

First Unity Church of St. Louis

**2023 Volume V
May/June**

Issue 3



Minister's Corner

ABUNDANT AND FREE

Recently, I was waiting to check out in the grocery store when I heard the person in front of me say to the checker, "Everything is going up but my salary!" In our human skins sometimes it's hard to look beyond rising prices to hold a consciousness of abundance. Yet in the months of May and June, as we see the meadows and hillsides come alive with vibrant green, flowers & plants push through the earth to unfurl, and days filled with sunlight and warmth, it's easier to realize that we live in an opulent universe with God as our source. Abundance in many forms is ours to claim.

In the mid-70s, Unity legend Rev. Eric Butterworth did a series entitled Techniques for Abundant Living, noting, "These techniques are not just to read, but to affirm and decree in the face of challenging times. They work if you work them." Adapted from Eric Butterworth, they are:

#1 MEET CHANGE

We've all heard that change is the one real certainty of life. Yet because of our human desire for comfort and security, sometimes we resist change.

Affirm: I do not resist change for I know that I am never alone. Like the lilies of the field, I am divinely guided to greater growth and goodness.

#2 ALLOW FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness (for self and others) has been called the Gateway to the Kingdom of Heaven because it opens the way for Divine Love to flow through us. Lack of forgiveness closes the gate to what we have come here to be.

Affirm: The love of God now fills my heart, sets me free of resentment, and brings me freedom.

#3 PURSUE PROSPERITY

Jesus told us it is God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. God is our never-failing

supply. Divine infinite substance is immediately ready to fill any human need.
Affirm: God is my all-sufficient resource - my instant, constant and abundant supply.

#4 PROMOTE HEALING

Realize that created in the image and likeness of God, we are whole and free. We follow Myrtle Fillmore's practice and bless every cell and organ of our physical bodies.

Affirm: I am an expression of God. I cannot inherit illness.

#5 CREATE PEACE AND TRANQUILITY

How do we manage all our responsibilities without feeling rushed, stressed, and frustrated? We turn within and find the peace the world can neither give nor take away.

Affirm: I am attuned with the Infinite, centered in the peace of Spirit, fresh and renewed, living without stress and turmoil.

#6 BREAK NEGATIVE HABITS

All negative habits are acquired through our personal ego. We can master and overcome any harmful habits as we remember our Divine identity.

Affirm: I am strong, decisive, and confident. I have the power to overcome any habit that is not for my greater good.

#7 EXPRESS LOVE

God IS love, and we are on this earth to be God's love in thought, word, and actions. We allow the unconditional, limitless energy of Divine love to flow through us always.

Affirm: I am a channel for the expression of the infinite love of God.

Eric Butterworth's original message, "*Techniques for Abundant Living*," is available on <https://www.truthunity.net/pubs/eric-butterworth/eric-butterworth-speaks/> and in the book *A Quest for Truth*.

Have a beautiful, abundant spring and the beginning of summer.
Love & prayers,
Rev. Jan

Minister, Jan Mourning

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First Unity Church of St. Louis Newsletter

May/June 2023

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Core Values

We welcome the following new members of the Board of Trustees:



Larry Gibbs:

What is your history with First Unity Church of St. Louis and/or the Greater Unity movement? What brought you to Unity?

Shortly after our first child was born (Claire, June 16, 1996), Cindy and I started talking about finding a church in which we could raise our family. We were born into two different Christian traditions, and we wanted a Church we would both feel comfortable joining. Our house is about two miles from First Unity Church, and Cindy suggested we attend services there a couple of times and make an assessment or move on. Twenty-three years later and we have not moved on; we have moved in.

During the time we have been attending First Unity, Cindy has become a Youth Education Teacher, and Claire has joined her mom as a teacher. Claire and I have played music (violin and flute) at services. I have given a couple of talks in the community room on services for Senior Citizens (Medicare, Medicaid, Medigap, Vets services thru the VA, senior housing), and I regularly deliver donated food to Feed My People. Also, I currently serve on the Community Service Ministry.

What motivated you to “say yes to serving on the First Unity Church of St. Louis Board of Trustees?

I feel very comfortable with the fundamental belief and message of Unity Church: that the Light of Christ is within every member and, in truth, everybody is created by God. We see this light in each other and also let our light shine for others to see. We are here to help/support/love each other and receive love from others.

We are happy that our children have been raised in this positive milieu. An illustration -- during the fall of Claire's first semester at MO State, Springfield, a Christian Bible Church near the University invited the new students to a Sunday pizza party. Claire attended. We visited her at Homecoming and took her out to lunch. She asked us questions about who the devil was, what was sin, and where is hell. She had never heard these religious terms explained during her time in Youth Ed at First Unity. She didn't like what we told her and never went back for more pizza.

Share something about your personal life – family, career, hobbies, and/or interests.

For the past thirty years, I have worked as a Gerontologist in several different jobs helping elderly citizens and disabled adults. I have worked in government at the Div. of Senior Services, HUD housing for Cardinal Ritter Sr. Services, and administrated several nursing homes. My Nursing Home Administrator's license is still current. My doctorate is in not-for-profit agencies, and my master's degree is in Gerontology. I have taught Gerontology at UMSL and Lindenwood Univ. as a member of the adjunct faculty.

Another illustration --when moving into Cindy's house after our honeymoon, I was carrying several boxes. One box was oblong, and Cindy asked what was in that box. Since I was from Chicago, she could have thought it was a Tommy gun. I told her that it was my violin and she asked me to play her a song. I had not touched the violin in over twenty-two years, but I remembered "Jingle Bells." She suggested that I find a teacher and begin playing again. I took her advice, and now I am a member of a 30-piece string orchestra. Our next concert is in May at the St. Louis Main Library downtown.



Julie Goede:

What is your history with First Unity Church of St. Louis and/or the Greater Unity movement? What brought you to Unity?

I have been attending First Unity Church for about ten years, give or take. I was looking for a new church because ugly things were happening at my old church. There was a lot of fighting, arguing, and anonymous criticism about the minister that were being placed in the collection baskets. (I think if you have a problem with someone – you should be honest and tell them about the problem face to face or at least in a personal phone conversation, not in an unsigned note in the collection box.) I

attended a service at First Unity and continued to come because I liked the people, ministers, values, and messages. I can feel love when I walk into the building. I feel like a valued member of the community. I have felt many times that the ministers were teaching about specific problems I was having. First Unity is the first church that I want to go to. I don't come because I feel like I have to come out of duty.

What motivated you to “say yes” to serving on the First Unity Church of St. Louis Board of Trustees?

I treasure what First Unity is, and I want it to continue to grow and be a safe haven for many people. I want people to feel that they are loved, safe, and valued. I want to help First Unity be a vital spiritual group.

Share something about your personal life – family, career, hobbies, and/or interests.

I have been married for 34 years. My husband's name is Wayne. I have one son, James, who is doing very well as a computer programmer. They both continually remind me about how much I don't know.

I love music and have a collection of stringed instruments that I should play more. I sing in two choruses, The St. Louis Metro Singers and The Vocal Project. I lead the community songs on two or three Sundays a month. I love doing this; it is so much fun! I also serve as Co-Chair of the Community Service Ministry.

I enjoy reading, walking in nature, and water activities. I am a level 3 Healing Touch Student. I have found it to be very powerful – although I am not a very good salesman for it. I have also taken Reiki classes. Both are based on healing with divine energy, along with treatments by your doctor for a more holistic approach.

I have previously served on the Board of Directors for the South County Chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) and also the St. Louis Metro Singers.

I am honored to serve as a board member. I will do my best to represent First Unity's best policies and interests.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Goede

**Thank you to our new Board of Trustee members for saying
“yes” to this important sacred service for First Unity.**



Precious threads

Lynn Murphy Mark

I once wrote a piece about the power of belonging. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. used the phrase “Beloved Community”, where everyone belongs and is cared for. In such a place, each soul is beautiful and unique, created by threads from many experiences. I often think of life as a tapestry woven from different sources. I also think it is possible to follow a thread back through time and see many connections that contributed to the pattern, or started a new pattern all together.

This year I will be 74. That’s a lot of thread. At times, the threads have become knotted and made a small imperfection in the markings. I know the knots represent a place where I had to slow down and not be undone by the circumstances. Each knot opens a new color, a new design. Some knots are bigger than others. Some knots must be unraveled so the pattern can continue.

In 1949 my parents were living in India. They had tried several times to have a baby. Then my mother heard about an Indian doctor who had perfected a new technique to deal with certain obstacles to pregnancy. He treated her and the outcome was good. I like to say I was made in India.

So my earliest threads have their origins halfway around the world. I have never been to India yet I feel a little sense of belonging there. I am grateful for the circumstances that led my mother to try an experimental procedure, in a hospital far away from her roots, by a doctor who spent his life helping women give birth.

After nursing school I met the father of my children and I was offered a job at my alma mater hospital in St. Louis. I sometimes wonder what might have happened if I had accepted a job offer in Columbia, Missouri, as a surgical nurse. My patterns would have been woven from very different threads.

I think about the friends who are precious to me. We encounter one another at the right place and at the right time for a friendship to flower. Sometimes I see how my tapestry has come together from the many colored threads that represent each person whom I call a friend. I never know when I meet someone new how or if any relationship will transpire. But there is a certain energy exchanged between people destined to be woven into each other’s life.

I’ve heard it said that there are no coincidences. Albert Einstein used to say that “Coincidence is God’s way of remaining anonymous.” I also love the quote from Deepak Chopra: “The coincidences or little miracles that happen every day of your life are hints that the universe has much bigger plans for you than you ever dreamed of for yourself.” There is a master weaver looking out for each of us. And so it is. Amen.

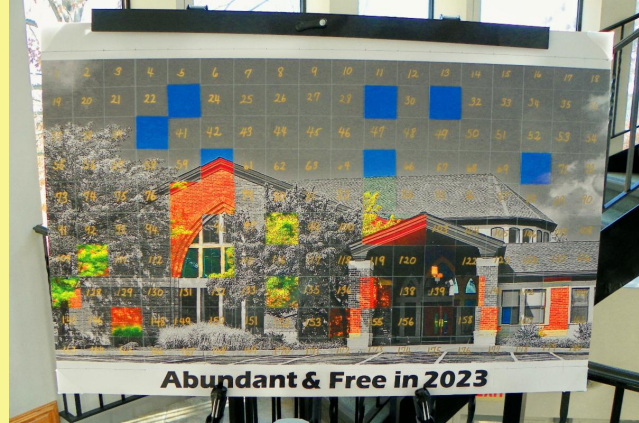
New Initiative: Abundant and Free in 2023!

We have begun a fun fund-raiser to build up our reserves to care for our beautiful church and fulfill our mission to enrich lives through positive prayer, education, and service. Our goal is \$50,000.

In our lobby, we have a large black-and-white photograph of our church. As each person contributes a gift of any amount, he/she matches a numbered color piece with the

corresponding number on the black-and-white photograph. As more and more people continue to give, the color photograph will come to life. At the end of this Initiative, all of the color puzzle pieces will fill the ENTIRE black-and-white photograph, and we will be **Abundant and Free in 2023!**

Come join us in the excitement of completing our Initiative. After donating your gift, take a puzzle piece of your choice, attach it to the black-and-white photograph, and let the fun begin!



Ways to give:

- Cash / Check (made payable to First Unity Church of St. Louis)
- Credit / Debit Card
- Online by clicking this link: [Donate to 2023 Initiative](#)
- By mail: 4753 Butler Hill Road, St. Louis, MO 63128. Please mark your check "2023 Initiative."

As your Board, we are visualizing this Initiative with an unwavering belief in the power of Abundance and Prosperity Consciousness.

Thank you for helping make this Initiative become a reality!

Abundant and Free in 2023 Affirmation:

In the year 2023, we visualize prosperity and abundance for First Unity Church of St. Louis and in our personal lives. We trust God and affirm that our abundance is manifesting now.

First Unity Church of St. Louis, Board of Trustees:

Larry Gibbs, Julie Goede, Betty Jean Kofron, Lynn Mark, Patricia Riess, and Mary Tumminello.

First Unity Church Presents Its Outstanding Music Calendar for May 2023

First Unity's Music Director, Dr. Steve Schenkel, has arranged for a variety of renowned guest musicians, singers, and groups to be with us for Sunday Services during the months of March and April. All are truly welcome here, and we hope you will join us in the sanctuary or online as we seek together to know God, to unfold spiritually, and to understand, love, and align with Spirit's Laws of Being



May 7, Brian Clarke, vocals and guitar. Brian is perhaps the most beloved New Thought musician in St. Louis. He is most recently the recipient of the St. Louis Magazine "A-List" Award as Best Vocalist and Best Musician.

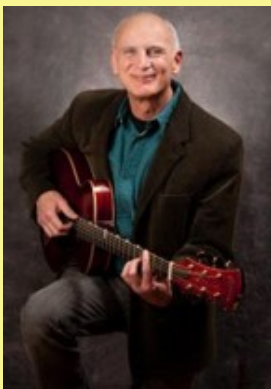
May 14, Michelle DeFabio, jazz violin. Michelle received her violin performance degree from the Illinois Wheaton College Conservatory of Music. Her first CD entitled "A Gift of Hope" raised money to construct an orphanage in Juarez, Mexico. In 2005, Michelle and her husband, Gary, an accomplished pianist, released their first CD entitled "Waiting for You" dedicated to Sophie, their adopted daughter from China.



Michelle completed her Masters in Teaching at Lindenwood University in 2008 and teaches strings in the Parkway School District.



May 21, Joanna Serenko, vocals. Saint Louisan since 2010, Joanna has been exploring her outlets for pursuing her passion from a young age. She has been involved in Jazz U, Sofar Sounds performances, won first place in St. Louis Teen Talent Competition, and in February 2020 she wowed all four judges during the season premiere of NBC's "The Voice." About her experience singing on national television, Joanna says, "This show has given me a whole new confidence. It's taught me that I could make it in the music industry." Her most recent release, "*Best Of Me*", is available on all major streaming services.



May 21, Steve Schenkel, guitar. The guitarist and orchestra manager for the Fox Theater, guitarist for the Muny Opera and the St. Louis Symphony, and a freelance jazz musician.

Steve has a Ph.D. in Music from Washington University and a Master's Degree in Religious Studies from Webster University where he has served as an Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies. Steve now serves as the Music Director for First Unity Church of St. Louis.



May 28, Scott Alberici, clarinet. Scott is one of America's finest clarinet virtuosos. Known for his superbly rich and warm tone, lyrical phrasing, and command of the American songbook, Mr. Alberici has developed a personal style that is instantly recognizable. His rare ability to capture the moment with the subtlety of expression mixed with brilliant and melodic improvisations will keep the listener on the edge of their seat from the drop of the downbeat to the end of the performance.

First Unity Church Presents Its Outstanding Music Calendar for June 2023



June 4, Brian Clarke, vocals and guitar. Brian is perhaps the most beloved New Thought musician in St. Louis. He is most recently the recipient of the St. Louis Magazine "A-List" Award as Best Vocalist and Best Musician.



June 11, Merry Keller, vocals and piano. Merry brings a professional choral background and extensive performing experience to her singing and teaching career.

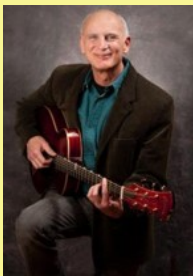
She continued with graduate studies in vocal performance, working with Stella Conway, professor of voice at West Chester. Merry Keller continues her vocal studies with Chris Armistead at Washington University in St. Louis and has collaborated with local pianists Neal Richardson, Ron Bryant, and Martha Shaffer.

Mary Keller has been active in St. Louis' cabaret scene, presenting a holiday show at Gaslight Theater in December 2008. She premiered her original show, *Love in Four Seasons*, at The Sheldon Concert Hall in October 2009. *A Love in Four Seasons* CD has been released that includes twelve numbers from the show. Other solo shows include *Songs of the Silver Screen* at The Sheldon and *Wade In the Water* at The Chapel in St. Louis.



June 18, Kim Fuller, vocals. Kim has been performing for decades in the St. Louis area. She began singing at age 5 in the Angel Choir at church. Over the years she has sung in a variety of music genres. She has been an opening act for the Jazz Crusaders, Randy Lewis, Pieces of a Dream, The Neville Brothers, and countless others. She is a member of The Jazz Story™, a group that promotes Jazz Education to grades K-12.

Kim is also a member of Oikos, a Jazz group that uses jazz as a catalyst to promote the gospel. She frequently performs around the St. Louis area with many talented musicians.



June 18, Steve Schenkel, guitar. Steve is guitarist and orchestra manager for the Fox Theater, guitarist for the Muny Opera and the St. Louis Symphony, and a freelance jazz musician.

Steve has a Ph.D. in Music from Washington University and a Master's Degree in Religious Studies from Webster University where he has served as an Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies. Steve now serves as the Music Director for First Unity Church of St. Louis.



June 25, Carolbeth True, jazz pianist. Carolbeth is well-known in the area as a performer and music educator. She is an adjunct music faculty member at Webster University and also has an extensive private piano studio. Carolbeth performs with Two Times True with her son Dave on drums; the Carolbeth Trio; the Oikos Ensemble; Wind of the Spirit Praise Band, and is an original cast member of The Jazz Story, the first educational program presented by The Sheldon. Her trio enjoyed extended runs at both the Adam's Mark Hotel and Jazz at the Bistro.

What's Happening



First Unity Bookstore

Mother's Day is right around the corner. Feel free to browse in our bookstore anytime before or after our Sunday Service to find a gift for that special someone.

Our Lending Library is also available, with plenty of good books ready to be checked out!



Dean Christopher Concert

Dean Christopher

Back In Town

NEW SHOW

accompanied by his 7 piece band

May 6, 2023

7:00 pm

\$20 per ticket



Concert location:

*First Unity Church of St. Louis
4753 Butler Hill Road
St. Louis, MO 63128*

Advanced tickets available:

**Chuck and Pam Seger at 314.614.2950
or**

First Unity Church of St. Louis at 314.845.8540

See YOU there!



Up To The Minute News



*Thanks to everyone who donated Easter Lillies
In honor and/or memory of loved ones.*

Loyce & HC Turan
~In Memory of: Our Loved Ones

Hope Dodson & Paul Henley

Marjorie LaRico
~In Honor of: Betty Jean Kofron

Claire & Bill Stake

Mary Tumminello & Roy Ems
~In Memory of: John Tumminello & Jackie Ems

Rev. Jan Mourning
~In Memory of: Bob Leonard

Nancy Davis
~In Memory of: Carolyn Branson, Larry Davis, & Jim Davis



Get ready to share your favorite recipes in the
2023 First Unity Cookbook

Ladies and Men's Night Out meets on the third Monday of the month!

Ladies' Night Out



May 15, 2023, at 5:30 pm.

Charlie Gitto's On the Hill
5226 Shaw Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63110

June 19, 2023, at 5:30 pm.

Bill Gianino's Restaurant
4583 Chestnut Park Plaza
Corner of Yaeger and Telegraph
St. Louis, MO 63129

Please contact Mary at jtpres5111@gmail.com for more information.

Men's Night Out

May 15, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

Joey B's
2524 Hampton Avenue
St. Louis, Mo 63139

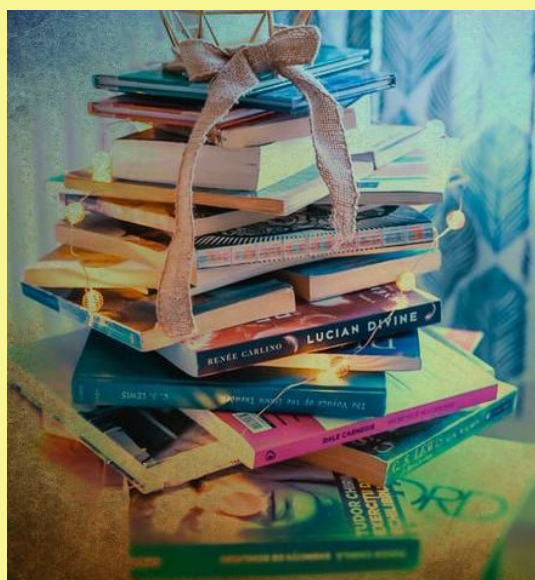
June 19, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

Caruso's South
5591 Oakville Shopping Center
St. Louis, Mo 63129

Please contact Roy at
fisherofbass@gmail.com for more information.



Book Club



Join the First Unity Book Club meeting on the second Tuesday of the month from 2 pm - 4 pm. Everyone is welcome. Looking forward to seeing you there!

For the months of May and June, the book club will be meeting at:

Miss Sheri's Cafeteria
5406 Southfield Center
St. Louis, MO 63123

Future books:

May 9, 2023 - *The Circus Train* - Anita Parika

June 13, 2023 - *Three Faces in the Mirror* - Veronica Mivon

July 11, 2023 - *Christie* - Katherine Marshal

August 8, 2023 - *Redeeming Love* - Francine Rivers

September 12, 2023 - *A Separate Peace* - John Knowles

October 10, 2023 - *Master Slave Husband and Wife* - Ilyon Woo

For further information, please e-mail Carol at cabullock48@yahoo.com



One of our core values for First Unity Church is: SPIRIT-LED

We transcend our human identity and claim our spiritual identity by aligning with and living in awareness of Infinite Spirit.

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORS

- We begin all our gatherings with prayer
- Cultivating communion with the Divine, we teach spiritual principles and practice sacred service
- We consistently provide opportunities to deepen and expand understanding of Unity principles and how to align with them
- Guided by Spirit, we act from our Divine Identity

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS

- I take life's celebrations and challenges into prayer
- I engage in daily spiritual practices that keep me conscious of Spirit
- I choose activities that deepen my relations with the Divine



HUMOR

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: 'Stop! Acts 2:38!

(Acts 2:38 (ESV) says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins.")

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the lady did was yell a scripture to you.'

'Scripture?' replied the burglar. 'She said she had an Ax and Two 38s!'

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter.

Then he put a note under the windshield wiper: "I have circled the block ten times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note:

"I've circled this block for ten years. I'll lose my job if I don't give you a ticket. Lead us not into temptation."

A very gracious lady was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country.

"Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

"Only the Ten Commandments," answered the lady.

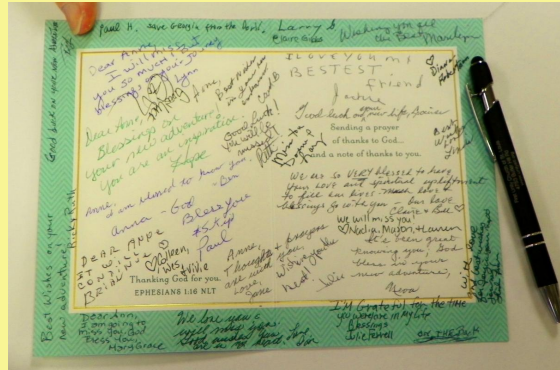
[Visit our website](#)



PHOTOS









Minister: Jan Mourning
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Website: unitystl.org
SilentUnity prayer support
1.800.NOW PRAY (669.7729)
uPray is a [free mobile download](#)