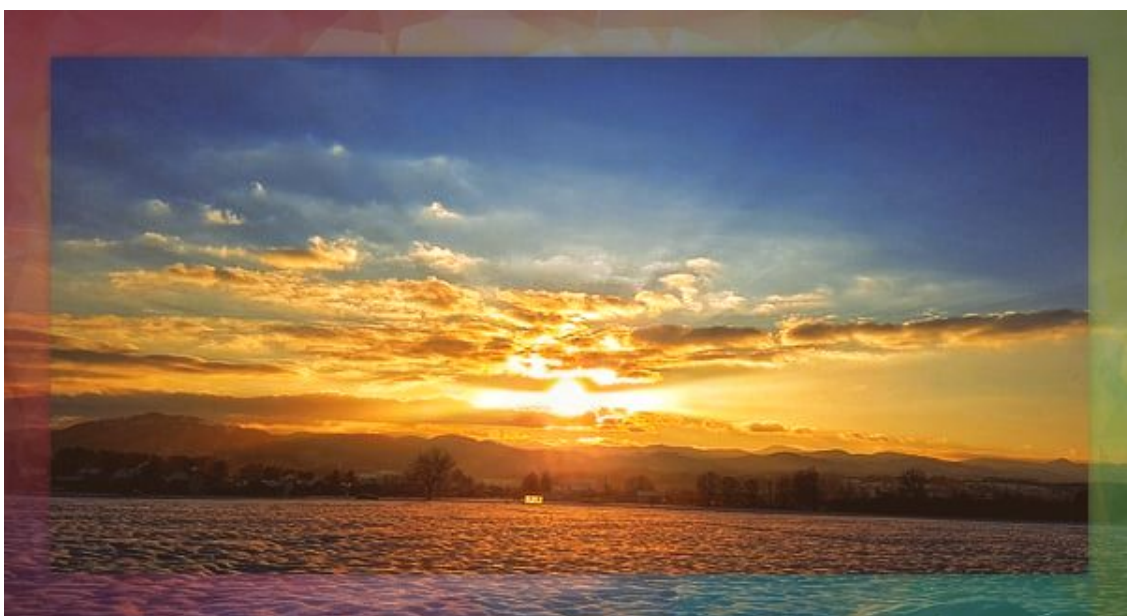


# First Unity Church of St. Louis

2021 Volume III

Issue 1

## Minister's Corner



### NEW BEGINNINGS

Recently, I overheard someone call 2020, “A Year of Good Riddance.” Normally, I enjoy reading those “Year in Review” stories that crop up as the new year approaches. This year, however, they seem too painful to read – over 300,000 lives lost in our country alone, economic peril, social isolation, inequity in our society, social unrest in our streets, and political discord are all part of 2020. Even though we yearn for a new beginning, realistically we understand that the new year will not magically erase the pain and heartache of the old year, nor will it immediately bring the changes we desire. Yet, the ancient, arbitrary calendar change from December 31 to January 1 brings with it renewed hope, courage, and strength.

Unity Co-Founder Charles Fillmore delivered a New Year message in another dark era in United States history, following the stock market crash in 1929. He said, “The joy of the Lord be unto you. You should begin the New Year with great enthusiasm because you know the Truth. Forget the things that are past. Rejoice in the opportunities of the present. Many blessings are yours. Pile up those blessings in your consciousness, and they will multiply and increase until your joy will be full. God bless and keep you always.”

On the morning of December 31, I decided to take Charles Fillmore’s advice, so I created a page in my journal entitled, “Blessings from 2020.” My list included:

- My husband and family
- My church family
- Getting ordained in the midst of a pandemic
- The doctors, nurses, hospital workers, and essential workers who risked their lives for others
- The scientists and researchers who used their intelligence and dedication to keep us safe and create vaccines

This process helped me to see the good in 2020 and look forward to new beginnings. Eric Butterworth wrote, "Every new year is an opportunity to accept the preceding year as a workshop. We don't just "go through" challenges, but we also "grow through" them. I'm talking about a state of awareness of our oneness and that life is lived from within out." Butterworth reminds us that every new year *is* a chance to begin anew – to shift our consciousness and direct our thoughts, feelings, love, and energy toward the realization that *wherever we are, God is. Wherever I am, I AM.* The important thing is to know that God is here, manifesting as the divine activity that's flowing forth through and as each one of us. In this consciousness, we are able to embrace new beginnings and create a greater good for ourselves and the world.

Happy New Year.  
Love & prayers,  
Rev. Jan

## Gratitude for Our Sound Engineer

### ***First Unity Church of St. Louis Newsletter***

Jan/Feb 2021

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Jeremiah Burcher is native to St. Louis, MO. In his youth, Jeremiah attended Normandy High School in North St. Louis County. After high school, he attended Southern Missouri State University. As his passion for music grew, he continued his musical training at the University of Missouri St. Louis.

Jeremiah is an accomplished trombone player who performs with a variety of Salsa bands in the St. Louis area including La Orquesta Son Montuno and Orquesta Chevere. He has been playing with salsa bands for 20 years, and he enjoys pursuing his musical career. Jeremiah also plays with the Route 66 Jazz Orchestra that just happens to have their rehearsals at our very own First Unity Church of St. Louis. The Route 66 Jazz Orchestra keeps him very busy as he has perfected playing three of the four different trombone parts with the orchestra. He is professionally trained to play whichever part is needed by the orchestra at the time.

As though his musical schedule does not keep Jeremiah busy enough, he also works during the week at a music store in St. Louis where his responsibilities include repairing musical instruments.

Jeremiah has become an accomplished sound engineer. When asked how he learned his trade he replied, "through various gigs and jobs through the years." Jeremiah is now is the sound engineer at First Unity Church of St. Louis.

He is very excited to be a part of the big technological changes coming forth at the church. Jeremiah replied, "It is going to be an awesome upgrade, and I am looking forward to helping First Unity get the most out of their investment."

Jeremiah likes spending time in the great outdoors and enjoys working with wood and metal hand tools in his spare time.

Jeremiah and his wife, Jessica, reside in South City in St. Louis and presently are enjoying their time together as a couple. First Unity Church is grateful to have Jeremiah Burcher as our Sound Engineer.

## **A NEW LOOK**

**Minister, Jan Mourning**

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Jeremiah Burcher

## Photographer

Roy Vaisvil

## Newsletter Editor

Patricia Riess  
riess@htc.net

Although 2020 brought many challenges, one amazing blessing was First Unity's Audio-Visual Upgrade being fully funded by generous donations. This represents a goal achieved and a dream come true for our spiritual community. Back in 2018, the Board of Trustees set the intention to improve the capacity of our visual arts and begin livestreaming in order to move beyond our four walls. Livestreaming will expand our spiritual community and further First Unity's mission to enrich lives through prayer, education, and service. People all over the world will be able to watch the Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. as it is happening or later at their convenience.

To implement this project, an Audio-Visual Ministry team was formed, and bids were solicited from several companies. Early in 2019, Elite Enterprises was selected. Elite is a company located in St. Peters with extensive experience with churches. During discussions with Elite and members of First Unity's Board of Trustees, it was determined that our sound system should also be included in their bid. Our sound system is 20+ years old and components are wearing out. It was also decided that we should upgrade our wireless connectivity to the internet throughout our building. With this capability, we would be able to offer simultaneous in-person and online participation for classes and meetings.

In 2020, the Board of Trustees decided to create a Capital Campaign team to fund this project. Donations had already begun through gifts to Rev. Jan's Ordination and other designated donations. Then, in the midst of a pandemic, a generous donor made a contribution to fully fund the project. The internet upgrade has already taken place, and installation of the new equipment will begin soon.

The key elements of our new system are:

- A new data system throughout the building
- Two laser projectors with a zoom lens to be mounted on the balcony
- A large motorized screen, ceiling-mounted, with wall switch controls
- A state-of-the-art streaming system
- A new sound system that includes speakers and acoustic panels to eliminate existing echo issues
- A ceiling-mounted screen for the Community Room
- A ceiling-mounted projector for the Community Room

If funds are adequate, we would also like to upgrade lighting as part of this project.

Rev. Jan, the Board of Trustees, and the Audio-Visual Ministry team want to thank everyone for your generous donations and your amazing prayer support for this project. We are abundantly blessed as we move forward to update our sanctuary, reach out to more people, and help to create a world awakened to infinite possibilities.

## Book Club



Our Book Club meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 2 – 4 pm. During this time we are meeting via the Zoom platform.

Jan 12, 2021 - *"Olive Kitteridge"* - by Elizabeth Strout  
Feb 9, 2021 - *"This Train Is Being Held"* - Ismee Williams  
March 9, 2021 - *"Kiss Carlo"* - Adriana Trigiani  
April 13, 2021 - *"Little Fires Everywhere"* - Celeste Ng

Please contact **Carol** at [cabullock48@yahoo.com](mailto:cabullock48@yahoo.com) for instructions on joining the Zoom meeting and future updates.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Book Club!



**One of our core values for First Unity Church is: WELCOMING**

**We celebrate the Divine Essence of every human being by joyfully inviting all into our spiritual home.**

### **COMMUNITY BEHAVIORS**

- With extended hands and open hearts, we provide a compassionate atmosphere where everyone is fully included
- Our Sunday messages are positive and uplifting, affirming the sacred goodness in each person
- As a welcoming spiritual community, we encourage all to share their spiritual gifts in sacred service

### **INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS**

- Suspending judgments, I receive with goodwill and kindness everyone who enters my spiritual community
- I actively participate in First Unity's social activities in order to build and nurture relationships
- I invite acquaintances, friends, and family members to attend services and social activities at First Unity

### **HOLIDAY SERVICES SCHEDULE**

## Burning Bowl Ceremony

The Burning Bowl Ceremony is a sacred and powerful ritual – a symbolic release to the fire – designed to let go of old wounds, false beliefs, and negative emotions that are blocking the flow of God's good in your life.

Engaging in the burning bowl ritual allows you to consciously clear away the old in order to embrace infinite possibilities in 2021. First Unity's Burning Bowl Ceremony will be available on January 3 at 10:30 a.m. online (unitystl.org). To participate in this from home, you may wish to have a lit candle, a small piece of paper, and a fire-resistant bowl or pot.



Also, you can participate in the Facebook Live Burning Bowl Ceremony on January 13 at Unity Village by emailing your Burning Bowl release.

**Join the Unity Burning Bowl Ceremony  
Streamed on Facebook  
With Rev. Sandra Campbell  
January 13, 2021, at 2 p.m. (CT)**

[Click Here for Burning Bowl](#)



## White Stone Ceremony

January 10, 2021

Following the Burning Bowl ritual, the White Stone Ceremony prepares you to create the vision of what you are called to **be** in the new year. The idea of the White Stone ceremony comes from Revelation 2:17: "Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers (who

overcomes) I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it." Through meditation, you will listen to Spirit within and your new name will be revealed. You will write your new name on a white stone from Jerusalem that will be yours to keep as a reminder of what you have set the intention to be in 2021. White stones are available at the church during office hours. Call Sara at 314 845-8540 and she will arrange a time for you to stop by to pick up a stone. After hours white stones will be available by the front doors.

## NEW YEAR HUMOR

Q: Where do you go to practice math on New Year's Eve?

A: Times Square

Q: What do snowmen like to do on New Year's Eve?

A: Chill out.

Q: What did the little champagne bottle call his father?

A: Pop!

Q: What's a cow's favorite holiday?

A: Moo Year's Eve.

Q: Why should you put your new calendar in the freezer?

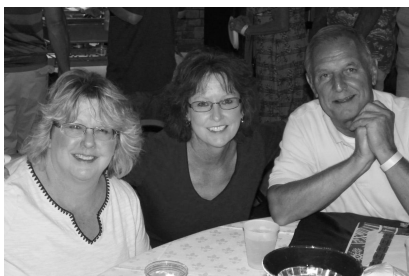
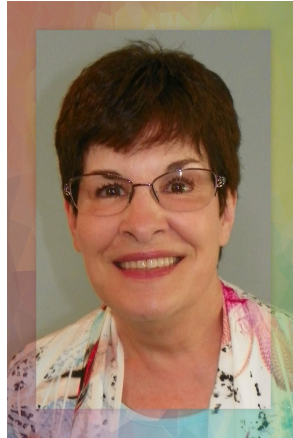
A: To start off the new year in a cool way.

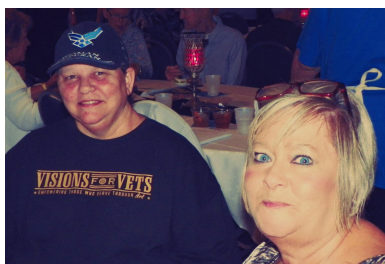


Q: What do you tell someone you didn't see on New Year's Eve?  
A: I haven't seen you for a year!

Q: What happened to the man who shoplifted a calendar on New Year's Eve?  
A: He got 12 months!

Visit our website to donate





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**Website:** [unitystl.org](http://unitystl.org)  
**SilentUnity** prayer support  
 1.800.NOW PRAY (669.7729)  
**uPray** is a free mobile download

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