



The Messenger

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

I will pray for you . . .

When you say "I will pray for you," what exactly are you planning to do?

Are you intending to ask God or Jesus for a favor on someone's behalf?

Please consider the following, if you pray to God to remove an illness or a problem from someone you are implying that God has the power to do that but been choosing not to, so perhaps "He" needs a nudge. Some people pray to a saint, asking the saint to nudge God. Others participate in elaborate and sometimes beautiful prayers or ceremonies designed to summon help for others. I question whether God, the Infinite Creative and Loving Intelligence of the Universe, is any more moved by our prayers – elaborate or simple – than the sun is moved by the passing of a cloud. That said; I do believe that prayer works. Prayer for ourselves and prayers for others has been scientifically proven to speed healing and improve health. I personally know people who have been healed by prayer alone. I know others who have successfully used prayer to enhance the outcome of medical treatments. Clearly prayer can be effective and powerful.

Unity teaches that prayer works because it helps us shift our thinking from the level of problems or symptoms to the level of wholeness and oneness, to the level of eternal Spirit. When someone turns their attention "toward God", even toward a God in the sky, they are expressing trust in something greater than the problem at hand. When people ask saints for help, they are acknowledging the availability of "spiritual support" in whatever form their mind might imagine. But the support doesn't come from the sky or the image; it comes from the presence of God that is as Jesus said, "at hand." Prayer at its core is simply a process for turning our attention away from the problem and toward the solution, which is always God at hand. Once that inner shift has occurred we find our prayers answered quickly and completely, and often in ways that are much better than what we might have imagined.

Because of our tendency to place "God" up in the sky, Unity

encourages the use of Denials and Affirmations. These are refocusing prayers designed to help redirect our un-prayerful thinking. Denials re-*mind us: that no-thing or condition has power over us; and that the appearance of symptoms or problematic situations is just that, an appearance.*

Affirmations re-*mind us: that love and goodness is present with us always; and that the power and the life of God is alive in our minds and our bodies.* To the extent that we begin to realize the truth of these ideas for ourselves, we become more effective "prayers" for others.

When praying for others we might begin by praying for ourselves, by raising our awareness beyond the level of appearances and toward Ultimate Truth (another name for God.) Become still and know that God is with you in your moment of prayer. Know that God is the very life force moving through the body you are inhabiting. Know that God, as infinite intelligence and truth, is alive in you. With practice you may begin to sense an alive and expansive consciousness in you. Your ability to know truth and feel connected does not need to be perfect for your prayers to be effective, but turning your attention in this direction is important.

Once you have made your inner shift, bring the person you are praying for to mind. Begin to re-*mind yourself that this person is also alive with infinite intelligence and life; that he or she is filled with wisdom and power at all times. Re-*mind yourself that any appearances to the contrary are temporary appearances that have no power over the person. Know that it is the will of All Creation for this person to experience his or her wholeness, happiness, contentment and joy. Remember that all these things are already present in the person and around them. If you can, feel the peace that comes from knowing this about the person you pray for. You may want to close your prayer by thanking the Mind of God, present in you, for helping you**



By Rev. Jim Fuller



The President's Corner

By Heather Diddel

First Peace

On the beautifully clear, sunshine-washed morning of September 11, 2011, I arrived at Unity for the early service at exactly 8:46. That was the time the first plane hit the World Trade Center in New York City ten years earlier. I had been listening to the NPR broadcast of the memorial service in the City, and as I opened the car door, the first sound I heard was the lone wail of a fire engine siren. And I was suddenly filled with emotion. I thought of the firemen and other people who lead lives in service of others, both at that very moment and 10 years earlier. And every day in-between. Even though the price can be their lives, as it was for many on 9/11.

In that moment, I was overcome with gratitude for those who give of themselves in that way, and felt a deep, passionate yearning for PEACE.

Throughout the entire planet. Everywhere. Now. Starting with this breath. These next words. These next thoughts. Small step by small step, we can walk the path of peace. With passion, fierce commitment, and an open heart.

I share with you the inspiring words of an 18th century Oglala Sioux spiritual leader, Black Elk. I read them often. They help me remember a simple truth to guide me on my path: Peace must start within each one of us first. And as we live our inner peace, that peace will move out into the world:

“The First Peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the Universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the Universe dwells Wakan Tanka, the Great Spirit, and that this center is everywhere, and it is within each of us. This is the real peace, and others are but reflections of this.

The second peace is that which is made by two individuals, and the third is that which is made between two nations.

But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is known that true peace which as I have often said, is within the souls of the people.”

May we each be inspired to walk the path of peace, each in our own way, small step by small step!

A Post 9-11 Poem

The following poem was created by Sue Oringel following the Sunday service where Rev Jim talked about moving “Beyond 9-11” thinking. The quote is from the Islamic poet Rumi.

Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing there is a field. I'll meet you there. - Rumi

The Field

*After the sickening crash of metal on metal or
metal gouging earth,
after the planes hit and there were explosions and
screaming,
and the sound of glass and concrete and bones
shattering
and fire and the smell of burning paper and flesh
and shouts and moans, suddenly all became
unearthly
quiet and a wind blew everything away. Even
thought, even pain. Quiet and dark. And then
the illumination. First far away, then radiating
closer, brighter,
stronger. And men and women and children,
hijackers and captains,
passengers and office workers suddenly all spoke
the same
language, which moved like music from heart to
heart,
and they rubbed their eyes like children
awakening from a bad dream, and helped each
other
get up and walk straight toward the light.*

Board of Trustees

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Your Name in Lights!

Well, OK, maybe not lights, but how about in print?

Articles for the December/January edition of the newsletter can be submitted to Denise Klein at katzr3@nycap.rr.com by Sunday, November 20th. Your news articles, spiritual thoughts, poetry, photos, humor or suggestions are always welcomed.

I will pray for you . . . cont.

see the person correctly. This is a prayer of great power. This is a prayer of saying yes to the holy creation of God that this person is. And since all minds are connected the person you are holding in prayer has received support for their healing through your prayer.

Some people like to incorporate visual images in their prayers. They may imagine the person they pray for, or themselves, looking happy or strong, perhaps smiling or looking contented. Other people may imagine the person surrounded in light, as if the light of God was shining brightly through and around them. I have used the image of the person comfortably nestled in a soft pink cloud; an image reminds me of safely and peacefully resting in God. With difficult people I have placed myself beside the person in the cloud, sharing the peace. Images that help us connect with feelings of wellbeing work in much the same way as affirmations, helping the prayer shift our minds away from appearances or problems and toward the remembrance of wholeness and peace. Pray for one another but pray by remembering the person's wholeness, after all that's the way God sees them... and you.

May your mind be filled with thoughts, images and feelings of wholeness, wellness and peace; and may those thoughts flow freely from you to bless the world we share. Amen.



TO ALL MY PUMPKIN FRIENDS!

Being a good person is like being a pumpkin. God lifts you up, takes you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. He opens you up, touches you deep inside and scoops out all of the yucky stuff — including the seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc. Then He carves you a bright new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see.

The Universe Is Calling: Opening To The Divine Through Prayer

**Wednesdays at 7:15 PM,
beginning October 12th**

What are the pitfalls of prayer?

What is the inner process of prayer?

What comes after prayer?

Based on Eric Butterworth's book "The Universe Is Calling", this eight-week class will help open up your prayer life. Prayer has always been at the heart of the Unity movement and who better to share Unity's understanding of prayer than Eric Butterworth, protégé of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore. You will learn to develop the inner intention needed to give power to your prayers. You will also learn how to pray with others and hold others in prayer. Prayer is about connecting with the always present power of the Universe and allowing that connection to heal and empower your life. We all experience the natural urge to pray, and we all have the innate capacity to get results from our prayers.

Are you interested in becoming a Unity Prayer Chaplain?

Prayer Chaplains are people who pray with others at the end of our Sunday services. If you are interested in becoming a chaplain we ask that you first complete the fall Prayer Class "The Universe Is Calling: Opening To The Divine Through Prayer." Rev Jim will offer additional Prayer Chaplain training in January.

Book Club News

Our book club reading for September through November will be *The Universe Is Calling* by Eric Butterworth. This is the same book we will use for our Wednesday evening classes. Prayer has always been the heart of the Unity movement. If you visit the original Unity church in Kansas City you will see the offices of Myrtle and Charles and what was clearly "add on" office space for a young Eric Butterworth. So and who better to share Unity's understanding of prayer than Eric Butterworth, protégé of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore? Eric's ministry carried him through 86 years of life and eventually took him to New York's Lincoln Center, an impressive achievement for a minister and teacher. His book on prayer, *The Universe Is Calling*, was published in 1993, just ten years before his passing. It is the summation of his teachings on prayer. Rev. Jim will lead a discussion on the book Sunday, November 20th.



“Unity 101” (New Member Class)

October 2 – November 13

Would you like to join Unity Church, or to learn more about us?

If so we invite you to participate in the six-week class we call “Unity 101.” We offer new member classes each fall and spring. The fall class will meet Sundays from 12:30 until 2:15 PM from October 2nd through November 13th, no class on October 9th.

Anyone interested in learning more about Unity is invited to attend. The class is required for those wanting to become members of the church. Please know you are not required to withdraw your membership from other churches to join Unity. Our purpose is to advance spiritual consciousness, not to convert.

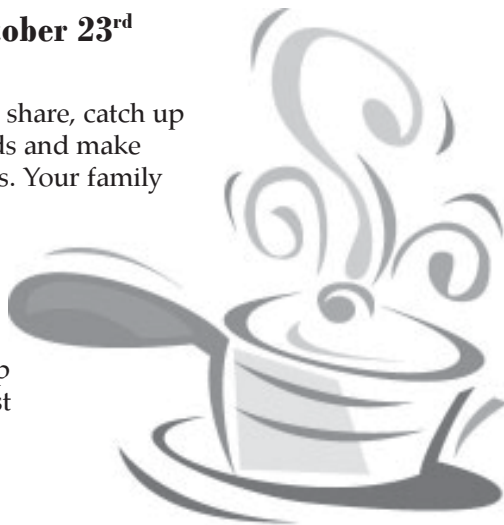
To qualify as a member we ask that you attend worship services regularly for at least six months, read a small book on Unity and attend Unity 101. If you haven’t already done so, please read *Unity: A Quest for Truth* by Eric Butterworth prior to the first class. This booklet is available in our bookstore.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

Pot Luck Lunch

Sunday October 23rd

12:30 PM

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



ST. FRANCIS DAY — BLESSING OF OUR ANIMAL COMPANIONS

Saturday, October 15, 2011 9:30 AM

Bring your pet to Unity Church for a special service and blessing.

A procession of animals, everything from dogs and cats to hamsters and even horses, is led to churches for a special ceremony called the Blessing of Pets. This custom is conducted in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi’s love for all creatures.

Francis, whose feast day is October 4th, loved the larks flying about his hilltop town. He and his early brothers, staying in a small hovel, allowed themselves to be displaced by a donkey. Francis wrote a Canticle of the Creatures, an ode to God’s living things. “All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures.”

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.



Unity Church Fall Retreat

Friday-Saturday, October 28-29

Does One Size REALLY Fit All?

~ An exploration of where I fit in my church, in my religion and in my spiritual life.

Where we started out isn't necessarily where we are now. Nor is it an indication of where we are headed. Throughout life's transitions and phases we find ourselves at crossroads. Sometimes the choice of which path to follow is clear, and sometimes it's not. This is true in our spiritual journey. We find ourselves worn out or bored with the role we have been occupying. And we wonder, "Where do I fit now?" Or we may be experiencing great satisfaction with where we are and wonder, "is this normal? Should I be looking somewhere else?"

This retreat won't provide you with the answers. What it will provide are questions and exercises designed to help you discern your own answer, or at least a place to start looking. So come and explore with us and be prepared to "be with the questions."

Our retreat will be held at the Dominican Retreat Center in Niskayuna. It will begin with dinner on Friday and end with dinner on Saturday. An overnight stay at the retreat center is required. Your registration of \$175 includes all meals, a private room, and all retreat activities. Space is limited to forty participants.

About Our Presenter:

Barbara Wisnom is a warm, engaging and deeply spiritual person. While her primary focus is business, coaching executives and senior level managers, she also maintains a private coaching practice, working with clients to make their unique goals become real. She has conducted spiritually based seminars for adults in a variety of settings. It was Barbara who led our first church retreat in 2008. Barbara holds Bachelors and Masters Degrees from Niagara University and SUNY Buffalo respectively. She received her coach training through the Coaches Training Institute and is a Certified Professional Co-Active Coach (CPCC). She may be reached via email at barbara@thethirdzone.com or by telephone at 518-371-2965.

Town Meeting

Sunday, November 6th 12:45-1:45

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.

Fall Clean Up Day

Saturday, Nov. 12th 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Join your friends at Unity Church as we tidy up our building for the fall.

Fall Coffee House (open mic night)

Saturday, November 12th 7:00 – 9:30 PM

This is an open mic night with music, poetry, humor and more. Sign in by 6:45 to share your talents, or just come at 7:00 and enjoy the show. Admission is only \$5, and includes refreshments.

Events "Farther Out"

Thanksgiving Day Luncheon

Thursday, November 24th 1:00 – 5:00 PM

Reverend Jim and Kay invite you to join them for Thanksgiving Day lunch at the church. We ask that everyone sign up and bring a dish to contribute to the meal. (This helps anticipate the number attending, and what they are bringing.) We will make sure that there is turkey, pumpkin pie and all that you would expect for a Thanksgiving feast. We gather at 1:00 to welcome each other and set up the meal. Lunch begins at 2:00. Won't you join us as we celebrate Thanksgiving and spend time with our church family?



December Dates:

- **Unity Church Christmas Party: December 3rd 7:30 PM**
- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: December 24th 5:30 PM**
- **Sunday Worship Service: December 25th 11:00 AM only**
- **Christmas Day Lunch: Sunday, December 25th 1:00 – 5:00 PM**
- **New Year's Eve Burning Bowl Service: December 31st 5:30 PM**
- **Sunday Worship Service: January 1st 11:00 AM only**

Circulation Day at Unity Church!



Food Pantry

As we approach the colder months, and those with special holidays, your donation will mean even more to those in need.

Week #1

October 2 & November 6: WOMEN'S WEEK! Needed are feminine pads, tampons, washes, shampoo, conditioner, tooth brushes & toothpaste, deodorants & soap.

Week #2

October 9 & November 13: MEN'S WEEK! Needed are shaving creme, razors, deodorants, shampoo & soap, tooth-brushes & toothpaste.

Week #3

October 16 & November 20: BABY WEEK! Disposable diapers, baby wipes, lotions & shampoos.

Week #4

October 23 and 30 & November 27: HOUSEHOLD WEEK! Toilet Paper, laundry soap, paper towels, household cleansers.

Thank you for the generous donation of whatever your heart leads you to give.

Spotlight on Service

By John Daubney

Dottie Frament

Dottie's journey is a testament to the inspirational power of our willingness to serve others in doing what we love to do. Just as Dottie was impassioned by those she saw joyfully giving service, others in the congregation will most likely be lit by the "sparks" Dottie throws off as she freely gives of herself at Unity. Passionate service is contagious!!

"When I think about my journey with service at Unity, I am reminded of the words attributed to Mother Teresa in a Scott Kalechstein song: "In this life we can't do great things, only small things with great love."

I should back up and say that serving with great love is a radical shift from the way I provided service before coming to Unity. Both my husband (Paul) and I were very involved over the years in service to our previous church community. With a strongly developed sense of duty and responsibility, we were both heavily involved in Sunday liturgy, served on the parish council, taught youth religious education, etc. By the time we came to Unity in 2005, however, we felt spiritually dry and in need of a respite from responsibility. I was also working full time as a home care Occupational Therapist at this time, and was well on my way to caregiver burnout. We were *tired and thirsty travelers* looking for fresh water to revive ourselves!

So, for our first 1-2 years here, we just drank from Unity's *well* without giving back. I came to church to enjoy the inspiring music, be among welcoming people, drink in the inspiration from Rev. Jim's sermons, and partake in the coffee and hospitality after church. After being "takers" for more than a year, we began to notice that we could stop being defensive about having to join the church or take on a job. There was no one pressuring us, only people nurturing and reviving us.

About that time, a miracle happened. I had known Phyllis Pulver from Friends in Harmony, but I would never consider singing in front of a group. That is until Phyllis extended an invitation to anyone in the congregation who loved to sing, to sing with Unity's Fourth Sunday Singers.

Since one of my passions is singing from my heart, I sheepishly volunteered. Soon, I was arranging my calendar to always be in town on 3rd and 4th Sundays, so that I could practice and sing on 4th Sundays. This, my first service at Unity, was a heart opening, joyful experience for which I will always be grateful.

Following this same inspiration, to volunteer with what I so enjoy, I offered to help out in the meditation garden. Paul and I still thank Donna Britton and Norma Seaward for inspiring us to join them in doing what we love to do. We enjoy the fun and fellowship when gardening as much as we enjoy the beauty and sacredness of nature when we work alone.

From these small beginning activities, it was then easy to volunteer to help out with Hospitality after Sunday service and then also to be on the Unity Church Cares Committee (UCCC) (Have you every known two more joyful people than Heather Diddel and Diane Teutschman, the women who head up these services?) Both the Hospitality and the UCC committees are about doing small things with great love. I enjoy meeting new people, so I found it easy and fun to make coffee and set up snacks to facilitate this experience for others. UCCC is another opportunity,

to offer our love and compassion by simply sending a card or flowers to someone who maybe experiencing difficult times.

However, when I was asked the 3rd time to run for the Board of Trustees, I was besieged with fears. Although clear that I wanted to give back to Unity for all the goodness I was receiving, I now perceived this service offer as being a BIG service commitment. But, I also recalled the number of times that Heather Diddel had told me that it was a joy to serve on the Board; that she had grown spiritually by working with our Board members who aimed to apply Unity principles in their daily life. Could I trust this might come to be true for me as well?

Well, my skepticism receded in a flash while in prayer, when it came to me to just trust that Spirit would use me in a way I could not yet imagine and in a way that would serve me and our church. Since being on the Board, I have experienced, in sometimes dramatic ways, the release of limiting beliefs that has brought forth my unused/unknown talents in service to others.

You'll see the power of Spirit, if, when it comes my time to give the Treasurer's report to the congregation, I can embody the enthusiasm and love of my predecessor, Dennis Ryan ... as I confidently sport a green accountant's visor."





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Our 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!*



Our Worship Schedule

**Two services every
Sunday at
9:00 AM & 11 AM.**

**Childcare is available at
11 a.m.**

**Wednesday night classes
at 7:15 p.m.**