

First Unity Church of St. Louis

2024 Volume VI
May/June

Issue 3



Photo by Andre Hunter

Minister's Corner

KEEP THE JOY

Life is amazing. And then it's awful. And then it's amazing again. And in between the amazing and the awful, it's ordinary and mundane and routine. Breathe in the amazing, hold on through the awful, and relax and exhale during the ordinary. That's just living heartbreaking, soul-healing, amazing, awful, ordinary life. And it's breathtakingly beautiful.

Ir Knost

In our human skins, we can be quick to label all that happens to us as *good* or *bad*, *amazing* or *awful*. We are happy when everything goes our way and disillusioned when it does not! Our level of happiness is directly related to outer conditions. Recently I was leaving for a trip to Nashville for a Unity workshop

and to spend a few days with a good friend. My bags were packed; I was ready to leave. I had prepared my list of instructions for the house-sitter including caring for my cats and maintaining my koi pond. All I had to do was print it and pack the car. I hit print and nothing happened. The error code read PAPER TRAY IS EMPTY, but it was not! I tried to reposition the paper and close the tray several times to no avail. I deleted my printer and reinstalled it, and that didn't work! All the happiness I had been feeling about my trip dissolved into frustration. I had to get this printed!

Finally, after spending over 30 minutes dealing with the printer, I walked away to load the car. During that time, I recalled the life motto of a wise and wonderful friend-- *I LET NO PERSON OR CIRCUMSTANCE TAKE AWAY MY JOY*. I sat down for a moment to breathe, relax, and turn within. Afterwards, I realized I let a minor problem steal my joy, I reflected about how grateful I was to be taking a trip. And the thought came to me that, if necessary, I could text the instructions to the house-sitter. Before I left, I decided to try the printer one more time – and this time, it worked!

This incident was a reminder that I always have a choice about how to respond to life's aggravations. It also led me to thinking about the difference between happiness and joy. Psychologists tells us that happiness is about outer pleasures and therefore is temporary, but joy transcends time and circumstance. As a recent *Daily Word* read, *Joy is a constant, quiet reminder of God's presence*. Although we may experience frustration with changing circumstances, (some more serious than a printer failure), we have faith that we are never alone. The Perfect Eternal Energy we call God is always with us and within us. This helps us turn our pivotal souls away from challenges to the realization that Godness and Goodness are omnipresent. Despite temporary challenges, we see life as amazing and breath-takingly beautiful.

Have an amazingly beautiful May and June.
Love and prayers,
Rev. Jan

Minister, Jan Mourning

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First Unity Church of St. Louis Newsletter

May/June 2024

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100th Year Photo Search**Humor****Photos**

You are invited to First Unity Church of St. Louis Annual Meeting



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.

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

**Patricia Riess, Secretary**

Patricia's desire to serve on the First Unity Board of Trustees spoke to her from the heart, and she didn't think twice. She is seeking her second three-year term with the First Unity Church Board of Trustees. Patricia has spent the majority of her time on the Board fulfilling her passions in photography, graphics, and communication for the church community.

She is currently serving on the Welcoming Ministry and co-chairing the Promotion Ministry. She has also been the

Designer and Editor of First Unity's newsletter for six years and weekly E-Blast since its conception.

Patricia is incorporating her talents by being actively involved with the Media Group, promoting First Unity through Facebook and First Unity's display sign.

She is ready to tackle any of the various projects at First Unity by utilizing her skill sets.

“IF YOU ARE WORKING ON SOMETHING THAT YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE PUSHED. THE VISION PULLS YOU.” — STEVE JOBS

First Unity Church Presents Its Outstanding Music Calendar for May 2024

First Unity's Music Director, Dr. Steve Schenkel, has arranged for various renowned guest musicians, singers, and groups to be with us for Sunday Services during May and June. 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 5, 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 12, 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.



May 19, Tyler Dale, vocals and guitar. Tyler is a graduate of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. His most recent recording, "*Last Goodbye*", is available on all major streaming services.



May 26, Mitzi MacDonald, vocals and piano. Mitzi MacDonald 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.

First Unity Church Presents Its Outstanding Music Calendar for June 2024

June 2, 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 9, 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.



June 16, 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.



June 23, Mitzi MacDonald, vocals and piano. Mitzi MacDonald 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.

June 30, Janet & Lisa Essenpreis, vocals & guitar.

Janet Essenpreis has been singing professionally for over 30 years at churches, concerts, and in musical theater. Janet and her sister, guitarist Lisa Essenpreis are regular guest musicians at Unity of Louisville. Their new CD, *"The Stillness Within"* is available on all major streaming services."



FIRST UNITY SACRED SERVICE MINISTRIES

There is nothing small in the service of God.

Frances de Sales

Prayer Chaplain Ministry – Offers individual prayer support on Sunday mornings, through monthly prayer calls, and in hospital and nursing home visits. Training required and provided.

Prayer Circle Ministry – Offers prayer support via a phone call chain. Prayer requests are held for 30 days and then sent to Silent Unity.

Youth Ministry – “Touches tomorrow” by assisting the Sunday youth program. This requires a background check to ensure our parents' safety and protect our children.

Music Ministry - Integrates the Sunday message into the worship experience through music, song, and instrumental performance.

Welcoming Ministry - Provides the “friendly first impression” of our spiritual community with a strategic welcoming plan. Greeters and ushers are part of this ministry.

Bookstore Ministry – Assists Bookstore Manager in serving in the Bookstore on Sunday mornings.

Community Service Ministry – Identifies and coordinates meaningful community service projects in alignment with First Unity Vision, Mission, and Core Values. Participates in Unity Worldwide Ministries Outreach Program.

Hospitality & Events Ministry - Plans and executes the spiritual community's social activities and fund-raising programs.

Lending Library Ministry – Assists in cataloging, shelving, and maintaining our extensive lending library.

Promotion Ministry - Creates and implements a multi-faceted plan of marketing and advertising to promote First Unity Church as an inclusive, vibrant spiritual community. Coordinates social media and First Unity newsletter.

Main Building & Grounds Ministry - Manages maintenance and repairs of the main building and grounds to ensure the building and property provide a safe, comfortable, aesthetically pleasing environment for the spiritual community.

Green Team Ministry – Creates and executes a plan for implementing environmentally friendly practices in our church, homes, and community.

Sunday Celebration Ministry – Prepares for and sets up weekly Sunday celebrations after church. Also does an abbreviated cleaning afterward and follows guidelines for closing and locking the church.

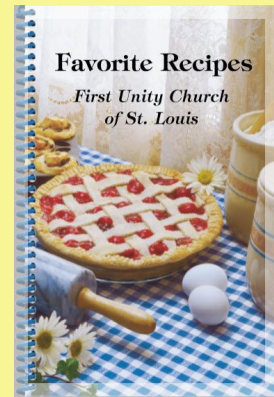
Anyone seeking more information on a particular ministry, please check on the table in the lobby. Sign-up sheets will be available for those who want specific information.

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.

Unity Cookbooks are on sale for \$15.00 a book!!!

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



Join First Unity Church of St. Louis at Purina Farms



Join us on May 18, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. at Purina Farms for a delightful day full of fun activities for all. Bring your children, grandchildren, neighbors, friends, anyone and everyone! Guaranteed to put a smile on your face and laughter in your heart! Sign-up sheets are in the lobby!

See you at the farm!

Daily Schedule:

10:00 AM Cow Milking
10:30 AM Dog Show
11:15 AM & 2:00 PM Magic Shows in Theatre
11:00 AM - 3:30 PM Wagon Rides
11:45 AM Partner Pets Showcase
12:30 PM Farm Friends
1:00 PM Cow Milking
1:30 Dog Show

[Click for Purina Farms information](#)



Up To The Minute News



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

Karen Prechtl

~In Memory of: Jean Prechtl & Danny Prechtl

Hope Dodson & Paul Henley

Marjorie LaRico

~In Honor of: Betty Jean Kofron

Nancy Davis

~In Memory of: Our Family & Friends

Loyce Turan

~In Memory of: Loved Ones

Joan Rose

~In Honor of: Rosemary Stanglein

~In Memory of: Charles Stanglein

Rev. Jan Mourning

~In Memory of: Bob Leonard

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

Ladies' Night Out



May 20, 2024, at 5:30 pm.

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

June 17, 2024, at 5:30 pm.

Billy G's
131 W. Argonne
Kirkwood, MO 63122

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

Men's Night Out

May 20, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Frankie G's Bar & Grill
4565 Chestnut Park Plz.
Oakville, MO 63129

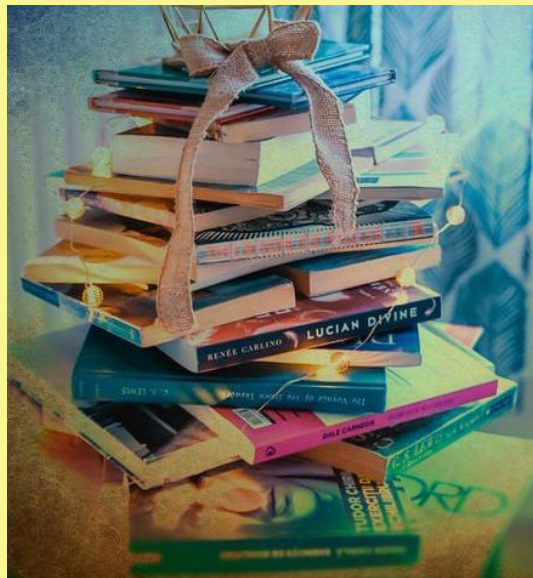
June 17, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Chile's Bar & Grill
1130 Kirkwood Road
Kirkwood, MO 63122

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!

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

Future books:

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

In oneness
of Spirit,
we celebrate
a world
awakened
to infinite
possibilities



We are a vibrant,
inclusive Spiritual
community
enriching lives
through
positive prayer,
education, and service

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

*Save
The
Date*

100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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

LUTs

Concerts

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

PLEASE SUBMIT PICTURES BY June 15, 2024.

Thank you!



HUMOR

After listening to a rather long and tedious sermon, a five-year-old boy asked his father what the preacher did the rest of the week. His father said, "He's very busy taking care of church business, visiting the sick and doing other similar work. He also needs to rest up because giving a sermon isn't easy." The little boy responded, "Well, listening to a sermon isn't easy either."

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "Does anyone know what we mean by sins of omission?" A little girl raised her hand and said, "Aren't those the sins we should have committed, but didn't?"

A little boy asked his dad, "Did you go to Sunday school every week when you were a kid?" His father replied, "I sure did, son." The little boy responded, "I'll bet it won't do me any good either."

A three-year-old was excited to see an altar boy lighting candles during the church service. In the middle of the silent prayer that followed, he stood up and sang, "Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you."

[Visit our website](#)



PHOTOS





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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](#)