



Unity Northwest Church NEWS

www.unitynorthwest.org

Happy Easter

April 2017

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Unity Northwest Church

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MINISTER'S LETTER



SPELLS OF CUSSEDNESS

Myrtle Fillmore wrote, "We don't tell you to deny the existence of all your problems or shortcomings. You should admit to them. But don't identify yourself with them. 'Spells of cussedness' are the result of the Spirit of Good doing a much-needed housecleaning work."

"Spells of cussedness?" Those are the experiences that you don't like, that you've labeled as less than perfect, that you've judged as bad or wrong.

Do you want to grow spiritually? Then you are willing to go through some tough experiences of life and understand that it's just the stuff that gets you in touch with your soul, that brings out the true inner essence of your inner being. By grappling with these issues, whether they show up personally, in a family system, at work or on the world scene, you will find rich opportunities to see what your soul is truly made of!

Thirty years ago, I heard that some individuals in my church were telling tales that weren't true, and I took it very, very personally. So personally that I felt it necessary to go around trying to counter every untrue statement that I had heard about. That just made things worse. I got caught up in a "he said, she said" conflict that was rising to epic proportions.

Then came the Sunday when a church member walked up to me during the greeting time and told me about a strange dream she had just the night before. In it, I was walking through a cow pasture, reaching down, picking up and stacking in my arms the many cow patties that I was finding there. Did I know what that meant? Did I? In a flash it came to me that I needed to learn how not to take things so personally, for by doing so, I was picking up the effluvia of others.

We are souls in evolution

In the weeks that followed, to the extent that I could de-personalize the issues of others and walk on, I lived in peace. To the extent that I reached down, picked up and stacked them, I didn't. What a marvelous opportunity to grow! After many fits and starts, I learned this lesson (most of the time, anyway).

How can you dis-identify with these "spells?" Try taking into meditation an affirmation, such as: "I Am That I Am," "I Am my Christ Consciousness," or "I am now in the presence of pure Being." Let these words wash over you, setting you free. Sit there. Just sit there. And make the commitment that you will not arise again until you feel a shift is happening. When you get up from your chair, you may find that what you thought was an insurmountable problem has shifted as well.

You are a soul in evolution and you are evolving through every experience of your life, even "spells of cussedness." Embrace these "spells" and just keep on growing!

Greg Barrette

TALK TITLES for April follow on p. 2

NOT YOUR MOMMA'S GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 14, 7:00 pm
 Led by Greg Barrette and featuring Megon McDonough, Music Director

Good Friday is the second part of the three-step process of Holy Week, beginning with the vision of Palm Sunday and ending with the power of Easter. Releasing our blocks to inner awareness is the crucial second step that Good Friday represents for us. We will explore the seven last words of Jesus to find clues on how to release this awesome power into our lives. A dessert potluck Fellowship Hour will follow the service.

Stay up-to-date with
 Unity Northwest Church

Visit our website at
www.unitynorthwest.org

AND

Watch past Sunday talks at
<http://vimeo.com/unitynorthwest>

or at

<https://www.youtube.com/user/unitynorthwestchurch>

COMING UP IN APRIL ...

LETTING GO AND LETTING GOD

Sunday, April 2, 1:00 pm
 Facilitated by Dr. Rose Grace

Dr. Rose Grace will help you discover what you are searching for in your life. Then she will help you discover solutions to use in unravelling your specific life problem around that situation. You will learn to look at challenges as the entrance to resolving an important soul issue that you came here to learn for yourself. And you will have much more peace in your life.

MAKING FRIENDS WITH REALITY

Tuesday, April 4, 7:00-8:15 pm
 Facilitated by Greg Barrette

When you realize that your purpose for living is to grow spiritually, then everything can contribute to the best interest of your soul. Instead of beating yourself up for not measuring up to some arbitrary standard, let yourself off the hook and begin to live and grow!

(Continued on page 2)

Unity Northwest is a center for spiritual growth that offers tools for living at every level of expression.

Our Mission Statement

We inspire and embrace the soul evolution of everyone in our church community.

What Is Unity?

Unity is an interdenominational Christian church based on the practical teachings of Jesus Christ, often referred to as "Positive, Practical Christianity." Our main focus is not on "original sin" but on the "original blessing" of being children of God. We are created in the image and likeness of God, here to live life and live it more abundantly.

**Silent Unity Prayer Line:
1-800-NOW-PRAY**

Unity's Five Basic Principles

- There is only Presence and one Power active in the universe and in my life, God the Good.
- Our essence is of God; therefore, we are inherently good. This God essence, called the Christ, was fully expressed in Jesus.
- We are co-creators with God, creating reality through thoughts held in mind.
- Through prayer and meditation, we align our heart-mind with God. Denials and affirmations are tools we use.
- Through thoughts, words and actions, we live the Truth we know.

Unity Northwest Newsletter

Ruth Trailer Editor

**April 2017
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Weekly

Silent Meditation Service

**Ongoing—Tuesdays, 6:00–6:45 pm
Facilitated by Greg Barrette**

Being supported by a group makes meditation much easier. Numerous studies by research labs at major universities have confirmed the effectiveness of meditation to heal and reduce stress. We have witnessed healings of mind, body and circumstances that can be attributed to this group practice.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES LETTER

Greetings from your Board.

Oh, April showers, may we continue to bloom to our highest potential.

A big thank you to everyone who attended our annual meeting last month, and we welcome to the board new members Stephanie Bartels and Dallas Trailer who were elected by proclamation. Then the new board will elect officers at the April meeting. We thank Tracy Wooldridge and Susan Sigler again for their three years of service.

Love, Communicate, Respond

The first three months of the year have seen an increase in attendance and offerings with a lot of first-time visitors. So be sure to say hello to unfamiliar faces and welcome them to our church family.

We have expanded our internet presence with Google ads and posting classes on Meetup.com thanks to Nick Novak.

We are one in the Spirit.

Sheila Budd, President, Board of Trustees

COMING UP IN APRIL ...

SOUL EVOLUTIONISTS UNITE!

Wednesday, April 5, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Lynn Barrette, LCSW

Soul Evolution is the new paradigm for understanding who we are, where we have been and where we are going as souls expressing on this planet. We will explore this new vision and investigate tools that help us cooperate consciously with the evolution of our souls.

REINCARNATION AND SOUL EVOLUTION

Wednesday, April 12, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Lynn Barrette, LCSW

Reincarnation is the process for evolution of our souls, but how does this information help us grow into our spiritual potential? We will explore where we have been, who we are now, and where we are going as we expand in awareness of our own divinity. Learn how to look for signs of your past lives right in your own surroundings!

ENNEAGRAM AND SPIRIT

Thursday, April 13, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Jim Ware

The Enneagram can be seen as a set of 9 distinct personality types. Those of you who are new to the Enneagram can go online for free and take a short assessment at the website: eclecticenergies.com to see what your type may be. The class will open with a short review of the Enneagram. Then we'll use it in class to discover how to best stay "above the 5" on the Spiritual Thermometer.

LESSONS IN TRUTH

Tuesday, April 18, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Greg Barrette

Written by H. Emilie Cady, *Lessons in Truth* has provided millions with an understandable presentation of Unity's basic teachings. The poet Maya Angelou once said that *Lessons in Truth* was "the single most influential book" she has ever read. Topics will include: The Nature of God, The Power of Thought and The Deeper Spirituality.

KARMA: WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?

Wednesday, April 19, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Lynn Barrette, LCSW

Karma gets such a bad rap here in the west! This workshop will uncover the myths and mysteries about karma and how we can use it to help us grow in understanding, intuition and awareness.

WHAT THE DYING TEACH US ABOUT LIVING

Thursday, April 20, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Uma Girish

Sitting with the dying and working with the elderly, I have learned what matters most when life is a finite time. This workshop will help you evaluate your life and course-correct as needed.

APRIL TALK TITLES

(Continued from page 1)

April 2 Putting Your Faith Into Action
Believing is the easy part. Taking action can be the challenge!

April 9 An Incompetent Caterpillar
Palm Sunday
You are changing, and that change is good!

April 16 Lifting Up Into Your New World
Easter
Your answer is nearer than you think!

April 23 How To Fix Everybody Else (Just kidding!)
But what can you do instead?

April 30 Making Friends with Reality
You are on a spiritual adventure--a vision-quest of the soul!

IC The Interfaith Counseling Center (ICC)

offers counseling to individuals, couples and families on a love offering basis for up to three visits. By the third visit, you may choose to end counseling, continue offsite, or be referred to a therapist or other community service agency that will best serve your needs.

ICC is available to people of all religious, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and provides support for a wide array of issues: spiritual, personal, relationship, parenting, stress release, depression and anxiety.

Call today for an appointment: 847-297-0997.

A free will offering will be accepted at most classes or workshops.

For more information call 847-297-0997, or visit www.unitynorthwest.org.

YOUTH EDUCATION MINISTRY

Lent and the Easter season are about releasing and letting go of all the error thinking that has kept us attached to thoughts and ideas that no longer serve us. It is a time of inner cleansing and a rebirth of the Christ presence within us.

The purpose of these lessons, using story and creative experiences, is to explore the events of this Holy Week and to understand how the wisdom in these stories still has meaning in our lives today.

Key learning objectives:

- To understand the events of Holy Week.
- To assist the children & teens in understanding the deeper message of each story.
- To invite them to discover how they can use

the wisdom within each story to empower their lives.

- To assist them in finding their own unique expression of the Truth within the stories and how to live a more conscious life.
- Topics include:
- [The Journey Begins—Jesus Enters Jerusalem](#)
Focus: exploring what is needed to prepare for a journey into new understanding.
 - [The Inner Sanctuary—Temple Traders](#)
Focus: understanding that our inner temple is sacred and that when we turn to the Christ we can empty it of all that is not for our highest good.
 - [Seeing Beyond Appearances—Jesus is](#)

We are the world. We are the children.

[Arrested, Sentenced and Crucified](#)

Focus: understanding that sometimes love, understanding and forgiveness are what is necessary in order to rise above a challenge.

- [A Time of Awakening—The Resurrection](#)
Focus: understanding that the resurrection is a symbol of new life, and as we look within, we reawaken to who we truly are—mind, body and soul.

With Love,

Rev. Diane Venzera
Director, Youth Education



SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY

THIS AIN'T YOUR MAMA'S IDEA OF FORGIVENESS

PART II: REDEFINING FORGIVENESS

Last month, we took a thorough look at what forgiveness is not; now we are going to look at what forgiveness is, in a way that is healthy and palatable.

Forgiveness is the process of Acceptance, Compassion, and Release.

The first part of forgiveness is the acceptance that something has happened. If someone has hurt me, for example, I can't do anything about that fact; it is what it is. I don't have to like it, approve of it, or try to get anyone else to see or understand it.

When we're dealing with the facts of what has happened, we are willing to be honest about those facts overall, not just the facts about what the other person did, or what the circumstances threw at us. Maybe I lashed out when I was hurt by another person, maybe I withdrew for a while, maybe I stood up for myself in the moment, or maybe I was the one who screwed up first. All these are part of the facts that we accept.

Why is acceptance important? If we deny the facts of a situation, we're not fully able to deal with our responses or the other person's behavior, or process the forgiveness need. We know what really happened, even if our thoughts—or those of people around us—try to turn it into something else.

For example, if someone is sexually abused, but their family members are giving an alternative reality to that situation, it becomes difficult for the victim of that abuse to make peace with their own internal experience and reaction, which affects the healing process—which in turn has lasting side effects. When our experience is denied, by others or ourselves, we don't have the clarity necessary to deal with the

otherwise healable trauma around the event.

We must give ourselves permission to acknowledge facts. That goes back to [what forgiveness is not](#), right? It is not denying ourselves the truth of what happened, or pretending nothing happened. Working with the facts helps us through our own emotional responses more efficiently.

Forgiveness is acknowledging the facts of your experience.

The second part of forgiveness is compassion—being able to look at the whole situation beyond our own emotional experience of it. This is where we put ourselves in the other person's shoes to try to see what they might have been intending or going through in that moment. We also try to see where we were coming from in the moment. We look above the facts in this step, to try to see the hurtful experience within the context of the time it happened, as honestly as possible.

In this part of the forgiveness process that we can learn what we need to about ourselves, about the other person. We see what we need to about our part in the situation, and what the event triggered in us. We see what we need to about the other person and learn how to adjust ourselves given the new information we have gathered. (Search for my YouTube video on [Discernment versus Judgment](#) for how to see behavior for what it is without getting all judgment about it.)

I'm not saying this is easy! Often it's harder to have compassion for ourselves than it is to generate it for others. And sometimes we don't want to have compassion for the other person; we want to hold on to the anger and resentment. But that's why forgiveness is a process. We work at it until we are ready to rise above our emotional response. We don't forget what happened, right? We simply work with the forgiveness process so that we can come to this point of compassion, and the next step, release.

What does my soul want me to do?

Forgiveness is working toward compassion for the other person and yourself.

The third part of forgiveness is release. This is the point at which we are willing to release the emotional pain created by the hurtful experience. That pain is going to come up over and over and over again until we release it, so this is a vital step! We won't forget to do our work because [life will remind us that our work isn't done](#) by those little triggers from the past. They poke at the emotional pain like when you poke a bruise on your arm and it hurts a little. That means the bruise hasn't healed, right? Our emotional body acts the same way. It will keep feeling sore until it is healed. But unlike our physical body that heals itself, we have to put conscious effort into the healing of our emotional pain.

When we have done the work of the first two steps, Acceptance and Compassion, the Release step is the action step of being aware when the emotional bruise gets poked at, or triggered, and reminding ourselves, "Oh yes, there it is. I am letting this go now." And we pull ourselves back to a peaceful state of mind, not indulging in the pain or the story. This is the step where we choose Acceptance and Compassion as our reality moving forward, instead of holding onto resentment and emotional pain as our reality.

Release is the step where we choose acceptance and compassion as our reality instead of resentment and emotional pain.

And that is what forgiveness is.

Next month we will address how to forgive. I have a couple of tried and true processes to share with you to help you with your forgiveness work. In the meantime, how does this new idea of forgiveness change how you are looking at forgiveness needs in your life?

Lynn Barrette, LUT, LCSW

FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Encourage, lift and strengthen one another.

True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. **C.S. Lewis**

The other day we watched a television program on the Weather Channel about people's personal experiences when a tornado leveled much of a small town in the Midwest. In one such incident, we see, via his dash cam, a policeman is driving down a street looking for people needing help after the tornado has passed. A man and woman come running toward the car shouting that they have to get home to their children. He lets them into the car and heads in the direction of their house, which they see has been reduced to a pile of rubble. But from underneath the ruins there emerges their thirteen-year-old son, who then helps bring out his younger siblings. Later on in a television news interview, a reporter asks him how it feels to be a hero. He says humbly that he doesn't feel like one because he was so scared. All he did was rush the younger kids into the basement and lie down on top of them until the noise of the tornado was over.

That's a hero! That boy felt his fear and did what he had to anyway. Of course, not all of us are confronted by dire circumstances for overcoming fears and taking action, but we do face subtler similar situations on a daily basis. Every time we choose to do something different or choose to do something differently, we create a new neuro-pathway in our brain. That's how we grow and evolve as human beings. In fact, it's our job as human beings to open to new ideas and practices. That doesn't mean we will embrace every new idea or practice that happens along, and sometimes when we do try something new, it can turn out to be a small mistake or a dismal failure. But that's how we grow and learn.

Both the words *human* and *humility* come from the same Latin word *humus*, meaning earth or ground. So we may ask ourselves, how are we grounded? What do we stand on/stand for? The boy who protected his siblings was grounded in love. Sure he was in survival mode, but survival for him included his little brother and sister. As the quote from Quincy Jones says, each of us is "a terminal for a higher power," and there's nothing higher than love.

Ruth Trailer

Thoughts become things... choose the good ones! ® © www.tut.com ®



I tell my kids and I tell protégés, always have humility when you create and grace when you succeed, because it's not about you. You are a terminal for a higher power. As soon as you accept that, you can do it forever.

Quincy Jones



Be God's Love in Action. VOLUNTEER! Call the church office at 847-297-0997.



Sunday Services: 9:00 and 11:00 am
Youth Education: Sundays at 11:00 am