



EarthCare Connections

unity[®]
Worldwide Ministries
EarthCare

Fostering awareness of our spiritual oneness with the earth and promoting active care of creation.

2019 Peoples Conference Goes Green!

Unity Worldwide Ministries is putting its commitment to the environment into action by instituting the following actions at the [Unity People's Convention](#), June 17-21, 2019, in Overland Park, Kansas:

1. Using bags from previous conventions rather than throwing them out.
2. Giving a bottle of just water. It is in a paper-based bottle/box and the cap is plant based. All parts are recyclable and the bottle can be refilled multiple times.
3. Putting evaluation forms online rather than printing so we are cutting down on paper.
4. Using envelopes that have the original logo for UWM that were found in our old building instead of throwing them away.
5. We are using the hotel sign system instead of printing big signs for each workshop.

In addition:

1. The hotel has agreed to not give plastic straws in the restaurant unless specifically asked.
2. The hotel is providing a recycling box in our offices to recycle paper.

One step at a time, Unity Worldwide Ministries is raising human consciousness!

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Why Don't More Young People Attend Unity?

In the past few years, a number of Unity spiritual centers have closed and many more are experiencing a decline in attendance. But it's not just Unity. Church attendance is down nationwide, and indeed throughout the western world. So why is this? Studies have shown that religion simply isn't very important to many Millennials (born 1980s to mid-1990s) and members of Generation Z (born mid-1990s to early 2000s) anymore. It's not that younger people hate religion but rather that they feel left behind by religious institutions. Catholic and mainline Protestant religions are too rigid for this mindset, and they are especially turned off by dogma. However, a survey by Vice Marketing and the Insight Strategy Group revealed that about 80 percent of millennials still believe in God or a universal spirit and are hungry for meaningful connection.¹

These days, many young people want to be a part of something larger. This can take many forms to create the beliefs and practices that make the most sense for their unique personalities and lifestyles. This may range from walking yoga, meditation, and Outward-Bound experiences in nature. Many also care for the larger world and want to tackle the big issues such as the environment and social justice.²

According to Tom Punch, chief creative and commercial officer for the youth-centric media company Virtue, “We now think religious brands should think more broadly about what their role is in society and how they can truly be a force for good in people’s lives.”³

In a culture where many are hungry for connection there seems to be a lot of room to find ways to connect with young people on a spiritual level. With this in mind, I believe that Unity’s non-dogmatic, inclusive, and positive approach to life that seeks the good in all people and events should resonate with what Millennial and Gen Z generations are looking for these days. So why aren’t more attending Unity? Something clearly is missing. Is it possible that becoming more involved in social and environmental issues is part of the key to nurturing the soul and well-being of a broader range of people? Could an active environmental program through EarthCare be part of the solution? I believe so. Please visit our website at www.UnityWorldwideMinistries.org/earthcare, or contact us, to learn more about the tools and resources we offer and how we may be of help.

Sources:

1. [Millennials Haven’t Forgotten Spirituality, They’re Just Looking for New Venues](#). PBS News Hour interview. Judy Woodruff interview with Asper Ter Kuile, Harvard University.
2. [Why Millennials Are Leaving Religion But Embracing Spirituality](#), December 14, 2015, by Caroline Newman.
3. [Want to Win Over Millennials and Gen Z? Vice’s New Study Says Brands Should Get Spiritual](#).

Sacred Activism Workshop

The EarthCare Team will present a workshop entitled, “Sacred Activism” at this year’s Unity People’s Convention in Overland Park, Kansas, June 17-21. The workshop will blend spirituality with passion for social change. It offers a pathway for engaging on pressing environmental and social justice issues in a way that is aligned with Unity’s core principles and that rises above the political fray and conflict. Major topics will include:

- The Challenging Media and Political Climate
- What Is Sacred Activism?
- Grounding in Gratitude, Seeing with New Eyes/Choosing Our Story
- What Is Possible Now?
- Taking Action
- Mindful Eating as Example of an Action

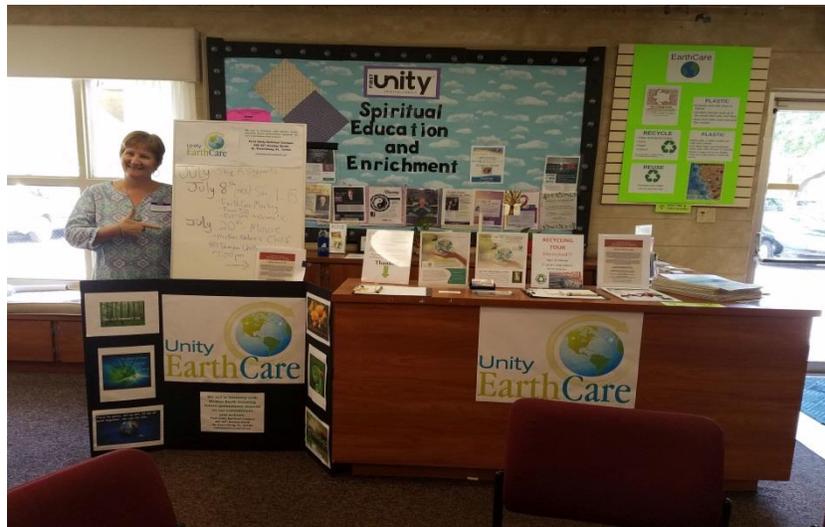
In addition, there will be an EarthCare table. Along with many useful resources to help start or improve your environmental program, there will be a “Tree of Life,” on which blue ribbons can

be placed on a “Care for the Earth” sheet upon which there are numerous signatures from people all across America.

2019 Green Star Awardees

The following congregations are recipients of this year’s Green Star Award for activities completed in 2018:

- First Unity Spiritual Campus, St. Petersburg, FL, Rev. Temple Hayes
- Unity of Wichita, KS
- Unity Church of Overland Park, KS, Rev. David Mosher
- Unity of Kalamazoo, MI, Rev. Joslyn Mason
- Unity of the Blue Ridge, Mills Creek, NC, Rev. Darlene Strickland
- Unity Renaissance of Chesapeake, VA, Rev. Paula Mekdeci
- Unity of Fairfax, Oakton, VA, Rev. Russell Heiland, Jr.



This year’s awardees completed some truly outstanding activities. Although there are too many to list here, the First Unity Spiritual Campus, St. Petersburg, FL, display booth regarding their Spiritual Education and Enrichment campaign, is a prime example.

New Certified EarthCare Congregations

Since the 2018 People’s convention, four congregations have embraced the Vision of EarthCare: *All humanity lives in a spiritual consciousness that manifests as loving co-existence with all creation and care for our Earth home.* They are:

Unity of Palm Harbor, FL
 Friends of Unity, Plymouth, MI
 Unity of Traverse City, MI
 Unity of New Braunfels, TX

Level A
 Level A
 Level C
 Level C

Rev. Bob Fortner
 Rev. Kathy Harwood Long
 Rev. Eileen Stulak
 Rev. Gary Canier

In addition, we are extremely pleased to announce that **Unity Worldwide Ministries, Donna Johnson, President/CEO**, has embarked on the Path to EarthCare by completing Level A of the program. It also is pursuing certification at Level B.

EarthCare welcomes and honors Unity Worldwide Ministries and all of these congregations for their commitment to the vision of EarthCare!

If you would like to become an EarthCare Certified Congregation, please visit our website at www.UnityWorldwideMinistries.org/earthcare, or write info@unity.org.

Climate Change Resolution

The Unity Worldwide Ministries Board of Trustees adopted the following statement, which will be submitted to the bi-partisan Citizens Climate Change Committee in support of HR Bill 763 introduced in Congress last January. The bill is a bipartisan effort that is actually further along than the Green New Deal, but would help that plan should it ever be implemented—and would actually help build momentum for that movement.

UWM acknowledges that climate change is real and that human activity is a significant cause of climate change. We hereby affirm our power to restore balance to the planet and all life forms and engage this power through our conscious and compassionate choices.

Is Global Warming Caused by Human Activity or Part of a Natural Cycle?

Recently, some friends and I had a lively debate regarding this topic. It is one that has been raging for years now. While space doesn't allow a full discussion, the short answer is that both sides are right, depending on the time scale chosen.

Geological records stretching back millions of years indicate a number of large variations in Earth's climate. This shifting is correlated strongly with Milankovitch¹ cycles as well as volcanoes, comet/asteroid impacts, and interstellar magnetic energy. The sun also is a primary source of Earth's heat, so relatively small changes in solar output can affect our climate.

However, satellite observations since the late 1970s have shown a slight decrease in the sun's total energy output. So we should be in a natural cooling cycle. Instead, the Earth has warmed over this period.² What is going on?

For starters, the scientific community is unanimous that carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is the primary cause of long-term changes in surface level temperatures. It also is agreed that 350 parts per million is the tipping point at which the earth can maintain climate stability. Finally, fossils and ice core samples have shown that in a natural cycle CO₂ lags behind the warming.³ However, since the beginning of the Industrial Age in 1750, CO₂ increases have been leading a warming in world temperature. 2017 marked the first time in several million years that atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ passed 400 parts per million.³ Finally, the CO₂ has the isotope signature of manmade chemicals.⁴

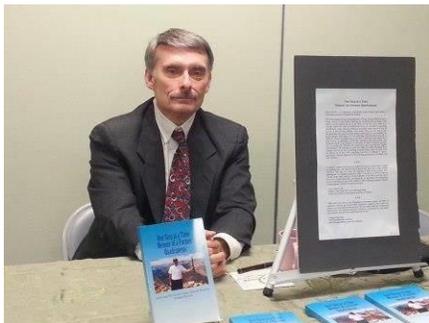
The results are in and the data clearly indicates that global warming is caused by humans. Ninety percent of scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) agree with this conclusion.² Isn't it time to put this argument behind us and concentrate on what to do about it? We're running out of time!

- ¹ Wikipedia, Milankovitch, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milankovitch_cycles
- ² Committee on Climate Change, “A Natural Cycle:” <https://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/the-science-of-climate-change/climate-variations-natural-and-human-factors/a-natural-climate-cycle/http://ossfoundation.us/projects/environment/global-warming>
- ³ <https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-the-world-passed-a-carbon-threshold-400ppm-and-why-it-matters>
- ⁴ How do we know that recent CO₂ increases are due to human activities?
<http://www.realclimate.org/index.php/archives/2004/12/how-do-we-know-that-recent-cosub2sub-increases-are-due-to-human-activities-updated/>.

Mentoring Calls

National: Facilitated by David Cordova on the second Saturday of each month, at 11 a.m. (CT). For more information, please contact David at davecordova@msn.com, or by calling 210-825-8422.

Mindful Eating: Facilitated by Rev. Grace on the third Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. (CT). The call-in number is 641-715-3680, and the access code is 1043504#.



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