

Wings



FIRST UNITY CHURCH – Serving the spiritual needs of the St. Louis community for over eighty-five years.

The Newsletter of
First Unity Church
Of Saint Louis

January 2012

- ❖ *Inspiration*
- ❖ *Information*
- ❖ *Illumination*

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Change

Perhaps we would agree that the keynote of life is change. We see it everywhere present in nature: the tadpole becomes a frog; the larva of the Monarch butterfly becomes an exquisite winged creature.

Change is especially evident in the trees. When the air chills, the leaves change color and shower down, leaving the trees dark and bare. And then, as winter moves into spring, once again the trees come alive, first with a new ghost of green and then bursting forth with a rich collage of foliage. The whole universe is woven with a harmonious ebb and flow.

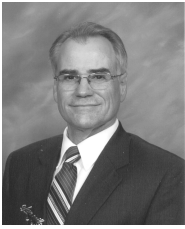
And, just as there is a harmonious ebb and flow in nature, there is also a divine rhythm at work in our individual lives. The patterns of our days are marked by endings and new beginnings. Every one of us is an integral part of the cosmic dance of the universe.

Although we understand intellectually that there are natural transitions at work in the universe, when change comes rapidly in our individual lives, we may question the meaning and purpose in what we are experiencing.



... One of my favorite Bible quotations is from the third chapter of Ecclesiastes: "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven." And there is the natural flow of seasons in our own lives. We experience seasons of activity and growth and seasons of rest and renewal. Life is about growth, unfoldment and change, which give us the incentive to explore new dimensions of living.

... God bless you on your journey.



Rev. Randy Schmelig
Senior Minister

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Jan Mourning
Jo Warren

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New Prayer Chaplains

This month we welcome our new prayer chaplains for 2012 and say "thank you" to Laura Akers who is stepping down after a year of service. Tom



*Praying
with You*

Bullock, Deb Fry, Anne Hartupee, and Jan Mourning are continuing in their service, and Paul and Judie Henley and Duane Cox, are joining the team for the first time this year. They will be available to pray with you on Sundays and will be making prayer calls to anyone who would like to receive them. Our prayer chaplains are a blessing to us all. We are grateful for their loving devotion.

Sunday School



The Sunday School Team would like to say a big "Thank you!" to Jane Voss for her generous gift of ceramic Christmas boxes that Santa gave to each child. Jane's collection was put to a wonderful use, and it is certain that each recipient will cherish the gift for a long time.

On-going Class

Licensed teachers, Jan Mourning and Deb Fry, will resume their 9:15 Sunday morning class, **Your 12 Spiritual Gifts** on January 8th. This has been one of our most popular classes. Please feel welcome to join at any time.

This month the **Ladies' Night Out Group** will be meeting Monday evening, January 16th at 5:30 at The



Olive Garden, 5529 South Lindbergh. For more information call Mary Tumminello – Home: 314-843-1807 Cell: 314-814-4530. All are welcome!



The next meeting of the Book Club will be Tuesday, January 10 at Bread Co. (across from St. Anthony's Hospital) from 2:00 to 4:00. The book being discussed is

The Faith Club by Ranya Idrily, Suzanne Oliver and Pricilla Warner.
February 14: **Broken for You** by Stephanie Kallos
March 13: **Room** by Emma-Donoghue

If you see a book you would like to discuss, please join us for that meeting. No requirement to attend all the meetings. Contact Carol Bullock @ 314-894-2602 or (cell) 314-518-9598 with questions.

Feed My People

"Hand In Hand - The Dream Continues" Hand in Hand, that's all of us, reaching out and helping each other, especially those who can use our help the most. Our hands are God's hands, letting God's love flow through each of us out into the world. The dream continues - the Father's dream for all of us, of peace, happiness, prosperity, loving and being loved - the dream that each of us has for our own children, magnified millions of times greater. Feed My People, with your help, is one instrument of that dream.

www.feed-my-people.org

**Silent Unity
January Affirmations**



Inner Peace: My divine connection brings inner peace.
Guidance: I am safely guided by the light of God.

Healing: The healing presence of Spirit fills every cell of my being.

Prosperity: With thanksgiving, I give generously and receive abundantly.

World Peace: I contribute to a world of peace through the power of my word.



Continuity
By Louise Darcy

There is no need to mark the ending year.

Let old and new into each other flow
With hours of joyous continuity.

What does it matter if a new year comes

Or if at last an old year has to go?
God is the same throughout the changing years;

Eternally His good for man appears.

A time to ponder



“New Year’s Eve is like every other night; there is no pause in the march of the universe, no breathless

moment of silence among created things that the passage of another 12 months may be noted; and yet no man has quite the same thoughts this evening that come with the coming of darkness on other nights.”

-Hamilton Wright Mabie

Less is more

What if we took our lengthy lists of changes we want to make in the new year and narrowed them down — way down? Rather than making a half dozen or more commitments that we’re unlikely to keep, how about zeroing in on a single word that captures the essence of what we want to achieve or become?

North Carolina pastor Mike Ashcraft encouraged church members to each find one word that points to or describes a characteristic or vision they wanted to achieve in the year ahead. The experiment turned into a movement, with ideas and testimonials available at myoneword.org.

What would your one-word resolution be?

Waiting to blossom

A 1979 song called “The Rose” (written by Amanda McBroom and made popular by Bette Midler) encourages listeners to keep the faith, even when the source of our hope isn’t visible.

In the depths of winter, we

especially need the reminder that beneath mounds of snow lie seeds already being prepared to burst forth “with the sun’s love” into springtime flowers.

When you’re in the cold depths of despair, grief, illness or other struggles, remember the deeply buried seed. Beyond your view, God’s love is already tending that seed, readying it to blossom into healing, new friendship, joy and life.

New mercies

Everyone seems to have at least one resolution that seems impossible to keep. And that can become very discouraging.

The prophet Jeremiah, who had his own reasons to feel down, wrote, “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23, NRSV).

God refuses to give up on us. When we lose hope, when we fail and fall short, his mercy never runs out. Tomorrow is full of promise and our Lord’s unceasing love.

Living above the weather

Have you ever boarded an airplane in a snowstorm? The sky is gray with heavy clouds. Snow is coming down hard, with no sign of letting up. Plows clear the runway and unfamiliar machinery de-ices the wings. Passengers might consider it madness to fly in such weather.

But the pilot knows the storm is earthbound. Past the clouds is glorious sunshine. The plane can fly above the weather, if only it can get off the ground.

When troubles overtake us like a storm, we may wonder in the midst of the darkness if God still cares or if he is even there at all.

But if we believe that God, like the sun, is unchanged in good weather and in bad, we can ride it out. For storms are earthbound, but we are not.

-Kari Myers

“Quotable Quotes”

Year’s end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. -Hal Borland

For last year’s words belong to last year’s language
And next year’s words await another voice.
And to make an end is to make a beginning.

-T.S. Eliot,
“Little Gidding”

I love all beginnings, despite their anxiousness and their uncertainty.
-Rainer Maria Rilke

New Year’s Day: Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual. -Mark Twain

We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year’s Day.
-Edith Lovejoy Pierce

A New Year’s resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.
-Author Unknown

Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man. -Benjamin Franklin

Youth is when you’re allowed to stay up late on New Year’s Eve. Middle age is when you’re forced to. -Bill Vaughan



Starters for Truth Seekers

By Lowell H. Turner

Many times the desire for Truth first emerges in our consciousness as a distaste for things as they are now. We ask ourselves, "Isn't there something better?" We begin to feel the urgency of finding a better way to live. So, we climb out of our old states of consciousness and seek something better. We know that we must have a change, and we step out to make a difference in our lives.

We tend to have that moment of Truth when we might even cry a little, and resolve with all our hearts to find reality. We want something in life that we can hold on to. We are willing to be ready to give up the old life-style entirely, if necessary. We recognize and follow that inner leading wherever it may take us.

We first become aware of spiritual hunger with our searching minds. Only then are we ready to go forward and make real progress and think about spiritual matters. Sometimes we are hungry and we don't know it; perhaps we have been very busy working, involved in something, and forgotten to eat. About 4 p.m. on one busy Saturday, I became aware of how empty my stomach felt and realized that I had forgotten to eat. Similarly, we need to recognize the spiritual hunger that has been growing steadily all along, and take steps to achieve satisfaction.

Do not be afraid to turn over many stones to find clues. *Develop the thirst for Truth.* Some people ask, "How do I get this thirst? I want to be a seeker. How do I develop the longing?" Begin!

We need to be unafraid to take any reasonable means in order to rise in consciousness. The only requirement is that we be sincere. After all, if we don't want a better life, then we are wasting our time. On the other hand, if we do want it, any step we take, sincerely seeking the goal of greater understanding of Truth, will surely bring us closer to it.

If what we read or hear doesn't seem to have the teaching we may need just now, or the right words to signal our growth, we will let it go without impatience or resentment if we are sincere in our desire for Truth, and seek the answers we need somewhere else. We may have to look under a thousand stones, though perhaps not necessarily in places, things, isms, or religions. The real research is done inwardly. The faces of all the teachers and writers are really the divine self of us trying to teach us what we need to know.

Truth-seeking is a conscious desire path. Life is desire, but we have to know what to desire-God, the source of all Truth, all good-and we need to behold that Source of all we desire right within us, awaiting our recognition and expression. We begin to use our imagination to visualize God-qualities, to get hold of ideas - such as, peace, love, joy, wholeness, strength, abundance and to think about them. We ask ourselves what they mean, and we begin to formulate some good, strong, vivid concepts as to what these qualities are. We use faith and imagination to discover new depths to these ideas in our thinking and feeling, to get a better picture of ourselves, to know the Truth about our identity.

We begin to recognize these qualities within our own makeup. Since God is indwelling, these God-qualities are our own true nature as well. We may have to wake up to our potential with a little faith, a little imagination, a little positive suggestion; to tell ourselves the Truth, even when we are feeling down and despondent; to tell ourselves we care about life; and to take a positive stand and see what happens. The despondency will fade; it has no power over us. Everyone has his "down" spells, but when we use conscious effort, faith, and imagination to tell ourselves we are "up" in Spirit, wonderful things happen to us and

through us. The power to transform our lives is right within us. It is the only place that this power has ever been or ever will be in our lives within our very own being, even now.

Certain conditions or experiences in life may present themselves as obstacles to successful comprehension and application of Truth principles. But in the final analysis, there is no obstacle that can withstand sincerity, practice, faith, and imagination. For instance, a great challenge in our life can be a tremendous obstacle to Truth study and to the practice of meditation, which is essential to the life of the Truth seeker. A physical illness is certainly a challenge. (Try to get someone to sit down and meditate when he is hurting and see how far you get. The person naturally wants to get rid of the stomachache, or whatever, before he can even think about meditating.) If we have an emotional problem, a problem with prosperity, or a human relation problem, we feel that there is a big, black cloud hanging over us. At such times, it is helpful to approach our Truth study and meditation times with an open mind and heart. We ask that the cloud be cleared away because we are sincere and want to go ahead. The cloud is cleared away if we can completely surrender to the healing nature within us, in this frame of mind: "Let this be removed in its own way. Let this outwork itself freely and naturally." We don't demand, "I must have this out of here I insist on quick action!" Rather, we learn to say, "This must have something to teach me. May I see the lesson here?"

What brings about our challenges in life in the first place? They are lessons meant to teach us. If we only want the problem at hand solved for us, without wanting the higher understanding that we could gain through meeting it peacefully and lovingly, we often

step right into another rut. Then we need to go to God every day, just asking Him to relieve us of some problem or other; we try to use God as we would a pharmacy! But when we truly open up, seeking to learn the lessons life has brought to us, asking God sincerely to make the way clear and right for us, but also sincerely wanting to learn and grow, we receive lasting solutions. If we pray, asking God, "Teach me, show me what I should do and what I shouldn't do, and why." He will tell us; He will show us. We will know it, though He may speak to us in many different ways. Somehow, if we are sincere, we will have our answer. This is the personal approach to problem solving and to unfoldment in the path of meditation and Truth-seeking. We should not be afraid to let God be very personal to us. The personal approach is all part of our search for God-awareness-for God is love.

Another obstacle to meditation and the study of Truth is unruliness of the mind. The question is often asked, "How do we get the mind to cease games with itself?" One way to meet such an obstacle in meditation is to continually center the mind in the spiritual phase of our being, the "I AM." Some persons can do this more readily than others. For many of us, however, the mind must first be calmed before we can take this important step. Some individuals seem naturally very calm; it is perhaps easier for these people to approach meditation and study. But even the ordinarily calm people, if they get in a certain spot in life, may find it very hard to relax the mind. This is why we as Truth seekers must practice meditation regularly to see through these tight places that naturally come in life. First, we learn to relax the mind and body, blessing this personal vehicle of growth and expression, acknowledging this psychophysical make-up as our own "raft" by

which we travel from the unreal to the real. Then we can more easily dwell on God-qualities.

As we keep to the path, we learn to recognize evidences of progress in the spiritual life. At times we may wonder when we are going to begin to make progress. Are we to see a great ball of fire, an image, or a vision of Jesus Christ taking us by the hand and walking beside us? Possibly so! What evidences will come to show us that we are making real, definite progress on the path? Will strange psychic powers come? As sincere Truth seekers, we could not be satisfied with mere psychic development. We want real, positive changes in our outlook, in our realization, in our everyday demonstrations and expressions of Truth on every level of living. We know that we are making headway when we begin to feel a sense of peace and self-awareness emerging through all life. Such evidences of progress are priceless, for they prove to us that we are on the right track.

As we systematically continue on the path of Truth-seeking, sticking to a definite daily regime of study and prayer, keeping mindful of the spiritual ideal as much as possible, we will see evidences of real progress. We find, for instance, that when we do become depressed now and then, we are not "down" for long. The power of God indwelling can take us out of depression and we can transcend the ups and downs of this world.

Way^{S P}
| Truth^R
| Light^L

The Highest Form of Prayer

By Charles Fillmore

You will observe if you study the Scriptures in the light of Spirit, that those wise prophets who bore testimony to God's inspiration always gave thanks. Their thanksgiving may not be couched in just the terms we would use, but there is recognition and gratitude and a devout thanksgiving on the part of the wise one for the good, even before it is received. There was going forth from the heart of the devotee the spirit of thanksgiving for wisdom, for the things of daily need, and, in the case of Jesus, for the ever-present Father of power and support. The highest form of prayer is affirmation of that which is in Being. It is praise of the good. Praise the peace of your own inner self. Rejoice and be glad in the actual possession of that Holy City within, and its gates will swing open to your inner eye, and its peace will pervade your whole consciousness.

Trades people have found that "thank you" has a commercial value, and it is being used universally in the business world. Metaphysicians find that words which express thanks, gratitude, and praise release latent energies of mind and spirit, and their use is usually followed by effects so pronounced that they are quickly identified with the originating words. Let your words of praise and thanksgiving be to Spirit, and the increase will be even greater than it is when addressed to human beings. The resources of Spirit are beyond our highest flights of imagination. You may praise a weak body into strength; a fearful heart into peace and trust; shattered nerves into poise and power; a failing business into prosperity and success; want and insufficiency into supply and support.

If you wish to know about a certain thing and believe in the great, everywhere-present Mind as the source of all knowledge, go into your "secret place," the deep recesses of

your mind, and begin at once to give thanks to God that you *do* know. Praise the Mind of wisdom and understanding-exalt your understanding and the one Presence through your word; and in some way, through a vision or a dream or a flash of spiritual discernment, you will receive the knowledge you are seeking. This law has been used by wise men all down the ages, but few have attempted to explain it. However, it is not hard to understand that mind synchronizes with mind, like the blending of music when a keynote has been struck. When you have considered the matter in the light of Spirit and given thanks for its consumation, you have fulfilled the most potent, yet the most simple of all laws. It is the law of mind action, and it always proves itself.

All the feast days in the old Levitical law-giving thanks to God for the escape from Egypt, for the passing through the Red Sea, and the entering into the Promised Land-had a deep meaning to the Jewish people. It was not the eating and drinking at the feast, but the prayer and supplication and thanksgiving to God that moved them. Through obedience, they came into possession of a law that lies at the very foundation of all true prosperity. Thanksgiving is cumulative. True thanksgiving is the soul's recognition of its relation to God, and there is no limit to its capacity. Jesus, in His parable of the talents, taught that the one who used his talent was commended by his lord, while the one who buried his talent was condemned.

Do you think Jesus advised getting ahead of others by tricky competition or heartless oppression? No. He knew the value of knowledge in lessening the burdens of the oppressed. If we were possessed of larger wisdom, we would have greater possessions.

There is a spirit of finance. There is a spirit of accumulation and an aberration of dissipation also. These are thought atmospheres that work in our minds. Jesus came as the master manipulator of these thought

atmospheres. He told us to get away from the mere material-to rise up into the psychological; to take advantage of mental and spiritual law. Jesus knew that the spiritually wise should be above the materially wise, yet without guile. "Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."

There is a law that, through the action of the mind, increases everything it praises. If you give thanks in the spirit of generosity-seeing abundance for everybody-the law works for you. But you must forgive others their debts. Jesus commended the steward who cut in half the sums owed to the landlord. "Owe no one anything, except to love one another," said Paul. Debt is to be forgiven in the kingdom of God. In their great thanksgiving feasts, the Jews forgave all debts. This is prophetic of that golden age to come, when debt and usury and taxes will be wiped away.

When you deal with spiritual forces, you should drop out of your mind all consideration of the meagerness of your faith. It is the little mustard seed of faith that will remove the mountain of materiality. We must stimulate our minds with ideas of the presence and power of the omnipotent God. Then we will build up within ourselves the dynamic energy of the one life and the one substance until they overflow and increase everything we touch. This is not selfish accumulation of riches, but the demonstration of plenty for the multitudes.

This is a law that has its origin in mind, in ideas. Take into your mind ideas of the mightiness of God. He makes kings, and He unmakes them; He fixes the stars in the heavens; He makes the earth, and He fills it with His creations. Such thoughts will build up your appreciation of God as your resource. Then praise Him and give thanks to Him for all those things that you so greatly desire to be brought into manifestation, and it will be unto you "according to your word."

We who claim to be children of God live in a far too violent world. Terrorism, war, random killing and sins too horrible to describe appear all too frequently in the daily news. As Christians what can we do?

In another dark time, just before the outbreak of World War II, King George VI of England went on the radio to offer a Christmas message of encouragement for his people. As part of his remarks, he read a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins entitled "God Knows."

Here's a portion of the poem:

I said to the man who stood at the gate
of the year,
"Give me a light that I may tread
safely into the unknown."
And he replied, "Go into the darkness
and put your hand into the hand
of God.
That shall be to you better than light
and safer than a known way!"
So I went forth, and finding the Hand
of God, trod gladly into the night.
He led me towards the hills and the
breaking of day in the lone east.

We may not always be able to dispel the threatening darkness, but we can walk through it with God for as long as it lasts. Let us remember these words from the popular hymn:

This is my Father's world.
O let me ne'er forget
that though the wrong seems oft so
strong,
God is the ruler yet.

("This Is My Father's
World" by Maltbie D.
Babcock)

Light in the Darkness

January 2012

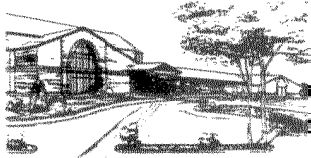
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>1</i></p> <p><i>Burning Bowl Service</i> 10:30 AM</p> <p><i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p>	<p><i>2</i></p>	<p><i>3</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>	<p><i>4</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA</i> 7:00 PM</p> <p><i>Choir</i> – 6:00 <i>Bell Choir</i> – 7:30</p>	<p><i>5</i></p> <p><i>Ukulele Practice</i> 7:00-9:00 PM</p>	<p><i>6</i></p>	<p><i>7</i></p> <p><i>Taking down</i> <i>Christmas Decorations</i> 10:00 AM <i>Pizza following</i></p>
<p><i>8</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p> <p><i>12 Powers Class</i> 9:15 AM</p>	<p><i>9</i></p>	<p><i>10</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>Book Club</i> 2:00 – 4:00 <i>Bread Company</i></p>	<p><i>11</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA</i> 7:00 PM</p> <p><i>Choir</i> – 6:00 <i>Bell Choir</i> – 7:30</p>	<p><i>12</i></p>	<p><i>13</i></p>	<p><i>14</i></p>
<p><i>15</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p> <p><i>12 Powers Class</i> 9:15 AM</p>	<p><i>16</i></p> <p><i>Ladies Night Out</i> 5529 S. Lindbergh 5:30 PM</p>	<p><i>17</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>	<p><i>18</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA</i> 7:00 PM</p> <p><i>Choir</i> – 6:00 <i>Bell Choir</i> – 7:30</p>	<p><i>19</i></p> <p><i>Ukulele Practice</i> 7:00-9:00 PM</p>	<p><i>20</i></p>	<p><i>21</i></p>
<p><i>22</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p> <p><i>12 Powers Class</i> 9:15 AM</p>	<p><i>23</i></p>	<p><i>24</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>	<p><i>25</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA</i> 7:00 PM</p> <p><i>Choir</i> – 6:00 <i>Bell Choir</i> – 7:30</p>	<p><i>26</i></p>	<p><i>27</i></p>	<p><i>28</i></p>
<p><i>29</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p> <p><i>12 Powers Class</i> 9:15 AM</p>	<p><i>30</i></p>	<p><i>31</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>				

Wings

THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITY CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS

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The light side – Saying “Thank You”

Top Ten Things to Say about a Gift You Don't Like

10. Hey! There's a gift!
9. Well, well, well . . .
8. Boy, if I had not recently shot up 4 sizes that would've fit.
7. This is perfect for wearing around the basement.
6. Gosh. I hope this never catches fire! It is fire season though. There are lots of unexplained fires.
5. If the dog buries it, I'll be furious!
4. I love it -- but I fear the jealousy it will inspire.

3. Sadly, tomorrow I enter the Federal Witness Protection Program.

2. To think -- I got this the year I vowed to give all my gifts to charity. And the Number One Thing to say about a Christmas gift you don't like

1. "I really don't deserve this."

Smart Grandma

One Christmas, mom decreed that she was no longer going to remind her children of their thank you note duties. As a result, their grandmother never received acknowledgments of the generous checks she had given.

The next year things were different, however.

"The children came over in person to thank me," the grandparent told a friend triumphantly.

"How wonderful!" the friend exclaimed. "What do you think caused the change in behavior?"

"Oh, that's easy," the grandmother replied. "This year I didn't sign the checks."

Lawyer

"How can I ever thank you?" gushed a woman to Clarence Darrow, after he had solved her legal troubles.

"My dear woman," Darrow replied, "ever since the Phoenicians invented money there has been only one answer to that question."