



Light On The Path

Unity—An inclusive path for today's spiritual seekers.

The Impossible Dream

"To dream the impossible dream," is the opening line of the famous song from the musical *Man Of La Mancha*. What is that dream and why is it so impossible? Is he really talking about a foe that is external or is he talking about the fulfillment of the personal journey to reach his own divine potential, the unreachable stars?

Explorers are an interesting breed. They seem to be fearless in the face of the unknown, perhaps thriving on the idea that out there somewhere is the answer to their quest and it is the call that continually drives them to seek it. Think Columbus, or Darwin, or Peary. Why risk the comfort of the known, their family, friends and their very lives for a quest that might never come to fruition; all their planning may never yield that which they seek?

History tells us that Christopher Columbus was looking for a passage to India. All the others had traveled to the east hugging the secure and visible coast line. Yet, Columbus said, "No, there must be another way," and he convinced the King and Queen of Spain to finance his exploration. Yet, Columbus failed in his endeavor for he did not find a new way to India; he did not find India at all.

Instead he found a whole new continent that no one could have known. A land far more vast and rich than India would ever be. And now his bold plans, his dreams of riches dramatically changed and so did his life.

The great explorers of the universe from Columbus to Capt. Kirk are not the only ones who have gone to the edge and experienced a ground breaking shift in reality. Spiritual pioneers of every tradition have answered the call to seek, to risk the known and comfortable and move into a bold new world unlike anything they have ever known. Jesus of Nazareth, Gautama Buddha, Rumi, and more modern day people such as Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela all took a giant leap in faith.

But the individual can say, "I am not them, I don't have their courage, their perseverance in the face of resistance and uncertainty. Does that mean that only a chosen few are destined to reach for the unreachable stars?"

The wise men of old looked into the night sky and saw a portent, a sign of light that herald the new day and they followed not totally certain what they would find or even how they would find it. They braved the disapproval of family and friends, the counsel of those wiser, and the uncertainty of their own fears. Yet, they followed the clarion call to seek and they were rewarded, not with the gift of wealth or fame, but with the viewing of a child.

"And when they saw the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage." Matthew 2:10-11

The story goes on to say that having finally arrived at their destination and greeting the child, they returned home by another way. They were no longer the three men with stars in their eyes, they now had found what they sought yet no explanation was given as to its meaning. Surely on the long journey home they each pondered the significance of all that they had witnessed. How could they explain to family and friends, so concerned and relieved at their return, that the prize they attained was an afternoon visit to a newborn baby.

"And I know if I'll only be true to this glorious quest, that my heart will lie peaceful and calm when I'm laid to my rest." Perhaps the journey of any explorer is never to reach the unreachable star but simply to make the journey, no matter how hopeless, no matter how far. And in the journey is the discovery of the self, a vein of gold so rich and deep that one lifetime cannot contain it. Here in the quest itself is the fulfillment of Life's calling: to seek, to find, to know and to seek again.

This is not a quest for the chosen few, but the eternal longing of the soul to come to the manger and to once again gaze upon its innate innocence and beauty in wonder and awe.



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Dearly Beloved of God,

Each year as I come to Christmas, I struggle to find meaning in a story that I have heard so often that it has really lost a lot of its power and import. Yet, something within the very nature of story invites us to the table again and again, to search for a depth, a new insight that we could not have had at any other Christmas because we have come to this Christmas, at this stage of life, in this moment on our spiritual journey.

The rich nuances of the story always tend to challenge me to grasp at a new level the story that is as old as time, and yet is as fresh and new as the telling. Several years ago Mark Lowry, singer, songwriter penned the lyrics to the now popular song "Mary Did You Know?" There is something about the way he wrote this song, the haunting refrain, the question that lingers, that make it so memorable. Just exactly what DID Mary know at the moment her child was born? For me, the song continues to dance in my heart filling it with even more unanswered questions.

What might we realistically, on a historical level, say about what did Mary know about her newborn son? Certainly Mary knew that this child was destined to live a difficult life. After all being born of peasant parents, that was the life that they knew and there was no reason to think that Jesus would have experienced anything different than what they had known for generations. He would carve out an existence on the land or perhaps make his way to the Sea of Galilee and like others hear the siren call of the wind and water, as he would live the life of a rugged, yet fiercely independent fisherman. He would be loved and surrounded and supported by his family and friends in a small rural town in the agricultural regions of the north, far away from the trappings of the city with its conservative political and religious bias.

As she gazed at her child peacefully sleeping by her side, she knew he was a fighter because he had survived birth. The vast majority of children died in birth and if they did make it through those difficult first hours and days of life, they were once again threatened by many factors that saw a majority of children die before the age of five. So what Mary knew in that moment was that her child was alive.

And Mary also knew that she was alive! Hard for us to remember that it was only a few short years ago that childbirth was the number one cause of death for women. So she was grateful not only for the life of her child, but also for her own. Thus Mary knew this child was a gift, a gift of life itself.

Yet, the song is also about the future, did Mary know in that moment that he would be a child who would walk tall upon the earth, testing the very limits between heaven and earth, declaring the kingdom of God was at hand and as a

result of his boldness, his passion would see miracles and majesty? And at the very same time, he would know pain and rejection and ultimately death for the very same vision that fueled him?

Every mother knows the power of this haunting refrain for when a child is born hopes and dreams are born with the tiny life. Could my own mother have even imagined the life that I now live? In many ways she could not because the world has so radically changed in our lifetime from that cold January day in 1950, in a then rather small town of Akron Ohio, my mother and father could not have said "And when she grows up she will be ..." Their hopes and dreams for me were more about being healthy, being a member of our family, a person of faith and a productive member of society, the essence of a loving person.

Yet, this story is more than just a biological reflection; it is our story as well. How often we come to Christmas so weary of it all that we lose the power of the story, our story. I can say I have been in that place myself sometimes. So I want to remind myself this Christmas about the story called Mary Anne, a story I think I know so well, a story that still holds so many unanswered questions. It is a reflection upon a new life, my life being born, another tiny insight into the infinite mystery of God in whose image and likeness I am, we all are, created. What do I know about this life? It has come to blossom and grow, it has been born to awaken within me the very essence of who I am, another slice of divine revelation being revealed.

It is easy to distance ourselves from the Christmas story. We find it too familiar, dated and easily misunderstood through the power of the media and our own imagination. And we want to keep the story in a nice little Bible on the shelf because then it becomes all about Jesus and what he did or did not do and not a story about his message that we are being called to live. And just like Mary, we really don't know what it means to give birth to this new life and to listen to its cries in the night of our soul. When we think of the story in those terms, it is easier to keep the story at a safe distance. But nothing about this child is safe, nothing about Christmas is certain and secure. It is the clarion call to give human life to the song of creation, the seed of God that is within us all.

Perhaps the song goes like this, Mary Anne did you know that your baby girl has come to make you new? This child that you delivered will soon deliver you. Mary Anne, did you know?

Rev. Mary Anne Harris



Board Report

Treasurer Report



Linda Lusk, Director

I love the holiday season we are coming into, Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are so fortunate to be part of a fellowship of loving, caring and sharing people. Unity is so important to me as I have adopted this fellowship as “my family.” I don’t have close relatives here to celebrate the joys of the season, so Unity, for me, fills this void not only at the holidays but year round.

I attended Unity first in 1990 and immediately felt like I had found my “spiritual home.” I have had a feeling of fulfillment ever since, and I know that others feel as I do for this is the beautiful, loving attraction of our fellowship.

We all have concerns about changing times and how that affects our church and its ongoing growth. Yet, often it is just the simple things that make the most impact, such as inviting and sharing our church through our website at www.tulsaunity.com and through our Facebook page Unity Church of Christianity. Our growth in the church is primarily about your growth in yourself!

Our Center for the Heart is in full operation and we are seeking organizations and groups that are in alignment with our philosophy: some 12 step groups, art classes, and others have been renting our Center. And we now have new posters for offering our Center for the Heart for use by others. Stop by the church office to obtain one.

Perhaps your home is a little too small for a holiday gathering of family and friends. This may well be a perfect place. Call the church office and check availability and make reservations.

This is your facility and as part of our congregation, we need your help in spreading the information about our beautiful asset that we have to share with the community.

Let’s all open our hearts and enjoy the season of love and gratitude.



Fall has always been an exciting time of the year to me. I love the warm days and crisp cool nights. This Fall is especially exciting for me. I am starting to feel some new energy and excitement in our church. As many of you are aware we have been going through some “lean” times financially. In our town meeting on October 2, I presented a report summarizing the profit and loss for this year.

After my report Suzy and Rev. Mary Anne presented some items that the board has been working on to increase “connections” with people outside our current membership. It was very exciting to feel the positive energy in the room grow as everyone discussed the plans.

One of the plans that was discussed in the town meeting was for everyone to have an “elevator speech” prepared for when we are asked about our church. This was very timely advice. Saturday evening, I found myself in a group of people being asked about my church. It was so much easier to present the positive aspects of our church having thought it through beforehand. I believe our church is one of the best kept secrets in town and people are not going to find out about us unless we spread the word ourselves.

I believe we can continue to build on this new wave of excitement. The more people that get involved the more it will build. The board plans cover making connections in several different areas. One area that I think everyone can help in is just to invite people attend a Sunday service. We don’t have to wait for a Friendship Sunday. Invite friends, family, co-workers or neighbors to come visit. As you know, it does not matter where you are in your spiritual journey, everyone is welcome here!

Jeff Woods, Treasurer

P& L Actuals	August 2016	September 2016
Income	\$12,394	\$12,051
Expense	\$19,382	\$15,284

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 Director: Linda Lusk
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Altar Decorations

Colleen Kirkpatrick
 Louise Rose
 Kim Wiley



Community Corner

CHRISTMAS "MAIL CALL" FOR HOMELESS VETS

NOVEMBER 1ST – NOVEMBER 29TH

LET'S FILL THOSE HOLIDAY STOCKINGS!

There is no day more special to a Vet than the day mail arrives! Once again this year we are helping to make it an extra special event. We have purchased 150 Christmas stockings and we ask you to pick up as many as you would like, fill them with travel size shampoo, deodorant, shaving cream, combs, razors and even a little candy. A suggestion shopping list is in each stocking.

Return the filled stockings to church ***on or before Sunday, December 4*** to send to the Denver House Drop In Center in Tulsa.



Touring the Churches of Tulsa!

Saturday, December 10 from 1:00p-3:00p . . . only \$5/person

We will carpool from the church and meet in the parking lot of the First Presbyterian Church for a tour their facility. Then we will move on to the First Christian Church, ending at Holy Family. Each church is uniquely decorated for the holiday festivities. *Kelly Gibson with Tours of Tulsa* will escort and direct us.

On this tour we'll hear about the founding of the downtown churches built between 1914 and 1929 when oil and prayer funded these powerful monuments to religious beliefs that are still vibrant and active today. We'll visit the interior of several churches to see their extraordinary beauty close up and hear about their history. The churches of Tulsa tell the story of its people and their faith, a story that resonates in the past and reverberates for the present and into the future.

After our tour, for those who want, we will head to the Topeca Café in the Mayo Hotel for a warm cup of tea or coffee and a snack.



November Highlights

Time Change—November 6
Fall Back one hour



Sunday, November 6

Sr. Ellie Finlay, speaking

Desmond Tutu
Mentor and Guide

Sr. Ellie Finlay is a solitary nun in the Anglican tradition. She is founder of the St. John Center for Spiritual Formation she now specializes in the theory and practice of meditations.

She worked with Desmond Tutu for three years in South Africa back in the 90s.

Special Music by **Sharla Ember**
Musical Mystic Healer, Singer/Songwriter

Sunday, November 6th

She is also the founder and writer at the Happy Gut and Ember's Paleo Gourmet.

We welcome back Sharla!



Sunday, November 13
Rev. Don Chatfield

Following our theme of spiritual explores, Don will be sharing his message:
The Long and Winding Road
subtitle: I'm not lost, I'm exploring!

Rev. Don, an ordained interfaith minister, has many years of experience as a counselor, speaker, retreat facilitator, and spiritual director.



He and his wife Karen are the Directors of the Osage Forest of Peace.

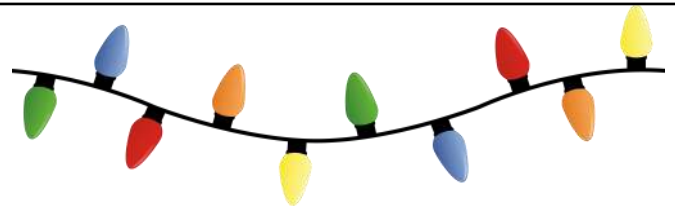
The Great Cookie Bake
Soup Lunch
Sunday, November 20th



Following our service we will gather for a lunch of hearty soup and bread from oklahomans for equality 11:30a—Noon. At Noon the baking will begin! There will be four workstations and four recipes to make. Pick your favorite and be part of the team.

Sign up sheets to bring ingredients will be in the foyer beginning Sunday, October 30.

We are baking cookies for the Dennis Neal Equality Center Dinner on Thanksgiving Day.



Decorate the Church

Saturday November 26
9:00a - Noon

Working together we create a winter wonderland. Big projects and little ones too . . . everyone can help!

Advent Prayer Tree

Sunday Morning Service
November 27

We begin our holiday season with a sacred tradition, the *Prayer Tree*. Instead of tinsel, candy and ornaments we will lovingly place personal prayer requests upon the tree. Experience the light emanating from each!



December Highlights

Special December Services



Remembrance Sunday Sunday, December 4th

Although Christmas is a season of celebration, it is also a time of sorrow as we remember a loved one who is no longer with us on this life plane. Bring a free standing picture of your loved one to place on the altar.



Special Music
Sarah Evans, Oboe

Christmas Day Candlelight Service

Sunday Morning December 25, 10:30am



Join Rev. Mary Anne and Ashlee Elmore for a special Christmas Day service that celebrates the birth of the Christ presence with in us and the quickening of our 12 Powers.

Please Note: There will be NO Christmas Eve Service.

Burning Bowl Service

Saturday, December 31
6:30p—8:00p



A ceremony to release the year past and to embrace and bless the year ahead.



Living the Artistic Life

December 1

11:00a - 1:00p

The first Thursday of every month for 12 months

This class is NOT about "art"

rather it IS about creating your life story.

Utilizing Unity's basic teaching of the law of mind action (thoughts held in mind produce after their kind), and exercises from Julia Cameron's great work, *The Artist Way*, and various other resources, we will explore through writing, readings, and discussion, how we create our lives, and how we give our lives purpose and meaning.

Class is on a love offering basis

Bring a lunch or snack if you would like.



Food Barrel

Our food barrel stands ready to accept donations of dry goods, canned food and non-perishable items.

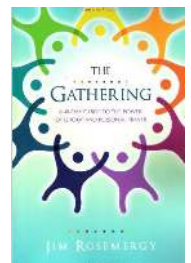
Food donations are sent to the Food Bank.

Wednesday Morning Book Club

November 2 - December 21

9:30a-11:30a

The Gathering by James Rosemergy



Prayer is a challenge for many of us. What should we ask of God? Is anyone listening? Why aren't our prayers being answered? The hard truth is this: God doesn't fulfill needs.

For thousands of years, humanity has brought needs to God with little success, often resulting in disillusionment. Now is the time to try something new: A nine-step prayer practice called The Gathering.

Please purchase the book before class.

Class is on a love offering basis.

John Bowdle is our facilitator.

Calendar

Unity Church of Christianity

November 2016

Sunday Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 Artist Life 11:00 - 1:00pm	4	5
6 Sunday Celebration 10:30 am Potluck	7	8	9 Book Discussion 9:30-11:30am Coloring 6:30-8:00pm	10	11	12
13 Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	14	15	16 Book Discussion 9:30-11:30am Coloring 6:30-8:00pm	17	18	1
20 Cookie Bake Noon—2pm Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	21	22	23 Book Discussion 9:30-11:30am Coloring 6:30-8:00pm	24 Thanksgiving Day	25	26 Decorate the church 9am—Noon
27 Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	28	29	30 Book Discussion 9:30-11:30am Coloring 6:30-8:00pm			

December 2016

Sunday Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Artist Life 11:00 - 1:00pm	2	3
4 Remembrance Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	5	6	7 Book Discussion 9:30-11:30am Coloring 6:30-8:00pm	8	9	10 Downtown Church Tour 1:00p—4:00p
11 Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	12	13	14 Book Discussion 9:30-11:30am Coloring 6:30-8:00pm	15	16	17
18 Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	19	20	21 Coloring 6:30-8:00pm	22	23	24 No Service Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day Sunday Celebration 10:30 am	26	27	28	29	30	31 Burning Bowl Service 6:30—8:00pm



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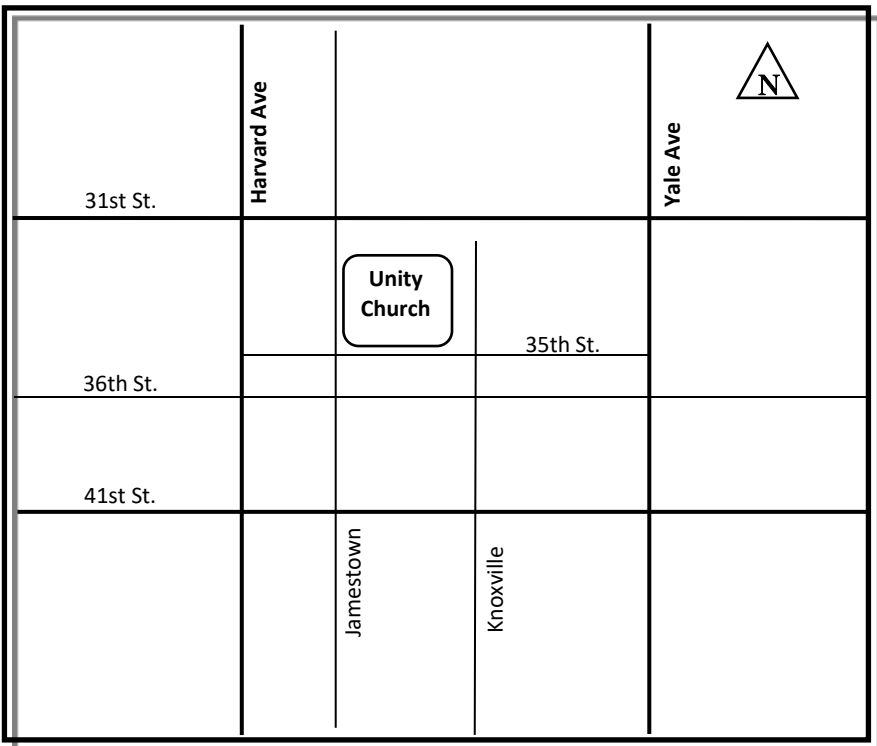
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SUNDAYS
10:30 AM
Worship Service

Reach us online at
tulsaunitymail.com
www.tulsaunity.com

<i>Unity Church of Christianity</i>	Church: 3355 S. Jamestown Ave. - Tulsa, OK. 74135 918-749-8833 E-mail: tulsaunity@gmail.com Website: www.tulsaunity.com Sunday Service 10:30AM
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November Theme: The Explorers

- Nov. 6** - Sr. Ellie Finlay
—Desmond Tutu
- Nov. 13** - Rev. Don Chatfield
- Nov. 20** - Endless Vista
- Nov. 27** - The Haunting Call

December Theme:

Mary Did You Know

- Dec. 4** - Whispered Prayers
- Dec. 11** - Do Not Fear
- Dec. 18** - A Women's Song
- Dec. 25** - In Her Image