



UNITY CHURCH

Where hearts open

*A publication of Unity Church of Corvallis
May 2007*

From your Spiritual Director **Unity 2007**

By John Butler

Well, if you are reading this newsletter that means that someone, somewhere that you know, perhaps you, was involved at Unity of Corvallis. There are, in Spirit, no time or space limitations and so we thought you might be interested in reading about what we are doing these days even if you have been absent from our Sunday service for a long while.

We are profoundly grateful for all those that helped co-create Unity of Corvallis. Those who founded this community in the early days; those who, over the years, left and returned; those who have arrived on the scene later and picked up the vision and forwarded it, and those who are yet to arrive.

We are here to serve, to support, and to co-create the thriving New Thought community for which we all yearn—a place where Hearts Open.

In a few weeks, I will have served Unity of Corvallis for 5 years—the longest continuous tenure of any spiritual leader here. There is something to be said for continuity since we have formed deep, harmonious and trusting relationships within our community that do take years to forge.

If you left years ago due to spiritual disruptions or difficult energetics, perhaps the time is ripe for you to see how it feels to be with us now.

My background and training are in creating Harmony, and we have been making peace here at Unity of Corvallis. For the past four years we have been the local sponsoring church for the Season for Nonviolence. We have implemented a consciousness of Harmony through classes and workshops related to healing relationships; Forgiveness, Nonviolent

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Your *source*

The Truth Behind the Secret

By John Butler

Perhaps you have heard of the book or film titled “The Secret,” which recently has been featured on Oprah and is on Amazon and New York Times bestseller lists. (We showed the film in December at our Spiritual Cinema). The book is about the so-called Law of Attraction and states that “the law of attraction is the most powerful force in the universe” and unequivocally claims that your thoughts create your future and your reality.

The book has created a firestorm of interest in Truth students and others seeking a way to a better life now. The book and film feature several very well known New Thought celebrities, and thus may be attracting many curious seekers to New Thought churches.... including, hopefully, ours. However, the book and film tend to gloss over many finer points, which might cause confusion about our authentic teachings and paint New Thought as if it was about Spiritual Materialism.

Unity has been teaching and applying successfully the Law of Circulation for over 100 years. If you really want to know what is proven to work and to understand the spiritual law behind the Secret (taught by Unity for over 100 years!), please join us for a series of Sunday services focused on “The Truth Behind the Secret”— May 27th, June 3rd and June 10th.

This is also a chance for you to invite friends who heard about “The Secret” and want to know more about how to change their lives for the better using Spiritual Law and mind/body techniques. I promise you, it will be an engaging and interesting series.

Why a Spiritual Community?

By John Butler

We have a church camping trip scheduled for the first weekend in June. We will be at Fishermen's Bend site near Mill City on the North Santiam River for some camping, rafting, visiting etc. One might wonder, why would we devote resources for such social activities. Last year Unity of Corvallis had almost a dozen social activities, from Karaoke Night, to a progressive dinner, to a camping trip, as well as old standbys such as singing Christmas Carols and an ice cream social.

So, why a camping trip? For one thing, on a practical level, we support families and this is a chance for single parents as well as families in general to enjoy time in nature without all the challenges of doing it alone. Collective camping is so much easier. In addition, some single women are a tad uncomfortable camping all alone, so joining a group setting supports their needs.

But on a deeper level, there is plenty of value in being part of a community, especially one that fosters and empowers our spiritual growth. In "The Spirituality of Community Life," by Ron McDonald, the author describes how community is created and how it supports spirituality. First, he draws from existentialist philosophers who suggest that consciousness is developed through crisis and community. Because there is so little community in our culture today, we tend to create crisis. In community, we can develop depth without the pain and fatigue of crisis. And (it might be obvious), we at Unity of Corvallis would rather have our consciousness raised through community rather than through crisis.

Not every group that forms creates a community. There is an evolution that is well defined. (See "The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace," by Scott Peck).

When a people in a group shift to creating community, it is because some in the group are willing to share their real selves and assert their deepest truth about the vision and purpose of the group. Prior to that, a group is typically in pseudo community, where the members act nice to each other, and often get along well, but are not being real about the things that matter. Usually, then, there is a crisis in the

pseudo community that either drives the group to transformation into authentic community or to self destruction. When members of the group are faced with this high level of authentic relationship, they will either leave the group or join in the process. When they join in the vulnerability, community happens. Openness is a prerequisite for community. As you know, Unity is a place where hearts open. We have, over the past 10 years created a loving and heart-centered community. Sure, we had our share of crisis and upheaval along the way. And today, we celebrate authentic community.

Living and practicing from any ideal, such as the Unity principles, is very difficult unless tempered and refined through the community experience. Faith is not meant to be lived in isolation, because we can only go so far in our ability to live up to an ideal without some support and collective discernment and listening to Spirit. Thus, in every tradition, seekers have gathered into communities to enhance their spiritual experience and understanding.

The things that matter most in creating community are vision and leadership. Vision transcends the individual or even the selfish concerns of the group; it makes the group open to others who are different or who have different perspectives. We at Unity of Corvallis, over the past 5 years, have created an intentional structural foundation of openness and inclusiveness. We rotate leadership, we share responsibility, we diffuse power and authority. We recognize the wisdom of each participant and invite expression through Inspirational Readings and Altars, as well as in Town Hall meetings and open board meetings.

Members of a spiritual community are on a pilgrimage together, and they expect to be transformed by it. We at Unity of Corvallis create social events as part of our vision of being a thriving New Thought community here in the Corvallis area. So, we would love to have you and your friends/family join our camping trip. You can come camping with us for any reason you like. Maybe because you enjoy nature and a group camping experience, maybe because you want to deepen your connection with an open hearted thriving community to support you on your spiritual path, or maybe just because you feel like it.

Prayer Chaplain Program



By John Butler and Debbie O'Rourke

Unity of Corvallis is a ministry created by right of consciousness and sustained by the power of prayer. One of the things we have manifested in these past few years is a vibrant and compassionate chaplain program.

We have created a dedicated team of Prayer Chaplains who are committed to a) be present with you after the Sunday service in prayer, b) to pray with and for you in response to your prayer requests through this Ministry and c) to hold the high watch with you each month in prayer.

It is the mission of the prayer team to help you manifest your good by raising your awareness of your spiritual potential, as well as by holding the high watch for you in prayer as your journey in this lifetime unfolds.

Your prayer chaplains are dedicated to helping you hold spiritual space in all areas of your life, on Sunday and throughout the week. Your prayer chaplains are trained to be loving listeners. They will meet you with compassion as you share with them and will hold your conversation in sacred confidence.

Our Prayer Chaplains also offer "wellness calls" to all active congregants within Unity of Corvallis as well as those less active that request prayer. Thus, they will be further extending themselves to be of service to you by praying with you or by holding someone you care about in prayer and they will initiate the telephone calls.

Bless you for allowing us to serve you.

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Communication, Spiritual Principles of Conflict Resolution, "Clearings," "Loving What Is" are all some of the material we have embraced to broaden our understanding of living and co-creating peacefully.

We have adopted, and are actively using, a set of shared membership agreements to help us define the qualities of relationship and interaction that serve our larger purpose of being a Thriving New Thought Ministry. We have helped heal many hard feelings and I can certainly say that when folks meet us for the first time, they inevitably comment on the open-hearted aspect of this community. There is a lot of love and compassion available. Come see for yourself.

Alternative Services

By John Butler

As those who have been following our progress this past 5 years know, we have been reaching out to folks who are not accustomed to attending Sunday service on a regular basis and yet who want to experience the Divine in their lives. We are still feeling and finding our way on this. We have found these Alternative Services do serve a number of people in the region, however we have also found that most of the events are not sustainable because the offering income does not cover the costs.

We currently offer two ongoing Alternative Services—our monthly meditative drumming circle, led by Fiona Moore (3rd Saturday of the month) and our Labyrinth and Taize led by Suzannah Doyle and Andy Andrews (once per quarter on, or nearly on, the solstice and equinox).

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Six Month Financial Update: Oct. 2006–Mar. 2007

Average Operating Income
Oct 2006–Mar 2007: \$7,942

Average Budgeted Monthly
Expenses (Break-even point)
Oct 2006–Mar 2007: \$8,511

Average adult attendance: 46
How close did we
come to sustainability?: 93%

Upcoming Event!

Yard Sale—July 28.

Call Lori at 926-8685 for details and donations.

Alternative Services *continued from page 3*

Both the drumming circle and the Labyrinth and Taize are modern adaptations of ancient spiritual traditions and we encourage you to give them a try.

Fiona brings a centering presence to the drumming circle due to her long experience in leading and participating in drumming circles as well as her own deep spiritual practice. Fiona starts with simple patterns and rhythms which when joined, over time, transport our conscious mind into an altered state where movement, sound and rhythm all join and separate at the same time. The experience of the drumming circle can be seen as a metaphor for the spiritual journey within community; there is space to improvise and co-create, or to just listen, as well as a chance to follow and support the leadership and knowledge of others more seasoned.

Our Labyrinth and Taize service also combines movement, sound (and voice) as well as meditation into one experience that is simultaneously both collective and deeply individual. Suz brings a variety of chants from many faith traditions, which meets my need for inclusiveness and variety. Andy holds space the old fashion way, by being the presence of light and love at the gateway to our Labyrinth—which is modeled after the traditional path as laid down in Chartres Cathedral many hundreds of years ago.

Meditative Drumming Circle (third Saturday of the month)
May 19, June 16, etc. 7:00–8:00pm at the church office
Benton Plaza Building, 408 SW Monroe

Labyrinth and Taize
Saturday, June 23, 7:00pm
Corvallis Friends Meeting House (3311 NW Polk)



Sunday Service address:
Chintimini Senior Center
2601 NW Tyler Ave, Corvallis

Office Location:
Benton Plaza Building
408 SW Monroe, Ste.M210C

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