



# Happy New Year! Unity Northwest Church NEWS

www.unitynorthwest.org

We nurture the experience of God in all.

January 2012

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## Unity Northwest Church

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Rev. Diane Venzera	Director Youth Ed / Family Ministry

## MINISTER'S LETTER



### THE BEATING HEART OF HUMANITY

*Sprinkled at random throughout your heart, there are a few cells known as pacemaker cells, whose job it is to send out a synchronous rhythm of electrical energy and entrain the rest of the cells to beat in unison. Without them your heart would just quiver at random.*

*Similarly, within the spiritual heart of you, there is that beating presence and power that will lift you up and align you to itself. That spiritual presence, the Christ within, is waiting for you to listen to it and respond to its call. It is your desire for it that will call it forth, coupled with each positive thought, word and action.*

The Indian poet Kabir wrote, "It is the intensity of our desire for the divine that does all the work." That love, that desire, is now melting the bonds of separation between souls, and between you and your divine self. All of humanity will benefit.

Our church, and every spiritual community on the planet, is also creating a field of consciousness and energy to generate the power needed for the great overcoming of all humanity. We must each do our part to participate in this great transformation. Each prayer, kind word and uplifted thought will add its energy and entrain the thoughts of all humankind in a God-ward direction of peace, love and harmony. A new, powerful rhythm for the heart of humanity will result!

All my love,

**Greg Barrette**  
Minister

## Sunday Talks

01/01/12 Your New Start — White Stone Ceremony—Led by Lynn Barrette. Licensed Unity Teacher and Greg Barrette

In Jesus' day, when a person was released from prison, they were given a white stone to represent their new start. During the White Stone Ceremony each of us will experience a meditation that will lead us into receiving a word or phrase that symbolizes a new start for our new year.

## We are souls in evolution.

### 01/08/12 Your Abundant Vision

Remove the blocks to abundant living and get out of your own way!

FOUR WEEK STUDY SERIES ON ERIC BUTTERWORTH'S *IN THE FLOW OF LIFE* (Small group discussion class Tuesday nights)

### 01/15/12 In the Flow of Life: The Healing Stream of Life (week one) Chapters 1, 2 and 7

How does it feel when you are in the flow? How can you get back into it when you are not?

### 01/22/12 In the Flow of Life: Divine Guidance and The Art of Getting Along (week two)

How can you plug in to your source of guidance and harmony?

### 01/29/12 In the Flow of Life: The Wellspring of Affluence (week three)

What does heaven have to do with prosperity?

### 02/05/12 In the Flow of Life: Growing Onward to Life, Death, Rebirth (week four)

What can you do to let go and walk on?

## COMING UP IN JANUARY ...

### Your New Start - White Stone Ceremony

Sunday, January 1, 9:00 am & 11:00 am  
 Facilitated by Lynn Barrette, LUT, & Greg Barrette

In Jesus' day, when a person was released from prison, they were given a white stone to represent their new start. During the White Stone Ceremony, each of us will be given a white stone to signify our freedom. We will then each experience a meditation that will lead us into receiving a word or phrase symbolizing a new start for our new year. We are now free to take our next spiritual step! In Revelations, John wrote "To the one who overcomes, I will give spiritual food, and I will also provide a white stone, upon which a new name will be written, that no one knows except for the one who receives it."

### Create Your Life Workshop

Tuesday, January 3, 7:00 p.m.  
 Facilitated by Greg Barrette

This will be an opportunity to create a practical plan for living the rest of your life. We will use journaling, visualization,

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*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)

AND

Watch Sunday talks at  
<http://vimeo.com/unitynorthwest>

**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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**January 2012  
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**BOARD OF TRUSTEES LETTER**

Happy New Year!

As we move into the new year, we look forward to many opportunities for spiritual growth within ourselves: how AWESOME is that! If you participated in the Burning Bowl service on New Year's Eve, I am sure you experienced the manifestation of a new journey without even knowing it for 2012.

Here are some Board notes for 2012.

- The Board has finalized the 2012 budget.
- Vice President Carolyn Dunoon will be the Board liaison to the 2012 Nominating Committee and will be working with Greg as we move into the Board elections coming up on March 18, 2012. You must be a member of Unity Northwest in order to vote for candidates running for the upcoming two available seats on the Board. A two session new member class will be held on Tuesdays, March 6 and 13.
- We are happy to hear that Inside Tracks will be returning starting on January 12.

**COMING UP IN JANUARY ... Continued from p. 1**

meditation and discussion to create goals for every aspect of living. We will spend 75% of our time doing written exercises on affirmations, forgiveness and clearing away negative beliefs. Some of the subjects covered will be employment, health, relationships, self-image, prosperity, forgiveness and spiritual growth.

***In the Flow of Life Experience***

Sundays, January 15, 22, 29, & Feb 5, 9:00 am & 11:00 am

Tuesdays, January 17, 24, 31 & Feb 7, 7 pm  
Facilitated by Greg Barrette

"Life is a flowing experience, and within every person is an inlet that may become an outlet to all there is in God," wrote Eric Butterworth. Getting into the flow of life will allow you to live from within-out, to heal, get guidance, prosper, find hope and let go of your anxieties. Each Sunday for four weeks, we will explore Eric Butterworth's best-selling book, *In the Flow of Life*, and then on Tuesday nights, we will break into small groups and experience a guided meditation that will lead us deeper into how we can live in that flow.

**Inside Tracks Meditation:  
Who Have You Come Here to Be?**

Thursday, January 12, 2012, 7:30 pm  
Facilitated by Rev. Diane Venzera & Peggy Dhont, LUT

**Love, Communicate, Respond**

- Greg will be facilitating a four week book group on Eric Butterworth's *In The Flow of Life* and will also focus his Sunday lessons starting January 15 on this book for 4 weeks as well.

Check the church calendar for information on other upcoming classes and workshops, and if you haven't seen our website lately take a look. Rev. Diane does a really great job.

Lastly, if you have thought about becoming a Unity Northwest prayer chaplain and have some questions, signup in the lobby to attend the Chaplain orientation scheduled for Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m.-12 noon. It is very gratifying to be of service in this way, and you get to hang out with some wonderful Chappies!

Many Blessings,

*Dee Caputo*

President, Board of Trustees

**Itching for Stitching**

2nd Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m.  
Facilitated by Judy Catrambone

A new group has been formed for all you stitchers out there. We invite everyone at Unity Northwest and friends.

**Weekly Silent Meditation Service**

Ongoing - Tuesdays, 6:00 to 6:45 pm  
Facilitated by Greg Barrette

A love offering will be accepted at these events. For more information, call 847-297-0997 or visit [www.unitynorthwest.org](http://www.unitynorthwest.org).

**UNW Men's Group meets the 1st Monday of every month 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 offsite, or be referred to a therapist or other community service agency that will best serve your needs.



ICC is available to people of all religious, cultural and 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.**



Calling All Evolving UNW Women!

Monday, January 9, 2012  
6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Come share in food, fun and spiritual nourishment! Bring your favorite potluck dish and your beautiful self! Sign up in the lobby, and we'll see you there!

## YOUTH EDUCATION MINISTRY

*Be good · Be patient · Be still*

Let's ring in the New Year with a faith and hope that we know the Spirit of God dwells among us, showing up as us.

We are excited to begin another year in youth and family ministry. We are blessed to have an awesome group of individuals who serve our children and teens. We are a wonderful team working together for the good of all.

The youth ministry team will begin the year by creating a plan of action that will add further support to our children, teens and families and will create an even stronger foundation for our programs. It promises to be an exciting year filled with growth and unfoldment.

We will explore the following ideas:

- What type of lesson content do we want to offer our children & teens? Possibilities include: Unity Basics; prayer and meditation, incorporating more music, exploring the issues our children and teens face, and exploring the Bible.

- Offering a vacation Bible school experience this summer.
- Creating more community-building events between the youth ministry & adult ministry.
- Creating rites of passages for our teens and preteens.
- Creating rituals that encourage the Spiritual development of our children and teens and help them navigate life.

This month the children and teens will share in the following classroom experiences.

### Prayer

- How do we pray in Unity?
- What is Affirmative Prayer?
- How can I use prayer in my everyday life?

### Meditation

- What is the difference between prayer & meditation?
- How do I meditate?
- How is meditation helpful to me?

In joy & gratitude,

**Rev. Diane Venzera**

Director, Youth Education Ministry



[www.maryengelbreit.com](http://www.maryengelbreit.com)

## LET YOUR RESOLUTIONS COME TO YOU!

How many of you make New Year's resolutions each year?

I stopped making them years ago when I finally felt disempowered enough to stop, since I wasn't following through with them anyway! Daniel Goldstein, a research scientist, says, "It's not that your goals are impossible to reach, but that you lack the self-discipline to stick to them. It is physically possible to lose weight, it is physically possible to exercise more, but resisting temptation is hard."

He goes on to explain that we have two parts of us, our present self and our future self. Who is in control? Our present self that often wants immediate gratification! So what can we do to defend our future self that wants the positive outcomes of our goals?

The wonderful news is that life is always providing us with opportunities for change right NOW—and in every NOW moment! Instead of imposing behavior alterations on ourselves at the beginning of the year, why not make a commitment to embrace the changes that arise throughout the year?

Often, not exercising is not the problem, but not feeling worthy of this self-care is. Eating too much is not the problem, but that which we are avoiding in consciousness is. Let our

New Year's prayer be, "God, thank You for making me aware of the changes I need to make during 2012." Believe me, you will be aware, and you will be supported because embracing it when it comes is participating in the change instead of controlling how it happens.

Give this new resolution a try for 2012: "I let my resolutions come to me!"

Happy New Year!

*Lynn Barrette, MSW, LUT*

## A COURSE IN MIRACLES 7—9 p.m. Thursdays

"To Awaken the Christ Within"—what does this mean?

I have led a life filled with lessons, just like you. I have felt that to suffer is to be human, just like you. I have questioned God, just like you. I have fears, just like you. I have felt worthless and guilty, just like you. I have experienced love based on conditions and selfishness, just like you. I exist in a physical body, too, just like you. I have forgotten who I truly am, just like you.

I have asked for God's help, just like you. I have prayed night and day, just like you. I have relied on the heart and soul of Unity, just like you. I have followed my own spiritual path, just like you. I have exercised my pur-

pose in life in service of my higher calling, just like you. I have loved unconditionally, just like you. I have remembered who I truly am, just like you.

The beginning and end of my story is no different from yours. We all forget, and we all remember. We all appear to separate, and we all reunite. We all fear, and we all love. We all fall, and we all rise.

So what does it mean "To Awaken the Christ Within?" It is to rise from the ashes. To shed light into the darkness. To discover peace within the conflict. To find forgiveness in the hatred. To resurrect joy from devastation. To rekindle faith in a moment of hopelessness. To give thanks in times of hardship. To remember your worth in spite of the ego mind. To find strength in your weakness. To love unconditionally when conditions appear. To rise again and again and again.

"To Awaken the Christ Within" is to experience all the beautiful Miracles in the Course of our Life. This is what *A Course In Miracles* teaches us. Jesus left footsteps for us to follow through his example. Embracing this gift is a blessing. Within every stumble you take there is a miracle waiting to be found.

**Lacey Bell Whittington**

Master Advanced Teacher

*A Course In Miracles*

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

**FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

*God dwells within me as me.*

*An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. ~ Bill Vaughan*

Well, I'm thinking about the year now past, and I ask myself, how do I feel about it when I look back? I do believe I'm gaining a new perspective on my life and myself, and that feels good. Let's take a look starting with the first Sunday of last January and the White Stone Ceremony at our church service.

The word that came up in my meditation to write onto my white stone was "random." And my first thought was, what the heck? Then I thought, maybe I'd like my life to be *less* random. It could be more organized, more planned, more thought out, more on purpose. But you see, I can get so caught up in the moment that I get distracted from whatever I might need to be doing. Of course, then there's good old John Lennon's saying that life is what happens to us while we're busy making other plans. So when to organize and plan and when to be more free wheeling?

So, getting back to being less random ... I took a kind of Meyers-Briggs test once upon a time that showed me I tend to be primarily impression and feeling oriented and motivated. Oh dear. This certainly explained a lot. Impressions and feelings, but thoughts and facts not so much.

Now I ask you, am I swimming upstream if I want to have less randomness in my life? I don't think so. Nobody is *all* head or *all* heart. And anyway, I do believe that God's purpose for us is to grow more confidently into who we are. We all grow and change, but maybe the emphasis can be on kindness and acceptance and courage and wonder. No matter what anyone's approach to life is, we can all let in more love, understanding and appreciation—of ourselves and others. Yes we can! And that's a big *Amen*, good buddy!

*Ruth Trailer*

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



Another fresh new year is here ...  
Another year to live!  
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,  
To love and laugh and give!

This bright new year is given me  
To live each day with zest ...  
To daily grow and try to be  
My highest and my best!

I have the opportunity  
Once more to right some wrongs,  
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,  
And sing more joyful songs!

William Arthur Ward



**Be God's Love in Action. VOLUNTEER! Call the church office at 847-297-0997.**



259 East Central Road  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016

Sunday Services: 9:00 and 11:00 am  
Youth Education: Sundays at 11:00 am