



Unity at the lake

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014 NEWSLETTER

LETTER FROM OUR MINISTERS, by Stew

The other day someone asked me how I was doing, and for the first time that I can remember in many years I didn't say, "I'm livin' the dream" or "Terrific" or "It's a beautiful day in my consciousness" or something to the effect. Instead, I heard myself reply, "Stressed, hectic and running late." It was all true, but it didn't feel very good to either feel or hear. After my errands, I was thinking about this on my way home when a car came around a curve on North Upper Truckee and didn't negotiate it very well—it was coming right at me in the oncoming lane and I had to swerve off the road and slam on my brakes to avoid first the other car and then some trees. The other car went onward without as much as slowing down, intent on terrorizing some other drivers, I suppose.

I sat there for a few minutes assessing the damage, and other than my neck being a bit sore and my psyche being a bit shaky, there was none. I can't remember now if my next thoughts were first of gratitude and then of anger, or vice versa, but I know I quickly settled mostly on gratitude. I was, and am, incredibly grateful to be alive. In light of the month we've just had, that began with our mentor's passing and progressed through a slew of hospital visits and memorial services; in light of the talks I've done recently about using our will to live to LIVE more deeply and joyfully and gratefully NOW, the incident became another vivid reminder of how precious and precarious life is.

As I sat there, I realized how my recent energy and consciousness probably contributed to the whole thing, but I wasn't beating myself up. I was grateful for the wakeup call. I hadn't been livin' the dream. I'd been allowing my perception of hectic-osity to shift my consciousness from living deeply and joyfully to "getting through these next couple of weeks." My head and neck continued to feel worse, but I remained mostly grateful.

I cried a bit when I got home, probably because Hillary was so wonderful and caring and nurturing when she heard about it (just as when I was little and I'd cut myself and only start crying once my mother started ministering to me or once I saw the blood, whichever came first). I felt a little sorry for myself—somehow I've now missed the Tahoe Improv Players 3 years running. But mostly, with Hillary's help, I remained grateful. What a precious gift this was. I understood a bit more of what the Buddha said, "Pain is inevitable; suffering is optional." My gratitude eliminated much of the suffering part. And I understood a bit more that it's not only possible but beautiful to, "Be grateful in all things", as Paul wrote in the Bible. Gratitude is always the quickest way to my heart, from which I can see the big picture with all its possibilities and I can remember my God Self and what's most important.

This reminded me of our Council VP Ken Cross. He recently fell off a ladder, broke several bones and was unable to move for a long period of time, and he shared with me that while he was in the hospital, under these horrendous conditions of pain and uncertainty, his dominant thought was of gratitude. That's pretty amazing and inspiring to me. He gives much of the credit to Unity principles and to Unity at the Lake. Reflecting on these past few days, I will echo that sentiment. I am incredibly grateful for those principles and grateful to have been practicing them all these years.

Life has a way of testing our faith and our beliefs, and a grateful heart can always have us passing those tests with flying colors. We study for the tests by practicing gratitude and by practicing the presence of God. I'm grateful and happy to still be around, and I'm grateful and happy you are too. Let's help each other to remember that!

OFFICE HOURS:

TUESDAYS 11-2 (Hillary) and WEDNESDAYS 10-2 (Hillary & Stew alternate weeks)

HILLARY AND STEW WILL BE IN EUROPE TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9th THROUGH MONDAY SEPTEMBER 22nd...THERE WILL BE NO OFFICE HOURS DURING THIS TIME...WEDNESDAY NOON PRAYER CIRCLES WILL BE HAPPENING, THOUGH

FRIDAY office hours (11-2) will resume in October

Hillary and Stew are always available for affirmative prayer. They also invite you to call & make an appointment for a spiritual counseling session (love offerings gratefully accepted). Hillary is also available (by appointment) for spiritual healing sessions (with your choice of affirmative prayer, Reiki and Zenith color therapy, all available for L.O. as well). Also, we are very happy to make an appointment and meet with you at a different time and day if our office hours don't work for you

SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS:

Sunday, September 7th: 12 Powers Sunday; the Power of Harmony (Order)...wear olive green if you'd like...1-hour playshop to follow the Celebration

Guest speaker September 14th: Rev. Arlene Meyer. Arlene is a Unity Minister, motivational speaker, life consultant, author and healthy lifestyle coach. She has been inspiring and empowering people for over 20 years, using her own life experiences of overcoming financial, spiritual and emotional hardships to nurture and guide individuals, couples and families to transform their lives by using the Laws of Life. Arlene has written and published a wonderful cook book, "How to Become a Vegetarian in Seven Days"

Guest speaker/musician September 21st: Singer, songwriter, Interfaith Minister and perennial favorite **Kathy Zavada** returns to lead our Celebration. Kathy will be offering a chanting concert afterwards

Sunday October 5th: 12 Powers Sunday, the Power of Zeal...wear orange if you'd like...1-hour playshop to follow

Hospitality: We bless all of you who bring food to share. Sometimes folks ask if it's OK for anyone to bring food...the answer is a resounding yes! ***We remind everyone that Hospitality only happens through us...if we each brought a "little left-over" that is in the fridge, we'd have a feast! Thank you, Carol Lehnert, who brings her delicious eggs EVERY week, and sometimes homemade dessert!!!***

To all our congregants: We have a number of chemically sensitive people in our midst and so we humbly ask everyone to please use a minimum of perfumes, colognes, etc. We know this is a personal and sensitive issue, we completely respect your right to smell as you like...and we sincerely appreciate your cooperation in this regard...this is part of being in community!

ONGOING UATL EVENTS

Wednesdays, NOON-12:40: PRAYER/MEDITATION CIRCLE in the Annex. Every Wednesday we sit and meditate on the presence of Love and hold the high watch for ourselves and for everyone on our prayer slips ...please join us!

*****Awakening Wednesdays will resume on October 1st**

SPECIAL EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

UATL EVENTS:

Unity World Day of Prayer: Thurs, Sept 11th. All day Prayer Vigil in the Martin Peace Chapel (in the Annex) from 9am-4pm. Come fill yourself with peace & love and then send it out to the world. Stay as long (or as short) as you like.

UNITY AT THE LAKE'S 20TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AND OPEN HOUSE!! Sunday October 12th, 11:30-3:00pm: Bring your family and friends and come celebrate with us! Live music from OneVoice, fun, fellowship, food (UATL will be providing the main dish and dessert and we are requesting you to bring a side dish to share if you can. There will be a sign-up sheet happening for that). For kids of all ages we will have face painting (and our fabulous playground), more activities tba. ***WE'D LIKE TO CREATE A CD MONTAGE OF ABOUT 120 PHOTOS FROM OUR ARCHIVES FOR THE OCCASION...IS THIS SOMETHING YOU LOVE TO DO?***

NON-UATL EVENTS:

Ongoing **Tai Chi*Qigong class**: Tuesdays, 11-Noon in the Annex, all levels welcome, no experience necessary. Thursdays, 11am-noon and 5-6pm. The Tuesday/Thursday morning class, although it includes some tai chi, focuses on Qigong whereas the Thursday eve class concentrates on the Tai Chi form. Contact instructor, Freedom Journeyhawk at (916) 850-9275, with any questions or for more information. Love offering.

New Class: Yoga on Saturdays, 9-10am, Annex Curious about Yoga? Have you wanted to try Yoga but for one reason or another haven't? This class is for you!
I invite you to give it a try, Eileen Hoyt, Love Offering

Special Evening Presentation: Sat, Oct 4th. Hosted by Lake of the Sky Outfitters (AKA our very own Peter & Alyson Hussmann) & the Sierra Club, Robert Hanna (John Muir's great-great grandson) returns. This talk will be on "Restoring Hetch-Hetchy to its Natural State". He will be bringing some very special friends, as well. There is no charge for this event.

Manifest Your Dreams and Healing Seminar: Saturday Oct 11th, 11am-5pm. Dr. Garland Landrith, whose research was cited in the movie, "**What the Bleep**", is coming back to Unity of the Lake to do this cutting edge workshop. In addition Dr. Landrith will do healing appointments on Friday, if there is a demand, using Tapping/EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique), HeartMath and Ho'oponopono. This will be a level 1 EFT Training class with a certificate given to all who attend. Cost for the seminar: \$49, includes a DVD and workbook, numerous papers as well as a mini-session with Dr. Landrith. Check out this link for more info: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nka97EvXMul>

FROM THE COUNCIL: Retreating to the Present, by Keith Williams

Being a member of Unity at the Lake and a member of the Council of Trustees has brought so many positive things into my life that it was difficult to decide where to start this article. So I thought I'd start at the present. After all, the present is where everything happens. One of the many opportunities I've had through Unity at the Lake and the most recent, is joining my fellow Unity men in a yearly retreat here at the lake. This year was my second time and was every bit as renewing and fulfilling as the first. There is something profound in being in the presence of 40+ "strangers" and yet feeling totally safe with expressing my own feelings. This environment is created through the Unity principles of Oneness, Wholeness and Love. I think it safe to say that the experience is unique to each individual and yet has a universal element of realizing we are all expressions of the same Oneness. One of the greatest gifts of the retreat for me is just holding space for my fellow man. No judgment, no need to try to change or "fix" anything, just the realization that we are all Whole as we are. Two days of total immersion in being present in Support and Love of our fellow man. What could be better! Every year we see an increase in the number of Unity at the Lake members attending the retreat and I am sure that every one of them would be happy to share their personal experiences with you. As Stew and Hillary say...just ask!

Speaking of Stew and Hillary, how lucky are we!! Like so many of our members, they are what drew me to Unity. Thank you! And that was just the beginning! I find the same feeling of acceptance, support and love from all of our Unity Community. What a wonderful gift that is.

And there are so many opportunities for us all to be a part of this community, not only through our Sunday Celebrations but also with our Transformational Opportunities. I find that many of these may call to me directly or give me the gift of doing something totally new. Me?, Caroling at Barton? - Wonderful experience! And they go on and on. And every one of them returns to me more than I could have imagined.

Thank you all for these gifts.

FAITH IN ACTION

Please note you can use a credit card to make any kind of donations and we can automatically charge your credit card monthly if you choose. You can also choose to have your bank send an automatic monthly donation.

We joyfully affirmed and celebrated our abundance thru tithing to the following during July-August 2014:

*West Central Region * Unity Worldwide Ministries * 20/20/20 * Silent Unity * Unity in the Community * Friends of the Library * Dr. Josh Welch *
The George Mark Children's Home (in honor of Noah's Kindness Project)

**Total of outgoing tithes for this period was \$1,493.76 Thank you, God!

As of 08/15/14, our bank balances are as follows:

Bank of the West Checking: \$5,936.52 (covers everyday spending and bills)

Bank of the West Savings (2014 Hands and Hearts for Christmas fund): \$97.66

Everbank Checking (general reserve fund): \$2,753.18

YTD financial report: Rev. Stew presented a mid-year financial report from the podium on July 27th. Here's essentially what he said:

-for the first time since the Bittmans have been UATL's Spiritual Leaders, we are "in the green" at this point of the year! We've ended several years having broken even, since our biggest fun(d)raisers are historically in the second half of the year, so this is wonderful news. Part of this year's abundance has come from wonderful fun(d)raising, a large, unexpected donation from one of our members, and the fact that we've kept expenses below budget.

-our incoming tithes, however, are below our projections. For the first time, we budgeted to make some money this year, to use for future growth (perhaps we'll be able to buy our property someday, for instance!). Our vision is for our tithes to cover our regular expenses so that our fun(d)raising can go toward restoring our reserve accounts and seeding that kind of growth. We're not quite there yet! So...please consider stretching just a bit in what you can give. And please keep in mind that giving isn't just about money...much time and talent is also reflected in our financial numbers

Fundraising opportunities for UATL:

RECYCLING! We have a recycling tub outside of the Sanctuary, when we're there, for you to drop off your glass, jars and cans. Or just leave your bag on the deck. Especially preferred are glass that is a "moneymaker" such as beer bottles and soda cans (California CRV). We would appreciate that these are deposited in the bins empty and clean.

AMAZON: Before shopping at Amazon.com, go to our website first! There is a link to Amazon.com on our website, www.unityatthelake.org (on the left sidebar of each page right under our phone #). We will receive credit for any purchases you make from Amazon when you go through our website first! ***And, if you sign up for Amazon Smile (free!), you can designate UATL as a regular beneficiary of your purchases (then you don't have to go to our website first).***

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: UNITYATTHELAKE.ORG! Our Sunday talks are available on our website, beginning shortly after each Sunday Celebration. The archives go back several years. ***Tell your friends!*** This is a wonderful way to introduce other folks to the Unity message.

You can also use the website to make donations (for **listening to talks online**, regular tithes, Building Fund, Minister's Fund & Hands and Hearts) and to purchase all of OneVoice's CDs, Stew and Hillary's meditation CD *Journeys to the Heart*, plus CDs of Sunday celebrations, via PayPal or credit card.

There's still time to submit your TESTIMONIAL! Has UATL enriched your life? If so, we're compiling testimonials to use in our public relations, newsletters, etc. We would really love to share them through the month of October from the platform at Sunday Celebrations – we would love them particularly to be short and to be very specific with how your life was/has changed because of UATL, rather than a generalized “Unity is great.” You can send them by email or hand them to us or come in and dictate and we'll write it! Please don't be shy...it's a wonderful gift for everyone to hear how your life has changed

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU...LOTS OF THEM!!!

To *Eric Dean*, who framed the windows on the outside of the Sanctuary (on the Annex side). They had been sitting unframed since we moved in!

To *Eric and Anik Dean* who took a ton of recycling in from the deck (it was all starting to take over the deck), as well as for agreeing to donate 10% to UATL when someone from UATL utilizes their professional services

To *Balin Usher* for bringing all of our archive material up to date (or at least current thru 2013)

To *Cindy Archer*...have you noticed the new lighting on the platform? She replaced all the lighting with LED lights which REALLY makes us happy because they are more earth friendly AND energy efficient!

To *Ken Cross*...and have you noticed the speakers in the front of the Sanctuary are now off the floor, and the big bulky speaker holders are gone, giving us a little more physical space and energy to breathe?

To *Evelyn Misner*...for stringing all those 1st-timer necklaces

To *Keith and Carrie Williams*...for donating lots of wine for our Night at the Improv

To *Sue Hoy* for giving us all a beautiful deck, keeping it in flowers all summer (despite the squirrels' efforts to the contrary) and continued thank yous to *Sue & Mort* (Marley) for the drip system that has made it all so easy