



Happy New Year!

Unity Northwest Church NEWS

www.unitynorthwest.org

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

January 2017

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Unity Northwest Church

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MINISTER'S LETTER



YOUR SOUL'S MAGNIFYING GLASS

You are a soul in evolution—and everything in your life has been custom-designed to grow you into a greater expression of that soul consciousness. And that is the ONLY thing that is truly important in life.

Unity's co-founder, Myrtle Fillmore, wrote late in her life of her commitment to the soul. She had personally witnessed thousands of healings—many from terminal illnesses. But she could see that there was something available that was of even greater value. "I have enjoyed seeing people getting well and whole. I still do. But I have learned that the daily soul growth and spiritual development are even more important." She realized that the soul growth must occur FIRST before any lasting outer healing or effect can take place. As Jesus put it, "Seek first the Kingdom—and its right alignment—and then all these other things will be added to you."

Harvard Medical School did a study of miracle healings of terminal illnesses—what they called "spontaneous remissions"—and determined that there was always a total shift in values and outlook that had to happen BEFORE there could be any outer healing. This is the soul growth that Myrtle Fillmore said must come first.

But what is the soul? I remember when I was about eight years old a friend down the street showed me his magnifying glass. My parents had warned me never to focus the sun's rays and burn anything—leaves, grass, paper—ever. Do you remember being told this? Did you heed the instruction? Well, neither did I! In struggling to make that lens work, I got an experience similar to how to access

We are souls in evolution

my soul. The sunlight of God—or "Spirit" within us—is gathered and caught by the lens of the soul and then used to focus that energy to make changes in our outer worlds.

The light of Spirit within is always shining, but you cannot do much with it. It just shines. You must take action with the soul to convert that impersonal light into something usable. Jesus said that the sun shines on the bad and the good, and the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike. And so the light of Spirit is unconditional, impersonal, and is always shining. But if you want to use that light of Spirit, you have to do something with it.

When you were a kid, you took that magnifying glass and worked and worked with it until you learned through trial and error how to concentrate the light. Some of your friends could already do it, and you wanted to as well! You also must work in a similar way with the mechanism of your soul to focus the light of Spirit within you for healing and growth. This is done mostly through prayer and meditation and by becoming the observer of our thoughts. Others have done it, and you can, too!

And just as you may have needed to clean the surface of that lens, so you need to polish your soul lens from any impurities that would hinder the gathering of the light. This is the process known as the healing of the soul—polishing it through forgiveness and observation of your thoughts. Your soul is the mediating principle between the spiritual you and the physical you. It is that which binds you together and makes you whole. Your soul aligns you, attunes you, and adjusts you in harmony with your highest good.

Greg Barrette

(Continue to Talk Titles on page 2)

Keys to the Kingdom

Tuesdays, January 17 – February 26, 7:00 to 9:00 pm / Facilitated by Greg Barrette

Join us for this advanced seven-week course in building a new consciousness and acceptance of true abundance. The course offers:

1. A new vision of your highest potential and a greater sense of power
2. A new understanding of spiritual law and your partnership with Spirit
3. A greater appreciation for the goodness of life and freedom from the past
4. A new way of living that will keep you in the flow of true abundance.

This extraordinary journey of spiritual growth requires your powerful inner commitment to these principles. If you are willing to make this commitment, you will profoundly alter your experience of life's abundance and awareness of your highest potential. And if you do not have this experience, your tithe will be returned to you at the conclusion of the course—without question.

Required course materials—CD and workbook—are \$55 and can be purchased on Sundays in the bookstore or by cash or check the night of the class.

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

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>

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

**January 2017
Contributing Writers**

Greg Barrette Sheila Budd
Diane Venzera Ruth Trailer
Lynn Barrette

Website

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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,

Wow! Another year has come and gone, and a new one begins. Hope you have a chance to participate in our burning bowl ceremony to ring in your New Year. If not, remember that every day is a day to begin anew, to reflect on what is working, what needs to change and to set a new intention on how to live your life.

At our last board meeting, we discussed projects to keep our church in the best shape possible.

- The church lights are a little brighter because we had electrical repairs done on fixtures that were shorting out and replaced several bulbs.

COMING UP IN JANUARY ...

Achieving Goals in 2017

Tuesday, January 10, 7:00 to 9:00 pm
Facilitated by Greg Barrette

This is an opportunity to create a practical vision for creating satisfying and successful goals for 2017. We will use journaling, visualization, meditation and discussion to create goals for every aspect of living. We will mostly focus on doing written exercises to create the quality of life that we would like to see happen.

Cooperating with Your Soul Plan in 2017

Wednesday, January 18, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Lynn Barrette, LCSW

In this workshop we will look at our goals, hopes, and desires for 2017. We will explore how to motivate ourselves towards our goals, how to deal with discouragement and the need for daily spiritual routine to keep us moving. A must for the new year!

Tapping in the New Year

Thursday, January 19, 7:00 to 9:00 pm
Facilitated by Celeste Magers

Start the New Year out right by roto-rooting out the hidden limiting beliefs that may be hindering your New Year's resolutions from manifesting. EFT "Tapping" is a technique that switches the nervous system from "fight-flight-or-freeze" to "rest-and-digest," allowing us to calm worry, find the hidden beliefs working against us and release them. Then our resolutions and affirmations can really work, and we can heal. Tapping is a very simple process, and beginners will pick it up quickly and easily. So join us, even if you are new to tapping.

Spiritual Solutions for Everyday Problems

Wednesday, January 25, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Lynn Barrette, LCSW

Every day holds opportunities to practice our spiritual wisdom. This workshop will explore what tools to have on hand for those daily run-ins with life's ups and downs.

Love, Communicate, Respond

- We will be looking to buff the floors after the winter grime is over.
- We have a great year of classes and services planned starting with the White Stone Ceremony and goal setting, working your soul plan and EFT tapping to help you live your best life in 2017.

Stayed tuned for all the wonderful things Unity Northwest and A.R.E have planned to help in your soul's growth.

Blessings,

Sheila Budd, President, Board of Trustees

JANUARY TALK TITLES (Cont. from page 1)

January 1 Your Good Eye for the New Year
New Years Day

NOTE: Only one service--11am!
Having a Good Eye means that you envision the Good and transform everything into that Good!

January 8 Your New Start
White Stone Ceremony—led by Lynn Barrette, Licensed Unity Teacher, and Greg Barrette
In Jesus' day, when a person was released from prison, they were given a white stone to represent their new beginning. During the White Stone Ceremony, Lynn will lead a meditation that will guide us into receiving a word or phrase symbolizing a new start for our new year. Everyone who comes will receive a white stone.

January 15 Listen Up!
How can you hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit?

January 22 Love Meets All Your Needs
This entire universe sings a personal song of love for you!

January 29 How to Choose Love
Love is your decision. Love is your choice.

Grace Appears in Times of Problems

Thursday, January 26, 7:00 pm
Facilitated by Bobbi Williams, Spiritual Counselor

Grace is not something we receive upon request, we receive it upon repose—given gently in Perfect time. In this class, we will learn to see our worries, fears and struggles as the necessary chaos for growth and the perfect stage for the gift of Grace. We will learn to live powerfully and purposefully in the center of chaos.

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

A favorite song lyric of mine is: "Every new beginning is some other beginnings end." So as another New Year begins, we sit back, take stock of all that we have experienced in the past year, and we open to the new and unlimited possibilities that lay before us. It is an exciting time of growth, discovery and acknowledgement as we combine the wisdom of the past with the possibilities of the future.

We are in a period of rapid growth and change within our Youth and Family ministry. We have had new families, teachers, children and teens join us and others who had been with us for a long time, move on to other life experiences. We welcome the new, and we grieve the loss of familiar faces. But through it all we know that the magic of the Divine Spirit is present and working to bring us all to a higher place of being.

Our course of study for this New Year includes the following:

Nursery & Preschool

- God Takes Care of Me
- God Keeps Me Safe — story: David and Goliath
- God Is With Me — story: Noah & the Ark
- God Gives Me Food

Multi-Aged Class: Lumindorf (Harry Potter) Harry Potter is a young boy who has traveled a difficult road. When he is ten years old, he discovers he is a wizard, possesses amazing skills and is filled with magic. His story is a wonderful spiritual journey that we can all identify with. Following his adventures we discover that the stories reflect our own spiritual journey and point us to a higher use of our own powers. The curriculum uses a variety of stories from the first four Harry Potter books and is designed to assist the students in tapping into the "magic" that exists within them.

We are the world. We are the children.

- Are You Muggle or Are You Magic? — To understand that magic exists within each one of us whether we are aware of it or not. When we understand the spiritual power that we possess, we can put our "magic" to use to create good in our world.
- What is Really Inside You? — understand that in order to discover our True nature, we must be willing to look inside ourselves and not just rely on other people's opinions of us. When we are willing to let go of negative self descriptions, we are then able to begin to discover wonderful things about ourselves.
- Platform 9¾ — To understand that we all have "brick walls" in our lives and when we understand how to use the tools we have and to tap into the "magic" that exists within each one of us, we can move through the "brick walls" as if they were not even there.
- The Sorting Hat — The Sorting Hat describes itself as being very smart and able to see inside our heads. It knows exactly where we need to be. Our Christ presence is the same way. It is within us, it is our source and it is always available to guide us.

The Teens

Will be alternating between Exploring Life Strategies and Lessons in Truth. Their topics of study include:

- Life Strategies for Teens: "Either You Get It or You Don't"
- Life Strategies for Teens: "You Create Your Own Experiences"
- Lessons in Truth: "All I Want Is Some Freedom"
- Lessons in Truth: "Who Am I ... and Who or What is God?"

With Love,

Rev. Diane Venzera
Director, Youth Education



SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY

MINDFUL MYTH BUSTING

#1: A BLANK MIND IS NOT THE PURPOSE

*Create a daily mindfulness practice,
and support your spiritual stamina in 2017!*

You may already know something about mindfulness, so I'm not going to go into that in detail, except to say that it's the practice of being present, aware, and without judgment.

In the classes, workshops, and retreats that I lead, I work with people to begin a practice of five minutes of daily mindfulness meditation. What often happens is that people quickly get discouraged with their practice because they can't still their minds for five minutes, then give up the practice altogether!

That's so sad because the point of mindfulness is not about achieving a blank mind—it's to train the mind not to react so quickly and unconsciously to the myriad of thoughts and emotions that pop into our minds and bodies in a given moment. We can have brief moments of a quiet mind, and perhaps after years of practice, our minds are much quieter than they used to be. But that takes a lot of practice, and most of us aren't there yet. In the meantime, we practice and practice and practice!

Every moment, thoughts and feelings are coming and going in our minds. When we're unaware of them, they inevitably drag us in one direction or another. If I'm working at my desk and suddenly start thinking about the doughnuts in the kitchenette down the hall, I can notice that thought—be aware of it—and remind myself that doughnuts are not the kind of food I want in my body; and besides, I don't even like doughnuts!

If I'm not present with those doughnut thoughts, they will dance in and

What does my soul want me to do?

out of my head for a few minutes before I feel compelled to go have a doughnut that I don't even like!

Our actions and attitudes follow our thinking!

Whatever spends time in our heads guides the rest of us!

When we do our mindfulness practice—or any type of meditation practice—we are doing just that: practicing. We are practicing observing our thoughts as they come and go. We have our anchor or focal point that we bring our attention back to gently, noticing our minds wandering, then bring our minds back again.

It's like lifting weights. We don't go to the gym, lift one repetition, then think we're done and now should be able to lift 500 pounds! We repeat those exercises a couple dozen times, several times a week, slowly building those muscles.

Mindfulness builds the muscle of the mind so that our conscious awareness is more in charge of us than our unconscious thoughts and emotions that pop in and out of our minds all the time.

Maybe you already have a meditation practice, or maybe you've come in and out of one. Either way, remember that while a quiet mind is wonderful, the practice of observing the busy mind and bringing it back to your anchor is how your mind's focus and attention muscle is built!

In a five minute daily practice, if you have to gently redirect your mind 1,000 times, that is success! Happy New Year!

Lynn Barrette, LUT, LCSW

(You can watch this message on YouTube at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MBJ4FQXzgw!>)

FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Encourage, lift and strengthen one another.

And with open hands and open heart we receive the gifts of the Christ—love, joy and peace.

It's time for New Year's resolutions, and we vow to start doing this or stop doing that, right? But we all know what happens to those resolutions—like working out at the fitness club: we end up letting our membership lapse. So, what if we were to change our minds about what we want to resolve? How about resolving to open our hands and heart to all the good that is coming to us in the new year?

What is an open hand? Well, first picture a closed hand. Is it an angry fist? Is it stuffed in a pocket and holding back? Is it pounded on a table to make an ultimatum? In any of these poses is it a hand open and ready to receive a gift?

If we believe that it's more blessed to give than receive and are not practiced in grateful receiving, then it's time to put ourselves in the reception line and take our turn. Giving and receiving are a continuous circle, and the cheerful giver receives with his left hand even as he gives with his right hand—and all with a sense of gratitude for participating.

"We gave, but they wouldn't receive." If this is our experience, then we need to take a closer look at how and what we're offering. Do we expect something in return? Do we tie conditions to our gifts? Is our "gift" for their highest good and not for our highest want? Hey, we need to give to others without expectation! Release that arrow, and it will find its true target.

What is an open heart? Well, a closed heart lets the ego mind take over and dictate what's right or wrong, good or evil, a blessing or a curse so that every gift gets a careful examination of its mouth with the result of finding lots of flaws. But an open heart knows that anything it needs is already here in this moment and that "flaws" are a part of what makes someone or something a unique piece of the puzzle.

So here's a helpful affirmation for our new New Year's resolution: "I am open and receptive to all the good that is coming to me." Amen.

Ruth Trailer

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



excerpted from
Gifts of The Goddess
 by Karen Drucker

These are the gifts of the Goddess,
 love, joy and peace.
 Gifts of the Goddess,
 are you ready to receive?

Love, are you ready?
 Joy, are you ready?
 Peace, are you ready?
 Are you ready to receive?

Gifts of the Goddess,
 love, joy and peace.
 Gifts of the Goddess,
 are you ready to receive?



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