



The Messenger

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

Beyond All Pain And Fear



By Rev. Jim Fuller

OUR WEDNESDAY EVENING CLASS has been studying the classic Unity book *What Are You?* The title poses one of the most important questions each of us will ever answer. Your answer to this question determines not only how you will experience this life, but also how you will experience your transition away from this life and

into the next. Since you are reading this article you are already at least interested in spiritual ideas. Perhaps you tell yourself, "I am a spiritual being having a human experience." That's true and it's a great place to begin. The challenge is to move from this beginning place to a point where you begin experiencing yourself as something spiritual. Like learning to play a musical instrument, speak a new language or run a marathon this takes dedication and practice.

Most of us identify very strongly with our physical body and human personality. We think of these as "who we are." Bodies and personalities seem to represent the "natural" order of things, and in one sense they are. All of nature, including the physical and personality aspects of you, is a "natural" part of the collective experience we call life on earth. There is nothing wrong with this experience and there are many parts that we enjoy and cherish. But like an amusement park ride, life on earth appears to be a time limited experience. We pay our dollar and hop on the ride along with our friends and neighbors. Hopefully we enjoy the ups and downs, thrills and quiet times of the ride. But ultimately all things made

of time and matter must end. Perhaps we and our friends will hop back on and ride through life over and over. But will we mistake this ride and the world of bodies and personalities for reality? Will we forget that it's just an ever-changing ride and that beyond the gates of this amusement park there is something greater and more lovely?

Easter is a time when we remember Jesus' dramatic demonstration that what is real and eternal can't be limited or destroyed by the world of bodies and personalities. During his lifetime Jesus came to understand himself as far more than just a human being. That experience appears to have changed his perspective not just toward his life but toward all life. It appears that he became incapable of living or teaching anything other than pure spiritual truth. This shift often placed him in conflict with religious or political leaders and at times with his own disciples. This inner shift gave him the wisdom and the capacity to help transform others by what we call spiritual healing. And it prepared him to make his final and most powerful demonstration of our true nature as spiritual power. Jesus' spiritualized state of awareness empowered him to walk through apparent betrayal, injustice and even death without any need to defend himself or condemn others. All of this led to a resurrection in mind and body; and ascension into higher and more expansive realms of existence.

Most of us are still caught up in a self image that is dominated by body and personality. We experiment with the idea that we are spiritual beings; that we might be able to live more freely and fully here or

The President's Corner

By John Frederick



In case you haven't noticed, spring is here. Both officially — as in "The Vernal Equinox" took place at 1:32 PM on Saturday, May 20th" — and unofficially, as in "Isn't this weather beautiful? Let's throw open the windows and get outdoors to do some raking, walking or biking."

Winter is a great time for hibernation, going inward, snuggling up and closing down. When spring comes, I can't help but open up. I can't help but throw open windows, shrug off heavy clothing, put the top down and drink in the sunshine.

To me, the longer days, the increased sunlight and warmth, remind me that God's presence was always this close. The sun wasn't farther away in winter. This hemisphere had just tilted away from the sun....temporarily. Now, even though the earth is physically farther away from the sun, the tilt — the orientation — of this hemisphere is moving so that the sun's rays are becoming more direct.

The presence of the sun hasn't changed, just our orientation toward it. So too, my orientation toward God gets variable at times. I think that is a human trait that I'll never escape from while I'm still in this physical body.

When I naturally turn my face toward God, I feel Her warmth and radiance. The Course in Miracles says that Joy is the best evidence of our connection with God. I re-JOY-ce that spring is here. I rejoice when I orient my mind in God. I know that, in human form, these times can come and go....and come back again.

Thank you God, for your steady light.

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What is the Secret?

The secret is touch,
gentle touch, caring touch
for that touch knows no bounds.

What is the secret?
The secret is touch.
Whose touch? your touch, my touch,
The Lord's Touch.

The secret is touch.
A touch in the present
A memory of touch in the past
A knowing of touch yet to come.

What is the secret?
The secret is touch,
willing touch, able touch,
for that is the touch
that offers itself
to one and all.

Donna W. Britton / 21 Dec '09



Unity Church Cares

THANK YOU to everyone that has signed up for our new *UnityChurchCares* ministry. Your generosity of spirit is so appreciated! Fliers are located in the Bradford Street lobby, explaining our purpose and mission. If you feel called to volunteer, there is a yellow folder with a sign up sheet for your contact information. We will call if and when the need arises. As our list of helpers expands, so will our capacity to help others.

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.

Any questions or concerns regarding *UnityChurchCares* may be directed to Diane T. at 280-4311.

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

Beyond All Pain And Fear continued —

hereafter. But like a spring bud on a twig this idea has not yet come into full bloom. Perhaps we wonder how Jesus moved from the initial awareness of himself as a son of God to his ongoing experience of his oneness with God and his true Christ nature. What might happen if we prayerfully asked him or God about this? Could we get an answer? Might it show up in pieces, like stepping stones for us to follow? Might it show up as people and events that come into our lives and guide us to a place where we, like Jesus, finally realize what we are? Asking Jesus, God or the Intelligence behind all of creation is a great way to set your inner intention to learn and to move toward the awareness you seek.



Will this require giving up living in “the world”? I don’t know that answer, but I can’t imagine that we would lose freedom by making a choice for spiritual understanding. Based on my experience, I suspect that we will find even more liberated and liberating ways of living both here and hereafter. Both the Jewish/Christian and Hindu/Buddhist traditions share stories of those who consciously return to the world to teach and help others who remain trapped by appearances and beliefs. What might it be like to live here as one who is free from “laws” and limitations of the world? What might it be like to be able to share that freedom with those we know and love; and with new friends as well?

This Easter I invite you to consider these questions. If you feel led you might even ask Jesus (God or Universal Intelligence) the question: How shall I get from where I am now, experiencing myself as a physical being and a human personality, to an actual experience of my eternal nature as a spiritual creation, at one with my Creator (God) and with all of creation? I am certain that as we ask with increasing sincerity and willingness we will be taught and led. The answer and the way will open for us just as it opened for Jesus. For me this is the true meaning of following Jesus in the resurrection. This is not just resurrection of a physical body but a resurrection of mind and the conscious experience of our eternal Christ nature. And from that more liberated place in consciousness who knows what new freedom and blessings we will experience as we welcome God’s wisdom and answers into our minds and lives.

“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” Jesus (John 12:32)

Affirmation: Spirit am I, a holy child of God, free of all limits, safe and healed and whole, free to forgive, and free to save the world. (ACIM lesson 97, adapted)



Unity Book Club May-June selection

“The Three Only Things: Tapping the Power of Dreams, Coincidence & Imagination” by Robert Moss

Robert Moss is a modern mystic and the pioneer of *Active Dreaming*. He works with groups across the US and around the world teaching innovative techniques to open personal paths to creativity and healing, and helping others find and live life’s bigger story.

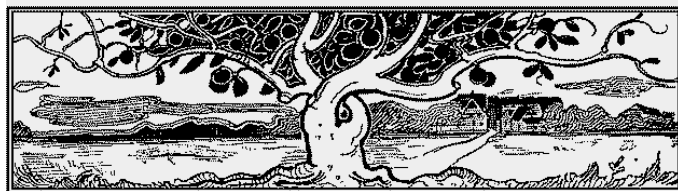
He is also a bestselling novelist, former foreign correspondent and history professor. Moss will speak at Unity Church on Thursday, May 13th. We will hold a Book Club discussion on his book on June 27th.

A Poem About “Others”

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I’ll meet you there.

When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase “each other”
doesn’t make any sense.

By Rumi



*May we welcome one another in that field today.
Have a blessed Easter!*

CALENDAR



Town Meeting

Sunday, April 11th – 12:30 to 1:30 PM

Town Meetings are your opportunity to learn more about what's happening at Unity Church, ask questions of our minister and board, and to offer your suggestions or comments. The purpose of Town Meetings is to promote good communication within our church community and keep in touch with the energy and direction of the group. Town Meetings are open to anyone who attends Unity Church.

Unity Book Club

Lunchtime Discussion

Sunday, April 18th at 12:45 PM

“Change Your Thoughts Change Your Life: Living the Wisdom of the Tao” by Dr Wayne Dyer

Five hundred years before the birth of Jesus the Chinese teacher known as Lao-tzu dictated 81 verses, which are regarded by many as the ultimate commentary on the nature of our existence. His text, called the Tao Te Ching or the Great Way, offers advice and guidance that is balanced, moral, spiritual, and always concerned with working for the good.

Dr. Wayne W. Dyer has reviewed many translations of the Tao Te Ching and written 81 essays on how to apply the Tao to today's modern world. Chapter titles include “Living with Flexibility,” “Living Without Enemies,” and “Living by Letting Go.” Rev. Jim and John Frederick will co-lead this lunchtime discussion.

The Tao of Unity

April 22, 29 & May 6

Thursdays 6:30-8:30PM

Facilitated by John Frederick

The class will use 2 basic texts: the “Tao Te Ching” translation by Stephen Mitchell and “The Tao of Pooh” by Benjamin Hoff. This will be a semi-structured class, led by where the group (and the Tao) wishes to lead us. Concepts to be explored will include Yin and Yang, Beginner Mind, Emptiness and Nothingness, Doing and Non-Doing, and the Uncarved Block.



Understanding The Purpose Of Life's Tests

Workshop with Dr. Michael Mirdad

Sunday, April 25th: 1:15-4:15 PM

Discover how everyone must walk, live and balance the two paths towards wholeness. Discover the difference between learning the easy way and the hard way. Learn how ancient civilizations use conscious intent to walk through the seven initiations into higher levels of awareness. Learn about the secret map to enlightenment that has always been used by initiates throughout history. (Love Offering \$35)

An Evening of Miracles

Lecture with Dr Michael Mirdad

Monday, April 26th 7:00-9:00 PM



This evening lecture is for ALL students of spirituality and healing. It is especially informative for students of A Course In Miracles.

Learn how to experience miracles, replace fear with love, heal relationships, practice forgiveness and receive healing and guidance. (Love Offering \$20)

Dr. Michael Mirdad has been a Spiritual Teacher, Healer, and Author for nearly 30 years. He is the author of the best-selling books: The Seven Initiations of the Spiritual Path, You're Not Going Crazy...You're Just Waking Up!, and An Introduction to Tantra and Sacred Sexuality. He has been featured as a keynote speaker in the world's largest Expos and Conferences, appeared on radio, television, and various Internet programs. He has also been featured in several magazines, including Whole Self Times, Sedona Journal, and Yoga Journal. Dr. Mirdad is respected for his ability to share the deepest teachings in a clear, applicable manner.

Learn more about him at: www.grailproductions.com



Learn how to recognize and harness the power of your dreams.

Nine Powers of Dreaming

With Robert Moss

Thursday, May 13th 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door

A dream can be an adventure playground, a night school, a garden of heavenly delights, a place of encounter with the more-than-human, a portal into the multiverse. It can be a place of healing, initiation, higher education & outrageous fun.

Robert Moss is a leading authority on dreams and dreaming. His is the creator of *Active Dreaming*, an original synthesis of shamanism and modern dreamwork. Born in Australia, Moss survived three near-death experiences in childhood and first learned the ways of a traditional dreaming people through his friendship with Aborigines. He leads seminars and trainings all over the world, including an online dream school at www.spirituality-health.com. A former professor of ancient history at the Australian National University, he is also a best-selling novelist, journalist and independent scholar. His seven books on dreaming and shamanism include *Conscious Dreaming*, *The Three "Only" Things: Tapping the Power of Dreams*, *Coincidence and Imagination*, *The Secret History of Dreaming* and *Dreamgates: Exploring the Worlds of Soul, Imagination and Life Beyond Death*. His website is www.mossdreams.com

Spring Class with Rev. Jim **"All About Unity"**

Wednesdays, May 5-26 at 7:15 PM

This four week class is an overview of Unity including its origins, evolution, and core teachings.

- *If you are new to Unity it is a great synopsis.*
- *If you have been in Unity it is a great review.*
- *It will also serve as our spring membership class.*

The class will help you understand and integrate your Unity connection. The recommended reading for this class is *"Unity A Quest for Truth"* by Eric Butterworth. It is required reading for anyone seeking church membership. To become a member of Unity Church you must

have attended church regularly for at least six months, read *"Unity A Quest for Truth"* and complete a membership class. You may retain membership in another congregation and also become a member of Unity.



How to Discover and Use Your Money Mantra

Workshop with Cary Bayer

Sunday, June 13th 12:15 – 2:45

At many of the 20,000 meals you ate growing up in your parents' home, you also imbibed their beliefs about money; many of them quite disempowering. Taken together, the most negative thoughts from your mother and the most negative from your father create your own Family Money Lie about money.

Your Money Mantra, on the other hand, is the empowering message that turns this lie on its head and enables you to transform your family's limiting message and begin creating the financial abundance you were born to enjoy.

In this class, *Prosperity Aerobics* author and Money Mantra Meditation founder Cary Bayer will help you develop your own personal Money Mantra. Moreover, he'll show you how to use this powerful message at home on a daily basis to more quickly attract real prosperity into your life.

Learn more about Cary at www.carybayer.com

Save These Dates!

Sunday July 11th • Church in the Park

Unity Fall Retreat, Sept. 17-18

Dominican Retreat House in Schenectady. Facilitator Marilyn Gawecke discusses "Self Compassion - The Path to Universal Peace".

Starting with dinner through Saturday, September 18 ending with dinner. Presenter: Marilyn Gawecke. Our Tentative Title: Self Compassion: the Path to Planetary Peace.

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney



Gerri Ann Laiacona

To say that Gerri Ann Laiacona is energetic is like saying The New York Yankees are a team that plays baseball; it just doesn't do justice to her reality. Geri's passion for what she believes in and for the many ways she has provided service has helped make our church the dynamic community it is today. As she will tell you, however, she receives much more than she ever gives.

I LIKE TO TELL PEOPLE I drove over 3000 miles to find Unity. I had been living in Albany but in September of 2001, after resigning my job and selling my home, I set out alone for California. Something was calling me. I eventually settled in Walnut Grove where one day in February of 2002 a friend asked me if I would like to go with her to hear some beautiful music. I said "Yes" and that became my introduction to Unity Church. That "Yes" has made all the difference in my life. Little did I know that I would find Unity when I arrived in California: Spirit has such a good sense of humor! This "find" has made such an impact on my life that I liken it to an awakening.

The people at Unity in Walnut Creek seemed very involved in *their* church. It seemed to me like everyone had a role and did things joyfully, pretty much like a contented family, all pitching in to get the work done. I looked around and wanted this for myself. I started off taking a few classes and volunteering during hospitality, and then in the bookstore, helped out at the annual dinner, went on a women's spiritual journey weekend as a gift from a congregant, attended classes, and just had a ball. We had fun, I was grateful, and I increasingly learned more about myself in everything I took part in. It was a spiritual deepening that allowed me to bloom. I was being fed spiritually so I naturally wanted to give back.

After a year in California, I was ready to return to

New York. Suzanne, the assistant minister, located Unity in Albany in her directory for me. It was not far from Sand Creek Rd where I once lived! When I returned in December I was initially a bit hesitant because I was missing Unity in Walnut Creek very much and there wasn't a minister here at the time. It didn't feel the same. In fact I was thinking, "This isn't for me" when someone told me that a *Rev Jim Fuller* would be arriving the next month. In January I returned and as they say - *The rest is history.*

I soon discovered the same spirit in Albany that I thought I had left behind in Walnut Creek. I also began to make friends as I became more involved with classes and service to the church. Unity teachings inspired me to go inside and heal; then give back as a way to say, "Thanks." Being a spectator is not for me; I believe we are here for one another. I also believe that a collective approach lightens the burden and grows a community. I have taken part in several volunteer activities here: hospitality, serving on the board, healing services, and others. I have gotten to know my fellow congregants in a deeper way through service and it affords me other ways to know God – through relationships and through expression of the Self. Now-a-days, I am involved with the bookstore and with the annual retreat ... and on occasion a tap on the shoulder during service and I become an usher. Who knows what is next? I love Unity Church and I am abundantly blessed because I said "yes."

The *Web* defines *service* as "work ... that benefits another." My definition would go on to say it benefits the giver even more. It opens you to a new awareness and moves you in a new direction. It is like coming to the fork in the road and taking the new path to an unknown place of great possibilities. It allows you to express who you are which is love. Someone once said to me, "You know everyone" – well, I don't – yet. Unity teaches us that the Christ presence is in each of us and that we are all connected. I believe that working together helps the Christ in you and I come *alive* in a more meaningful way. I just love Mother Theresa's response when asked about her service: "We can do no great things, only small things with great love." Unity at Albany can really use the "small thing" you can offer "with great love". So, join in, share your *love* and experience the *joy of service*. It is amazing how one grows and opens to new possibilities through service.

Bulletin Board



- **The Bookstore Needs You** - Please consider helping in the bookstore once a month. Your help would be most appreciated. All the workers in the bookstore thank you for your consideration. Talk to any book store volunteer, Genie McFarlane, John Reith, Deb Singer, or Geri Ann Laiacona and we will get you signed up! Geri Ann will give you a brief training and you will be ready to assist our fellow congregants with their bookstore purchases and library loans. We looking forward to having you join our team!
- **Have you noticed the new Bulletin Board downstairs on your way to the fellowship hall?** This is a place for our church family to get to know one another and share news!
 - **Do you need a ride to church**, or know someone who does? Post your information on the board (paper and pens are available) for others to see. This is a great way to be of service to one another and meet new friends.
 - **Do you volunteer in your community?** Would you like a friend to help you? Share what you do on the board, and list your contact information so others may get involved as well. Another great way to be of service and meet new friends.
 - **Do you have special news to share?** New baby? New home? New job? Inquiring minds want to know!
 - **This is our Bulletin Board**, so please post and share each week!
- **Ellen Elting is compiling pictures** and other memorabilia for a Unity Church scrapbook. Send pictures to Ellen or call 459-0616 for more information. Photos are also needed for the newsletter and the website..
- **E-mails are still being accepted** for the Unity Church distribution list. Submit yours to the office if you would like to be included!

They say there's a novel inside of everyone . . . is there an article for our next newsletter inside of you? If there is, let it out!

Articles for the June/July edition of the newsletter can be submitted to Denise Klein at katzr3@nycap.rr.com by Sunday, May 23rd. Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.

Food Pantry Needs Daily Bread & More!



Now that the winter months are over, let's not forget our local food pantry. Donations are accepted all year, in the basket in the Bradford Street lobby. Thank you always!

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.

Happy Spring!

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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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

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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
- October 31, 2010