

Association of Unity Churches International

Education Links

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Editor's Letter



Kathy Kellogg with her great-niece, Anni

Yellow school buses, patches of red maple leaves, and blue backpacks are showing up in the world outside my window as the planet's rotation brings the autumn season slowly back into my experience. Change is in the air.

If you've noticed, change has come to *Education Links*. Now that it is an online publication, we can use color on every page and are unlimited in pages. I love it! Kudos to our graphic designers, Cheryl Vestal and Joanna Carrell, for creating the new look and widening our possibilities.

This issue also kicks off our year's theme of the Twelve Powers. The Twelve Powers is a great way to organize curriculum and events while learning more about the spiritual attributes of our Christ-nature. It is so much fun to use in Children's Ministry as the colors, disciples, and affirmations provide easy learning tools (and aid in memory). The teens, though they may not get into the colors and such, are ready to explore how aspects of their Christ-nature show up to support their daily forays into the bigger world.

There are lots of goodies in this issue. I invite you to take the time to "leaf" through them and find ideas and resources you can use and encouragement to continue the work. My heart sends out the deepest gratitude to all of you who sent these in so that your passion and creativity can live in us all.

So as this magazine embraces change, I realize that it is just a reflection of our greater world. I affirm that order is inherent in the change; I face it with enthusiasm, letting go of those things that no longer serve my experiences so I can live in full expression of my Christ-nature. (How's that for getting in the powers of September through December?)

Enjoy the issue and enjoy the change,

Kathy

Reminder:

Send to kid@unity.org:

Any Twelve Powers materials, curriculum, or resources you are willing to share.

Articles and pictures of your latest youth, family, or multigenerational program or event. (Remember to get photo releases!)

Recommendations for great websites or books.

Making a Difference With Youth Ministry

by Rev. Jane Simmons, IYOU Coordinator
you@unity.org

During this fall season when youth programs are beginning again after the summer, we may be asking ourselves the question—is what we are doing making a difference? Have you ever asked yourself that question?

How important is youth ministry in our world today? In considering this question, I was fortunate enough to discover a wonderfully written book by Eboo Patel, the founder of Interfaith Youth Core, called *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation*. In this reading, I found inspiring answers to the importance of our work as youth leaders.

Eboo Patel moved from his native India when he was a child and he grew up in the Chicago area—an Indian Muslim. Feeling like an outcast as he entered his teen years, he strayed into what his family dubbed “the dirt bike crowd” and started on a road leading to adolescent trouble.

His book is a combination of an inside look at a young man’s journey of self-discovery as well as a wake-up call for what might happen in our world if alienated youth are treated with indifference.

He documents the lives of the young suicide bombers in England who were responsible for blowing up the trains during July 2007. What happened

to make them choose such an act of violence? He paints a compelling picture of the story of their lives as outcasts in their society, clearly showing how a deliberate, calculated process is in place to indoctrinate young, alienated youth into religious extremism and hatred.

He writes (on pages 148-9), “Were [the British suicide bombers] meant to be murderers? How about Osama Bin Laden? They, too, were born with the breath of God within them. They, too, were made to be servants and representatives of God on earth, to steward His creation with a sense of compassion and mercy. What happened?”

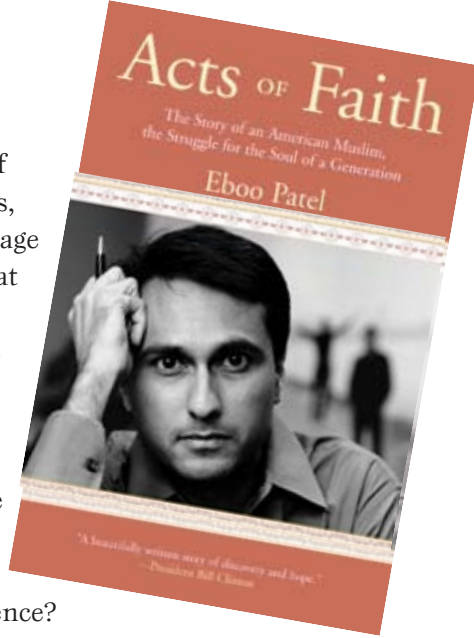
“Every time we read about a young person who kills in the name of God, we should recognize that an institution painstakingly recruited and trained that young person. And that institution is doing the same for thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands, of others like him. In other words, those religious extremists have invested in their youth programs.

“If we had invested in our youth programs, could we have gotten to those young people first?”

Imagine with me that these young men, instead of being indoctrinated into an extremist fundamentalist group teaching hatred and violence, had found a spiritual group that accepted and loved them unconditionally and helped them to discover the power of Spirit within.



What if, instead of a diet of separation and divisiveness, they had ingested the message of oneness and peace? What if, instead of being the willing perpetrators of acts of violence, these young men had become loving ambassadors of peace? How might their lives have been different as well as all of those affected by religious and political violence?



Patel goes on to describe his own life as an outsider with his peers, trying to fit in as a “brown kid in a white world,” feeling excluded and inferior as an Indian and a Muslim. What was the factor that shifted him from the slippery slope he found himself heading down? What causes one young man to become a suicide bomber and another a Rhodes scholar, heading an organization of religious pluralism, peace, and cooperation? Eboo Patel discovered the value of heart-centered service.

The YMCA saved him from his “free fall” as he describes it. He began tutoring children and contributing. He also discovered adults in the program who valued him and treated him with kindness and respect. These were the magic ingredients—contribution, caring, and service. At the same time, he was exploring his faith and finding others who were on a path of spiritual self-discovery. Patel founded the Interfaith Youth Core for teenagers to both dialogue about their faith and serve together, side by side. He has recently been appointed to President Obama’s Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

As Youth Educators, we have the opportunity to be love in action with our children and teens. Our classrooms can be places of heart-centered caring, compassion, kindness and acceptance. We never know when we might make a positive difference in a young life or the ripple effect that an act of kindness can have.

Never underestimate the value of youth ministry; it is a mighty work that is important and significant. Remember Myrtle’s question, “Who will take care of the children?” The Unity movement has a message that can transform lives one heart at a time and we have the opportunity to make the difference in the life of a young person through our acts of kindness and encouraging words. As Eboo Patel envisions, “Movements re-create the world.”

How I Used Truth: Power of Prayer

by Lily Berkley

Every year I lead a Unity Kids Summer Camp for K-5th graders and I have learned three important items:

1. Never speak over children. Speak quieter and have them stretch their ears to hear you.
2. Give an instruction only once and then invite them to ask their peers to clarify their questions.
3. Never have a lost and found. Encourage children to keep track of their personal items and to ask their inner guidance for help in locating “lost” items.

At camp, a kindergartener “lost” a very important hat that his dad had given him. For three days he stressed over where his hat might be. The staff would encourage him to ask and listen to his inner guidance. On the last day an instructor paused in her lesson and invited all the children to ask for the safe and easy return of the hat. They were invited to feel what it would be like when this young boy found his special hat. Closing in prayer, they gave thanks in advance for finding the hat. While this class was visualizing the return of the hat, a few doors away, I was going through some boxes and found the hat.

When the children entered the room where I was, they saw me holding the hat for which they had prayed. The spontaneous joy that erupted was pure delight! The children cheered, high-fived, jumped with glee, and hugged each other. I was bewildered until they began to tell me how they had prayed for the very hat I was holding and that God had answered their prayers!



FUN-Raising for Youth Ministry



by Rev. Charli Tupper, Associate Minister
Unity Church of Prescott, AZ
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Youth Ministry is an important aspect of our church community, especially the Uniteens and YOU (Youth of Unity). When they attend one of the Southwest regional events, they return with a clearer understanding of who they are, and bring home tools that help them put Unity principles to work in their lives on a daily basis. However, fundraising to assist our teens in attending regional events took a lot of time and effort from the youth ministry director and sponsors. It seemed as though there was always a fundraising

going on, and each one only raised enough for the next event.

Then in March of 2005, one parent suggested we do it differently. He suggested that we have one big event each year; a dinner and auction with live music. Being an outgoing and enthusiastic gentleman with an abundance consciousness, his enthusiasm for the idea was contagious. Before long he had a committee consisting of congregants who were determined to making this event successful.

Here is how it works. After the committee has an initial meeting at which they decide on the menu and choose the auctioneer, then one member of the committee speaks with both the Uniteens and YOU. They talk about the event and ideas are gathered from the teens. At this meeting, the youth are given instructions on marketing. It is also their responsibility to obtain auction items from local merchants and restaurants. The idea is not for the

adults to do all the work but to have the youth do most of it with adult supervision.

About five weeks before the event, the teens send a letter to the entire church mailing list inviting them to attend this event. Enclosed with the letter are two tickets for the recipient to purchase. Often people send in money even though they cannot attend. The letter also asks the congregants if they have any services or items that they would be willing to donate to the silent auction.

Every aspect of the evening has a youth involved in it. The day of the event, the youth come in and prepare the silent auction tables, decorate, and set up the hall for the evening's dinner. They also assist in the kitchen. And, while everyone is arriving, they sell raffle tickets.

After dinner, the silent auction is closed and the auctioneer begins auctioning off camp scholarships. Would you like to send a child to kids' camp? Would you like to send a Uniteen to Uniteen Camp, or a YOUer to Summer Connection?

It is an evening of fun, laughter, music, and an income for the youth ministry of over \$10,000.

Overflowing Abundance

by Lisa Yelenick
Co-Director, Youth & Family Ministry
YOU Consultant, SCUCA Region

At Unity Church of Denver, Colorado, in the Children's Garden (youth ministry pre-k through 5th), we have an opening circle every Sunday that includes our love-offering time. We love to have one of the youth lead this. We take time to focus on the many gifts we have to offer the world.

Since we do work with the Virtues Project and also the 12 Powers, our kids are familiar with some great concepts and verbiage to identify the many gifts we *all* have within us. We talk about the gifts within, we talk about the substance of God as money and how all of these gifts have a place. The money helps us to have lights and heat or air conditioning in our church home. The money also goes to support our Christian Children's Fund sponsored child, Frederick, who lives in Uganda, Africa.

Our inner gifts are equally important. We have the kids hold out their arms with their hands cupped and then we invite everyone to speak out various gifts they bring to give. As the gifts are spoken, we use our power of imagination and see our cupped hands being filled to overflowing with the many gifts we are giving. Then we bless our gifts using the same prayer used in the sanctuary.

As the offering containers are being passed around, we sing the song "Love, Serve, Remember" along with signing motions to honor all. Then we finally bless our gifts when they are put back on the altar table in the center of our sacred circle.

We have been supporting a child from the Christian Children's Fund now for over 30 years. There have been several children over that time period. We are staying in touch with a child whose living conditions and culture are so very different from ours, hearing from them periodically, seeing pictures from their home, and knowing that the money we give and the prayers we send are making a difference in his or her life. It is a huge part of practicing abundance and living in gratitude for all of the many blessings we have in our lives. We pay a total of \$252 per year, and that amount comes from our children's giving. Then we send art, letters, and small gifts throughout the year.



One Community Spiritual Center



Interview with Lily Berkley
Youth & Family Minister Director

One Community Spiritual Center has changed its name to reflect the direction it is going and the people it serves. Founded in 1958, this Unity center in northern Kansas City, Missouri, is guided by its purpose: Reaching out to people who have given up on religion; Awakening to our Oneness with a positive, loving God; and Living this Unity every day. Will Bowen, lead minister since the fall of 2005, has brought the Complaint-Free World message to the world and to the church. No where better is this demonstrated than in the youth and family ministries director, Lily Berkley (read Lily's article on page 12). Her energy, creativity, and bubbly spirit help welcome newcomers and old friends alike and keep her striving to provide the best learning and loving environment for the families.

What's Working

- Lily and Will have a great working relationship. The ministry staff functions as a team and meets every Tuesday (9 a.m.–12 noon) at which time everyone communicates what is going on in their part of the ministry.
- Will also puts Lily in front of the congregation. At the end of each service, the children come forward and Lily gives the congregation a short, succinct run-down of what they learned and the fun they had. Every six months, Lily serves as the main speaker in church. This helps the adults become acquainted with her presence and spiritual maturity.
- A weekly email goes out on Friday inviting people to the weekend services letting them know what is happening in “big church” and what the young people are doing.
- The nursery has a paid nursery coordinator (professional kindergarten educator) who is supported by paid staff. This has resulted in a low turnover for a position of high responsibility.
- The youth ministry volunteers meet at 10:30 a.m. for the *Daily Word*, updates on who's teaching, what's going on that morning and praying for each others. Lily says this is the best thing they've done and it has been amazing for the program. Everyone, then picks up their tubs (with everything they need for that morning) and is in place at 10:45 a.m. for the pre-session for preschool through 8th grade.
- The Kansas City area Unity youth directors come together to create summer curriculum. Each person writes four lessons on a theme and then shares them with the others. They also collaborate on a daily summer camp.
- Lily conducts a class on spiritual parenting based on the book, *10 Principles for Spiritual Parenting*, by Mimi Doe. The class meets once a month during the week so parents have the time to check in with Lily on a one-on-one basis.
- Family Trios is a program where three families get together for dinner, conversation and play, once a month for a 6-month period. After six months, the families are reassigned to meet other families.

Staffing Tips

Volunteers are spiritual guides not simply warm bodies filling the spaces. Know that the Universe is abundant and that there are plenty of people in the congregation who would be spiritually fed by youth ministry. Take the time to interview prospective

Highlighting Youth and Family Ministries

Ever wonder what other Unity churches are doing in their youth and family ministries? We are interviewing one ministry each issue and seeing how their programming, staffing, and intention promotes a healthy and growing youth department. Enjoy!

volunteers and choose which ones will be the best fit. Lily says this has made a substantial difference in impacting their growth. Lovingly release anyone who is not being spiritual fed through being a part of youth ministry. Spirituality is fun so find the people that can serve from that place.

Recruit two teams, a summer and a school year team. Lily puts together the entire schedule at the start of each term (summer, Sept–Dec and Jan–May). With teams of four spiritual guides for each classroom, they solve any scheduling difficulties amongst themselves. It takes the director out of it and builds connection between the teachers.

Areas of growth in the next year

- Most growth is within the teen programs after having set an intention to build these groups. Now working on determining what they need for social and classroom support and attracting the right people for the teams.
- Exploring more ways to build connections between the families.
- Developing the preschool program.
- Creating teams to help lessen the personal load of doing ministry.

Sharing the Wisdom

When asked what she would like to pass on to others from her own experience, Lily is clear that working in collaboration is so much easier than doing it all herself. With her volunteers and the other youth directors in the area, there is plenty to learn from one another and it's great to have someone to bounce off ideas with. Delegation goes hand-in-hand with collaboration and is a necessary skill when you are growing a church.

One Community Spiritual Center

Three Weekend Services:

- Saturday evening (contemporary with full band) includes childcare for youth under 8 years.
- Sunday 9 a.m. (meditative service) with nursery for infants-pre-k and, during the school year, a rotating class for K - 5th graders. Includes Kids'sJam (yoga and drumming) and HeartArt (guided meditation with art expression).
- Sunday 11 a.m. (contemporary service, loud, dynamic, high energy) with youth programs for infants through YOU.

Children are invited to attend all services if they so choose.

There is a sitting area in the lobby for a fussy baby since there is no crying room.

Average Sunday Attendance:

Average adult attendance: 350 (summer 300)

Average youth attendance: 80 plus

Youth groupings and average attendance:

Unibabes—birth through 3½ years (10-14)

Unitots—3½ years through pre-K (12-20)

Unitikes—K-1st grades (22)

Unikids—2-4th grades (15-20)

Unitweens—5-6th grades (15)

Uniteens—7-8th grades (5—most moved into YOU)

YOU—9-12th grades (12-17)

Highlighting Youth and Family Ministries

Youth and Family Ministries Director, Lily Berkley, has been at One Community Spiritual Center for four years. Before taking the position, Lily worked for five years as an in-home child development specialist with a local school system. She shares her life with Ryan, and their two children, Quinn (7) and Gracie (10).



My Passion for Youth Ministry

In my ministry I want for my kids to know three things:

- Spirituality is FUN.
- God is everywhere.
- Connecting with Spirit is easy.

Spirituality Is Fun!

You know the experience: Child comes to Sunday school, colors sheet, glues a cotton ball to an image, and recites a Bible verse. Yikes! The reality is that mainstream churches have figured out a way to make coming to church FUN and then they sprinkle in bits of spirituality. They get kids hooked on games, activities, and outings so that the children build friendships! Kids come back to church based on the connections they make there. It is our job to create a spiritual experience that meets kids where they are and provide opportunities to make friends. Toss out the need to “teach” anything to kids and encourage the adults in the classroom to seize the moment in creating teachable moments that illuminate Unity basics and principles based on what is happening in the classroom in that moment. And remember, if it isn’t fun, it won’t stick!



YOU2YOU was started as a way for our YOUers from across the area to see each other between rallies and to support each other in leading a lesson.

God Is Everywhere!

As a mother and a youth spiritual director, I believe the single most important Truth a child can get from Unity is that God is everywhere! This concept affects the way a person experiences the world around them as well as themselves. When a person knows that God is everywhere, it trickles into every aspect of their being. That’s why I stress this concept several times during our Sunday experience. Perhaps a child introduces themselves in sacred circle and then says one place where God is. Another way we stress the concept of God’s omnipresence is to play “ABC: Where is God?” as we wait to go into “Big Church.” I say a letter and the children call out places where God is that begins with that letter. All ages adore this game, participate, and by extension, have this concept subtly reinforced in their lives!

Connecting with Spirit Is Easy

Until the age of eight, children are concrete thinkers. After the age of eight, their brain chemistry begins to shift and abstract thought begins to emerge. The process of abstract thought development takes many years and it ebbs and flows. Knowing this, we must anchor Unity Truths in real experiences for our children. When a child comes to you with an issue, ask if they have gone fishing for a solution yet. Invite them to sit in the quiet and imagine tying their issue to a hook and casting it out into the Universe. Then invite them to let go of any concern over the issue and to just wait until they feel the Universe tug on the line with an answer. Conclude with saying, “Let me know when you get your answer.” This simple exercise communicates in a kid-friendly way the power of turning things over to God and trusting that an answer or solution will come. As ministry directors we must continue to think of concrete ways for our children to clearly experience Spirit!

The Twelve Powers

This year we are exploring the Twelve Powers as outlined by Charles Fillmore in his seminal work, *The Twelve Powers of Man*. The twelve powers themes are often used for youth ministries to help young people learn about their spiritual attributes that create the whole Christ-nature, and it is a great theme to organize a whole year of spiritual education.

Please note that most youth ministry materials order the twelve powers according to an order attributed to Rev. Joel Baehr, Unity minister in Mesa, Arizona, where love was moved to the second spot for February (love—pink) and wisdom was moved to the fourth spot for April (wisdom—yellow).

For more information about the Twelve Powers, you may wish to read:

The Twelve Powers of Man

by Charles Fillmore

Christ Enthroned in Man

by Cora Fillmore

How to Use Your Twelve Gifts From God

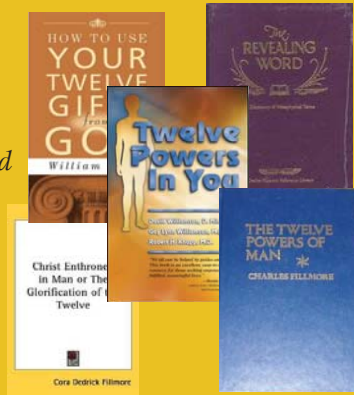
by William Warch

Twelve Powers in You

by David Williamson,
Gay Lynn Williamson,
and Robert Knapp

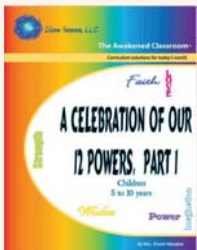
The Revealing Word

by Charles Fillmore



Also, check out the “12 Power Super Heroes” by Gary Eisenberg in the Summer 2007 issue of *Education Links*. www.unity.org/el

Twelve Power curriculum (present and past):



Celebration of Our Twelve Powers by Diane Venzera

Units available for children (5–10 yrs) include 48 lessons that explore *The Twelve Powers of Man* through the use of Bible and contemporary stories, science, art, and games. This is a two-book set and includes a CD of additional activities and adult study guides. Available also for Uniteens and YOU. Go to www.dianevenzera.com.

The Twelve Power Program for Young People

Published by the Association of Unity Churches International
Out of print but will be provided in this year’s issues of *Education Links*.

The Twelve Gifts From God

By Marilyn K. Richardson,
published by the
Association of Unity
Churches International.



Volume 1: January through June. Out of print but someone in your region might have it.

Volume 2: July through December.

Available at www.unity.org/shop. Order #BA6057.

12 Power Color Key Program

Developed by Joel Baehr, it attaches a color to each power (Charles Fillmore did not). Joel also flipped the order of Fillmore’s love and wisdom powers so that love became the power of February (love and pink) and wisdom became the power of April. Otherwise, the remaining powers are in the same order as Fillmore’s. This is out of print but lurking in most churches’ file cabinets. Downloadable at www.unity.org/association/youth/index.html. Look under Children’s Ministry.


Through the Year of the Child Program Packet, 1993

Rainbows of Peace Global Awareness

Program, published by the Association of Unity Churches International, now out of print. Another resource that every church received and probably has filed somewhere. It can be downloaded at www.unity.org/association/youth/index.html. Look under Children’s Ministry.

As you will notice, most of the above is out of print. If you have any curriculum, resources, materials, etc. that you would like to share, please send them to kid@unity.org or mail them to: Kathryn Kellogg, Association of Unity Churches International, PO Box 610, Lees Summit, MO 64063. Electronic format is preferred.

Answering the Call for Thriving Youth Ministry: Creating a New Story for Unity Youth Ministry



In Unity, our founding story for youth ministry is Myrtle Fillmore's dream in which a voice within her asked, "Who will take care of the children?"

Rev. Kathryn Kellogg, Kathy@unity.org
Every community has its founding stories—stories that tell its members and those outside the community who the community is and how it came to be. In Unity, our founding story for youth ministry is Myrtle Fillmore's dream in which a voice within her asked, "Who will take care of the children?" The voice spoke again. "You will take care of the children; this is your work."

Who will take care of the children? Over the years I have heard this question used countless times during recruiting drives. Ministers and youth directors have quoted it when desiring more resources (human, fiscal, or spiritual intent) for building a youth ministry department. Sometimes the ending was added, "You will take care of the children," in hopes that the community would answer the call.

Yet it seems to me that the Unity community as a whole is still asking the question—not as a narrative that sets up a greater story on how we answered it—but as if we are hearing it for the first time. Who will take care of the children? Do we provide youth ministry or not? Will we create a separate space for them or will we invite them into ours? We seem unsure of whether youth ministry is a given or not.

Humorously, I reflect that perhaps our collective subconscious remembers the more complete version of Myrtle's dream where she recounted that she was

surrounded by a crowd of people including a number of unruly children. Unruly children—just as we feared—what will we do with them? My belief (or the story I created) was that the children were unruly because they were not getting enough attention. They clamored because they wanted to be touched by Spirit as captured in the New Testament story found in Mark 10:13–14, 16. When parents began bringing their children to be blessed by Jesus, the disciples moved to keep the children away from him. Those of you who know this founding story of the Christian community remember that Jesus was indignant and said to the adults, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." And he took the children up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Most Christian denominations are unflinching in ministry to children and teens because they believe that they have been given a Biblical mandate to bring young people to Christ. Their theology informs them that babies are born in sin or have the predisposition for sin which then shows itself when the child reaches the stage of exercising free will. Therefore, in order to "save" these young people and bring them into relationship with Christ, these faith communities create amazing programming. Some of us in Unity have even secretly coveted their success.

However, Unity doesn't believe that we are born in sin. Therefore we don't need to be saved and we all have equal access to Spirit. So what is our mandate? What do we believe to be true about young people and their relationship with God? What do we believe to be true about what a child needs to grow in strength and wisdom, to fully express their Christ-nature? How will serving children help us co-create a world that works for all?

I have my own answers for the above questions and am willing to share them whenever asked (said humorously but

with passionate dedication); but it is time for us as a greater movement to come together and collectively decide whether we have a greater story to tell. As we begin to look at what constitutes thriving youth ministry, Unity communities need to answer the above questions that we might create and embrace a mandate that informs us within Unity, and those who come in contact with us, on how we perceive the spiritual lives of young people.

Who will take care of the children? Jesus told us not to hinder them and Myrtle was told it was our work. How we answer that question in the 21st century may be the beginnings of a marvelous story that, generations from now, Unity communities around the world will tell with pride in our success.

Q&A

How do I know if the kids are getting the lesson?

Jacquie Hardesty
Children's Ministry Consultant
Southwest Unity Region

How do I know if the kid's are getting the lesson? This is a question that I am asked regularly from our children's ministry volunteer teachers in the Southwest Region.

Here's my reply: Our principal function as spiritual youth educators is to create a safe environment of love, fun, and creative learning centers to support Unity children and teens. These environments then promote discovery. The word *educate* has its origin from the Latin word *educare* which means to bring out, draw out (or to lead out).

So education is the process of drawing out knowledge from an individual. Their discoveries are an individual expression of their Truth.

If we would remind ourselves that our function as spiritual youth educators is to draw out rather than "put in," then perhaps we may recognize that our role as teachers is to plant a seed (acorn) which will grow with time into a magnificent oak tree. Sometimes we may not witness what children are learning in the moment as their discovery may show up later in their lives.

Dear wonderful teachers, relax, have fun, and enjoy your precious time with Unity children. Know that the universal truth is that kids already have everything in them to "Get It" as they are perfect spiritual blessings.

Multi-Faceted Youth Education:

Cultivating the Nine Intelligences

by Kathryn Ashera Sprowls

Psychologist Howard Gardner is an innovative psychologist who has changed the way we perceive learning. He helped us see that each child has unique strengths in the way that they learn. By recognizing and teaching to these multiple intelligences, we cultivate enthusiastic and successful learners. And by creating experiences that call upon and draw forth our many capabilities, we become more multi-faceted and creative individuals!

Gardner initially identified seven different types of intelligence. They are outlined in his book *Frames of Mind*. The eighth and ninth intelligences were added later. The eighth, the naturalist, is a very exciting dimension to fold into our spiritual education experiences. The ninth—that of spiritual or “existential” intelligence—is the most difficult to measure and define, but is perhaps the most important “intelligence” that we address in our Unity classrooms. This article is a brief look at how we can teach to stimulate and meet the needs of all our learners in our Unity classrooms.

1. Linguistic—The Power of Words

Children with this kind of intelligence love hearing and telling stories, learning new words and different languages, talking about things, poetry, writing, reading—anything to do with words! Scriptures, affirmations, and prayers all exemplify the creative and activating potential of words. Journals and self-created booklets are a treat for this child. Add words to artwork, create a “print-rich” environment with posters and books around the room, use mantrams/phrases in meditation, build a repertoire of prayers. Research and use some phrases and words in Aramaic, the language spoken by Jesus! Find out all the different ways to say “peace” or “love” in other languages. Use teaching songs or rhymes for these new words and concepts.

2. Logical-Mathematical

This intelligence sparks interest in patterns, principles, systems, categories, and relationships. It senses the “Divine Order” working behind the scenes. With this intelligence, we solve problems through logical strategy. The Five Unity Principles are a logical, progressive system of thought. Object lessons and other science experiments that demonstrate a concept are a favorite with this intelligence. The Twelve Powers/12 Disciples are a fascinating system. The spiritual or metaphysical significance of numbers

is also fun for this part of our minds. Remember that science and mysticism are merging, especially in the field of quantum physics, and quote examples of this in your lessons. Study the properties of light to find that bridge! Measure the vastness of the stars in the heavens as you stretch to infinity.

3. Bodily-Kinesthetic

Our kinesthetic self processes knowledge through the five senses, plus movement. This part of us finds it hard to sit still for very long! Acting out stories, exploring concepts in movement, yoga warm-ups, body prayer, dance, sensory-oriented meditations (“feel the warm sun shining, stretch your arms wide as you breathe in deeply”), songs with hand motions, and movement games and energizers work for the mover in us. Hands-on crafts, service projects, and field trips all work for this modality.

4. Visual-Spatial

This part of us works in images and pictures. We may love mazes or puzzles, walking a labyrinth, constructing in 2-D or 3-D, or daydreaming a scenario. All kinds of art projects work for us: collages, vision boards, creating table altars from a shoe box. Inspiring images captivate us—picture books, mandalas, a deck of sacred geometry cards, symbols/objects that represent a concept. Story books and illustrated Bible stories work well. Guided visualizations also work very well with this intelligence.

5. Musical-Rhythmic

Music is the universal language of spirit. Musical children are always singing or drumming to themselves. Our musical intelligence is stimulated via sound play. Take advantage of this by using songs, bringing out rhythm instruments, and

playing sound games. Vary the inflection of your voice when speaking, and using different character voices when storytelling. Have the children add sound effects to stories. Add a bell or chime to the classroom ritual. Develop “good listeners” by playing listening games. Add chants, songs and finger plays to your stories and lessons. Dance to music. Ask children to bring in their instruments to share their musical abilities with the group! Create mini-recitals and have children play during Children’s Church.

6. Interpersonal

Social intelligence is one of the key factors to happiness and success in life. Spark this intelligence by encouraging the natural friendship, collaboration and leadership skills within each child. Teach and model good communication skills, draw out an understanding of emotions and motives in the stories you share. Break into small groups or partnerships for an activity each week. Encourage connections and friendships within your group by putting “buddies” together for various tasks, and get permission to share the class list so that playdates can be arranged. Recognize and value kindness and “being a good friend.” Have a kindness campaign.

7. Intrapersonal

This intelligence encourages us to be self-aware and self-motivated. In the Association’s “living curriculum” style of teaching, we take each story or concept and ask how it relates to our own lives to gain greater insight and inspiration. We take time for guided reflections through meditation, journaling, brief periods of silence or quiet time, and other creative explorations to cultivate this intelligence. After reflecting individually, create time to share in partnership, small groups, and the whole group! Continue to ground and integrate through some type of concrete project.

8. Naturalist

Many of us remember spending hours outdoors/in nature as a child. Nature is seamlessly interwoven with spirit, and we naturally resonate with this wholeness. The naturalist in us feels a powerful connection with nature and is interested in the subtleties of nature. The naturalist notices and remembers patterns, relationships, and systems in the natural world. The naturalist in us senses God/Spirit in nature. Have a picnic blanket on hand (some have a vinyl lining) and hold parts of class outside. Celebrate spring by planting flowers, honor Earth Day by sprucing up the church grounds, and do tree activities on Arbor Day. Build a medicine wheel; create a peace garden; have a nature

walk, nature meditation, or treasure hunt outdoors. If you can't go outside, you can work with natural materials in the classroom, such as pine cones and pressed flowers. Bring other natural images and elements, such as water, clay, plants, pets or flowers, into the classroom to remind us of our kinship. In meditation, take an imaginary journey/vision quest to your favorite place in nature.

9. Existential-Spiritual

Our inner child has an intrinsic connection to Spirit. This part of us loves sacred energy, ritual, places of spiritual power, spiritual reflection/meditation and prayer, and recognizes genuine spiritual presence. When this is activated, we have a natural inclination to pray, meditate, do spiritual service or other spiritual practices. A child with this inclination will gravitate to others of like mind. They may be especially empathetic, intuitive or have higher sense perceptions. They may have lofty philosophical thoughts or deep insights—being “wise beyond their years.” Encourage children and families to create “sacred space” at home—perhaps a prayer corner or a windowsill altar. Encourage children to have spiritual time on a daily basis. Encourage the “big questions” and philosophical musings. Recent studies have shown that children who spend time “gazing” (what we might previously have called “spacing out”) are actually tuning into the spiritual dimension of their being. These children then more fully embody the qualities we most highly value in children: innocence, love, purity, that essential preciousness of being! Recognize the value of “just being.” Treasure moments of stillness and communion.

Identify the Intelligences

By recognizing these modalities within ourselves and our children, we are inspired

to more consciously develop and apply them to our teaching. Use the following to sharpen your appreciation of how many modalities can be woven into a single lesson or experience. What kinds of intelligence are used in the following activities?

Treasure Hunt. Children must read written clues and solve riddles that lead them around the campus (outdoors and indoors) to gather various treasures and further clues that lead them to a final revelation (a spiritual truth of some kind). They must interface with other members of the church in order to complete their tasks. They must cooperate with each other to accomplish certain tasks. There are certain physical challenges, such as climbing a tree to retrieve a hidden object. One task is to sing a song together successfully. One challenge requires them to sit in silent reflection for two minutes before responding to a spiritual question. In one area, they find the pieces to a puzzle that they must fit together in order to gain the next clue. The hunt ends with a celebration including food and festivities.

A small team of young teens must build a structure: a bridge or a tower out of newspaper, masking tape, and several blocks. They are to work cooperatively, and see how high and sturdy they can make it. After it's done, they are to write some words on a card that is taped to the structure that say what spiritual principles the structure represents.

Bowl, Water, Sand. A teacher has a clear bowl of water in the center of the circle on a small table. At the bottom of the bowl, there is a layer of sand. She has the children describe what is there, and see if they can see each other through the bowl. She comments, “This is our mind and our heart when we are still and clear, when we have gone to our peaceful place within.” She asks, “What do you think will happen when we stir the water and jostle the bowl?” She accepts all hypotheses. Then she jostles the bowl, stirs the water up, and has the children describe it. (It becomes cloudy and muddy-looking.)

They look through the water again to see if they can see each other. She comments, “This is our mind when we are all stirred up and allowing things to confuse and overwhelm us. What do you think will happen if we let it get still again?” Then they set it down and watch it settle again. She asks them, “How is the bowl of water like us?” “How is the sand like us?” “How do we get stirred up and muddy, and how do we get clear again?”

She then has the children close their eyes, breathe deeply and relax. They then settle down into stillness, with their hands over their hearts, to see how peaceful and clear they can get. They might use the

image of the clear bowl of water or a clear, still lake. They end with an affirmation: "I am peaceful and clear whenever I choose to become still and present."

Follow the Leader. A teacher finishes telling the story of Noah and the Ark. She then leads the children in a game of "Follow the Leader," having them travel in a large circle as they become different animals. She calls out several animal types, noticing and commenting on how the children are expressing each one. She then asks the children, "What else can we be?" and chooses different children to call out and demonstrate the next animal to be. After a short time, she asks everyone to find a buddy/partner. They are to decide secretly what type of animal they are going to be. Then they pantomime the animal together and the group guesses what they are.

A group of young teens goes outside to write nature haiku (3-line poems, very spare). The teacher first leads them on a nature walk. He encourages them to open to all their senses: touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing. He has them notice the contrasting elements of nature (small and large, old and new, light and heavy, dull and bright). He reads a few haiku, having them close their eyes and visualize the images. He plays an oriental flute piece and has them center and enter into an attitude of wonder and "beginner's mind." After they have wandered in silence, discovered and written some lines, they gather at a picnic table to decorate the cover of their haiku "journal" with leaves, flowers, and twigs. At the end of class, a few of them share their haiku.

Kathryn Ashera Sprowls was director of Youth & Family Ministry at Unity of Fairfax Church, and is now preschool director at the Odyssey Community School in Asheville, North Carolina. She can be reached at SpiralRose@aol.com.

Child/Teen Ministry Week 2009



Back row: Kathy Kellogg, Brandon Nagel; middle row: Vicki Richardson, Laura Barrie, Bernadette Swanson, Giselle Vivian, Winnie Lynch, Heidi Nathe; front row: Dakota Guynn, Carolynn Conley, Amy Groblewski, Anita Stehmeier, Jane Simmons, Diane Venzera.

Talk about blooming where you are planted! This year's Child/Teen Ministry Week brought together eight youth directors, one YOU sponsor, a spiritual leader, and four facilitators who had the best time sharing stories, asking questions, and being actively involved in the learning process. The outcome? Stronger skills in creating Sunday morning experiences, visions that will propel their youth ministries forward, and connections with those in the field. Unity churches across the U.S. were represented: Virginia, Florida, Ohio, Illinois, Kansas, Texas, New Mexico, and Washington.

2010 Child/Teen Ministry Week July 11-16



Flyers will be available online in November.

Using the Twelve Powers

From the *Twelve Powers Program for Young People*

This was a curriculum created and refined by Rev. Suzanne Cameron Stover, Barbara Selvaggi, Kym Farmer, and the youth teachers at Unity Temple on the Plaza around the early 1980s. Published by Unity Temple on the Plaza, then the Association of Unity Churches International, it is currently out of print.

The Twelve Powers refer to inner spiritual attributes that originate from divine ideas in God-Mind. These capabilities help us in our daily living and our spiritual growth, if understood and used properly. They come from our God-Self, can be directed by the indwelling Christ, and are expressed by us according to the clarity of our own vision. These God-given tools are ours to help develop inner balance, peace, and harmony.

Included here are ideas to help you put together your own curriculum or opening celebrations/assemblies based on the Twelve Powers. All Bible verses are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRVS), the translation that has been used as the standard for Unity students due to its ecumenical scholarship. You might also use the New Century Version Bible which is used with the teen curriculum.

Order

Month: September
Disciple: James the Lesser
Color: Dark Green

Concept

Order is the outworking of the laws of Divine Mind. These laws are eternal and always working. They define and establish

a coherent universe. Law and order are a back of all manifestation. Everything that comes into being does so in alignment with these laws.

The universe is an excellent symbol of divine order because nowhere can we see more clearly and awesomely expressed the breath-taking order of God-Mind. Stars, galaxies, entire cosmos, are hung in perfect balance and harmony, everything moving with exquisite precision in its part of the dance.

If the infinite universe is capable of such expression of order, are we not capable of the same attainment? The order is within us—we have only to remove the blocks to its expression through us, so that our lives can line themselves up with the peace and understanding that result from a natural orderly unfolding. When we put God first in all our affairs, order will naturally follow.

It is possible for us to become one with the universal harmony. Our perfect pattern (the Christ) is developing itself through our beings, coming into perfect manifestation under law and order. One of the great characteristics of order is its overcoming power—we learn that there is a knowable way to overcome fear, despair, imperfection. It is by means of order that all our other faculties become possible for us.

Divine order radiates its mighty power into the other faculties and sets them into sustained activity to the end that perfection shall be brought forth. Thus, through the operation of divine order, the greatness of the soul is demonstrated and the nature of God is revealed.

Symbols

Planet earth, galaxy system, sheriff's badge

Affirmations

I am centered in Divine Order.

I live in God's orderly universe.

Divine Order is established in my mind, body and affairs.

Bible

Creation	Genesis 1
Noah and the Flood	Genesis 7
For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.	Ecclesiastes 3:1
... First the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head.	Mark 4:28
... Christ in you, the hope of glory.	Colossians 1:27
Jesus instructs his disciples	Luke 9:1-6

Activities

Musical order and harmony
Oysters and pearls
Planetarium, universe presentations
Spiritual laws

Memory Verses

... First the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head.
Mark 4:28
Love is the fulfilling of the law. **Romans 13:10**

Zeal

Month:	October
Disciple:	Simon the Zealot
Color:	Orange

Concept

Frequently we think of zeal as being a loud, boisterous, erratic, overpowering quality. But used correctly, zeal is a silent, steady, persistent mind-power that is our impulse to go forward toward our highest good. We come to know our highest good through the “still, small voice” within; so zeal should always be connected to this inner guidance. Zeal is sometimes experienced as an inner pressure to follow through with that inner guidance.

Zeal is set in motion, it expresses through energy and enthusiasm (other words used in relationship with zeal). As we respond to the impulse upward, we can trust zeal to help us achieve our heart’s desires. Zeal can provide us with great staying power in our spiritual quest. It can enable us to hold on and to keep on in our desire to ceaselessly practice the presence of God. Zeal is the mighty energy of purpose that allows us to transform.

Our energy-body is one of the powerful expressions of the Christ-power of Zeal. It is a perceivable energy that emanates from the center of our circumference and beyond, though we are not always consciously aware of it. It has been observed and reported through Kirlian photography (photos of auras), polarity therapy, acupuncture meridians, and force-field studies. Through science we have learned that everything emits energy and everything is energy. The only difference between energy and matter is the rate of vibration. Even a rock is a dance of electrons!

Symbols

Flame, smiling face, our energy body, sun, running figure

Affirmations

My smile radiates God’s energy.
I sizzle with Zeal!
I glow with God’s energy.
I am alive with God’s energy.

Bible

Battle of Jericho (paraphrase how they used their energy to bring down the walls)	Joshua 6
Baptism of fire	Acts 2:1-4
Burning bush	Exodus 3
Hem of the garment/ fringe of his cloak	Mark 6:54-56

Activities

Sun/shade
Electric energy
Olympic torch relay
Sprout garden
Charles Fillmore’s Zeal
Spiritual meaning of Halloween

Memory Verses

Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters (man). **Colossians 3:23**

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another constantly from the heart. **1 Peter 1:22**

Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your might... **Ecclesiastes 9:10**

Renunciation/ Elimination

Month: November
Disciple: Thaddaeus
Color: Russet (red-brown)

Concept

“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay.” (Matthew 5:37 KJV)

When Jesus spoke these words, he was teaching us about the Christ-power of Renunciation. Elimination is our ability to say no to that which is no longer useful or helpful to us in our lives. Through this ability we are able to let go of negative thoughts, beliefs, feelings and conditions that we have previously allowed to lodge in our consciousness, in our bodies, or in our affairs. They may even have served a useful purpose for us in the past, but now they are no longer needed. We can use the “space” they have occupied to develop the fullness of Spirit!

We can make use of this Christ-ability not only to eliminate negativity, but also to avoid it. We activate our power of Good Judgment in the use of Elimination, to be able to discern that which is untrue or undesirable, that which is not of the Spirit. We make the choice before we ever allow the negative ideas to enter our consciousness.

This release is a gentle activity, not a harsh one. We can see it used in three main ideas:

1. **Cleansing:** to gently remove that which does not serve us well.
2. **Forgiveness:** to release our ill feelings about others so that we ourselves may be released.
3. **Denials:** to release in our consciousness the belief that any negativity has power or reality.

Symbols

Leaves, open hand, butterfly, wings

Affirmations

I release, let go, and let God.

I release my fears and welcome my good.

Christ within me sets me free.

I let my words be “yes, yes” and “no, no.”

Bible

Story of Thaddaeus (not much found in the Bible, but you can go online)

Joseph and his brothers

Psalm of Thanksgiving

Jacob and the angel

Jonah and the whale

Rich Young Ruler

Moses out of Egypt

Release in forgiveness (last words on the cross)

Healing at pool of Bethesda

Parable of talents

Genesis 45

Psalm 100

Genesis 32:22–32

Jonah 1–4

Luke 18:18-23

Exodus

Luke 23:33-34

John 5:1-9

Matt 25:14-30

Activities

Burning Bowl Ceremony

Balloon release (*Please consider this carefully.*—Editor)

Spiritual meaning of Thanksgiving

Law of giving and receiving

Affirmations and denials

Memory Verses

Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No.” **Matthew 5:37**

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth ... **Matthew 6:19**

The Truth will make you free. **John 8:32b**

Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:17b

Life

Month: December
Disciple: Judas
Color: Red

Concept

The Christ-power of Life is the vibrating energy within us that inspires us to action—even propels us to action many times! It is vigorous and vital, and enables us to heal, to mend, to restore, to regenerate. It is the Divine Idea behind health—what makes wholeness possible for us.

Life is not a quality that begins with birth and ends with death. There is an eternal, unending river of life in which we are immersed. It is because of this that we are able to manifest in the three-dimensional world as being “alive.” But the real of us is not simply alive: It is Life itself. Our bodies, our circumstances, our environment, our mind—all are indications of our degree of contact with our inner life, the life of Spirit.

We have chosen the symbol of the candle of life, to represent the eternal flame that glows within us, that is in constant motion that warms, illumines, and activates us. It is the fire of life, a reminder that God will fill us with enough life to accomplish His plan through us.

Symbols

Evergreen tree, six-pointed star, pine cone, candle

Affirmations

Christ Life is born in me.
I am Christ Life.
I am filled with abundant Life.
God’s good Life glows in me.

Bible

Jesus’ birth	Luke 2:1–7
Annunciation to Mary	Luke 1:39–56
Nicodemus	John 3:1–8
Three wise men	Matthew 2:1–12
Annunciation to shepherds	Luke 2:8–20
Wheat and tares	Matthew 13:24–30
Story of Judas	
Boyhood of Jesus	Luke 2:39–52

Activities

The Other Wise Man by Henry Van Dyke
Tree of Life
Symbols of Christmas
Christmas pageant/play

Memory Verses

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever. **John 6:51**
I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly. **John 10:10b**
One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. **Deuteronomy 8:3**
For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. **Luke 12:23**
To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. **Romans 8:6b**

Did you know ...

- that *Education Links* is a green magazine only available online but formatted so you can download it, take it to the printer, and have multiple copies created for your whole youth ministry team? We thought you’d like that.
- that you can easily get to *Education Links* by using the shortcut www.unity.org/el?
- that you can sign up for E-Link, our bi-monthly newsletter, by going to www.unity.org/enews?
- that our Religious Emblem programs, created for Unity young people active in scouts or interested in a greater study of Unity, are now available as free downloads at www.unity.org/emblem?
- that there is a Unity homeschooling Yahoo group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UnityChurchHomeschoolers>?
- that job openings for youth education/ministry directors are posted on our website at www.unity.org/jobs? Currently look under Unity Village openings. (The heading may change in the future.)

Twelve Powers of Man

Based on the teachings of Charles Fillmore, cofounder of Unity

Power: Faith **Month: January** **Color: Deep Blue**

Affirmation: I have faith that God works for good in my life.

Faith is the ability to say yes to letting good manifest in your life.

Power: Love **Month: February** **Color: Pink**

Affirmation: I am a radiating center of God's love.

Love is the ability to know and feel your oneness with all creation.

Power: Strength **Month: March** **Color: Light Green**

Affirmation: My strength comes from my inner light.

Strength is the eternally enduring quality of your being.

Power: Wisdom **Month: April** **Color: Yellow**

Affirmation: I use my inner wisdom to guide all I think, feel, say and do.

Wisdom is the ability to discern what decisions best reflect your true God-self.

Power: Power **Month: May** **Color: Purple**

Affirmation: I use my power to speak my truth.

Power is the ability to act, do and accomplish good.

Power: Imagination **Month: June** **Color: Light Blue**

Affirmation: I use my imagination to create good in my life.

Imagination is your ability to form pictures out of ideas.

Power: Understanding **Month: July** **Color: Gold**

Affirmation: I grow in understanding of God's plan for me when I listen.

Understanding is the ability to know that good is beneath everything, regardless of appearances.

Power: Will **Month: August** **Color: Silver**

Affirmation: I am willing to do what my inner will directs me to do.

Will is your ability to be motivated to listen to God's will and to direct your powers to manifest that good.

Power: Order **Month: September** **Color: Green**

Affirmation: I know that divine order and harmony are operating in my life and in the world now.

Order is your ability to act from a centered place.

Power: Enthusiasm **Month: October** **Color: Orange**

Affirmation: When I am full of joy and enthusiasm all my powers are activated.

Enthusiasm is your ability to be interested and enthusiastic about life.

Power: Letting God **Month: November** **Color: Brown**

Affirmation: I can let go of anything that stands in the way of God's good for me.

Letting Go is your ability to release anything that does not serve you. Release is the most powerful action you can take in your life when done with love.

Power: Life **Month: December** **Color: Red**

Affirmation: My life is a wonderful gift from God.

Life is given to you to manifest the truth and beauty of God's wonderful universe.

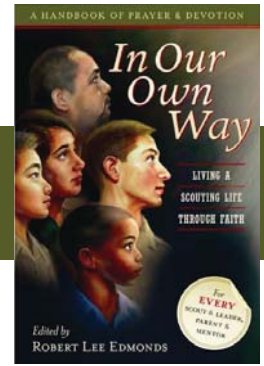
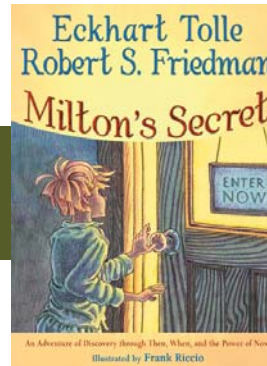
Resources

Milton's Secret

By Eckhart Tolle and Robert S. Friedman
Illustrated by Frank Riccio
Hampton Roads Publishing and Namaste
Publishing, 2008

Here is a children's book that illustrates the power of living in the now. Milton is a happy, loving kid who enjoys whatever is in front of him. When his path intersects with that of a bully, Milton discovers that being afraid of what has happened and projecting what may happen keep him filled with worry. That worry robs him of peace and happiness until he experiences the power of now.

Illustrations are lovely, colorful, and help move the story. Lots of words on a page make this more of a sharing book between child and adult, or a single reader level of 7–8 years.



In Our Own Way: Living a Scouting Life Through Faith

Edited by Robert Lee Edmonds
Red Honor Press, 2008

Subtitled “A Handbook of Prayer and Devotion,” this little book is a wonderful collection of prayers representing the diverse faiths and denominations that provide religious emblem programs utilized by the Boy Scouts of America. Edmonds compiled this book because he recognizes that “prayer is universal,” that “our nation is a rich tapestry of many religious traditions” and that spirituality is an integral part of a scout's life. Unity is represented along with mainline Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and more; plus scouting prayers. Bernadette Swanson, our own curriculum editor, contributed the Unity pieces.

The Spirit of the Environment

By Linda Depke
Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator
Unity of Phoenix, Arizona

The classroom environment is an essential part of creating ministry for children and teens. The classroom setting should effortlessly unfold as children and teens engage in co-creating their world while expressing their unique gifts and talents. When a classroom is uncluttered and intentional, it eliminates distraction so that they can discover a space where grace can unfold within them.

In the teen classrooms, this *place for grace* is seen in large groups, small-group sessions, breakout skits, and the brainstorming process. Dialogue and communication flows naturally and respectfully while discovering individually and collectively their spiritual identity and purpose.

In the children's classrooms, “center” areas are created to guide the children and provide spiritual learning. In the *sacred circle area*, children learn they are one with God and all things. In the *block area*, they become co-creator of their world. The *reading and writing area* teaches children that they create with their words, and that words are powerful tools to express what they think. In the *dramatic play area*, children learn from questions, “Who am I?” and “What is mine to do?” by physically “trying on” different expressions of life choices.

The *music area* is joyous and healing. The *science area* teaches children to be caretakers of the earth, and in the *art area*, children learn that creating is a process through which they express God. Each classroom also has a sacred space called the *safe place* where children learn that they are responsible for their words and actions.

Our classroom philosophy is designed to take children and teens deeper, and draw forth the individual's truth through experiences, storytelling, and creative expression in a space that cultivates the grace within each of us.

Regional News

West Central

Family Activity Night: At Unity In Marin, we recently initiated Family Activity Night. Held the third Wednesday of every month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., this activity attracts quite a number of families and some of our teachers. The children involved are usually between five years old and preteen. We begin by sharing a meal; pushing several tables together so that we can all sit at the big rectangle and see each other. Parents offer what they can bring to eat (usually soup, salad, and bread), letting us know ahead of time by email. We start with a blessing and have lots of talk and laughter. There always seems to be enough food “somehow.” After the meal, we do an activity that parents and children can do together. Making something a little messy seems to be popular. For example, in October, we tie-dyed tee shirts for Halloween, and in November we made gratitude candles. December was the time for caroling in the neighborhood and at a local senior citizen residence. Photos taken at each activity are displayed at the sign-in table on Sunday mornings. Everyone gets to see how much fun we had, and the photos prompt the question, “When’s the next one?” With just these first few months, the program seems to be a huge success!

Teacher Aide Program: The teacher aide program at Unity In Marin has evolved into a big boost for the youth education program. While the teachers are paid (\$75 per Sunday) and teach alternate weeks, the teacher’s aides are all volunteers. Having an extra pair of hands in the bigger classes has proven to be invaluable. The teacher’s aides are mostly parents. We simply invited the entire list of registered parents to participate, drew up a schedule, and most of them agreed. Two to three aides/parents are scheduled for each week, and we now

have enough families so that each one ends up serving just a few times a year. Emails are sent out two weeks prior to when the families are scheduled. An RSVP is requested, for confirmation. Each parent volunteer has a copy of the next six months’ schedule, and, if a time conflict arises, the parent is encouraged to switch with another parent on the list. New parents who become part of the family ministry are worked into the schedule when someone else can’t find a needed replacement. Teacher’s aides don’t need to prepare anything ahead of time. They just help in whatever way the teacher needs in that class. For the most part, aides serve in the youngest classes and nursery, where the help is more routinely needed. The teacher’s aide program gives parents a good window into what occurs in the youth education classes. They also seem to really enjoy the fun of playing with the little ones and getting to know the middle schoolers. It is a win-win-win program!

Steppin’ Up Services: September excitement for families at Unity In Marin has jumped up a level these last couple of years. In mid-September, the kids, teachers, and director of Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) host both Sunday services for what we call “Steppin’ Up” Sunday. This is a celebration recognizing children who have reached the grade level which allows them to graduate to the next higher youth education class. During the summer, each candidate for Steppin’ Up has the opportunity to complete a challenge activity (a personal goal which they choose with their parents’ permission) in preparation of the move. At the end of the summer (and the Sunday prior to Steppin’ Up Sunday), parents and children all meet together to witness and applaud each child’s sharing on how they chose and met their personal challenge. It is quite moving, and provides lots of opportunities for us to get to know each other better—and to laugh and even shed a tear or two. On Steppin’ Up Sunday, the children and teens do skits or other activities connected with their spiritual learning, perform all of the music, and participate in a ritual-type graduation experience on the stage. Teachers and the YFM director present the Sunday lesson. This format, devised by Rev. Bill Englehart, gives the congregation an opportunity to see the growth of the youth education program, and to support the families. The parents get to be proud; the children get wonderful practice appearing on stage along with the risk of stretching themselves. We all “Step Up”! The next Sunday, all of the children begin in their new classes for the coming year.

**Pat Palmer, Youth and Family Ministry
Unity In Marin, Novato, California**

Southwest

Jan Chase, senior minister of **Unity Church in Pomona, California**, was awarded 2009 Volunteer of the Year for the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for the whole of Los



Angeles County. Four community partners that Jan work with at the Pomona office of Children and Family Services attended the event with Jan and Jim Jensen. The five county supervisors were present to honor the 100 people honored by the county for their service this year. The DCFS is building partnerships in the community, especially faith-based partnerships. When Jan was invited to attend DCFS meetings, she went and found people who deeply cared about children and families in the community. She also found an openness to creative ideas and change. As Jan looked at how she and her church might serve (DCFS) and their families, she realized that her building could be used to host court-ordered visits for children to spend time with the families that had been split. Eight people in Unity Church of Pomona went through the required fingerprinting and volunteered to host these twice-a-week visits monitored by trained personnel. This pilot program has been so successful that visits are now being scheduled at other sites on other days. During the 11 Days of Global Unity in 2008, DCFS co-sponsored a Peace Film Festival in a number of local churches, building relationships with a number of congregations while the message of peace was being spread.

South Central

In May, Unity Village Chapel, Unity Village, Missouri, hosted a Mother/Daughter Retreat conducted by ministerial students and Francie Potter and Gayla Crum, the youth and family ministry coordinators for Unity Village Chapel, Missouri, and Unity of the Heartland, Olathe, Kansas, respectively. The event was held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and included lunch served by the girls. It was an opportunity for moms and mentors to share in a special time of love, understanding, and commitment with their daughters/girls. The program was designed by the Dove Campaign—Real Beauty for Girls, A Self-Esteem Workshop! Eighty girls and their mentors/moms attended. The girls ranged from 8 to 17 years old. At the end, we enhanced the program with a commitment ceremony which included mothers/mentors reading their commitment on stage to their girls and vice versa. The duos exchanged gifts and received a certificate of completion and a take-home booklet to continue building self-esteem. I recommend this program for every girl and their mom/mentor. You can go online to www.campaignforrealbeauty.com. The self-esteem tools are distributed by Dove for free.



Mother/Daughter Retreat hosted by Unity Village Chapel, Unity Village, Missouri

Calendar of Events

Regional & National Trainings, Workshops and Retreats

Please go to the regional website listed in the consultants' directory (next page) for more information.

2009

- Oct 16–18 Northwest: YOU Retreat, Camp Waskowitz, North Bend, WA
Oct 18 Southwest: Arizona YOU Fall Picnic & Outing, Scottsdale, AZ
Oct 23–25 Eastern: YOU Fall Rally, Camp Tockwogh, MD
Oct 24 Great Lakes: Creating the Vision, Unity of Clinton, IA
Oct 24 SCUCA: Children's Ministry and Teen Training for north Texas, including Dallas cluster, north Louisiana and south Arkansas area, Unity Church of Dallas, TX
Oct 30–Nov 1 South: Fall Rally, Glen Lakes Camp, Glen Rose, TX
Nov 6–8 Northwest: Fall Unitreat (Uniteens), Cispus Center, Randle, WA
Nov 8 Southwest: Arizona Uniteens Fall Picnic, Scottsdale, AZ
Nov 13–15 Central: Fall Rally, Rock Springs 4-H Center, Junction City, KS
Nov 13–15 Southeast: YOU Fall Retreat, Camp Geneva, Fruitland Park, FL
Nov 13–15 Southwest: YOU Fall Rally, Pathfinder Ranch, Idyllwild, CA
Nov 14 Southeast: Children's Ministry Teacher Training – Unity of Tampa, Tampa, FL

2010

- Jan 15–17 Eastern: YOU Midwinter Rally, Unity of Washington DC
Jan 22–24 Northwest: Youth Team Conference, Huston Center, Gold Bar WA
Feb 12–4 Central: Winter Rally, Colorado Springs, CO
Mar 6 SCUCA: Teen Training for mid to north Arkansas, Oklahoma and southwest Missouri, Unity Spiritual Life Center, Oklahoma City, OK
Mar 12–14 Eastern: Youth Educators Conference, Virginia Beach, VA
Mar 12–14 Southeast: YOU Spring Rally, Warren Willis Camp, Leesburg, FL
Mar 19–21 Northwest: Kids Camp Counselor Training, Spokane, WA
Mar 19–21 Northwest: Unitreat Staff Plan & Train, Cispus Center, Randle WA
April 9–11 SCUCA: Teen Ministry Conference, Unity Church of Denver, CO
April 23–25 Eastern: YOU Spring Rally, Camp Tockwogh, MD
April 23–25 Northwest: YOU Rally, Cispus Center, Randle, WA
April 30–May 2 Central: Unitreat, Scott City, Kansas
June 7–11 Unity People's Convention, San Diego, CA
June South Central: BiRegional Rally
June 13–18 Southeast: YOU Summer Connection, Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC
June 20–25 Northwest: Unitreat, Cispus Center, Randle WA
June 26–29 Northwest: Kids Camp, Camp Waskowitz, North Bend, WA
July 11–16 Child/Teen Ministry Week, Association of Unity Churches, Lee's Summit, MO
August 1–6 International Youth of Unity Summer Event, 3 Trails Camp & Retreat Center, Kansas City, MO
Oct 15–17 Northwest: YOU Retreat, Camp Waskowitz, North Bend, WA
Nov 5–7 Northwest: Fall Unitreat, Cispus Center, Randle, WA

Regional Education Services Consultants Directory

The Unity ministries in the United States are divided up into seven regions. In each region, there are educational consultants that support and enrich the spiritual development of youth and all those who serve them. Below is information on how to contact the consultants in your region.

(C) Children—for those serving infants through 5th grade

(U) Uniteen—for those serving grades 6–8

(Y) Youth of Unity—for those serving grades 9–12

CSE—Certified Spiritual Educator

LT—Licensed Teacher

Eastern

Contact information at: www.ERChildTeenMinistry.org

James Scott, LT (C, U)

Jane Harden (Y)

Great Lakes

Contact information at: www.greatlakesunity.com/consultants.html

Rev. Diane Venzera (C)

Eileen Patra, CSE, LT (U)

Jo Horn, CSE (Y)

Northwest

Contact information at: www.unitynwregion.org. Click on Programs, and then Youth.

Rev. Penny Gruver (C)

Rev. Jackie Green (U, Y)

Southeast

Contact information at: www.seunityyouth.org

Steven Butler, CSE (C)

Michele Senac, CSE, LT (U)

Carolyn Renfro, CSE, LT (Y)

South & Central

Contact information at: www.scucaregion.com

Click on Youth & Family Ministry.

Marygrace Sorensen, CSE, LT (C)

Joanne Burns, CSE, LT (U)

Lisa Yelenick (Y)

Southwest

Contact information at: www.swunity.org

Jacquie Hardesty (C)

Rev. Mark Fisk (U, Y)

West Central

Contact information at: www.westcentralregion.com. Click on YOU and YE Website

Shirley Barbula (C)

Jerry Sharp, CSE, LT (U, Y)

For ministries with young adults and Next Generation, go to www.unity.org/ngu. The regional consultants for this ministry can be found by scrolling down the page.

Soles4Souls + Unity = Shoes4Unity

An estimated 300 million children worldwide have no shoes.
Unity is reaching out to change that.

In partnership with Soles4Souls Inc., a nonprofit that collects and distributes new and gently used shoes throughout the world, the Spiritual Social Action Team of the Association of Unity Churches International (Association) has launched a project called Shoes4Unity. The goal is to sponsor or gather 525,600 pairs of shoes by the end of 2010—that's the equivalent of one pair of shoes and one life changed for every minute in a year.

Unity constituents can participate by contributing new flip-flops that have the Shoes4Unity logo. Flip-flops are an economical way to make a tremendous difference in third-world countries, as they protect against puncture wounds and ringworm infections, which are the second leading cause of death in Africa.

Donors can send a pair of flip-flops to one person for \$5, to a family for \$20, a school for \$100, or an entire village for \$250.

You can also donate gently used shoes (plus cash for postage). According to www.soles4souls.org, more than 1.5 billion pairs of shoes go unused in American closets. Shoes4Unity collection boxes have been placed at participating Unity churches. From there, donated shoes will be mailed to Tennessee or Alabama for sorting and disinfecting. Those that are wearable will be sent on to individuals in need. Shoes deemed unusable will be ground up to create playground mulch.

How Soles4Souls Began

The idea for Soles4Souls emerged following the devastating tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004. While watching news reports of the aftermath, Wayne Eelsey, an executive for a footwear company, was struck by an image of a shoe washing up on the beach. He came up with the idea for a shoe donation program. Eelsey contacted other footwear executives and went on to deliver a quarter of a million shoes to the area.

When Hurricane Katrina hit a year later, the shoe drive began anew, resulting in more than a million pairs of shoes sent to Gulf Coast communities. Recognizing an ongoing need, Eelsey incorporated Soles4Souls as a full-time, not-for-profit organization. Since its inception, Soles4Souls has distributed more than 4 million pairs to people in 125 countries.



For more information, go to www.shoes4unity.org and see how you can participate.