



The Messenger

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

Smiling Trees and Other Things of God



By Rev. Jim Fuller

DRIVING DOWN Central Avenue one day I noticed a woman walking down the sidewalk on the opposite side of the road. She was neither beautiful nor stylishly dressed yet my attention was drawn toward her. As I passed by she turned in the direction of my car and smiled a most lovely smile. I felt as if an

angel had just smiled at me. I have had this experience before, seeing something beautiful and spiritual in ordinary human beings and feeling a sense of God-connection with them. I have also had similar experiences with trees, the sky and even rocks. While trees or rocks may not actually smile, the aliveness in them is palpable and "friendly."

Unity has always taught that God is present everywhere and in all things. Charles Fillmore often said that all physical substance (solid matter) is made of God-substance and that God-substance would conform itself based on whatever images were held in mind. This means that all the many physical forms we see are simply God or Spiritual substance taking on shape based on images and ideas held in mind. God inspired ideas and images produce the highest, most perfect and most pleasing forms. Ideas that we have "adjusted" to suit our more limited personal beliefs will produce similar but perhaps less ideal forms. But regardless of the form the content will al-

ways be the same, God or Spiritual substance.

We all have the innate capacity to experience inspired impulses or images, God ideas. An inner idea may direct you toward a helpful book, or perhaps you will be reading a novel and find a helpful idea arising as you read. You may feel drawn to call a friend, take a different route home or reschedule a trip or appointment, notice these. Some God-impulses may seem small or insignificant; they may not appear to lead you anywhere, but don't stop noticing. Other impulses may help notice something of interest or beauty, or even set your life on a totally new course. Some God ideas may be there to protect you. Several years ago my wife Kay was commuting to work on a busy expressway. She felt an inner impulse to change

lanes which she did; moments later a piece of heavy furniture fell off a truck and landed in the lane she had just been driving in. God is always present as guiding wisdom and as well as inspiring ideas. Attending to and following our inner impulses requires willingness and practice, and it is always helpful.

Some God-impulses may seem small or insignificant; they may not appear to lead you anywhere, but don't stop noticing.

What might your life be like if every morning you said: "Okay God, I'm interested and willing to experience more of you in my life."? Or, "I'm interested in noticing the guidance and wisdom that is available for me today. I'm interested in sensing your spirit in the people and things around me. I'm interested and willing to have some God experiences today." If you

Reserve now for Fall Retreat

Self Compassion: The Path towards Planetary Transformation

Friday, September 17 through Saturday, September 18.

Time: Retreat starts with 5:30 pm Dinner on Friday and ends with dinner on Saturday. To attend retreat, the overnight commitment is required.

Place: Dominican Retreat House & Conference Center, 945 Union Street, Schenectady, NY

Cost: \$175.00 (includes room, meals, and presenter/materials).

Reservation Deposit: \$75 (checks made out to to UNITY CHURCH)

Questions: Contact Unity Church at 453-3603

Please note: Register early to reserve your place as rooms are limited.

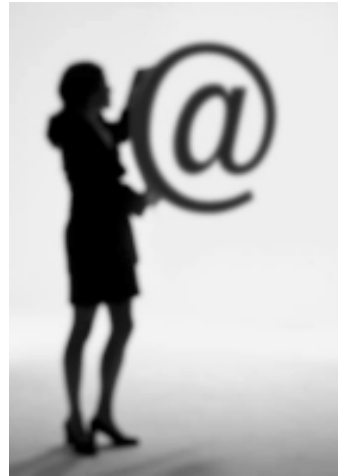
About the Speaker: Marilyn Gewacke, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist, motivational speaker and non-denominational minister. In addition to her Albany private practice she also is involved in creating spiritual retreats for increasing and enhancing “soul wisdom” and sacred awakening. Her retreats and workshops are dynamic and inspirational for anyone going anywhere on the path of life. She is currently working on completing her book entitled, “*Living from the Inside Out: Soulful Steps for Sacred Living*”. This book outlines her new and groundbreaking psychospiritual paradigm for self and soul wellness and planetary transformation.

About the program: *Self Compassion: The Path towards Planetary Transformation:* *We are experiencing one of the most if not the most important evolutionary times on this planet. We have amazing opportunities not only to take part but to shape this planetary transformation. Through self compassion we allow room for reawakening and remembering the true purpose of who we are and empower ourselves to become part of this global spiritual awakening. This retreat will offer people an opportunity for experiencing this deeper self realization and soul awakening so that we can align and attune ourselves to our true “God” source within.*

Experiential offerings:

- 1-creating a safe sacred community for sharing and awakening
- 2-techniques for the self compassionate journey
- 3-rituals for releasing old patterns and beliefs
- 4-meditation, music and movement
- 5-rejuvenation exercises
- 6-community commitment ceremony

Bulletin Board



- **The Bookstore Needs Volunteers-** Please consider helping in the bookstore once a month. Your help would be most appreciated. Speak to Geri Ann Laiacona at 445-1180 for more information.

- **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!

- **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!

- **June 13 is the Gay Pride Parade and Festival-**we need volunteers for our information table and pa-

Board of Trustees

President. ...	Heather Diddel ('13)	475-9604
Vice Pres. ...	Pamela Coles ('11)	764-3783
Treasurer	Sheila Healy ('13)	434-1517
Secretary	Diane Teutschman ('12)	280-4311
Trustee	Bill Hewson ('12)	686-7990
Trustee	John Frederick ('13)	486-5689

Remember the Food Pantry each week

As we head full speed into summer, 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.

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:

- _____
- _____

Smiling Trees and Other Things of God continued —

say something like this with even a small amount of sincerity you will begin to notice interesting shifts in your life. And the more consistently you pray or give voice to your intent, and then look for responses to your prayer, the more the world around you will come alive.

Everything in Creation, which literally includes every person and every thing, has its origin in God and is alive with God. If we are not witnessing the God in someone or something we are missing its true nature and its true beauty. Imagine walking through a world where everything is alive with God, where the Presence of Spirit smiles back at you from every face, and tree and rock. This summer I invite you to take a few moments each day to invite the Presence of God to reveal itself to you; in people, in trees and rocks, in ideas and in images. Notice the impulses that arise within you and explore them. Notice where you feel led, and also notice when the idea of stop or no arises. There is a lot more going on around you and within you than you are presently aware of. In Jesus' words "the Kingdom of God is at hand," and is here for you to experience and enjoy as you practice inviting it into your daily awareness.

Infinite Intelligence, present everywhere; help me to notice and appreciate your presence in all people, in all things, and in me. Thank you. 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!

- August 29, 2010
- October 31, 2010



Coming Events

For The Bible Tells Me So

Wednesday, June 9th at 7:00 PM

*Does God really condemn loving same sex 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 LGBT issues and the Bible revealing that anti-gay bias is based on a misinterpretation of scripture.

Free and open to the public



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 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 Bayer at www.carybayer.com

Your investment \$20

Book Club Discussion on:

The Three "Only" Things

By Robert Moss

Sunday, June 27th at 11:45 AM

Facilitated by Rev Jim Fuller

Church in the Park

Sunday, July 11

at John Boyd Thatcher State Park

We are holding a vision for our traditional Church in the Park as scheduled. Stay tuned as we await updates on the state budget vote which will reopen Thatcher Park by July.

Services at 9:30 & 11:00 AM

Picnic Lunch at noon

Special Church in the Park Event!

Discovering the Sacredness of Breath and

Sound: A Spiritual Sound and Breath

Meditation Workshop a workshop with Phil

Shiva Jones

July 11th / 1:30 – 3:30 • Workshop cost: \$20

Australian interfaith minister and recording artist Phil Jones will present an interactive workshop teaching meditation and simple breathing techniques with the Australian didgeridoo. The didgeridoo is an ancient mesmerizing drone instrument made from a eucalyptus tree and traditionally played in ceremony and healing by the Aboriginal clans of Australia. Playing the didgeridoo creates soothing and resonant harmonics that easily erase the 'monkey chatter' in the mind – enhancing mental clarity and emotional equanimity.

No musical experience is necessary. All participants will be provided an instrument to play during the workshop.

Phil was the lead singer and songwriter of the renowned English band Quintessence (Island Records/RCA), where he pioneered the merging of sacred Sanskrit mantras into a modern musical format during the late 1960's and 1970's. As an interfaith minister and singer, he speaks and performs at churches and spiritual fellowships, universities, yoga studios and wellness centers across the USA.

Kirtan (Chanting) with Shubalananda

Saturday, July 31 at 7:30 PM

This will be an evening of chanting sacred Sanskrit prayers. These prayers of love and devotion to God are simple, beautiful and easy to sing. No previous singing experience is necessary. This kirtan is presented on a love-offering basis.

Future Events:

Faerie Elaine Silver

“Coffee House” Concert

Saturday, August 22nd at 7:30 PM (\$15)

“The Passion Test”

Sunday, August 23 at 12:15 PM (\$30)

Find your passions and your purpose to lead you to your personal destiny!

Unity Book Club Reading for July & August

“Even Mystics Have Bills To Pay” by Rev. Jim Rosemergy. **Discussion on October 24th**

September Class

“Even Mystics Have Bills To Pay” with Rev Jim Fuller
Wednesday evenings: **Sept. 1 – 22 at 7:15**

Gregg Levoy

Sunday, September 12th 9:00 & 11:00 AM

“Callings” workshop at 1:15

Gregg Levoy is the author of *Callings: Finding and Following an Authentic Life* (Random House.) He has been a Keynote Speaker at Unity's National Convention and several Regional Unity Conferences. He speaks and teaches at Unity churches across the country.



Unity's Silver Screen Series

“Henry Poole Is Here”

Friday, June 25th at 7:00 PM

Henry Poole just wants to be left alone in his misery, but a stain on his new stucco house looks a lot like the face of Jesus and that changes everything. Starring: Luke Wilson, Radha Mitchell, Adriana Barazza, and George Lopez Rated PG (free)

“All About Jesus” Film Series

From Jesus to Christ & The Consciousness of the Christ

Wednesdays (7/14-8/11) at 7:15 PM &

Sundays (7/18-8/15) at 11:45 AM

We will begin with “From Jesus to Christ”, four sixty-minute episodes that chronicle how Christianity evolved from a Jesus led movement inside Judaism into a separate and eventually competing religion. This PBS Frontline series offers excellent insights into the confusing and often conflicting teachings of various New Testament writers. It will also help you understand how Jesus' followers and their successors understood Jesus and how our Bible was created. The presenters are all respected main stream Bible scholars.

We conclude with “The Consciousness of the Christ” an 80 minute independent film by New Thought minister and film maker Kell Kearns. This film, much of which was shot in the holy lands, offers a spiritual perspective on the life of Jesus that is very similar to Unity's.

Each video will show first on Wednesday evening and again on the following Sunday. These films are suitable for older kids, nothing objectionable.

“Emmanuel's Gift”

Friday, July 23 at 7:00 PM

If you are born disabled in Ghana, West Africa you are likely to be poisoned, or left to die by your family; if not you're likely to be hidden away in a room or to spend your life begging on the streets. This was not to be the fate of Emmanuel Ofofu Yeboah. This 2005 documentary chronicles his early life and his work empowering persons with disabilities. Rated G (free)

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney



Bonnie Kriss

Like so many of us, Bonnie got here at the end of a long spiritual search. Her gratitude has shown itself through the many volunteer activities she has taken part in since first coming to Unity. She sees service as an opportunity to expand and nurture her spirituality as well as a chance to be part of creating a loving environment within our church.

SPIRITUALITY IS A BIG PART OF MY LIFE ... and Unity Church in Albany is a big part of that spirituality. Service is also a big part of my life ... and service is a big part of that spirituality.

The word spirituality was never in my vocabulary until 10-12 years ago when I explored books written by Ilanya Vanzant and Marianne Williamson, along with "Conversations with God." Many of the readings referred to "A Course in Miracles" and, although I was curious about the Course, it took a little while to actually show up in my life. Through ACIM study groups, many like-minded individuals came into my life; one being Marti Bryer who became my friend and massage therapist and who thought I might enjoy Unity Church in Albany.

We started visiting Unity soon after Rev. Jim became minister, attended off and on for a few years, and then in the spring of 2004 my husband Ted and I became members. We both knew this was our spiritual "home." The upbeat, loving, affirming message was very healing for me. It helped too that there are several parallels between Unity and ACIM for which I am still a student. Both have had a huge influence on me ... this is my spiritual path for life!

Although it is hard to remember at times that the "preacher" is not the church, I quickly learned that the people at Unity supplied the atmosphere and the energy. It was easy to *want* to get involved with volunteering, starting with hospitality and ushering. Meeting more like-minded people was an absolute joy! One of the most

influential times for me was when Jackie Hawkins invited me to run for the Board of Trustees. I was very moved with her explanation of the *prayerful* way the Board did business and knew that serving my church was a further and deeper step on my spiritual path. This became another wonderful and important decision as to how I would choose to live my life.

The Trustee experience (2007 to 2010) brought so many opportunities to be of service, and opportunities to grow and stretch: from being a platform assistant to being in charge of hospitality; from developing the church directory to being in charge of outreach/inreach; and from cleaning windows to being in charge of special events. My time on the Board allowed me to become a part of the pulse of our church. Our little church has so many opportunities available to be of service but most importantly, opportunities to grow spiritually. For me, actually *being* of service is a way to grow spiritually, not to mention the growth that results by participating in the many classes that are available. We at Unity are so very fortunate!

Service became a part of my life after my children had grown, when in my desire to give back to the community, I became a Hospice volunteer. I had found a new and very meaningful life after 25 years of working at GE. I then was able to marry my skills *and* desires together by going to work for Hospice in addition to volunteering. This path included an "eye-opening" visit to Hospice patients while traveling with a group of volunteers in South Africa. I am also grateful that another door to service has now opened for me at a local two-bed comfort care residence for the terminally ill—a dream job for me.

Today, I can't imagine my life without service, for service is both meaningful and fulfilling. It is true that "giving is receiving"! And, doesn't God want us to help each other, to be there for each other, and to join with each other? How can we love and not share or extend that love?

This chapter in my life—the *spirituality chapter*—differs from other chapters. I grew up Catholic and attended 12 years of Parochial School. As an adult, I grew away from the Church and later started "seeking." When I joined up with Ted, we became very involved in the Methodist Church. We married in the Methodist Church, well ... not exactly ... a Methodist minister married us on a skip-jack —an almost extinct wooden sailboat—out on the Chesapeake Bay! But that's a whole other chapter!

Although my term on the Board ended earlier this year, it does not mean that my service to church has ended. I am now involved with "UnityChurchCares," a ministry to those in need within the congregation. There are always ways to be of service! I have faith that another path will be presented to me. It's all part of the Divine Plan!

A Word Fitly Spoken

By Billie Freeman

WE HAD JUST PLACED a “For Sale” sign in our front yard when a friend and neighbor said: “My, but you picked a bad time to put your house up for sale. Right around the block from you there are two houses that have been for sale for months. Houses here do not seem to be moving at all.”

Do remarks like these sound familiar? Do they remind you of things you have heard or said?

For instance, concerning the house—which was sold all in good time and to the satisfaction of everyone concerned—the thought planted by the negative remark did not make us happier or more relaxed about the whole transaction.

Perhaps as you read these words, you will think of times when you were guilty of speaking the wrong words or of saying something that did not add to a situation. Do not waste time and energy by going back in thought or wishing that you could retract your words. Rather, determine to start where you are and make the words of your mouth and the meditation of your heart acceptable in God’s sight.

Try starting your day with an idea, a word, a meditation that is positive, uplifting and inspiring.

Keep your ears open to the words you speak. Listen to them.

I tried it; I listened to myself one day from the first words I spoke in the morning until the last words I spoke that night. Even as I listened to myself, I became more aware of the tone and the inflection of the words themselves. In order to speak in the way I wanted to speak, to express the ideas I wanted to express, I needed to be certain of the meditations of my

heart. I found that to pray about the words of my mouth was the best way to establish myself in a right way of speech.

God within you knows the sincerity of your heart and your true desire, and divine wisdom will give you the words to convey your ideas to others in ways which will not disturb or distress them, in ways which will not plant worry or doubt. When your words are constructive, you find that your reaction to them is constructive. If throughout the day you express only positive ideas through good words, the end of the day will find you feeling unsurpassably content. Why? Because in order to speak helpful words, you must first have constructive thoughts, and these have an inward influence as you voice them.

When I think of the importance of our words, I think of Jesus. The words that he spoke led others to follow Him, to leave their way of life and to live a better, more fruitful life. The words that he spoke brought a friend back to life. The words that he spoke fed the multitude. The words that he spoke gave a thief new hope. They must have been well-chosen, helpful, love-filled words. We could never think of the man Jesus as complaining, bemoaning his fate or gossiping.

Like Jesus, you can keep yourself in tune with God. You can learn to be patient with yourself; you can learn to watch and to listen. As you learn to center your thoughts in God, your words will be more loving, helpful, and constructive. To watch your words does not suggest that you must be tight-lipped and disapproving. Quite the opposite! You can be a person of understanding, a person who loves and enjoys others, a person who perceives the real, true selves of others.

As you watch your words, you will prove to yourself how much of God’s goodness is in the world about you, in others—and how much of God’s goodness is in you!

Author Billie Freeman was the wife of James Dillet Freeman, Unity’s noted poet and creator of The Prayer for Protection. Article reprinted with permission from the Unity website at <http://www.unity.org/prayer/inspirationalArticles/aWordFitlySpoken.html>

Calling all writers!

Articles for the August/September edition of the newsletter can be submitted to Denise Klein at katzr3@nycap.rr.com by Sunday, July 18th. Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.



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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!*



Coming Soon!
Summer Coffee House &
Open Mic Night
Date TBA
\$5 admission

WORSHIP SCHEDULE.
One Service at 10 a.m.
Childcare & Classes
at 10 a.m.