, and eagerness to extend himself for the benefit of others. Raised in the Midwest as a doctor-going Christian Scientist, he has swum in and out of the waters of new thought consciousness for longer than he can remember. Walking

life's path with an appreciation for oneness with the Divine and a celebration of the inherent wholeness of all beings is something that Sam has been engaged with for his entire life. And yet, the realizations that come with this path continue to arise with a new freshness that leaves him energized and hungry to engage with this path more deeply.

I MOVED AWAY from all formal church activity for many years, from my middle teenage years until my 30's. During that time, however, I pursued my own personal spiritual path with varying degrees of intensity. Born into a family with a very strong appreciation for the powerful way that life unfolds in its own perfect way—as a reflection of God's creative energies at play—I relished how the intersection of the divine and the worldly come together. As a Religious Studies major in college, I narrowed my focus to the religious traditions of Asia, diving deeply into the traditions of Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. Steeped in these traditions, I sought for ways to bring much of the richness of an Eastern approach to what I had considered earlier to be the "limitations" of the Christian tradition. Along with my wife Heather, I finally found that richness through our exposure to Unity. Coming to Unity was a breath of fresh air for both of us and we have relished the Unity experience ever since.

Soon after graduating from college, it was clear to me that a significant part of my spiritual path involved being of service to something beyond myself. With that in mind, I worked in some of the spiciest neighborhoods in Brooklyn as a social worker during the height of the crack era, at a time when New York City was experiencing some of the highest levels of violence, high school drop out rates, and teen

pregnancy it had ever seen. Making home visits in the war zones of the inner city revealed to me, over and over again, that the bright shining light of humanity is as strong in East New York as it is on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. In places and families where there was no reason to have hope or a sense of possibility arising from the conditions of those settings, I was surprised over and over again by the resilient, loving, and resourceful nature of remarkable people whom I was blessed to both serve and learn from. The personal value gained by serving something or someone beyond the self was cemented into my being in those early years.

Inspired by my parents' modeling of contributing to others, I have carried this notion of service to others forward in my own life, becoming a psychotherapist, in both outpatient and inpatient settings, in New York City and in the Capital District. Later, I took this personal commitment to service into the field of Executive and Personal Coaching and Leadership Development. Even though, as a coach, I honor my commitment to hold only the client's agenda and not my own, I acknowledge that, when appropriate, I subtly steer a clients' stated desires to have a fulfilling life toward a pathway that includes serving others, even if in only a very small way. I do this, knowing that when a person turns their focus toward serving another, their personal life challenges no longer seem so bad.

Coming to Unity Church, after unsuccessful ventures into other local Christian churches, has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my present life. Shortly after the arrival of Jim Fuller to Unity, I threw myself more fully into the Unity spiritual experience. Owing to this rich experience, I've also been re-discovering the valuable personal gain that springs from providing service to others in simple ways here at Unity. To that end, I'm still looking around for how I can do more to make a contribution to the Unity community. As a newly minted Powerpoint-sound-and-light guy, I'm currently engaged in supporting the Sunday services (with as few mistakes as possible!) from the back of the sanctuary, as I attempt to put the right slide up for the congregation at the right time while making sure that the lights and sound work well. In addition, I love to serve as an usher during the services. While these are simple tasks, they have also been a joyful way to connect to others and to contribute to the Sunday services. I invite anyone interested in ushering to give voice to such desire and share the chance to give back to Unity in this simple but meaningful way.

"In serving others I am serving the deep desire for wholeness within me. Love given is love received."

- Anonymous

Worth a Thousand Words!

*Welcoming Harmony
Grace Carone to our
congregation.*



*Small Business Fair,
January 17th*



*A Merry Christmas
was had by all!*



Food Pantry Winter Season Needs!

Now that the holidays are over, let's not forget our local food pantry. Donations are accepted all year, and especially appreciated during these cold, winter months. There is a basket in the Bradford Street lobby for your gifts of food items.

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
- _____
- _____

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:

- _____
- _____



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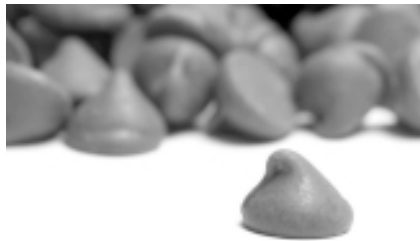
Phone: 518-453-3603

E-mail: unityalbany@yahoo.com

Web page: www.unitychurchinalbany.org

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,

WORSHIP SCHEDULE.

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

Ellen Elting is compiling pictures and other memorabilia for a Unity Church scrapbook. Send pictures to Ellen or call 459-0616 for more information.

Calling All Columnists!

Articles for the April/May edition of the newsletter can be submitted to Denise Klein at katzr3@nycap.rr.com by Sunday, March 21st. Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.