



EarthCare Connections



unity[®]
Worldwide Ministries
EarthCare

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

www.unityworldwideministries.org/earthcare
earthcare@unity.org

Evolving Ministries

The pandemic has affected all of our lives in many ways. It also has prevented many Unity congregations from coming together in worship. For some, this is a temporary situation to prevent the creation of super-spreader events. But for others it is a permanent decision not to have a "pulpit" ministry or possibly even a congregation. These were formally called virtual or alternative ministries but now fall under the general heading of Evolving Ministries.

Through its Member Services Division (<https://www.unityworldwideministries.org/evolving-ministry>), Unity Worldwide Ministries is supporting Evolving Ministries. Carrie Kenyon is the Member Services Coordinator, and can be reached at CKenyon@unity.org or 816.434.6846.

But what can EarthCare do to support this growing movement? Actually, there are several ways already in place. First of all, participation in and certification through the EarthCare program is available to all churches, including evolving ministries. We realize that not every action in the program may be appropriate for a ministry and welcome the opportunity to discuss alternatives to any of the actions in the program. Secondly, we offer monthly mentoring calls facilitated monthly by David Cordova (davecordova@msn.com). This is a great opportunity to get ideas from our experienced core team members, learn what other congregations and simply brainstorm. Finally, there are detailed descriptions & examples in "EarthCare Steps and Actions, Suggestions and Opportunities" on the EarthCare website (www.unityworldwideministries.org/earthcare), many of which are applicable to evolving ministries.

The EarthCare Team is also in the process of developing more ways to support Evolving Ministries. If you have any ideas or suggestions in this regard, please send them to Mike McCord at (earthcare@unity.org).

In the meantime, here are a few things to consider:

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 - Unity of Olympia, WA
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- Start a Zoom environmental book club.
- Invite congregants to watch eco-documentaries on Discovery or Netflix, then have a zoom meeting to discuss.
- Get involved in the national or state chapter of Interfaith Power & Light (<https://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/>) or the Sunrise Movement (<https://www.sunrisemovement.org/?ms=SunriseMovement>).
- Have a monthly outdoors nature activity.
- Start a community garden.

Active Hope Workshop

Last October, EarthCare sponsored an interactive Zoom workshop called “Active Hope,” presented by our own Beth Remmes. Based on “The Work That Reconnects,” 25 participants summoned their collective regenerative power in a breakout room format to explore ways to express their gratitude and challenges and opportunities during this crucial time on planet earth. Through this, they moved into a deeper understanding of how we can work towards a more sustainable, just, and peaceful world where all beings can thrive.

Here are some of the resources from the workshop that you may find useful:

<https://workthatreconnects.org/> - This is the framework that we teach from and has a number of great resources

<https://www.joannamacy.net> - Root teacher of the Work That Reconnects

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/> - A fantastic publication dedicated to solutions for creating a life-sustaining society!

In addition, here are some links to learn more about our amazing Beth Remmes:

<https://earthspiritaction.com/inspiration> - The inspiration page links up to Pinterest and includes many helpful guides and websites. If you view it on your mobile phone you can scroll down the list.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1740357066285112/> - Private Facebook group for people who have taken this workshop, so that you can connect, share resources, and inspire each other. I will also send you an invite.

<https://www.facebook.com/earthspiritaction/> - Public Facebook Page

Newly Certified Congregations

Three congregations have been certified EarthCare Congregations since our last newsletter. They are:

- Unity of Bandon by the Sea, Oregon, Reverend Robin Haruna, Level A
- Unity of Olympia, Washington, Reverend Terry Murray, Level C
- Unity of Joplin, Missouri, Reverend Gordon Keyler, Level C

Unity of Bandon adopted their EarthCare Covenant on February 23, 2020, in which the congregation declared a covenant with God to walk upon the Earth for the greatest good of all creation. We hope they continue on the Path to EarthCare.

In completing the seven-step Path to EarthCare, Unity of Olympia has accomplished a number of environmental activities many of which center around their renovation of their building and the 3.79 acres of land which they landscaped and made environmentally friendly. Another popular program is “First Friday,” in which an artist and an environmentalist are invited to speak before the congregation. The artist shares his or her art with the congregation while the speaker’s talk focuses on natural resources such as water and forest habitats, green energy of the future, global warming, and the Puget Sound. The program has been in effect for two and a half years.

Unity of Joplin also completed the Path to EarthCare and in the process developed a well-rounded and established environmental program that touches the lives of all their congregants. One of their innovative programs is to get people to use less paper and read the e-letter. Their CareBear icon is hidden somewhere in the letter and everyone who finds it is entered into a drawing for a prize of some kind of sustainable product. Pretty nifty, huh!

CONGRATULATIONS to Unity of Bandon by the Sea, Unity of Olympia and Unity of Joplin for their commitment to foster awareness of our spiritual oneness with the Earth and promote active care of all creation!

Mentoring Calls

Facilitated by David Cordova, Unity Church of San Antonio, 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.

Telephone Dial in number for **AUDIO ONLY:**

(571) 392-7650

Pin: 779 087 6107

Unless you have a high bandwidth internet connection it is better to call in using the above audio dial in. Of course it is a joy to see each other's faces in real time. I usually record the calls which include video.

For Audio using a computer microphone and Video (optional)

Cut and paste this link into Google Chrome URL (top line):

<https://us.bbcollab.com/guest/d72429ecf4714e00988087381f84d51f>

We have an EarthCare resource web page located at <https://www.unityworldwideministries.org/earthcare>



Facebook

Please check out our Facebook page for timely information and comments by fellow “Unitics” regarding our environment! This includes new information that will eventually be put on a renovated EarthCare website. Please go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/UnityEarthCare>

The page is maintained by UET member Beth Remmes of Unity Atlanta Church.



Tis the Season of Healing

In a recent issue of "The Path," I wrote, as we enter this next chapter of America, let us remember that we all are one and share a sacred bond with all of creation. The trees we see and touch may not talk to us in an audible voice, but we learn from them about the importance of being flexible and yielding to winds of change. Let's join as one, open our hearts and connect ourselves to the journey ahead.

Since then, the country has elected a new president. By so doing, we have been given a fresh opportunity to work together to address the many crises that face our country: from the pandemic, to the economy, to social injustice but to name a few. However, an even bigger threat to America is the bitter division that exists between nearly half the populous. It threatens to tear the country apart.

In 2020, the horrors of systemic racism and social injustice were graphically brought home by the murder of George Floyd. In addition, the reality of global warming went from simply being a topic of discussion to reality as average global temperature was one of the three highest on record, a record number of hurricanes hit America and millions of acres of our western forests burned. For far too long now, we either looked the other way or only half-heartedly opposed systemic racism, social injustice and the gradual degradation and deterioration of the environment. Perhaps these harsh

realities were the wakeup calls we needed. So what can we, as a people of faith, do to help heal the wounds that divide us?

The path towards reconciliation is murky and perilous. However, many have written (and science has proven) that there is a collective consciousness, a domain of intelligence of which all individual minds are a part¹. The realization that we all are one is a potential way out of the division, bitterness, hatred and destruction that threatens to engulf our country. Because if we don't, beyond a certain point there will be no escape.

St. Augustine wrote, *A nation is a multitude of rational beings united by the common objects of their love*². So we have to ask ourselves, what do we love in common? What does it mean not only to be good Americans but a people that see the Christ Divinity within each and every one of us?

Here are a few things we all love: our family, being with friends, our pets, Fourth of July fireworks and peanut butter--ok, I'm showing my bias!

But two others stand out from the rest. Because I am convinced that Americans in general are a compassionate, generous and kind people, the more we understand one another the less hatred and bigotry there will be. Secondly, we love nature. Who doesn't love a quiet walk along the beach or the bliss that comes from admiring a tree, a mountain or a bubbling brook?

As stated in "The Third Planet from the Sun" in the symposium, *Awakening the Dreamer, A new day begins in much the same way for all of us on planet Earth. Maybe that's when the warmth from a ray of the sun or the kindness of a stranger reminds you how one life touches so many others. And from it you begin to see how all things are connected, like the blood that unites one family, and you come to realize that mankind did not weave the web of life. We're merely a strand in it, and whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves on the third planet from the sun*³.

Once we realize we are all interrelated, the easier it will be to break down the barriers between us. As I have previously written, 2020 was a moment in time in which there was a shift in consciousness towards the imperative to address social & racial injustices as well as climate change. Could this be "the hope of wisdom" that Lewis Thomas wrote about⁴? Possibly, but before anything else we need to change our focus from "me" to "we" in order to build upon the commonalities we all share. In so doing, the realization that all sentient beings are intimately connected will become inescapable and recalibrated into the golden rule, "Do unto others as others would do unto you."

This does not diminish the need for structural changes in order to reform institutions that for too long have allowed prejudices and injustices to

prevail. Religious organizations have an important, dare I say moral, obligation to promote social justice and address climate change. These should be among the objectives of every ministry and its Green Team.

It won't be easy, but I believe that by holding love in our hearts towards others, and by combining faith with action, we can break down barriers and create a more equitable, just and environmentally sustainable society. Through these Truths, any issue can be triumphed.

¹The Maharishi Effect.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10683169608409775#:~:text=Time%20series%20analysis%20was%20used,Meditation%20and%20TM%2DSidhi%20programme.&text=Up%20to%201992%2C%20Merseyside%20crime,which%20has%20increased%20by%2045%25>.

²World republic of letters - Literary criticism - TLS, www.the-tls.co.uk

³Awakening the Dreamer, The Pachamama Alliance, "The Third Planet from the Sun."

⁴Lewis Thomas, The Medusa and the Snail: 174-175.



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