

First Unity Church of St. Louis

2024 Volume VI

Issue 2



Minister's Corner

GIVE IT UP?

Although part of me would be happy living in a warmer climate, I know I would really miss the seasonal changes. They are truly Divine gifts; each season brings its own beauty & inspiration. During spring, as nature awakens from the winter cold and darkness, we witness the miracle of new life. Daffodils poke their heads up through the earth, days lengthen, trees & birds begin their early morning chorus. Spring is the season for renewal, new growth, and new beginnings. Appropriately, this is the time when Christians throughout the world celebrate the season of Lent. The word "Lent" is actually from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten* which means "to lengthen"--referring to the longer days of sunlight.

In traditional Christianity, this is a time of fasting & abstinence. I remember as a child being impressed by what my Catholic and Lutheran classmates were giving up for Lent. It seemed very pious and adultlike except for a few of the boys who said they were giving up homework or cleaning their rooms. One day I came home from school and announced to my parents that I was giving up

Snickers for Lent. My mother looked at me and said, “We’re Methodist. We don’t give up things for Lent.” My father added, “That might be good for your teeth, but I don’t think that would be God’s #1 priority.” That comment stuck with me. In my teens, I wondered if we really need to give up life pleasures to get God’s attention?

In the book *Keep a True Lent*, Unity Co-Founder Charles Fillmore wrote, “Lent is a time for realigning ourselves with the Christ Mind, for developing awareness of God’s love active in our lives. In Unity, we observe this sacred season as a time of preparation -- not by giving up chocolate or other small joys--but by releasing negative, stinkin’ thinkin’ that creates a false sense of separation from God & envelops us in the darkness of misunderstanding our true essence. Lent is a season for spiritual growth.

One of my favorite Unity teachers, Rev. Tom Thorpe wrote, “Life isn’t about denying ourselves the good in the world; it’s about discovering the great Christ potential in you, me, and everyone.” In other words, it’s about *giving up* limiting thoughts about Spirit and ourselves. I’m not sure who created the acronym: LENT = LET’S ELIMINATE NEGATIVE THINKING, but I think it is a much wiser intention than giving up Snickers! We can *give up* thoughts of less than about ourselves, our wholeness, our finances, and our happiness.

As we give up what is blocking our good, we embrace this sacred season with Rev. Martha Creek’s definition of LENT – LET’S ENCOURAGE NEW THINKING. Let’s center our thoughts on the Absolute Goodness of God and all the powers of the Christ. Centering ourselves on the Christ within, we become open and receptive to infinite possibilities of Godness and Goodness in all circumstances. In preparation for Easter Sunday, we follow the Christ light within to rise up into a fuller expression of our own Divine essence. Happy Spring and Happy Easter.
Love & prayers,
Jan

Minister, Jan Mourning

Board of Trustees

Mary Tumminello - President
Betty Jean Kofron - Vice - President
Patricia Riess - Secretary
Lynn Mark - Treasurer
Larry Gibbs - Trustee
Julie Goede -Trustee

Prayer Chaplain Team

Prayer Chaplain Trainer
Mary Tumminello

Prayer Chaplains

Hope Dodson
Lynn Mark

Platform Assistants

Hope Dodson
Lynn Mark
Mary Tumminello

Facebook Admin

Eric Vondruska

Facebook Contributors

Carol Ellerman
Valerie Harris
Patricia Riess

Office Manager

Sara DeWitt

Music Director

Steve Schenkel

Music Soloists

Julie Goede
Chuck Seger

Youth Ministry Team

Glenda Gebhardt
Cindy Gibbs
Claire Gibbs

Sound Engineer

Jeremiah Burcher

First Unity Church of St. Louis Newsletter

March/April 2024

In This Issue:

Minister’s Corner

St. AlphonsusConcert

Music For March

Music For April

Youth Ministry Team

Calling All Crafters

What’s Happening

Easter Lilies
Spring Brunch
Easter Bake Sale
Dinner & Jazz Concert

Bookstore Managers

Betty Jean Kofron
Mary Grace

Photographer

Julie Goede

St. Alphonsus Concert
First Unity Church Annual
Meeting & Luncheon

Webmaster

Carol Ellerman

Newsletter Editor

Patricia Riess
riess@htc.net

Up To The Minute News

Ladies' Night Out
Men's Night Out
Book Club

Core Values**Humor****100th Year Photo Search**

Presenting the St. Alphonsus Choir Concert on Sunday, April 21, 2024



Mark your calendars for a very special event on Sunday, April 21, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. First Unity Church will host one of St. Louis's premier choirs — the St. Alphonsus Choir of St. Alphonsus Liguori "Rock" Catholic Church on North Grand Blvd.



Two members of the choir will be familiar to the First Unity congregation: Danny Dumaine (piano) and Connie Pierce (vocals) performed during our February 11, 2024, service. Danny is the Minister of Music at St. Alphonsus "Rock" Church. Danny also serves as choir director, composer, and pianist. Connie is a member of the Voices of St. Alphonsus, sharing and growing her faith through gospel music.

St. Alphonsus Liguori "Rock" Catholic Church is a historic Black Catholic church founded in 1867. It is associated with the Redemptorist Order.

Suggested minimum \$5.00 Love Offering will be collected at the door.

You won't want to miss this musical opportunity!

For a preview of the St. Alphonsus Choir concert, click the button below for a video!

[Click here to view St Alphonsus "Rock" Choir](#)

First Unity Church Presents Its Outstanding Music Calendar for March 2024

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. Join us in the sanctuary or online as we seek together to know God, unfold spiritually, and to understand, love, and align with Spirit's Laws of Being.

March 3, 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.



March 10, 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.



March 17, 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.



March 24, Mitzi MacDonald, vocals and keyboard.

Mitzi performs at numerous churches, peace events, pubs, coffee houses, outdoor concerts, and special events. She has opened for authors Alan Cohen and Neal Donald Walsh at Westport Playhouse, and has performed at the Sheldon Concert Hall with CD release concerts.



March 31, Karen Fulks, vocals. Singer and actress Karen Fulks is a St. Louis mainstay in the jazz, gospel, and musical theater fields. She was the winner of the Arts For Life "Best Performance" award for her work in the musical "Hairspray."

**First Unity Church Presents Its Outstanding
Music Calendar for April 2024**



April 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.



April 14, Joanna Serenko, vocals. St. 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.



April 21, Connie Pierce and Danny Dumaine. Connie Pierce grew up in Washington, MO, singing in church choirs from the age of 10.

She attended the University of Notre Dame, singing in the Voices of Faith Gospel Choir and performing as a National Anthem soloist for various sporting events. Upon her return to the St. Louis area, she has been a member of the Voices of St. Alphonsus, both sharing and growing her faith through gospel music.

Danny Dumaine is the Minister of Music at St. Alphonsus "Rock" Church in St. Louis. He is a choir director, composer, and pianist.

Danny Dumaine is also the music director of the St. Louis band "Boom," which has entertained audiences around the country for over 30 years.



April 28, Mitzi MacDonald, vocals and keyboard.

Mitzi performs at numerous churches, peace events, pubs, coffee houses, outdoor concerts, and special events. She has opened for authors Alan Cohen and Neal Donald Walsh at Westport Playhouse and has performed at the Sheldon Concert Hall with CD release concerts.

A Big Shout Out to our Youth Ministry Team

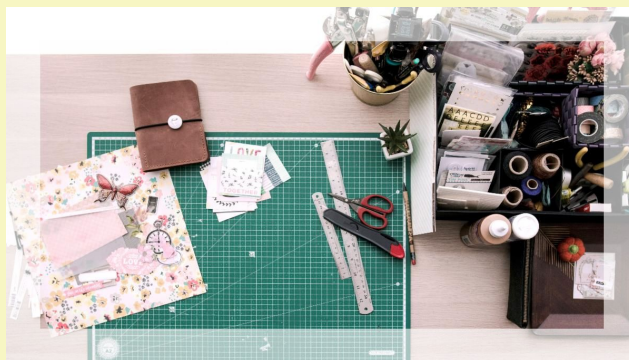
Expressing gratitude and recognition, to First Unity's Youth Educators for all their amazing contributions to our youth. Thank you, Glenda Gebhardt, Claire Gibbs, and Cindy Gibbs.

**We Love you,
We Bless you,**



CALLING ALL CRAFTERS

Do you crochet, knit, sew or quilt? Do you have unfinished projects you need motivation to finish? Do you do paper crafts? Do you want to make blankets to donate to children's groups or to make for yourself? Come join us, a group of like-minded people. We meet the third Thursday of the month from 10:30 to 3:00. Bring a lunch and stay as long as you want. We meet in the Adult Classroom. All are welcome. For more info, contact Jane at jcvond@aol.com



What's Happening



First Unity Church is offering Easter Lilies this year!



The cost is \$10.00 for each lily and can be purchased in honor or memory of a loved one.

The deadline for ordering is March 17, 2024. To place an order, fill out a form available in the lobby, call the church at 314.845.8540, mail a check to First Unity Church of St. Louis, or pay by Paypal at unitystl.org



to a Spring Brunch on March 3, 2024

Bring a recipe from First Unity's Favorite Recipes Cookbook or create one of your own! Don't forget to bring a friend!!!

Everyone is welcome!

Easter Bake Sale

Sunday, March 31, 2024

You can donate your favorite baked goods and shop for others' goodies to take home!

Items are sold on a Love Offering basis.

No need to sign up. Just bring your baked goods to the church on Saturday, March 30, from 10 - 12, or if you prefer, you may deliver your goodies before the Easter service.

For questions please get in touch with Hope:
hope_dodson@yahoo.co.uk, Julie: juliegoede02@gmail.com or Mary: jtpres5111@gmail.com



Dinner and Jazz Concert

Route 66 Jazz Orchestra

Jazz Concert

Friday, April 19, 2024

First Unity Church of St. Louis

4753 Butler Hill Road, St. Louis, MO 63128

Dinner & Jazz

Lasagna, Vegetarian Lasagna, Salad & Dessert

Dinner 6:00 pm until 7:00 pm

Concert starts @ 7:30 pm

Tickets

\$15.00 - Concert Only - At The Door

\$25.00 - Dinner & Concert

For Advanced Tickets for Dinner & Concert Call:

Chuck Seger @ 314.614.2950

First Unity Church @ 314.845.8540

First Unity of St. Louis is proud to host
St. Alphonsus Concert

April 21, 2024
1:30 pm

Suggested minimum \$5.00 Love Offering will be collected at the door.

First Unity Church Annual Meeting and Luncheon

First Unity Church of St. Louis will hold its Annual Meeting on May 5 immediately following the Sunday Service.

After the meeting, a luncheon will be served downstairs, in the Community Room.



Up to the Minute News

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

Ladies' Night Out



March 18, 2024, at 5:30 pm.

Walnut Grill
Sunset Hills Plaza
10797 Watson Road
St. Louis, MO 63127

April 15, 2024, at 5:30 pm.

Bartolino's South
5914 South Lindbergh Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63126

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

Men's Night Out

March 18, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Mike Duffy's Bar & Grill
124 West Jefferson
St. Louis, Mo 63122

April 15, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

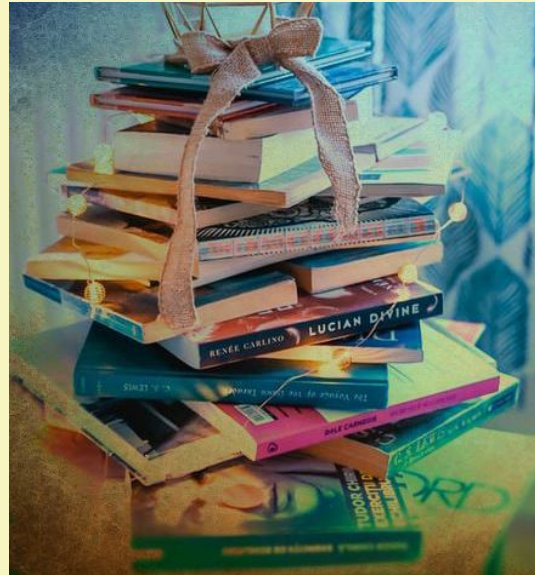
Maggie O'Brien's

Sunset Hills
3828 South Lindbergh
St. Louis, Mo 63127

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 March and April, the book club will be meeting at:

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

Future books:

March 12, 2024 - *The Personal Librarian* - Marie Benedict, Victoria Christopher Murray

April 9, 2024 - *Horse* - Geraldine Brooks

May 14, 2024 - *Amazing Grace Adams* - Fran Littlewood

June 11, 2024 - *The Celebrants* - Steven Rowley

July 9, 2024 - *Five Star Weekend* - Elin Hilderbrand

August 13, 2024 - *The Nickel Boys* - Colson Whitehead

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



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

Spiritual growth is a life-long practice of bringing one's mind into harmony with the Absolute Goodness of God

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORS

- Embracing the wholeness, abundance, and wisdom that we all have within, we open a space to support everyone on his/her individual path toward ever-expanding spiritual growth
- We teach and practice spiritual principles that inspire us to look beyond human conditions and claim our greater good
- As a spiritual community, we make decisions from our inner Christ, contributing to the well-being of one another and the world

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS

- I engage in metaphysical Bible interpretation, seeing my own soul's evolution in the characters, places, and events in the Bible
- To develop increased spiritual understanding, I read and listen to spiritual material, engage in daily prayer and meditation, and attend classes
- As the realization of my Divine identity evolves, I align my thoughts, words, and actions with the Absolute Goodness of God



HUMOR

Q. What's the Easter Bunny's favorite restaurant?

A. IHOP!

Q: What is Easter Bunny's favorite kind of music?

A: Hip-hop, of course!

One Easter, a father was teaching his son to drive when out of nowhere a rabbit jumped on the road. Slamming on the brakes, the son said, "I nearly ruined Easter! I almost ran over the Easter Bunny." His father replied, "It's okay son—you missed it by a hare."

What kind of jewelry does the Easter Bunny wear?

14 Carrot Gold

Five-year-old Brian had a pivotal verse to recite in an Easter program: "*He is not here, he is risen*" (Luke 24:6). Unfortunately, he could not remember what to say, and the director had to quietly remind him of his line. He then confidently grabbed the microphone and triumphantly shouted, "He's not here; He's in prison!"

[Visit our website](#)

Save
100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
the
Date

First Unity Church of St. Louis
09.07.24
St. Louis, MO

Looking for Photos for our 100th Anniversary Celebration!

Do you have photos of people or events from First Unity Church of St. Louis going back through history? We would love to have some to include! If you have regular paper photos, we will gently scan them and return them to you.

We're interested in any kind of photos, but are especially looking for:

Weddings

Special Events prior to 1998

LUT's

Concerts

If you have some to contribute electronically or with regular photos, please contact Hope @ hope_dodson@yahoo.co.uk.

PLEASE SUBMIT PICTURES BY APRIL 30, 2024.

Thank you!

Minister: Jan Mourning

Office: 314.845.8540

Email: firstunity@firstunitychurchstlouis.org

Website: unitystl.org

SilentUnity prayer support

1.800.NOW PRAY (669.7729)

uPray is a [free mobile download](#)