

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

May 2012

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

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By Ernest C. Wilson

Practicing Prayer

By Genetha K. Merrell

The old maxim, "Practice makes perfect," is as true of prayer as it is of the acquiring of any other skill. For prayer should be considered a skill, to be mastered by study, concentration, and practice.

Only a very foolish person would expect to type fifty words a minute before learning the typewriter keyboard, to solo the first time behind the controls of a plane, or to play a difficult composition after completing a first piano lesson.

In acquiring any physical, mental, or spiritual skill, the first steps are usually slow, painstaking, and tedious. Beginners, floundering about with crossed skis, do not experience the satisfaction they will feel when they can swoop down a sparkling slope with a crisp breeze in their faces. Novice drivers to whom parking is a major problem will enjoy their cars much more when they have mastered the basic skill of operating it.

Actually, the beginner in prayer will find much peace, satisfaction, and release. But here, too, the deepest joys come to those who persevere, to those who attain competence by regular conscientious practice.

If we develop prayer skill in a businesslike way, we will not turn to prayer as a last resort. Neither will we pray only when we are in the mood. Prayer should be our daily, regular appointment with God, and we should not make the most vital relationship of life subject to the whims and moods of the outer person.

We bring spiritual skill to unfoldment just as we develop competence as an organist or as an

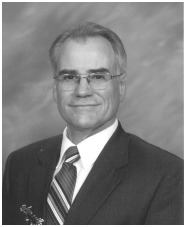
accountant-by setting a regular daily period for practice or study, and by observing it conscientiously. In regular application lies the secret of attainment.

Practice of the presence of God adds a new dimension to our lives. Through daily prayer we shall experience a steady strengthening of the inner person. Often this strengthening comes so quietly and gradually we scarcely realize it is occurring. Only as we look back do we see that we have indeed been learning and growing in a quiet, unspectacular way.

Practice makes perfect, and as we persist in the practice of prayer we shall build a living relationship with the living God.

"Ask ...
SEEK
knock."
Matthew 7:7, NIV





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New Board Members

At our annual meeting on April 29th we elected Marilyn Milonas, Heather Rhodes, and Chuck Seger as new members to our church board. Paul Henley, Mary Tumminello, and John Young stepped down after two consecutive terms of wonderful service. We give thanks for all our out-going board members have done for our church and welcome the contributions our new members will make for our future.



Have you visited our **Face Book Page** or our **Website** lately? You can listen to Rev. Randy's lessons and our music and watch our services on video now!

www.firstunitychurchstlouis.org

This month the **Ladies' Night Out Group** will be meeting Monday evening, May 21st at 5:30 at Rib City, 1090 Old Des Peres (off Manchester & 270). For more information call Mary Tumminello – Home: 314-843-1807 Cell: 314-814-4530. All are welcome!



May 8th: *Journey of Souls, Case Studies of Life between Lives* by Michael Newton, PhD.
Place: Bread Company, across from St. Anthony's Hospital from 2:00 to 4:00.

June 12 -- The Lost Years by Mary Higgins Clark

July 10 -- The Happiness Project by Gretchen Rubin

August 14 -- Enemy Women by Paulette Jiles

Contact: Carol Bullock @ 314-894-2602 or (cell) 314-518-9598

Our Prayer Chaplains are available to pray with you on Sundays and will make prayer calls to anyone who would like to receive them. We are grateful for the loving, caring service of our chaplains, and we bless them in this important work.



Praying with You

Guest Musician:
On Mother's Day, May 13th, we will have the pleasure of guest artist, Alison Harney. She is the second chair violinist with the St. Louis Symphony. Alison and Anne will be playing Schubert's "Ave Maria" for the prelude that day.



Sunday School

Our Sunday school team would like to invite those interested in caring for our Unity children to come down for a visit to see the wonderful things happening every Sunday.

Feed My People is associated with a national group called Ample Harvest which encourages people to donate any excess



produce their garden grows to a local food pantry. They are always thrilled to have fresh fruit and vegetables to give out to their clients and would be glad to receive any extra produce from your home garden.

"Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount."



MEMORIAL DAY

—General Omar Bradley



Silent Unity May Affirmations

Inner Peace: My world is at peace because I am at peace.

Guidance: Guidance is revealed in the stillness of my mind.

Healing: Wholeness is my truth.

Prosperity: I open my heart to the rich blessings of Spirit.

World Peace: Prayerfully, I stand for peace.

Thanks, Mom

Dad came home to find toys all over the living room, dirty dishes stacked in the sink, clothes piled in the laundry room, beds unmade and kids still in their pajamas. The house was a wreck, like nothing he'd seen before.

Worried, Dad rushed upstairs to find Mom reading a book in bed.

"Are you okay?" he asked.
"What happened?"

"You know how you always ask what I do all day?" Mom replied.
"Well, today I decided not to do it."



In – Carnation

The official flower of Mother's Day is the carnation, the favorite flower of the mom of the holiday's founder,

Anna Jarvis. Over time, the custom arose of wearing a white carnation on Mother's Day if your mother has died and a red one if she's living.

In fact, many carnation colors have special meanings. Pink carries the richest Christian symbolism. According to legend, carnations first appeared on earth as Mary wept while watching Jesus carry his cross. Where her tears fell, there appeared pink carnations, symbolizing a mother's undying love.

According to one theory, the English word for carnation comes from *carnis*, Latin for flesh. From the same root comes *incarnation*, God's coming to earth in flesh. Thus, carnations remind us of our loving mothers as well as our loving Savior.

Wherever you go

Graduations bring a commencement, or beginning, of new things.

In 1990, Dr. Seuss published *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* This popular graduation gift tells in Seuss' inimitable style of all life's possible



ups and downs, twists and turns. There will surely be excitement and slumps, fun and loneliness, purpose and confusion. And, yes, fear: "There are some [things], down the road between hither and yon that can scare you so much you won't want to go on."

The sheer determination of the storybook's life-traveler moves him beyond trouble and fear. But God's children don't have to go it alone. Life cannot take us anywhere God hasn't been first. Furthermore, he walks beside us on every winding path and around every corner.

Graduates, and all Christians, can trust in the promise of Joshua 1:9 (NIV): "Be strong and courageous ... for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

How will they know?

A well-known 1960s song by Peter Scholtes answers an implied question: How will others know we're Jesus' disciples? Not by how we understand family values. Not by our politics or theology. Not by how many Bible verses we've memorized, how often we attend church or how much offering we give.

Rather, the song's title and refrain say it all: "They'll know we are Christians by our love." Jesus put it this way: "Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, NIV).

Sometimes love involves words — teaching, proclaiming, bearing witness to God's presence. But if words aren't backed by actions, they soon fall flat. We can, as the song says, "spread the news that God is in our land." But if we don't live like that, no one will believe it.

When we declare God's reality but withhold kindness from neighbors, observers rightly question whether we follow the God whose presence we announce. But "if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us" (1 John 4:12).



"Quotable Quotes"

Prayer lays hold of God's plan and becomes the link between his will and its accomplishment on earth. Amazing things happen, and we are given the privilege of being the channels of the Holy Spirit's prayer.

-Elisabeth Elliot

If you have a mom, there is nowhere you are likely to go where a prayer has not already been."

-Robert Brault

The phrase 'working mother' is redundant.

-Jane Sellman

The heart of a mother is a deep abyss at the bottom of which you will always find forgiveness."

-Honoré de Balzac

Success is getting what you want. Happiness is wanting what you get."

-Dale Carnegie

Thank someone for something. Go out of your way today to acknowledge the generosity of a person you know."

-Alan Epstein

Different shades of life make the painting more beautiful.

-Mike Dolan

Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice.

-W. J. Bryan

Don't wait. Make memories today. Celebrate your life!

-Unknown

Live with no excuses and love with no regrets.

-Montel

Courage does not always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'

-Mary Anne Radmacher

The Emerging Self

By Ernest C. Wilson

About God

How can a man know God?

"I've read scores of books about Him. I can quote long passages verbatim. I have the letter of it, but I don't have the spirit. I don't feel anything about Him," says a student.

Perhaps that word *feel* is the magic word. Feeling is the secret, when we endeavor to experience the deep things of the spiritual nature.

How shall we begin?

You have to begin where you are, and with what is familiar to you. You probably have to begin by thinking, and see where, if anywhere, your thinking leads you.

It is axiomatic that the place to begin anything is at the beginning. In mundane affairs this usually means to begin at the bottom, and to make progress we work up from there. In spiritual efforts we begin at the top; and here, too, we actually begin at the beginning, because God is the beginning. The very first words in the Bible are "In the beginning God ... " But that is not where most of us begin our conscious thinking in trying to find our way out of the confusions that assail us. We usually begin with our troubles.

To begin with thoughts of disease, want, and misery and try to reconcile these with the thought of God is going at things the hard way. It is not an impossible way, for no matter where we are in thought God can reach us, and no matter where we are we can reach God. But there is a better way; and that way is to begin with God. Beginning with Him is like bringing light into darkness. And we might paraphrase St. Augustine's statement, "God is a circle whose center is everywhere

and whose circumference is nowhere," saying instead, "God is a light whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere." Wisely we do not fight or resist the darkness; we bring in the light.

How do you think about God?

When you try to think about Him do you see a big Man sitting on a throne somewhere in the sky, surrounded by the four creatures and twenty-four elders? Or have you tried to comprehend what John meant when he said that "God is [a] spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth"?

Can you think of God in terms of attributes?

Suppose you try the thought, "God is life." That should be the easiest of all; it is free from dogmatic connotations. You see life all about you. Or do you? Do you really see life? Or would it be more accurate to say that you see the *expressions* of life? Animal, vegetable, mineral life. Life on land, life in the sea, life in the air; life that is obvious or animate, life that is not obvious and that we (hesitantly) describe as inanimate. Hesitantly, because even rock seems to have a kind of life of its own. It is a mass of pulsating atoms. Its interior structure is often amazingly beautiful. Seen through the eye of a microscope, its atoms are revealed to be in a state of frenetic but orderly activity. Or if you should be so fortunate as to break open just the right kind of boulder you might find its center to be hollow and lined with incredibly beautiful crystals of amethyst.

The Embodiment of Life

And what of you yourself? Are you not the veritable embodiment of life? You stand by the sea and waves come crashing toward you, dispersing into little

ripples that reach toward your feet. You feel the ocean breeze caressing your face, your body. A gull's cry mingles with the sound of the waves. The winged form traces patterns in the air. The sun's rays beat down upon your upturned face. You feel your oneness with sea and sky and bird and air.

Whence came all these life forms, fluid, airy, solid, colorful, pulsing with a mysterious energy? Some call it a fortuitous conglomeration of atoms. Others call it God. But have you ever read a scientist's calculations of the fantastic chances against even one of these wonders having happened accidentally? (See Morrison's "Man Does Not Stand Alone," or Andrews' "The Symphony of Life".)

Life! How do you explain it? You cannot. But you can feel it, you can respond to it, because you are a part of it. More than this; you are you. *You* are not a body, not even just a mind (either of which, body or mind, is to be regarded with the greatest reverence and awe). *You* are these, but you are more than these. You think, you feel, you move. *You* can activate your body. *You* can say to a hundred, nay, a thousand thoughts, "Go!" and they go, and occasionally a little less readily, "Come!" and they come. For you are more than flesh and bone and sinew, more even than thought and feeling. You are life-in-expression, a part of all the life there is. When you feel this, are you not aware of life? And is there a better name for it than God?

Or try thinking of God as love. What is love like? Have you ever seen it? What points in space does it occupy? How long? How wide? How deep? How much does it weigh? What are its colors? The story is told of a teacher who asked her little pupils to tell her what love

is. They were mute. They squirmed in their places. They shook their heads. "Then tell me what love does," she invited. One youngster came and put her arms around the teacher and kissed her. Another offered to clean the blackboard; a third, to empty the wastebasket.

We adults know that love has myriad forms, many faces. There are many aspects to its expression. It is more essential to our content and well-being than food or shelter or riches. We grow into an awareness of how important to our sense of well-being it is to love and be loved in return-or to love without thought of return-because it is in the nature of our being to love, as a lamp sheds its light because that is the nature of a lamp, or as the sun sheds its rays because that is the nature of the sun.

What makes this so? Did you or anyone in the whole wide world make it so? Does all the love of all the people in the world offer the totality of love? Do men create it, or do they simply respond to it because it is universal, supernal, infinite?

God as Father

Jesus most often spoke of God as Father. In one way this tells us something about Jesus' human father, Joseph. It also affirms something very special about us and our relationship to God. If God is our Father, then something of His nature abides in us, and though we may on occasion be erring sons, we are not rejected. In the very moment that we turn to Him we find that He is already with us-never more than a thought away. And as God is Spirit, we are then, by our divine inheritance, spiritual, and destined to manifest this, our true nature.

Indeed this concept has a very pertinent relationship to the

evolution of what is now known as Unity. The story is told elsewhere, but it merits acknowledgment here at least. Back in the 1880's Myrtle Fillmore, mother of three growing sons, was told by medical authorities that she had contracted tuberculosis (or as it was called in those days, consumption). And in those days the common thought was that this was inherited. She was given just six months to live. In desperation, she turned to the Scriptures. "If," as Jesus said, "God is our Father and it is right there in Jesus' immortal prayer-then we can inherit only good from Him, and our inheritance from Him supersedes any human inheritance," was the gist of her thought.

The impact of this concept on her mind and emotions was emphatic, so much so that she rapidly regained physical strength and health. Neighbors were impressed. They asked for her prayers. "Better than praying for you, I will pray with you," was her response. A prayer group was formed. From this small beginning, a movement of simple Christian faith evolved.

Soon her husband, Charles Fillmore, who was crippled as the result of a childhood injury, became interested. Together they began to share their experience with small gatherings, by letter and the printed word. It was Charles Fillmore who described this ministry as Unity. "The word *Unity* appeared before my mind's eye in letters of gold," he said, describing the experience in some of his later writing.

In contemporary thought there are those who reject the God-idea as being simply the out picturing of man's need for a father-figure, someone who is authoritarian, and upon whom also we can blame our weaknesses and shortcomings.

But why should we feel such a need, why should we feel a sense of weakness or guilt or shortcoming, except that something within us calls us to a higher standard of thought, feeling and-to be very practical-performance? And we may find some comfort in the thought that if we can see our standards as being less than they should be, we have already reached past them in aspiration. What we can conceive, that we also can achieve.

Potentials

The father-concept may seem superficial to the casual thinker, as indicated in the introductory chapter. Viewed from the standpoint of Jesus, it is tremendous. It opens a whole new vista of potentials. It establishes a basic relationship whose possibilities are illimitable.

From this relationship all the other aspects of God evolve. If God is love, then we are "in love." We are in the love of God, and the love of God is in us. We are, by extension, loving.

Consider God as principle.

If God is Principle, then His action is all-pervading, includes us all, "shows no partiality." "God as principle is the absolute good expressed in all creation. When we know God and 'worship him in spirit and in truth' we recognize Him as this great goodness, which is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, ready and willing to guide, to bless, and to uplift." The apparent inequities and injustices of life are often a challenge to faith. We see, at its worst, the barbarity and bias of human laws and execution of justice that moved Dryden to exclaim, "Worth on foot, and rascals in the coach." Even at best, human efforts seem insufficient to make the ideal actual. Certainly we shall not be able to answer all human doubts

and arguments in this paragraph or even in this book, but Peter points the direction in which we should turn our thought when he says, "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality" (or in the more familiar King James version, "God is no respecter of persons"). And Peter no doubt got this conviction from Jesus, who said, according to Matthew, "Till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."

We do not always *see* it so, but then we do not always see the totality of the sequence from cause to effect. Often we see the cause and the effect so far separated by the passage of time as to obscure the precision of the law that Jesus was talking about.

The thought that God is principle, "with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change," may seem to be a very cold and impersonal concept; but by the same token it is our very present help, because it is absolutely dependable. If the laws of being (God) could be influenced by our human urgings, there would be no security. He might be *for* us one day, *against* us another. To know that He is always "for" the perfect action of justice requires only that we accord with what is right and best—that we be amenable, agreeable, to the action of divine law, and we are secure.

The sun shines. "He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust." Men walk by its light. What they do of good or evil invites results that are foreseeable to the man of understanding.

God as Substance

Somewhere in the Christian ethos the notion has evolved

through the years that it is a kind of virtue to be poor, a sin to be prosperous. Emerson comments on this concept in his essay on "Compensation" when he says in part, "Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratification another day?" Timothy, in his first letter to Paul, writes, "As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy."

God promises us riches and honor, but also places a condition of fulfillment on every promise.

There is, so to speak, a "price on everything in life. You take what you want and pay for it," despite the assurance that "the best things in life are free." Free they may be of monetary considerations, but somehow or other we pay for them all, by giving them our time, our efforts, our attention, our appreciation, and perhaps most of all, our understanding. Without these, under grace and perfect law, everything we hold is at risk, but Jesus implied that it was very much a matter of putting first things first when He said, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

To have the matter put straight to us that God withholds from us no good thing, then, may come either as a shock or a relief. For every man must learn that use is the measure of possession. "Use or lose" is the law; but it is in the nature of God to provide us "enough and to spare," withholding nothing.

Charles Fillmore often discussed the nature of God as "substance," a concept seldom stressed outside New Thought. "What men need to know," he writes, "is that money represents a mind substance of unlimited abundance and accessibility; that this mind substance cannot safely be hoarded or selfishly used by anyone; that it is a living magnet attracting good of every kind to those who possess it."

Another writer declares: "Most of the great men of the Bible were either born prosperous, became prosperous or had access to riches whenever the need arose. Among them were Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, Elijah, and Elisha of the Old Testament and Jesus and Paul of the New Testament."

Jesus wore the seamless robe, of such value that soldiers cast lots over who should possess it when it was taken from Him. He told His disciples how to acquire gold with which to pay taxes. He called forth loaves and fishes to appease the hunger of five thousand men on one occasion, four thousand on another, "besides women and children."

He appears to have been able to transmute the "invisible substance" of spiritual energy, as Charles Fillmore describes it, into whatever form answered the need of the moment, without being cumbered by "much possessions."

So we are coming to know something of "the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

May 2012

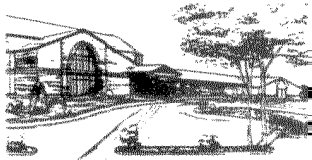
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		<p><i>1</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>	<p><i>2</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA - 7:00 PM</i></p> <p><i>Choir-6:00</i> <i>Bell Choir - 7:30</i></p>	<p><i>3</i></p> <p><i>Ukulele Practice</i> 7:00 - 9:00</p>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<p><i>6</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p>	<i>7</i>	<p><i>8</i></p> <p><i>Tau Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>Book Club</i> 2:00 - 4:00 <i>St. Louis Bread Cc.</i> (Across from St. Anthony's Hospital)</p>	<p><i>9</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA - 7:00 PM</i></p> <p><i>Choir-6:00</i> <i>Bell Choir - 7:30</i></p>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>
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<p><i>20</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p>	<p><i>21</i></p> <p><i>Ladies Night Out</i> <i>Rib City</i> <i>1090 Old Des Peres</i></p>	<p><i>22</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>	<p><i>23</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA - 7:00 PM</i></p> <p><i>Choir-6:00</i> <i>Bell Choir - 7:30</i></p>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>
<p><i>27</i></p> <p><i>Sunday Service</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM</p>	<i>28</i>	<p><i>29</i></p> <p><i>Tai Chi</i> 10:00 AM</p>	<p><i>30</i></p> <p><i>AA Men's Group</i> 10:00 AM</p> <p><i>CA - 7:00 PM</i></p> <p><i>Choir-6:00</i> <i>Bell Choir - 7:30</i></p>	<i>31</i>		

Wings

THE MAY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITY CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS

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The light side — A little holy humor

A MOTHER'S DICTIONARY

Bottle feeding: An opportunity for Daddy to get up at 2 am too.

Drooling: How teething babies wash their chins.

Dumbwaiter: One who asks if the kids would care to order dessert.

Feedback: The inevitable result when the baby doesn't appreciate the strained carrots.

Grandparents: The people who think your children are wonderful even though they're sure you're not raising them right.

Hearsay: What toddlers do when anyone mutters a dirty word.

Independent: How we want our children to be as long as they do everything we say.

Look out: What it's too late for your child to do by the time you scream it.

Prenatal: When your life was still somewhat your own.

Prepared childbirth: A contradiction in terms.

Puddle: A small body of water that draws other small bodies wearing dry shoes into it.

Show off: A child who is more talented than yours.

Sterilize: What you do to your first baby's pacifier by boiling it and to your last baby's pacifier by blowing on it.

Storeroom: The distance required between the supermarket aisles so that children in shopping carts can't quite reach anything.

Top bunk: Where you should never put a child wearing Superman jammies.

Two-minute warning: When the baby's face turns red and she begins to make those familiar grunting noises.

Verbal: Able to whine in words

Whodunit: None of the kids that live in your house.