



unity

June 2017—July 2017
Vol 33, Issue 4

Unity Church in Albany • 21 King Avenue • Albany NY 12206 • 518-453-3603 www.unityalbany.org

Earth Day is Everyday



"The Great Spirit is in all things: he is in the air we breathe. The Great Spirit is our father, but the earth is our mother. She nourishes us; that which we put into the ground she returns to us."

— Big Thunder (Bedagi)
Wabanaki Algonquin

My usual morning routine when I drive up to the church is to delight in the landscaping that was done several years ago. During our spring clean up day, our garden team did a fantastic job of clearing out both our front yard and back garden. If you haven't visited the back garden in a while, it's time you do. Thanks to two of our congregants, we have a beautiful new seating area that takes the place of the old wooden bench.

As I see butterflies and bees enjoying the spring blooms, young birds and squirrels moving around and the neighborhood cat sunning itself in our backyard garden, I see how what we do to the land can bring joy and life to all. Likewise, what we do to the land can be devastating.

Unity's fundamental belief is we are all one. Our first principle is, God is good, omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. Because we believe God's wisdom and power is present everywhere, this means everything of this earth is interconnected and everything is sacred. As stewards of the Earth, it is important for us to care for creation. All

creation is God's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect.

Last year, Unity Church in Albany started to seriously look at ways we can do our part in being loving and respectful to the planet. We are working to become a part of Unity Worldwide Ministry EarthCare Ministry Team. Their wonderful statement of purpose is:

"The Unity movement is guided by a vision of sacredness and the inter-connectedness of all, the interdependence of all life. It is a journey of spiritual relationships with Earth and its creatures. It is through awakened consciousness that we see everything as the presence of God."

We became more diligent in our use of the air-conditioning and heating systems, only using them when activities are happening in the ministry. We now are a ministry that recycles. Through technology, emails, Dropbox, and the networking of our computer system, we have become more paperless.

This year, with thoughts of how we can continue to do our part to love and respect our world, I recommended to the board that we continue our paperless pursuit and our

(Cont'd on Pg 2)

Mission Statement

The mission of Unity Church in Albany is to awaken to and embrace the Christ in all persons through prayer and service.

Earth Day is Everyday (cont'd) **President's Corner**

capabilities to expand our use of technology by altering the way this newsletter is distributed. This newsletter will be the last one mailed out via the United States Postal Service. This shift allows us to continue to do our part as good stewards of our land and be good stewards fiscally.

We are excited to be able to offer you more information and a new format as we start emailing the newsletter to you in August. We don't want you to miss a thing, so please make sure we have your email address. You can get your email address to us several ways:

1. The sign up sheet at either entrance.
2. Email us at unityalbany@yahoo.com.

Let's continue to work together as a community to love and respect our planet. If you have any suggestions on how our ministry can continue this mission, please let us know. For as Thich Nhat Hanh said:

"You carry Mother Earth within you. She is not outside of you. Mother Earth is not just your environment. In that insight of inter-being, it is possible to have real communication with the Earth, which is the highest form of prayer."



*Going
Green!*



Attention all readers of Unity in Albany's Newsletter!

Please take note that we are converting the newsletter to a digital format vs paper beginning with the August/September issue.

Please send your email address to unityalbany@yahoo.com if you are called to continue to receive this mailing.

By Orisa Skipper

Friendships Through Service



Here at Unity there is a heart circle with every area of service. There are people serving with love and kindness to welcome you. Education, Special Events, Sunday Service, Inreach/Outreach, Hospitality, Building and Grounds, and more. What area is for you?

I encourage everyone to pray about the service area calling you. Listen and watch for your answer.

What you receive back from giving will be priceless. I am sure of it! The reason why I am so sure is because there are friendships that will grow when a mutual interest is shared. Friendships are priceless. I have experienced this blessing by serving on the board and in hospitality. The people I have shared service with have come dear to my heart. The bond is service, the gift to me has been friendship with loving and kind hearted souls that are so very precious.

A very important part of allowing growth is to be connected with one another. We are a community of heart-centered individuals, a community of people that care, trust, and are willing to serve toward a mutual goal to continually better our church. Unity is a place to experience real connection with mind-liked individuals. Drop the pretenses, let down your guards, you don't need them here. Just allow the real you to shine and connect with others without fear and with love.

At Unity we learn to go within and listen, to give from our hearts. We learn discernment, the difference between what you think and what the heart is desiring. Authentically supporting each other in developing friendships and trust.

Namaste'!

Orisa

How Sweet The Sound

By Rev. Roger Mock

Journey of Souls



As a teenager, one of my favorite ways to spend a Saturday afternoon was to take the bus from my hometown of Little Falls to the nearby "metropolis" of Utica for a visit to the Munson Williams Proctor Museum of Art. It's a great little

museum with a permanent collection specializing in 19th and 20th Century American and European paintings and sculpture. The most impressive pieces in the collection—the ones I recall most vividly—are a series of four VERY large canvases by Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole called "The Voyage of Life", considered to be his greatest achievement. Cole completed the commissioned work in 1840. In grand romantic style, they employ the metaphor of life as a journey down a magical (if at times treacherous) river. The journey is illustrated in four phases of a man's life: Childhood, Youth, Manhood and Old Age.

The guardian angel disembarks during the "Youth" phase and is seen waving cheerfully from the river bank as things are still looking very rosy and promising for the young lad. "Have a nice time! Catch you later!" What could possibly go wrong? I'll spare you the drama and cut to the chase. The seemingly oblivious angel reunites with a very shaken old man in the final frame, his faithful dinghy itself a shambles. I have a vague memory of being met by my parents in such a manner at the end of a far-more-horrifying-than-it-first-appeared amusement park ride.

Life as a watercourse journey. Despite the overly romanticized depiction in Cole's larger-than-life paintings, it remains a salient and inescapable metaphor. Many the unseen bends, daunting rapids, and—hopefully—tranquil, flowing passages in each of our lives.

I used to believe that you only get one chance at life. In my early "manhood phase", I experienced mounting anger at the inequality and unfairness of it all, but as I was able to release that "story"

and open to other possible scenarios, the anger fell away. My beliefs had become too restricting. I'm talking about scenarios like the possibility of reincarnation, of multiple journeys down multiple tributaries of life. Or the idea that a soul chooses its experience on the physical plane for its own reasons with its highest good in mind. When I was angry it was because I was seeing myself as the victim of a plan I had nothing to do with. But if I believed I had chosen this particular path myself from the higher perspective of the soul, then I could allow myself to trust in the journey.

One of the things that helped me a lot early on was reading Raymond Moody's seminal book, "Life After Life", which was published when I was in my early 20's. I had come down with mononucleosis and had had to return home to my parents' care for a week or so, and brought the little book with me. It was the first book to present a case for



peoples' reports of near death experiences. Much has been published on the topic since, of course, including the recent personal account by neurosurgeon, Dr. Eben Alexander.

Is reincarnation true? Are peoples' near death experiences worthy of being taken seriously?

Will we ever know what the heck we're really here for? No matter what the chosen belief, the questions remain. I think living with the question is a key ingredient of the journey of life. I think that life is meant to be experienced, not understood in an ultimate sense. So I try not to hold too rigidly to any particular beliefs. Nonetheless, I do believe in the soul and I believe this physical life is a means for the soul to expand, to grow, to "row the boat of being toward ecstasy," as I have heard it put. I think that the soul's growth must have to come from allowing itself to have an experience of not knowing; a life or lives in which it learns to trust the unfolding of its own hero's journey. I don't know for sure, but I strongly suspect that the soul is able to allow itself many such opportunities down many rivers of experience. I'm just glad I'm having this one right now! Life is good.

Love and light and a good strong dinghy,
Roger

Events Calendar

Looking for a Spiritual Community?

Summer Worship Schedule

Join us at 1 of our 2 Sunday Services

10:00 am | 6:00 pm

(The week after *Labor Day weekend*, we will return to 3 services 9:00 am | 11:00 am | 6:00 pm)

Ongoing

Meditation

Wednesdays, 6:30—7:00 pm in the downstairs fellowship hall or in the Sanctuary, join Rev. Crystal Muldrow for Zen form meditation. (Zazen). This will bring peace to your mind and body.

Sundays 9:00—9:45 am in the large upstairs classroom. Jerry Patel and friends offer Sunday morning meditations each week before morning service. The regular practice of meditation builds peace and calmness within and helps us strengthen our awareness of our connection with the Divine. Group meditation makes the process easier and helps us move more deeply into the meditation experience. **Please arrive before 9:00 am** as the doors will close to hold the silence for this sacred gathering.



A Course In Miracles Study Groups

While the *Course* is designed for individual study it is helpful to have a “support group” to share your questions, discoveries, and journey with.

- **Sunday evenings at 7:15 PM** in the church library.
- **Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm** at the church. For further info, call or text John at 518-935-8038.
- On the **2nd and 4th Mondays at 7:00 pm** at the home of Leslie and Joe Coffaro, in Albany. Call Leslie at 518-465-3399.

Mondays at 5:00 pm

Kripalu Yoga

Deborah Foss (944-9858 for info).



Sundays, Matinee at the Spectrum Unity Movie Group

The 1st Sunday of every month, join a group of congregants meeting at the Spectrum Theater to go to a 3:30 or 3:40 movie. There is a sign-up sheet available at the Bradford St. lobby.

2nd Saturday of the Month

Unity Hiking Club

Join us for a fun hiking experience. Each hike will be different, and details will be provided prior to our climb. Even if you can make only one occasionally, we'd love to include you on the list. It's a wonderful way to commune with God in His church ~ the great outdoors! Contact Ann Marie Burke or Paul Frament for more information.

1st Sunday of the Month

Friendship Sunday

Bring a friend to 11:00 am service and perhaps a dish to share for after the service.

Tuesdays, 10:00-11:30 am

Tuesday Book Study Group

New book 7 Spiritual Laws of Success by Deepak Chopra. Starting June 6.

Sign up in the lobby to order a book.

Prosperity Update

Through April 2017

Note: Fiscal Year is January 1—December 31

| | Month to Date | | Year to Date | |
|---------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| | April 2017 | April 2016 | Jan-Apr 2017 | Jan-Apr 2016 |
| Income | 19,497 | 16,571 | 73,992 | 78,125 |
| Expenses | 18,619 | 26,150 | 72,374 | 79,762 |
| Surplus/ Deficit | 878 | -9,759 | 1,618 | -1,637 |

“God is our Source. We bless and appreciate all the many channels through which God’s abundance prospers our ministry.

We affirm that our fiscal year concludes with a financial surplus.

We always have more than enough to spare.”

Upcoming

Saturday, June 3, 1:00—6:00 pm

Guest Speaker Series

Reverend Crystal Muldrow (Reverend Boepbo Sunya Dharma) will be guest speaker at the at the Change Your Mind Day; Expanding and Awakening the Mind & Body. Her topic: Buddhism 101. This event will be held at the First Unitarian Universalist Society in Albany, 1pm—5pm.

Sunday, June 4, 10:00 am & 6:00 pm services

12:30 pm Workshop

Guest Musician/Bob Sima

The workshop, entitled “Full Body Musical Experience”, is an intentional chakra balance, and a multi-dimensional experience of discussion, guided meditation, live music and conscious breathwork. Investment: \$30 advance/\$35 at door.



Bob Sima is a dynamic singer-songwriter, performer,

storyteller, speaker, servant of humanity, workshop and retreat leader, meditation and breathwork facilitator, and creative collaborator—often weaving all of these elements into a single performance.



Did you know that you are welcome to attend Board of Trustees meetings?

They are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm in the library.

Upcoming

June 15

July 20

People to Know

Staff

Rev. Crystal Muldrow, Senior Minister
Jane Bloom, Licensed Unity Teacher, (LUT) and Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Rev. Roger Mock, Music Director

Barbara Zeller, Office Administrator

Your Board of Trustees!



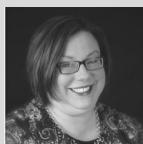
Paul Frament, Co-President
Hospitality



Orisa Skipper, Co-President
Inreach/Outreach



Ernie Klemm, Treasurer
Spiritual Education



Elaine Lasda, Secretary
Special Events



Sam House, Trustee
Building & Grounds



Karin Reinhold, Trustee
Prosperity/Sunday Worship



Josephine Faruol, Alternate

Events Calendar *continued from page 5*

Upcoming



Thursday, June 8, 6:30 pm
Tama Kieves

Workshop entitled, "Unleash your Calling: Create the Work & Life You Love." Come join Tama Kieves and learn how to get past limitations and unleash the powerful calling within you. In this fun interactive workshop,

learn how to: trust your instinctive genius and move past old limitations, choose the right passion, stay motivated, experience unstoppable strength, turn roadblocks into launch pads, and fall in love with your life.

Featured in USA Today and on Oprah radio, Tama is best-selling author. A former Harvard-trained attorney, she is a sought-after speaker and visionary career/success and writing coach. She has helped thousands world-wide to discover, launch and thrive in the life, calling, and business of their dreams.

Sunday, June 11, 12:00—5:00 pm
Capital Pride 2017

Washington Park, Albany Represent Unity at a March, Parade, and/or Table. Looking for volunteers. Contact Orisa Skipper

Wednesday, June 21, 7:00—8:30 pm
World Peace and Prayer Day

The focus and purpose that an inter-faith prayer is being organized and call for in the city and various inter-faith communities and churches to prayer as one human species from many faith traditions and cultures for the sincere progress of Earth Awareness and World Peace.

It's an inter-faith prayer and musical devotional with invocational music to join the rhythms of the earth and her children to pray and sing for peace, understanding and respect for all species and the Earth, Our Mother.

Sunday, July 17, 10:00 am
Church in the Park

Thatcher State Park at Greenhouse Pavilion. Look for the Unity Banner. Bring your own grillables, a dish to share, games, walking shoes, etc.

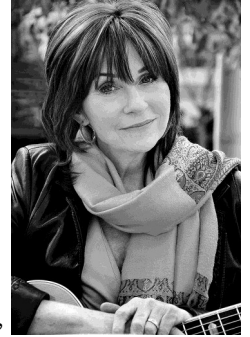
Sunday, July 23, 10:00 am
Guest Musician/Megon McDonough

By the age of 17, Megon McDonough was opening for such folk acts as John Denver, Steve Martin and Harry Chapin. She has performed on stages as diverse as Carnegie Hall and the Cellar Door. Megon is best known for her work as an inaugural member of the folk group The Four Bitchin' Babes, which allowed her wit and folk sensibilities to comment on the ups and downs of everyday life. To date, Megon has 13 solo albums to her credit, and is best known for her song "**Amazing Things.**"

Megon classifies her music as folk/cabaret, citing her love of theater and jazz as the reason for the unusual mix.

In addition to her singing career, Megon has also had an acclaimed acting career. She received rave reviews for playing Patsy Cline in "Always Patsy Cline," has appeared in Pump Boys and Dinettes and was recently seen in "Forever Prime" at the Viaduct Theater in Chicago.

Megon currently serves as the Director of Music for the Unity Northwest Church in Des Plaines, IL.



October 6 - 8

Ramananda John E. Welshons

October 6 - 7, Unity Annual Retreat

October 8, guest speaker and workshop

WELSHONS is a highly respected contemporary spiritual teacher who lectures and leads meditation courses, workshops, and retreats across North America. He has worked extensively with Ram Dass, Stephen Levine, and Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. He has spent time in India at the ashrams of Meher Baba and Neem Karoli Baba. He is the author of three



powerful books: ONE SOUL, ONE LOVE, ONE HEART: The

Sacred Path to Healing All Relationships; WHEN PRAYERS AREN'T ANSWERED: Opening the Heart and Quieting the Mind in Challenging Times; AWAK-ENING FROM GRIEF: Finding the

By John Daubney

Spotlight On Service



Karin Reinhold

Karin loves to share her joy through service to others. She believes that being of service is being in the natural flow of life and abundance. No matter what our life circumstances may be, we can always give out of our abundance. We can simply choose to smile or be kind or lend a helping hand, and be richly rewarded in return.

“The 4T and Prosperity Plus programs teach that, to be in the flow of abundance, it is beneficial to develop a practice of showing up in life as abundance: being abundant in time, talent and treasure. From Neale Donald Walsch (*Conversations with God*), I learned there is always something we can give: comfort, love, affection, or making someone smile or laugh. There are many ways we can share our abundance. The best for me is to bring joy.

“I see service as being in the flow of abundance; giving from my energy, giving from my heart. The flow of abundance is the flow of life. Life is an energy that permeates everything. Life wants to flow, it does not like being constrained or pinched. If you look around, you see that the world is abundant. Look at a tree in bloom. It is abundant in flowers. It produces way more flowers and seeds than it needs for its own reproductive purposes, it offers of itself to life. Service is an opportunity for us to do the same. I love the feeling of being in the flow—serving is easy, serving is a joy.

“I serve in many capacities. I started with hospitality when I asked Jim Fuller where could I be of service. I love taking care of people, I love making a small contribution that warms people’s hearts. The gatherings after service on Sunday are beautiful. I love that people come down to have a cup of coffee, a bite to eat, and a heartfelt talk with friends. The time together is important and brings us closer together. I love contributing to hospitality whether it is preparing the food or coffee, or tables or helping clean up. And it is beautiful that people always show up to help. Hospitality is the heart of our beautiful community.

“This past year, I have served as teller. The teller team is a committed group of people that show up at their appointed time, and is well organized by Laurie. The tellers help keep our financial house in order. While it may not have the same

warm feeling as hospitality, it is important work that requires it be done correctly. The tellers team rocks!

“Ever since Paul Bernard passed, I’ve been co-hosting the Sunday A Course In Miracles with Nancy Remick. This is perhaps my biggest service commitment. This group meets every Sunday. It is not a service to Unity, although most people that come are Unity members. Serving in A Course in Miracles is, for me, serving spirit. We open the meeting with a prayer: “I am here only to be truly helpful ...”, which summarizes what service is for me. The Course also teaches that giving and receiving are the same. Serving others is then giving to yourself. And this is truly so because when you give without attachment, you also receive. “In my experience, I receive an openness within myself that feels good. I feel as if room is made within my heart. And then, when the teachings from the Course touches someone’s heart, I also receive a blessing in mine. We “teach” what we give. The lesson that I receive is by giving it to others. The Course has been a blessing and has brought much peace into my life. It has allowed me to expand my awareness of the love that is all around us. My hat is off to Nancy Remick for her more than 30 years of commitment and dedication to our group beginning in 1984.

“This year, I said yes to serving on the Board of Trustees for Unity. I love the team I’m working with. They are a dynamic and uplifting group of people, each bringing different gifts. I look forward to growing in the roles this opportunity brings me. In particular I

enjoy holding a Prosperity Consciousness for our church.”

“Grace happens when we act with others on behalf of the world.” — Joanna Macy

I slept and dreamt
that life was joy.
I awoke and saw
that life was service.
I acted and behold,
service was joy.

Robinhood Tagore

THOUGHTS

Editor’s Note: Feel free to submit photos, articles, prayers, and/or poems for publication to Bonnie Kriss, tedandbonkriss@hotmail.com. Deadline for submission is 7/20 for the August/September newsletter.



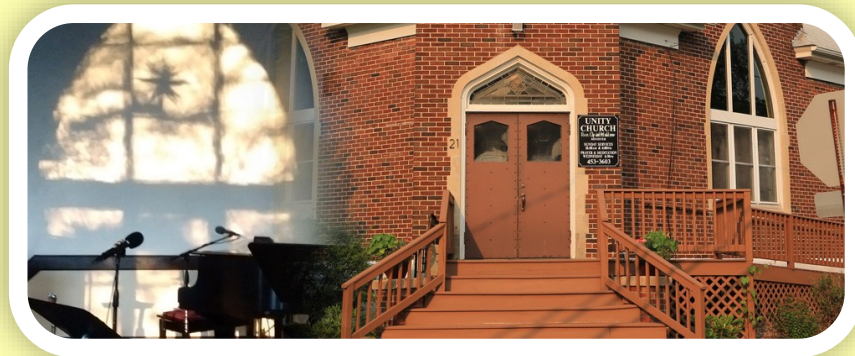
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.. a positive path for spiritual living



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!***

Sunday Worship Schedule

Sunday Morning Summer Schedule

10:00 am

*Youth classes are available during the
10:00 am service*

Sunday Evening "OneSong" Service

6:00 pm

*Multi-faith service with music, meditation
and sacred chant*