

# Unity Northwest Church **NEWS**

www.unitynorthwest.org

We nurture the experience of God in all.

August 2011

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## 🎵 August Music 🎵

- 5 Jennifer Alleavitch
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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 Youth Ed / Family Ministry

## MINISTER'S LETTER



### WHAT DO YOU WANT?

How spiritual you are has less to do with what you believe than what you desire. Every spiritual tradition teaches this at its core.

What?

I thought the Buddha handled that one when he told us not to desire—that desire was the cause of all suffering?

Nope. He was telling us to focus our desire down to one: enlightenment. Or, as Jesus called it, the Kingdom of Heaven. To seek it first—same thing.

In Hinduism's Katha Upanishad we find: "You are what your deep driving desire is, as your deep driving desire is so is your word, as is your word so is your deed, and as is your deed—so is your DESTINY!"

Jesus told us to desire God above all else. He told of someone who found a precious pearl and sold all he had to get that pearl. Or another who discovered a treasure buried in a field, secretly reburied it, and sold all he had to buy that field.

The Muslim poet Rumi must have read the Bible, when he wrote "An ocean wooing a drop! In God's name, in God's name, in God's name, sell and buy at once—Give a drop and take this sea full of pearls!"

Years ago, a spiritual friend rocked my world when she asked me "What do you really want, Greg?" We were seated in a car just outside the Unity Village gates. I felt really good about

myself when I replied "To serve God." Imagine my surprise when she asked me "Don't you think you ought to get to know God first?" I'd been a minister for 17 years!

And I have since set about to do just that. By putting God first, my life has taken on a different hue. It is now Technicolor, when it used to be lived in black and white.

So how do you get to know God first? By desiring God "With all your soul, mind, heart and strength." Desire magnetically attracts all the spiritual resources you need to grow into that connected soul-in-evolution that is one with God.

All my love,

**Greg Barrette**  
Minister

*Watch Unity Northwest Church Sunday talks at <http://vimeo.com/unitynorthwest>.*

## Sunday Talks

**AUGUST IS ENERGY MONTH AT UNITY!**

08/07/11 You Are an Energy and a Force  
How can you BOOST the amplitude of your expression as mind, emotion and energy?

08/14/11 Turn on the Light!  
If you find yourself in the dark—turn on the light! Here are several simple ways to turn on that light.

08/21/11 Bringing Heaven to Earth  
You are a transmitter of God's light, energy and wisdom. How can YOU bring heaven to earth?

8/28/11 Focus on Spirit  
Concentrate all of your energy on radiating love to humanity. You will then receive all the support you need to live a successful, satisfying life.

**Kick Up The Heat Concert**  
**Sunday, August 14, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.**  
with  
**Tricia Alexander & Diana Laffey**

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, author of *The Power of Positive Thinking*, once wrote, "The Game of Life is filled with wisdom and creative insights. That its teachings will work I know to be fact, for I've long used them myself. By studying and practicing the principles laid down in this book one may find prosperity, solve problems, have better health, achieve personal relations -- in a word, win the game of life."

Continued on p. 2

## WHAT'S UP IN AUGUST?

### The Game of Life & How to Play It

Tuesday, August 9, 2011  
7:00 to 8:30 pm  
Facilitated by: Greg Barrette

Florence Scovill Shinn first published "The Game of Life and How to Play it" in 1925. "This inspirational little book has helped thousands achieve a sense of purpose and belonging. Through it, we understand that life is not a battle but a game of giving and receiving—that whatever we send out to the world will eventually be returned to us.

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

**Our Mission Statement**

We nurture the experience of God in all.

**Our Core Values**

**Authenticity.** Through our Christ nature, we are authentic, principled people, embodying honesty, integrity, and justice.

**Creativity.** God expresses through us the beauty and joy of the creative spirit.

**Faith.** Through prayer and meditation centered in faith, we receive wisdom and inspiration.

**Love.** Through the power of love, we express compassion and kindness to all.

**Strength.** Through strength, courage and perseverance, we reveal our Christ self.

**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**

**Newsletter Staff**

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**August 2011  
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Diane Venzera Web Master

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES LETTER**

Hi Everyone,

You know, we are an AWESOME church. We have more new faces coming through our doors every Sunday! And we are holding strong with attendance for the summer months, which can be a challenge, but not for our church. Thank you, GOD! Greg's Sunday lessons have been amazing, and many people are viewing them online on our church website ([www.unitynorthwest.org](http://www.unitynorthwest.org)) and on Facebook. Isn't technology mind blowing!

As a church we are doing well with our finances, and we have a rocking fund-raising concert coming up this month—"Kick Up The Heat"—to raise funds for a new furnace. Please invite your family and friends. They won't want to miss Tricia Alexander and Donna Laffey, who are frequent musical guests here.

Thank you to all who participated on PHUN day despite the weather. Once again you each helped by blessing our church with your time and talents. We could not do it without all of you!

A big THANK YOU goes out to Youth of Unity (Y.O.U.) on their awesome bake sale drive. All

**Love, Communicate, Respond**

the funds that were raised will go to people of Unity in Joplin, MO, who lost their church to a tornado storm.

This month it has been two years that we have been honored and blessed to have Greg as our minister. And didn't we get a bonus in his beautiful wife Lynn, who teaches outstanding classes and facilitates the Women's Group, and in the delight of his children, Rosalie and Jason!!

Thank you, everyone, for your continued love and support and for being a divine spirit of light and love at Unity Northwest Church!

Much love,

*Dee Caputo*

Vice President, Board of Trustees

**The Unity Northwest Ensemble**

We chant. We sing.  
We express our divinity musically.  
We rehearse at church Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.  
Come join us!

**What's Up in August?** *Continued from p. 1*

**The Lord is My Shepherd**

Tuesday, August 16, 2011  
7:00 to 8:30 pm  
Facilitated by: Greg Barrette

The "Shepherd's Psalm" is the second most widely quoted section of the Bible, yet it may be the most misunderstood. It contains the refined energy and vibration of 3000 years of singing, reciting, prayer and meditation. In this workshop, we will go deep within the meaning of each verse, and finish with a meditation on the 23rd Psalm.

**Beyond Prosperity**

Tuesday, August 23, 2011  
7:00 to 8:30 pm  
Facilitated by: Greg Barrette

There are four factors which will determine whether and how well you will manifest prosperity. You will learn these four secrets and the blocks that can prevent you from prospering. Ironically, true prosperity requires that you move past your attachment to things and money and embrace yourself as a soul in evolution. Catherine Ponder once said after watching these principles presented by Greg Barrette, "That was the clearest presentation of prosperity teachings that I have ever heard."

**Writing Down Your Soul**

Tuesday, August 30, 2011  
7:00 to 8:30 pm  
Facilitated by: Greg Barrette

How can you activate and listen to your incredible inner voice? There are four simple steps presented by Janet Conner: Show Up, Open Up, Listen Up and Follow Up. Greg met Janet at a workshop he gave in Florida two years ago after she felt intuitively led to go to it. They both found themselves affirmed in a powerful new way by each other's work. Her own story of overcoming violence and abuse through this method is rich and filled with tools that can help you get beyond any situation.

**UNW Men's Group meets  
every 1st Monday at 6:30 p.m.**

**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 off-site, 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 socio-economic backgrounds, and provides support for a wide array of issues: spiritual, personal, relationships, parenting support, stress release, depression and anxiety.

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

**UNW Women- Ice Cream Social**

Monday, August 8, 2011  
6:30 to 9:00 pm

Organized by Lynn Barrette MSW LUT

Join the UNW Women for a summer cool down! We will visit together about various spiritual topics. Bring your hot, summer self and your favorite ice cream flavor or topping! Sign up in the lobby today! Sorry, women only!

**A love offering will be accepted at the classes.**

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

## YOUTH EDUCATION MINISTRY

*Be good · Be patient · Be still*

It's August already, and our garden continues to grow while our children and teens continue their exploration of how to be Keepers of the Earth. We talk about simple ways to make a difference and how important it is for each one of us to do our part. This month brings a continuation of our curriculum, "Loving Mother Earth." We will be exploring: ***How to Care for Our World; Taking Responsibility for Our Actions; Working with Others and Creating an Earth Care Covenant.***

Some exciting news includes an updated roster in youth ministry of over 60 students between the ages of 3 mos and 18 years! This breaks down to 10 to 12 Y.O.U. (high school), 19 Tweens/Uniteens (4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>), 20 Unikids (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>), and 12 Nursery/PreK

We are currently operating 5 classrooms: *Y.O.U.; Uniteen; Unikids; Prek & Nursery.* Because we are adding about 3 to 4 new students a month, we are anticipating creating a Tween classroom (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade) in the fall, allowing Uniteens to be just Middle School (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>). We are very fortunate to have an excellent, dedicated staff of volunteers to serve our children. And with our continued growth, there are more openings for those of you who feel called

to serve our youth. Training and all teaching materials & supplies are provided. You can teach/assist from once a month to as often as you like. One of the advantages of volunteering in Youth Ministry is the opportunity to explore your own spiritual nature and enhance your spiritual growth right along with the children and teens. Open classroom teacher positions include PreK, Unikids, Tweens and Uniteens plus open classroom assistant positions for all ages except Y.O.U.

For those interested in seeing what it is all about, there will be a Youth Ministry Training at Unity Northwest on Saturday, Aug. 19 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. (*Attendance is not a commitment to teaching/assisting, just an opportunity to see if you would enjoy it.*) If you are interested in any of these positions or in attending the Youth Ministry Training, please contact me through the church office or at [diane@dianevenzera.com](mailto:diane@dianevenzera.com).

Many blessings,

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



## A COURSE IN MIRACLES

7-9 p.m. Thursdays

Do you judge your day, or do you perceive your day through the eyes of Spirit? Judgment is destructive in its nature. The effect is the projection of a world of duality and separation. On the contrary, Spirit offers a shift of perception. Spirit provides true vision—the view of your day, of your life, through the Christ Consciousness. This vision is pure, untouched by the judgment of the ego. Its nature is Love. The effect is a reality of eternal blessings and unconditional love.

To truly let go and *see* your day through the divine mind of Spirit frees you from all those destructive thoughts and feelings you experience daily. When you allow the Holy Spirit to enter your mind and help you, He shows you the blessings in EVERYTHING you experience. How, might you ask? By showing you where your judgments lie and by directing you on a path of forgiveness. True vision is when you can *see* yourself and your life through only Love.

Awaken from your suffering through the miracle of Love! Arise from your dis-eases! Know yourself as you truly are! You are ONLY Love and were created from ONLY Love! Free from judgment and fear, YOU ARE FREE! Give yourself permission to experience the real you and enjoy!

**Lacey Bell Whittington**  
Master Advanced Teacher  
*A Course In Miracles*

**Teach only love,  
for that is what you are.**

## Spirituality and Counseling

Lynn Barrette, M.S.W., L.U.T.

Spirituality is the essence of the counseling process. It positively affects healing, supports the sense of hope and good outcome, and is a source of comfort and insight along the way. Your spirituality is the ideal your therapist holds for you as you move through the challenges that brought you to counseling. Your religious or spiritual worldview—or personal ethic—helps you make the changes that heal your life.

### How do we know that spirituality is essential to personal growth?

As we explore the body, emotions and thoughts, we find that our true identity is in none of these. There is a greater part of us that can make changes in each of these areas, and sees them as temporary at best. For example, we know that we can help relieve physical pain by altering how we think about it. Through this, we discover that we are more than just our bodies. We also know that our emotions are reactions to a thought, belief or attitude that that we are holding. From this, we discover that we are more than our feelings. When we examine our thoughts, we find that some are true while others are not. We also find that we can change a thinking pattern from "I am not strong enough to go through this," to "I have all that I need to achieve my goal," which opens us to new choices in our life. As a result, we discover that we are more than our thoughts.

### What, then, are we?

We are something greater than the self that we know. We are that inner strength, wisdom, compassion,

acceptance and joy that we hold as an ideal. Our spiritual nature is that which urges us to reach out for help, to find encouragement for moving through difficult situations, and to be truthful with ourselves, even when no one is looking.

When we feel out of touch with our ideal self, we may feel a loss of hope or motivation to give our best to our daily tasks. At times, it is difficult to see beyond our problems, and we feel out of integrity with our thoughts, feelings and behavior. Our bodies may ache from stress. Our emotions may not make sense to us. Our thoughts may seem unpredictable, even a little frightening. We may believe we *are* our problem. Our awareness of this disconnect comes from our spiritual nature, urging us to try something different to resolve our difficulties. We can then look within ourselves and make the adjustments necessary to pull us back into alignment with who we really are. Yet, sometimes we need more—an outside observer who can look objectively at our situation and offer guidance.

Your therapist is trained to hold a picture of you as capable, healthy and whole, even when you feel you aren't. She or he is there to remind you of your spiritual nature, to help you regain hope and your sense of inner balance. This vision can only be held from the vantage point of your ideal self, not your physical, emotional or mental levels, which are changing and are not *you*.

Through counseling, you are supported in awakening to your inherent talents and abilities. Your ideal self is within you. It is accessible and it belongs to you. Listen to its promptings and let it move you forward in life.

**FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

*God dwells within me as me.*

*It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye.*

— *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

So one day a week or so ago I happened to catch *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* on television. I love that movie! Uh-huh ... with Harrison Ford and Sean Connery ... yeah, well, anyway. I've always been especially intrigued by the ending where Indiana Jones has to pass three challenges in order to retrieve the Holy Grail, fill it with water and heal his father's wound. And, of course, he succeeds, but what is the point of those God references—the breath, the word and the path of God? Well, I think they show the way to seek and find whatever is meaningful and precious to our lives.

- First is the **Breath of God** bestowing inspiration. If we are penitent, we know we makes mistakes when we think and act all on our own so we kneel to show our submissiveness to God's will, and we pray for guidance.
- Second is the **Word of God** showing how to proceed. We must tread with very great care, knowing that we ourselves are expressions of God, as are all, and we are always on sacred ground.
- Third is the **Path of God** requiring great courage. We must believe that the way to what we seek is there for us even if we don't recognize the path or even see it.

But there's more, isn't there, not just to the Indiana Jones movie but to how we reach the prize we seek. The Grail Knight tells our hero, "As the True Grail will bring you life, the False Grail will take it from you." What must be true is our heart. If our motivation is greed and lack, then we grasp the prize with a tight fist, closing our minds and our lives around it. But if we sought to achieve the prize—to be worthy of it, then we receive it with an open hand in gratitude and appreciation.

God, may we always proceed from your will and guidance and know that therein lies the only path to the desires of our heart. Amen.

*Ruth Trailer*

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



The Breath of God

*Only the penitent man will pass.  
The penitent man kneels.*

The Word of God

*Only in the footsteps of God will  
he proceed. The name of God  
is Jehovah.*

The Path of God

*Only a leap from the Lion's  
Head will prove his worth. It is  
a leap of faith.*

*from Indiana Jones and the Last  
Crusade*



259 East Central Road  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016

Sunday Services: 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Youth Education: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.