



# Unity Northwest Church **NEWS**

[www.unitynorthwest.org](http://www.unitynorthwest.org)

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

August 2016

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### Unity Northwest Church

**Member:** Association of Unity Churches

**Affiliation:** Unity School of Christianity

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Rev. Diane Venzera	Director

## MINISTER'S LETTER



### THE UNITY—NATIVE AMERICAN CONNECTION

I grew up in Unity. By the time I was ten years old, my mother, a youth leader in our Unity church, had told me about how she had used a prayer given to her by Silent Unity to help heal my sister of serious birth defects when she was a baby. She also shared the equally miraculous story of Unity's co-founder, Charles Fillmore, who was raised among the Ojibwa nation where his father ran the trading post.

The elders of the tribe recognized young Charles as having been marked by the Great Spirit to do a divinely preordained work. They believed that he needed to be prepared spiritually with ceremonies. For this purpose, Charles was "kidnapped" by members of the tribe at the age of two and taken through the appropriate rituals. He was then returned to his family in perfect condition. His mother would never speak of it except to confirm that it happened—it had so traumatized her, but Charles always somehow knew that it was for a good purpose and had never felt in danger.

This story was confirmed many years later by a Unity member of my church who grew up on the Ojibwa reservation and had heard stories of that young boy while he was raised there. Only when I shared this story in a service did he realize the young boy was actually Charles Fillmore!

For years I never gave this story another thought until I was returning to college from a summer hitchhiking trip across America in 1972. I stopped at a fast food place in Winterhaven, California and had my first personal experience of the connection between my Unity upbringing and Native American religion.

In 1972 the young medicine man of the Quechan tribe in Winterhaven could not get a hamburger served to him in town. I know because he gave me the money to purchase one for him, calling out to me from the parking lot as I walked up to the drive-in. It seems they didn't serve native Americans even

### *We are souls in evolution*

though we were on ancestral tribal lands. The owner asked if I was making my purchase for "the Indians," and I lied.

After I gave him his burger and expressed outrage at his treatment, he invited me out to the reservation, where he and his friends talked to me all night of all the injustices they had experienced and what they believed. I told him about Unity, and they were amazed that someone who was not Native American believed pretty much what they did about the Spirit and healing. They had never experienced that before. It was a mind-opening experience for all of us. Early the next morning I hit the road.

The next day I was dropped off at an on-ramp in Earlismart where some type of spiritual synchronicity was at work. There was one other hitchhiker there, an oddly dressed man about my age. We struck up a conversation as there was nothing else to do while we stuck out our thumbs. I knew that his getup was going to make procuring a ride very difficult in that conservative agricultural town.

Once again, he was a medicine man, this time of the Yurok nation, from the redwood country near Eureka. He had until recently been a pre-law student and student body president at California State University, Northridge, but felt a spiritual calling in a dream to return to his tribe. His previous training in tribal religion had been cut short when

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## Unity Northwest Church PICNIC!

**Sun., August 21, after the 2nd service**

**We'll have games and other activities for the kids.**

**Bring a side dish to pass — salads, desserts, bread or chips.**

**See Tracy Wooldridge or call the office to volunteer for cooking, setup or cleanup.**

**Join us for the fun!**

**Stay up-to-date with Unity Northwest Church**

**Visit our website at [www.unitynorthwest.org](http://www.unitynorthwest.org)**

**AND**

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

**or at**

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

## COMING UP IN AUGUST ...

### Decluttering as a Happy Spiritual Practice

Wednesday, August 3, 7:00 pm  
Facilitated by Rev. Mary Beth Speer

This workshop is based on the book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo. "When you put your house in order, you put your affairs and your past in order, too," says the author.

### Burnout Begone

Tuesday, August 9, 7:00 pm  
Facilitated by Greg Barrette

Change is not possible without accepting yourself exactly as you are. Unconditional self-acceptance is necessary if you want your life to move ahead.

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*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

**August 2016  
Contributing Writers**

Greg Barrette  
Diane Venzera  
Lynn Barrette  
Sheila Budd  
Ruth Trailer

**Website**

Diane Venzera Web Master

**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!

"Count your blessings, count them one by one. Count your many blessings; see what God has done," as the song goes. I am enjoying the services here, the friendly faces and the expansion of consciousness.

At the July board meeting we discussed the following:

Church Picnic – Sunday, August 21

Finalized plans for our picnic on Sunday, August 21st. Looking forward to seeing you there.

**MINISTER'S LETTER**

*(Continued from page 1)*

he decided that his talents would be better used in service to the tribe as a lawyer, but his dream told him that he needed to return home and resume his spiritual training.

After dropping out of school, he began hitching up north to attend a convocation of medicine men from all over the west in Eureka. He told me that his first ride was a spiritual test in preparation for his return to being a shaman. They had robbed him of all the money he had, stole his clothing, beat him and left him naked by a dumpster at a Salvation Army store in the San Fernando Valley. There was a clothing donation box there, out of which he pieced together the most incongruous of outfits. Nothing matched or fit. Now he had to manage to find a way home dressed like that, with no money. We would be there for a long time, I thought.

To kill time while we waited for a ride, we shared what we each believed, and just like the night before, he was shocked to find a non-Native American who held to his tribal teachings about spirit and healing. He had never met one. As he shared his beliefs with me, it wasn't lost to me that this was no accident—coupled with my experience in Winterhaven—and that Fillmore's Native American connection was strong enough to have affected his teachings in a powerful way.

As the day progressed, it was becoming clear that his looks were going to make getting a ride impossible so I offered to buy us both bus tickets to the next city, Fresno, where it would be easier for us both to get rides. By that time, most of our time had been spent in meditative silences of profound energy. I will never get over that experience. This spiritual synchronicity followed me to the primary

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

**For more information  
call 847-297-0997,  
or visit [www.unitynorthwest.org](http://www.unitynorthwest.org).**

**Love, Communicate, Respond**

Building Care

Replaced the air conditioner belt as it was having a hard time keeping up with the heat.

Unexpected Income Program

Program yielded 92 registrations. Hope you are enjoying the blessings.

Namasté

**Sheila Budd**

President, Board of Trustees

**COMING UP IN AUGUST ...**

*(Continued from page 1)*

**Releasing Old Beliefs through EFT "Tapping"**

Thursday, August 11, 7:00 to 9:00 pm  
Facilitated by Celeste Magers

EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) "tapping" is a technique that calms the brain and nervous system, allowing us to relax and reduce the fear that is keeping us from finding those beliefs, releasing them and allowing the beliefs that we prefer to work.

**Stepping into Prayer Power**

Monday, August 15, 7:00 pm  
Facilitated by Rev. Mary Beth Speer

Revs. Mary Beth and Michael Speer will team up to present the five steps of affirmative prayer known as Spiritual Mind Treatment. Treatment is one of several spiritual power tools offered at Unity Northwest which anyone can learn and immediately use. Participants will be treating before the night is through!

**Your Heart Already Knows What Is Needed**

Tuesday, August 23, 7:00 pm  
Facilitated by Greg Barrette

Your life is not so much a matter of huge crossroads. It is the small day-to-day decisions that make the difference. Your heart knows how to make these decisions.

**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.**

## YOUTH EDUCATION MINISTRY

This month we conclude our study of fairy tales and fables. Children instinctively know that these stories are just stories. They understand that they are not true on a literal level but are examples of the inner challenges we all must face and overcome. Also, we all have experiences that are challenging or frightening. Fairy tales tell the children that they are not powerless as these challenging or frightening experiences can be overcome.

### Lesson For August:

- **My Words Have Power:** "The Boy Who Cried Wolf," Aesop's Fables  
When we are honest, we feel good about ourselves and can develop positive relationships with others.
- **Be Careful What You Promise:** "Rumpelstiltskin," The Brothers Grimm  
Taking responsibility for our choices helps us to live an honorable life.
- **Church Family Picnic**
- **Seeing Beyond Appearances:** "The Ant & the Chrysalis,"

*We are the world. We are the children.*

### Aesop's Fables

When we are willing to look beyond appearance, we see the Truth shining forth from others.

The teens continue their exploration of *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz. The purpose of the Third Agreement is to understand how important it is to state our thoughts, to voice our needs and to ask for additional information so that we can communicate more clearly. When our communication is clear, it is much easier to honor the Christ in all. The purpose of the Fourth Agreement is to understand how important it is to always do your best. Under any circumstance, always do your best, no more and no less. Even though your best may change from moment to moment, always strive to do the best that you can at the time. ~ Don Miguel Ruiz

Blessings,

**Rev. Diane Venzera, Director, Youth Education**



## SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY

### DISCERNMENT VERSUS JUDGMENT

I often hear from people who worry overmuch that they are thinking or saying something judgmental, when in reality they are making a clear and healthy discernment regarding a person or situation.

The distinction between discernment and judgment has to do with intention and motivation. Discernment is healthy and helps us make wise decisions while judging generates negative feelings and energy for everyone. Discernment acknowledges our own experience of a situation, another's possible perspective, plus the factual reality of it. Judgment keeps us stuck in our emotional evaluation of a situation, which doesn't always allow for another point of view or factual input.

For example, perhaps we have a relative who drinks too much at family gatherings and becomes obnoxious. Using discernment, we can acknowledge that the behavior is happening, and notice how that behavior affects us. Is it affecting us negatively? Is the behavior uncomfortable to be around? The focus of the problem is the behavior, not the evaluation of the person as a human being and soul in evolution. From our discerning observation, we can make the clearest decision about what we need to do or not do to take care of ourselves, remove ourselves from the situation, say something to the person (in very well thought-through circumstances), or simply maintaining our presence of mind for as long as we need to endure the behavior.

### *What does my soul want me to do?*

If we were judging, our inner dialogue might sound something more like this: "Oh no, not Uncle So-and-So. You know how he gets. He is such a jerk when he drinks. He'll start talking and there's no stopping him. I really can't stand being around him." We feel stuck, disempowered, victimized by the other person or situation, which then causes us to lash out judgmentally, which in turn does nothing for Uncle So-and-So or us.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself when you are worried that you are feeling judgmental and want instead to come from the wiser space of discernment.

1. What is happening?
2. What is my experience of what is happening, and how is it affecting me?
3. What can I do about it? What is in my control?

From there, we can take the high road in a tough situation.

When has your discernment supported healthy decisions for you?

**Lynn Barrette, LUT, LCSW**

For the video of this post, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUGdVmLhR50> or search "Lynn Barrette" on YouTube.

*Thanks for reading and watching!*

### MINISTER'S LETTER *(Continued from page 2)*

stop on my journey that summer. While attending a retreat at Unity Village, I met with Silent Unity's then director, James Dillet Freeman, and personally heard a surprising Native American connection that he had some years earlier. Freeman told me about how he had been writing an article that included something about native American shamanic beliefs, but got stuck on one part. It seems that he had once heard of something about Hopi tribal teachings that he was working into his article but needed more information to clarify it. He remembered muttering to himself, "I wish there was someone I could ask about this."

The very next day, he received a phone call from a man who turned out to be the very Hopi shaman who had been the source for the spiritual teachings written down by Frank Waters in *The Book of the Hopi*. This medicine man identified Freeman as his favorite writer and asked if he had any time for him the next day when he would be passing through the Kansas City area. Freeman told him of his writing predicament and muttered question, and the man said, "I know." From then on, I always had a sympathetic feeling towards Native American teachings, which I knew in my heart were compatible at a deep level with Unity beliefs.

Many years later, while speaking with the Unity minister Dale Batesole,

I was amazed to find out that that this same medicine man attended his services in Sedona, driving nearly three hours each way every week. Unity is where he went to receive his spiritual nourishment. As a side note, he told Batesole that one of his practices was to drive into Winslow, sit in the back of the theater through all the showings of whatever scary movie was playing and gather up all the energy from all the screaming teenagers, transmute it and then use it for healing back on the Hopi reservation.

I guess it didn't surprise me too much when I got a phone call many years later from the medicine man of the Taos Pueblo, who expressed his appreciation for the Unity message and our radio broadcasts in New Mexico.

In her last year of physical life Myrtle Fillmore wrote, "I often think that the Indians' concept of a Great Spirit brought them, consciously, nearer to the creator than the Christian's concept of a personal God."

It is satisfying to me that Unity and Native American spirituality share a deep connection and strong spiritual foundation that has endured over many generations.

**Greg Barrette**

*(Talk Titles on page 4)*

**FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

*Be kind to one another. EPHESIANS 4:32*

*The words I AM are your sacred identification as God—your highest self. Take care how you use this term because saying anything after I AM that's incongruent with God is really taking the Lord's name in vain!*  
**Wayne W. Dyer**

*A Course in Miracles* says that we don't have to change the world; we just have to change our minds about the world. This principle came to me while mulling over a conversation I recently had with my daughter Kate. We often discuss the topic of the working life because she has begun a new chapter in hers, and I have retired from mine. Well, on this occasion we were talking about how at times we have felt like a victim in the work environment due to annoying or negative co-workers, supervisors who know less than we do, company policies or rules, etc. We agreed that in our mutual experiences middle or upper management and Human Relations personnel don't always take kindly to complaints, which led us to the question: how does an employee tackle a problem when she has one? Solution: don't be a complainer!

Then we just have to stuff it, right? I mean, if we go to a boss or HR to complain about a person or situation that annoys or hampers us on the job, they're just going to be annoyed with us or hampered by us, aren't they? Well, maybe, Kate said, but what if we don't go to them as a complainer. She told me that, as she saw it, we can go into it as a victim or a solution. I had to admit that I had never looked at it this way. My thinking was that victimhood is often an employee's default state of mind. At least it had been mostly my default state of mind when confronting a problem.

So here's where we check in with *A Course in Miracles* and that change of mind about the world. We have the choice of how to see a situation or people and how to see ourselves in relation to a situation or people. Go positive or negative. Choose love or fear. And here's the bottom line: "... God is love." 1 JOHN 4:8 Self-pity is a trap that's hard to pull ourselves out of so reject that, and go for self-love. What joy we will feel when we see ourselves as a resource on the job or anywhere else. We can let God's love inspire and direct us as part of the solution. Yes, we can! Sounds like a plan!

**Ruth Trailer**

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



We may have made mistakes in the past, but we're not bound by those mistakes in the present – as long as we're willing to think now as we did not think then, act now as we did not act then, clean up in the present what needs to be cleaned up from the past, and be now who we were not then.

Marianne Williamson



**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**

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**Talk Titles for August**

August 7 Your Heart Finds Its Balance

As you grow through your life, seek the middle path of balanced living.

August 14 What is Unity?  
 Unity is Positive, Practical and Spiritual!

August 21 Trust Your Guidance  
 There is a light upon your path that shines always--the light of your intuitive guidance!

August 29 Gem of Infinite Value  
*Rev. Mary Beth Speer, Guest Speaker*  
 Within every one of us is a gem of infinite value. We'll help you find yours.