



The Messenger

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



By Rev. Jim Fuller

Partnering With God

MANY PEOPLE try to imagine what it would be like to have a rich and dynamic spiritual life. They imagine a life filled with positive synchronicities and a clear vision for the path that lies ahead. They feel motivated as they read books or attend classes and talks. But for some the path toward this rich and creative spiritual life seems long and unclear. One reason may be that people often only partially commit to their spiritual life. Interest, curiosity and even excitement are not the same as commitment. This month I offer a few simple but concrete ways to step up your spiritual development by stepping up your commitment to serve. Partnering with God through committed acts of service is one of the most powerful ways I know to step up spiritual growth.

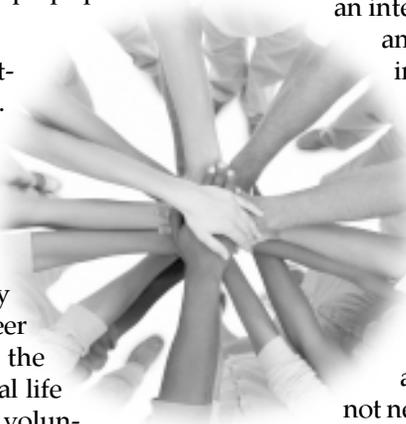
Consider this; you may love to attend sporting events or to watch them on television. Watching and cheering from the sidelines is great fun but it's not same as stepping onto the playing field and getting into the game. No matter how enthusiastically you cheer you will never score a touchdown or hit a home run until you actually step onto the field and play ball. Volunteer and service work is one way to step into the game and turn your interest in the spiritual life into a real commitment. While any type of volunteer or service work can be rewarding I suggest that you notice the places where you feel or sense God working in your life and commit to some service work there. When I do this I feel that I am "partnering *with* God." Whether you serve at our church or another or through some spiritual study group does not matter. What does matter is that you make a choice to partner with God by stepping into the game and actively supporting an organization through

your service work. And please, do your best to check your ego at the door as you step up to serve. Real service isn't about being noticed, looking spiritual to others, or even being a leader; it's about being in service to others.

Another way of serving is through intentional and committed giving. Those who adopt tithing or some form of committed giving as a spiritual practice consistently report that their decision to "financially partner with God" produces results that far exceed their expectations. Where you choose to give and the amounts you commit are strictly between you and your Creator. Again, I encourage giving to the teachers and institutions where you experience God touching or teaching you personally. By giving to these groups you are partnering with God to keep that spiritual channel open both for yourself and for others. Making an intentional commitment to give a tithe or set amount on a regular basis is a real step up in thinking and doing for most people. And when it is done with appreciation and commitment for what is also being received it always generates positive results.

Charles Fillmore once wrote, "Unity is a link in the great educational movement inaugurated by Jesus Christ; our objective is to discern the Truth in Christianity and prove it. The Truth that we teach is not new neither do we claim special revelations or discovery of new religious principles. Our purpose is to help and teach mankind to use and prove the eternal Truth taught by the Master." Unity continues to focus its efforts on education through its churches and through classes and retreats at Unity Village.

The Unity movement needs members and leaders who are both committed and educated. Unity's Personal Development Program is a wonderful way to move deeper through



The President's Corner

By Heather Diddel

SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, I made my way from the sanctuary to Fellowship Hall to grab some tea and good talk after the Sunday service. Nearing the downstairs rooms, I slowed down, quieted my mind, and listened. I was struck by the happy, high energy permeating the church -- from the sanctuary through the hallway, down the stairs and throughout the fellowship area in the basement, in the library and out in the garden. It reminded me of both the quiet, sturdy buzz of a thriving beehive, and a board meeting last year where we discussed our vision for different ministries of the church. One of the images that materialized was of the church humming like a beehive, with joyful enlivening energy. And voila – many months later, there it was. Just as envisioned. And growing beyond that vision.

Vision is an interesting thing. In terms of physical vision, I am near-sighted and have been for many years. I started out with a pair of sky blue plastic, "cat eye" glasses in third grade (sometimes, there is no explanation for taste, is there?) and wore those glasses as rarely as possible. I didn't like the idea that my vision was different than other kids' and even worse, that I might end up wearing glasses like my dad, all the time. Over the years, I have indeed seen my vision change (along with my ideas of suitable eyeglass frames) as well as my perspective on that. I have also noticed how my "vision" in other areas of my life has changed over time.

Even as I have seen how our physical vision may (but

doesn't have to) diminish over the years, I have become increasingly aware of the power of holding bigger and stronger visions for ourselves, our families and our world. I now see the extraordinary possibilities that are created when we dare to hold big visions for our lives and our communities, and dare to let those visions unfold.

Are you someone who has a practice of "visioning" what you want to have in your life? Or are you more like I have often been, unaware even of the value of trying to tap into and claim a vision? Have you ever had the experience of intentionally "visioning" with others? If not, it's an experience worth trying.

In my time with Unity, particularly in the last 2 ½ years on the Board, I have learned to ask Spirit for what wants to unfold, and to wait and see what answers show up. That's one of the methods of accessing spiritual guidance that Rev. Jim has guided the Board to use in our work as leaders and members of this community. And sometimes, the answers can be quite surprising! It was during one of those times of asking for guidance that the image of the church humming with the healthy enlivening energy of a beehive materialized. It is quite touching to feel the aliveness of that vision growing.

As you may have heard, we are going to have a chance to vision together, as a church community, on Sunday, October 17, 2010. Come and join us, and let's find out what our shared vision is for the Church as we move forward. When we as a community look to Spirit for guidance about the vision that now calls us, anything is possible...

• Science, God, & Consciousness •••••

A speaker series presented by Bethany Gonyea and Healing Springs

"The Science of Making Things Happen: Turn Any Possibility Into Reality"

Sunday, October 24th 1:15-4:15 PM • Kim Marcille Romaner, author

The universe is designed to deliver whatever possibilities you desire, for your personal life, career, business or spiritual lives. In this time together, Kim will share the scientific keys to acquiring a consciousness that helps us align our will with the universe to amplify our desires into reality. A mind-bending yet easy-to-understand exploration of the realm of possibility will re-energize you, remind you of your own incredible power, and give you a set of cutting edge tools to create whatever future you desire. (Suggested donation \$25)

• Waking Up Consciousness Through Gnosis Meditation and Tibetan Dream Yoga •••••

Sunday, November 14th 1:15-3:15 • Patrick Donovan of the Saratoga Gnosis Center

Tibetan Dream Yoga techniques are done to maintain consciousness while sleeping and dreaming, so dream interpretation becomes unnecessary. Dreams do have a language, but it does not use the same language that we use in everyday life. If we are conscious while we are dreaming, we don't need intellectual dream interpretation, because consciousness is a way of knowing without having to "think" everything through. (Suggested donation \$20)

John Daubney, Author

Sunday, December 5th, 12:45 pm, following the 11 am service.

Our own John Daubney will do a talk and book signing to celebrate the release of his inspiring book, *“Those Who Walk with Fire: Everyday People Discuss the Passion that Fuels their Everyday Lives”*

The presentation, in which he will read excerpts from his book followed by a book signing, will take place in the church sanctuary. The book, which has taken five years to complete, is comprised of 33 in-depth discussions with people from various walks of life (including some of our own Unity in Albany members) talking about various aspects of their passionate lives. From them you will learn:

- How the seed for a particular passion gets planted.
- The impact of personal spirituality on passion.
- Healthy versus unhealthy passion.
- How to connect to one’s passion.
- What is required to follow a passionate path.
- The benefits of living a passionate life.
- How our healthy passion can impact the world about us.

A Halloween Invitation to All

Sunday, October 31, 2010 for a fun gathering after the 11:00 service, at the Church

By Heather Diddel

Whatever for?? There’s a bit of a story . . . Over the summer, the Board decided it would be fun to read a book together; we chose one that is connected to our growth as a community of people walking their spiritual paths. The book is great: Neale Donald Walsh’s *Friendship with God*. It’s an easy and intriguing read.

We quickly realized that it would be even MORE fun if some or all of you read the book and came to the gathering to talk, listen, and share questions and thoughts about its powerful message. I don’t know about you, but in my years of church before Unity, I wasn’t taught about “friendship” with God. It’s a potentially life-changing perspective, and at the very least, fun to look into and see whether it calls you.

Where Can I Get this Book? At our very own bookstore, as well as through well-known bookstores.

Do I actually have time to read this book? Absolutely. It’s quick, interesting and enjoyable. How many things can you say that about these days?

Hope to see you there!

Partnering With God —



spiritual education. It will prepare you to serve more effectively in your church and community. The Personal Development Program (PDP) is a series of 25 classes designed to help you understand and integrate Unity’s teachings. These classes are offered on line, at Unity Village (spring, summer & fall), and at regional trainings. They are generally

taken over a period of several years. PDP includes The Quest which many at our church have already completed. I will be offering a PDP class later this winter. Completing the Personal Development Program also opens the door to Unity’s Licensed Teacher (Lay Minister) and Ministry Programs; two more powerful ways to partner with God through serving.

Every path you follow will move you toward a destination. In this world there are many paths to select from. Some have thrills or excitement as their goal. Some focus on money or success. Others move you toward expanded awareness, spiritual consciousness. Each of us will explore many paths during our life and enjoy the good each has to offer. However if we want to reach the ultimate goal of the spiritual path, to experiencing our own noble, powerful and connected nature, we must commit to that path. Every time we choose to step onto the playing field and consciously partner with God we accelerate the pace of our spiritual growth. We move in the direction of and closer to our ultimate goal, the doorway to the Infinite Divine, the Kingdom of Good.

“Whoever wishes to be great among you must become a servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be a servant; just as the Son of Man (this human being) came not to be served but to serve...” (Matthew 20:26-8)

*May we each find and commit to our paths of service.
May we choose to partner with God and in doing so find
Heaven’s open door and our Creator’s welcoming love.
Amen.*

Unity Retreat 2010

Thanks to everyone who participated in this year’s retreat and for making it such a success.

A special thanks to Nancy and Rene for all their help.

Save the Date for 2011

Unity’s 4th Annual Retreat October 28th - October 29th

Calendar Of Events

Fall Class with Rev. Jim “You Can Heal Your Life”

**Wednesdays, October 13 through
December 15 at 7:15**

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

Please begin reading the book (at least the introduction and first chapter) before attending the first class. Books (including audio books), affirmation cards and other materials are available in our bookstore.

You Can Heal Your Life: The Movie



Wednesday October 6th at 7:00 PM

You Can Heal Your Life: The Movie is hosted by Louise Hay and offers an intimate look into her inspirational life story. It also includes a special segment devoted to helping you apply Louise’s affirmations and groundbreaking wisdom to heal your own life and the challenges that you face today. The film includes a number of luminaries in the fields of self-help, philosophy, health, spirituality, and New Thought join Louise, who share their take on success, happiness, and the myriad ways in which people can heal their own lives. Appearances include: Wayne Dyer, Candace B. Pert, Gregg Braden, Mona Lisa Schulz, Christine Northrup, Doreen Virtue, and Jerry and Esther Hicks (The Teachings of Abraham). Free and open to the public.

Guest Speaker Victoria Moran

Sunday, October 3rd 9:00 & 11:00 AM

Victoria is an author, motivational speaker, life coach and holistic health counselor... She is a frequent speaker at Unity Churches across the country. She is dynamic, funny and committed to helping others connect with their highest self. Her books include: The Love Powered Diet, Living A Charmed Life and Fat Broke and Lonely No More. Due to a change in her schedule Victoria will not be able to present the workshop we had previously advertized. She will be present after services to talk with people and sign books.



Pot Luck Lunch

Sunday October 10th, noon-2:00 PM

Bring a dish to share, catch up with old friends and make some new ones. Family and friends are always welcome at our pot luck lunches. No need to sign up in advance.

Pet Blessing

Sunday, October 16th at 9:30 AM

Bring your pet to Unity Church for a special service and blessing. All are invited to celebrate the blessing with their animal companions at the Bradford Street Lobby of Unity Church, rain or shine. (In case of rain, the ceremony will take place in the sanctuary.)



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

Refreshments will be available for all animal and human participants.

Visioning for Unity Church

Sunday, October 17th 12:45 – 3:00 PM

In 2007 we gathered, prayed and opened ourselves to God’s vision for Unity Church. Most of the things we envisioned during that gathering either have happened or are happening now. This October we will gather again to ask, “What is God seeking to do through our congregation?” This event is restricted to church members and non-members who have been attending regularly for one year or longer.

Living a Life of Prayer & Introduction to Chaplaincy

Special Weekend Training Workshop October 29-31, 2010

Prayer is the heart of the Unity movement. Learning to pray for yourself and others is one of the most valuable skills you can develop. This course presents an overview of the Unity Institute's curriculum on: Living a Life of Prayer and the Unity Chaplain program. In it you will learn and practice Unity's affirmative prayer methods. You will explore and develop your own prayer practice and strengthen your prayer consciousness. This weekend includes an introduction to the role of Unity Chaplain. We offer this to encourage you to consider carrying on the sacred tradition of Myrtle Fillmore and Silent Unity by learning to pray with others.

Rev. Cynthia Barclay is a former member of Unity in Albany. She is an ordained interfaith minister with extensive chaplain training including serving as chaplain at Albany Medical Center. While living in Kansas City she served in Silent Unity's Telephone Prayer Ministry. She currently lives in Amesbury MA where she serves as Head Chaplain and Director of Prayer Ministry for Unity on the River. Cynthia offers her 37 years of commitment to the Unity movement and her daily prayer practice to inspire you as you develop and deepen your life of prayer.

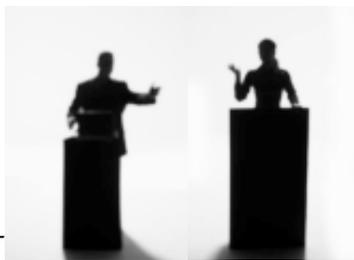
Location: Unity Church in Albany
Schedule: Friday, October 29th 6:00PM-9:00PM
Saturday, October 30th 9:30AM-6:30PM
Sunday, October 31st 1:00PM-5:00PM
Cost: \$100 (includes lunch on Saturday)

To Register: Call Rev. Jim Fuller at 518-453-3603

Town Meeting

Sunday, November 7th

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.



Piano and Voice Recital with Judy Avitabile and Friends

Sunday, November 14th 1:00-1:45 PM
Free and open to all

One Soul, One Love, One Heart:

The Sacred Path to Healing All Relationships A workshop with John Welshons

Sunday, November 21st at 1:15PM

How do we heal our difficult relationships and nurture our healthy ones? What is their significance in our spiritual life? This workshop will answer these questions and many more. John is a highly respected contemporary spiritual teacher who lectures and teaches at churches, hospitals, yoga schools, colleges and retreat centers across the country. He has studied extensively in India and been a practitioner of vipassana meditation and various forms of yoga for more than forty years. He has worked closely with Ram Das, Stephen Levine, and was trained by Dr Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. Cost: \$20

Thanksgiving Day Luncheon

Thursday, November 25th
1:00 – 5:00 PM

Reverend Jim and Kay invite you to join them for lunch on Thanksgiving Day. This covered dish banquet is open to everyone. Won't you join us as we celebrate Thanksgiving and spend time with our church family?



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December Dates:

- **Unity Church Christmas Party:**
December 4th 7:00 PM
 - **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:**
December 24th 5:30 PM
 - **Christmas Day Lunch: Saturday,**
December 25th 1:00 – 5:00 PM
 - **New Year's Eve Burning Bowl Service:**
December 31st 5:30 PM
-

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney



Heather Diddel

Almost from the day Heather walked through the doors of Unity her energy has been one of joy and service. Passion is contagious and

Heather's passion to give of herself for the betterment of all is impossible to miss and just as impossible for someone to be around without being affected. Heather is an icon for the joy and passion to serve, that exists within us all.

I WAS BORN AND RAISED in New York City. My three siblings and I were raised as Catholics by my mother and by the Catholic nuns who taught us catechism and repeatedly admonished us to have faith and not to question. It was, however, the 1960s, the world was changing, and we, students, were being taught to question authority and to think for ourselves. Although the nuns fought a losing battle they did instill a strong sense of duty to serve selflessly.

My parents modeled different kinds of service. My dad was “Coach” for neighborhood kids who played football on city streets, (2) a cub scout “den master”, (3) a co-founder of our block association, and (4) a leader of a neighborhood association committed to creating a safe Central Park. Mom on the other hand, modeled service in her commitment to our family. She was fun-loving and self-sacrificing, always putting the family first.

Growing up, I was surrounded by people committed to serving higher causes. We listened to the Freedom Singers, heard about civil rights activists, listened to the dreams of Martin Luther King, JFK and Bobby Kennedy. We read about Gandhi, Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker, and Jesus the peace-maker and revolutionary. I believed that I would someday work to help people, to save the world.

Surprisingly, I ended up spending several years in the Soviet Union in the 1970s, where I met remarkable people and witnessed profound courage and commitment to truth and service at great personal risk. From that experience I felt called to do human rights work and, upon the advice of a Soviet dissident, went to law school in NYC, expecting to create a life of service in the realm of international human rights.

Instead, I moved to the Capital District, not Moscow, in 1988 with my husband, Sam, and our first child, Emily. Here, in my professional life, I've served on the boards of many or-

ganizations providing services to the underserved in our community and found that very rewarding, but the most rewarding board service I have ever done is for Unity.

When Sam and I first moved to the Capital District, we searched for “our church”. We ended up at Unity one day, several ministers ago, and loved the message. We knew we had found a “home” and fellow travelers.

At Unity, I have grown a different consciousness about serving others. My earlier understanding of “service to God” entailed sacrifice if not outright martyrdom, while today's paradigm is one of life-affirming service. Much of this consciousness has evolved from my work on the Unity Board of Trustees for the past 2 ½ years. The shift started when I was invited to run for the board: Although I thought I had done little to “earn” this opportunity, I experienced a strong yearning to be involved and to make a difference which really surprised me.

Being on the board has been a gift; it has been F-U-N and has taught me much. I have discovered countless ways to be easily engaged in service—ranging from ushering, participating at Clean Up Day, hospitality, hosting our Christmas party, platforming, and more. Joy and fun and loving relationships have been the gifts of this work.

I have also learned that service is an “inside out thing” for me, on several different levels.

First, I have learned to choose service opportunities based on my inner response to the opportunity. If thinking about it lights me up, triggers my curiosity or slight nervousness, brings me joy, or sounds like it could be fun, I now recognize these as cues that it may be mine to do. Conversely, I have learned not to take on service projects out of a sense of “should” or duty, or if I detect an inner sense of burden, boredom or dread. I think of these inner messages as guidance from Spirit.

Second, I have learned that the “being” of service is at least as important as the doing, if not more. I can get caught up in the doing of many different things, all at the same time, and can become a “doing machine.” At this point in my life that is not what best serves me or others. Being present in the moment and slowing down to have a heart to heart connection with others is, for me, an essential, life-giving element of service.

Third, I have learned that service, or giving of ourselves, is life-giving precisely because it is our way to express our spirit, our true nature. Mystic, Jim Rosemergy, sums it up beautifully:

“We give because it is our nature. Nothing is more natural than to give... To give is to be alive - to express what we truly are.... When people give you an opportunity to give, they are giving you a great blessing. It is an opportunity to express your true nature. Don't miss it.”

Reiki Healing Service

Thursday, November 11th, 7 p.m.

Reiki (pronounced Ray-Key), a non-intrusive therapeutic touch, is a complete method for activating and learning to use natural energy to promote healing based on the application of Universal Life Force Energy. Reiki literally means Universal Life Force Energy.

New Reiki graduates and practitioners of all levels Reiki will provide a Reiki Healing Service. Come and receive a Reiki Treatment. Open to the public. Love offering appreciated. All love offerings will go to Unity Church.

For information please call Unity Church at 453-3603.

Second Degree Reiki:

A Practitioner Workshop

The class is taught by Reiki Master, Geri Ann Laiacona. Geri Ann received her Reiki Master Certification from HCH: The Institute for Hypnotherapy and Psycho-Spiritual Trainings, in Lafayette, California. She is committed to assisting you in improving your health and well being and approaches her work with enthusiasm, compassion, and warmth.

When:Saturdays, Oct. 23rd and Nov. 6th

Time: 11 am to 4:00 pm

Where: Unity Church, Choir Room, Albany, NY

Requirement: Completion of Level 1 Reiki

Information: Call Unity at 518-453-3603 or Geri Ann at 441-2771

Cost:\$125 includes workshop, manual, and practitioner certification

Reservation:Sunday, October 18th. Please include a \$75 deposit

What to Bring:Snack or Lunch and a Notebook

What to Expect: ... A Relaxing and Uplifting Workshop

Unity Book Club

November – December selection

One Soul, One Love, One Heart: The Sacred Path to Healing All Relationships by John Welshons. This book received the prestigious 2010 Nautilus Silver Award, an annual award which “recognizes books that represent distinguished literary contributions promoting spiritual growth, conscious living, and positive social change.” John is also the author of *Awakening From Grief* and *When Prayers Aren’t Answered*. Reverend Jim will lead a lunchtime discussion on this book Sunday, December 19th.

**Clean up day at Unity Church
October 9th • 10:30 am - 2 pm**

Book Club Discussion

Sunday, October 24th 1:00 PM

Join Reverend Jim for a lunchtime discussion of Eric Butterworth’s classic book “In The Flow Of Life.” This is an excellent book for those who are relatively new to Unity. It is also a great reminder for everyone about the importance of getting into the flow of the “Life” that is all around us. Discussion on the book will take place at Professor Java’s Coffee Sanctuary (they have great food) on Wolf Road in Colonie.

Unity Church Cares

THANK YOU to everyone that has signed up to volunteer for our new UnityChurchCares ministry. Many of you have stepped in to help, and your generosity of spirit is so appreciated! Fliers are located in the Bradford Street lobby, explaining the purpose and mission of this new ministry. If you feel called to volunteer in some way, there is a yellow folder with a sign up sheet for your contact information. We will add you to the growing list, and call if and when the need arises. 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.

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.

Please remember that the Food Pantry needs go on around the calendar. Especially needed are diapers, baby products, paper products, bathroom and toiletry items, laundry soap, and household cleaners. Your donation is always appreciated.



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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!*

Board of Trustees

President	Heather Diddel ('13)	475-9604
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Secretary	Diane Teutschman ('12)	280-4311
Trustee	Bill Hewson ('12)	686-7990
Trustee	John Frederick ('13)	486-5689

Halloween is Extra Special This Year

Why? Because October 31st is our 5th Sunday Youth Service!! Every 5th Sunday, Reverend Jim has a special message for our Youth....and the Young At Heart. Halloween will be extra special!

Scary? Thrilling? Exciting?

All children are invited to sit up front. Come and find out!

Save the Date

Kirtan with Shubalananda and Friends

Sunday, December 12th from 1:00-2:30 PM

Kirtan is sacred chanting in the ancient Sanskrit language. Chanting is an easy way to quiet your mind and move deeply into meditation. The chants are very simple and you don't need to be a singer to participate or to benefit. This kirtan is being presented on a love-offering basis. It's open to everyone.

December/January Newsletter

Articles for the December/January edition of the newsletter can be submitted to Denise Klein at katzr3@nycap.rr.com by Sunday, September 19th. Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.