



*A Positive Path for Spiritual Living.*

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**Board of Directors**

Rev. Rachel Simpson, Minister  
 Nancy Fassett, President  
 Michelle Demaree, Vice President  
 and Secretary  
 Dorothy Willworth, Treasurer  
 Sheila Lankford, Trustee

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Sunday Service 10:30 am  
 Wednesday Meditation, noon  
 Office hours 10-3 T & Th, 12-4 W  
 and other times by appointment.

**Letter from the Minister**

Hello and Merry Christmas!

This has been a adventurous fall for me and my family, as we are getting settled into our new home and new city. It has also been a season of change for the church family as my arrival signals the completion of the minister search process as well as the beginning of the shifts that inevitably happen as a new minister settles in.

It seems fitting that I arrived in the fall. Fall is the season of preparation, when animals are gathering food or bulking up for hibernation. I witnessed many of you preparing by putting away outdoor furniture, improving the weatherproofing of your homes, and switching the tires on your vehicles.

What is all this preparation about?

Sure, it is the practical part of being ready for winter, but could it be more than that?

Winter is the season of contemplation and rest. After the busy hustle and bustle of Christmas is over, life slows down a bit. While there are plenty of things we can do to keep ourselves busy, there is also wisdom in taking some time to just be.

What if we follow nature's lead and let ourselves rest. Not only in body, but in our minds and hearts as well. What would happen if we gave our minds permission to rest from worry, criticism, and gossip? What if we gave our hearts a rest from judgment, fear, and doubt?

Could we use the space we've opened up to listen more openly, give more feely, love more completely? Could we see ourselves



Rev. Rachel Simpson

and others with compassion and caring?

This is my practice this winter season. I hope you will join me in slowing down, making space, and resting from ideas that don't work.

Love and Blessings,

Rev. Rachel

**Coming Soon!**

There are some great things coming up.

First we will be starting a **Metaphysics class** in January. This highly interactive class will look at what Unity teaches about many theological concepts, and gives a framework to discover

one's own beliefs. Take your pick of Wednesdays at 6:30PM or Saturdays at 9AM. The first day will be the 6th and 9th respectively and run for five weeks. Many of you have already ordered the book, *Heart Centered Metaphysics*, if you

haven't and would like one, let Pat know.

Also in January we will be holding a **new member class**. Anyone who is considering becoming a member of Unity of Anchorage, or would like a brush up on the history and basics of

### Notes from the Board by Nancy Fassett

Our current rental agreement has been renegotiated. Our rent has been reduced from \$2700/month to \$2200/month for 6 months from November 2015 through April 2016.

The Church Search Committee has recommended having additional signage to help newcomers find the church. Our webpage has added pictures to the directions section which are helpful.

The Security Policy has been updated and can be viewed in the office. The Board is reviewing and updating both the Financial Policy and the Policy

Regarding Small Group Rental of the Facility. We are also looking at options for reducing our credit card and bank fees.

A search is underway for a Sunday School teacher. We have some curriculum here and can borrow more from Unity's Northwest Regional Lending Library.

There have been two large fundraising events this fall. Nine people tithed on their PFDs. The Parcel Post Auction raised \$1900. Thank you all for your generosity.

Eight congregants volunteered their time at the Thanksgiving Blessing on Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Our group helped at the Mountain View Community Center. The fixings for a complete Thanksgiving dinner were distributed to hundreds of families.

This is the third year that our congregation is participating in the Be a Santa to a Senior Program. We continue to collect food and deliver it to different agencies such as the Food Bank and Lutheran Social Services for their food pantry.

Our prosperity statement: We hold in our consciousness that God is the ultimate source of our prosperity, and we are ever grateful for our abundance.

### What's in a Name? (or a logo) by Rev. Rachel Simpson

If you haven't noticed already, there is a new logo for Unity of Anchorage. It has begun showing up on our signs, print materials and on the web. This logo, while new for us, is not new within the Unity movement. It was comprehensively researched by an independent branding company, and adopted at Unity People's Convention in 2010. The goals were to give Unity churches and the whole movement a consistent brand, and the information needed to reach our target audiences.

Over the last five years, many churches have joined the branding project and have seen great results from their efforts. There is more than a new logo included in being a part of Branding. We have access to professionally designed bulletins, cards, and print material, which we can print in-house or send out. We can utilize the research that helps us best reach our current and

Unity offers practical, spiritual teachings that empower abundant and meaningful living.

future members. We are seen as part of the worldwide Unity moment. Together, all the branded ministries are helping Unity's identity become more recognizable to the public.

When I presented all of this to the board, along with the fact that joining was free, they decided to go ahead with the process. I invite you to have patience as we shift over to the new logo. If you would like to learn more about the research, the logo, or to see other ministries signs, you can visit: [www.unityworldwideministries.org/branding](http://www.unityworldwideministries.org/branding)

The quotes surrounding this article are part of the language brought forth by the survey.



Our new logo.

We believe that prayer works.  
We help people discover & live their spiritual purpose and potential.  
We help people have a stronger connection to God every day.  
Our spiritual centers have inspiring ministers and are involved in spiritual social action (and social activities!).

Provide practical teachings to help people live healthy, prosperous, and meaningful lives.

## Volunteer Updates by Sheila Lankford

### WHAT WOULD WE DO WITHOUT YOU?

Volunteers, that is. Really. Think about it. Rev. Rachel is currently our one staff person. Her responsibility is to be the minister and to provide ministerial support to the congregation and the community as well as, for now, managing the office. EVERYTHING ELSE is being done by our own volunteers. Just to look around, there doesn't appear to be much to do. But when you think about the details, WE'RE AWESOME! These are just some of the things being done by someone you know or by you — whether or not anybody knows. Somebody: leads the singing, plays the piano, plays the ukulele, operates the sound system, records the service, greets congregants and guests, makes

name tags, acts as platform assistant, leads the morning prayer, reads the Daily Word, ushers, assembles weekly bulletins, orders books, represents Unity at the Whole Life Festival, brings refreshments, makes coffee, serves on the prayer team, assists in the office, procures supplies, brings fresh flowers, dusts, vacuums, straightens the sanctuary, waters plants, transplants plants, washes dishes, hauls the filtered drinking water, cleans the refrigerator, mops the floor, takes out the trash, shovels the sidewalk, recycles paper, sends “we miss you” and “happy birthday” cards to congregants, advertises, maintains the website, performs community outreach, teaches classes, serves on the board of trustee, served on the minister search team, serves on the

building team, and more. WHEW! Please, give yourselves a big hand! Please take time to thank each other when you notice someone being of service in any capacity. Everyone likes to be noticed and appreciated.

If any task listed above interests you, please just sign up! You can sign up for most activities on the volunteer schedule in the social area. If you are interested in marketing, music, sound system, platform, teaching a class, outreach, fund-raising, or serving on the board of trustees, just let Rev. Rachel or any Board member know. We welcome people who want to be of service or who want to try something different for awhile.

Oh the Fun We Have!



Marie, Sheila, Karn, and Rev. Rachel volunteering at Thanksgiving Blessing.



Dorothy, Pat, Sheila, and LaDora making cards for Pioneer Home.



Sue and Rev. Rachel after service.



Mary Ellen opening her Parcel Post Auction box from Italy.

Rachel, Sam, Kyah, Elizabeth, and Cougar showing off their goodies from Vermont.



Michelle, Mary Ellen, and Sue following Iona's instructions on card-making techniques.



## Magic Happens Every Day by Sheila Lankford

This true story happened about fifteen years ago, when I was still fairly "new" at Unity. My nephews had just turned 4 and 6 years old; the oldest was learning how to make his letters. Their parents were separated, going through a particularly hostile and angry divorce. The children were shuffled between homes every week, and the week of this first Christmas without both parents, I witnessed some of the horrid shouting and name calling that my nephews were routinely hearing in their father's (my brother's) home.

I wanted to provide a haven from that psychological noise and confusion, so I invited both boys to my home to assemble a ginger bread house and listen to Christmas music. The project provided a great distraction, but by the time the boys were supposed to be back home for dinner, we had still not completed the gingerbread house. What remained to complete was the very detailed decorating. My brother reluctantly agreed to let the oldest boy, Lucas, return to my home the next afternoon to finish the frosting decoration. Lucas and I played

soothing Christmas music and decorated in silence. Frankly, I didn't know what to say. I certainly did not want to pit the boy against either parent, but I was in agony knowing what turmoil Lucas must have been experiencing. Then quietly and calmly, Lucas said to me, "Aunt Sheila, do you know that something magic happens every day?" Tears suddenly welled in my eyes, and the lump in my throat almost prevented me from speaking. Finally I said, "Yes, Lucas. I do know that. Some people call them miracles. I do believe miracles happen every day." We worked in silence. My mind was racing, wondering at the miracle that I'd just experienced: God talking to me through my 6-year old nephew! After some time, Lucas said, "Aunt Sheila, it's good to love life." Tears came freely now. "Yes, Lucas, it is good to love life."

I still tear up when I think of this wonderful memory. There's more, though. Unity's silent auction was

*"Aunt Sheila, do you know that something magic happens every day?"*

coming up. I asked Lucas if he'd be willing to make some framed plaques to donate as auction items for the fundraiser. He said he would and used colorful crayons to write his messages, which I then framed. Some plaques advised that "Something magic happens every day" while others offered the reminder that "It's good to love life." Each time he wrote the messages, he became more proficient in printing the letters and remembering which way the "S" curved. It was a wonderful fund-raiser, and about 20 plaques flew off the table.

But I'm the one who learned the most. When I was wondering how those little boys were going to be able to cope, when I was in turmoil and so conflicted and in pain, one of God's children spoke to me.

Thank You, God.  
Blessings,  
Sheila Lankford

## Coming Soon Continued:

Unity is welcome to attend. New member classes are Jan 10th and 17th after service. New member induction will be Jan 31st. Membership is welcome but not required to be a part of our congregation. However, to vote in the annual meeting or to serve on the board you must be a member. The annual meeting will be in March.

**Chili Cook-off** will be January 31st. So get your recipes ready for this fun yearly fundraiser.

**Women's Circle** is every First Saturday. Check the website or weekly announcements for location information.

Our winter sermon series will be following the book *Pray Up Your Life: 50 Powerful prayer Practices to Help You Create the Life You Desire* by Rev. Charline Manuel. Copies will be available in the bookstore.

The **Whole Life Festival** is coming up January 30-31. If you would like to help out at the Unity bookstore booth, let Pat know.

We will be collecting **stuffed animals** to donate to Providence Children's Hospital through January and the beginning of February.

## Go Green and Stay Connected.

Did you know we send updates out via email every couple weeks? Contact the office or complete a yellow contact card to get signed up.

If you are comfortable receiving communications from Unity of Anchorage electronically, please let Rev. Rachel know. Future newsletters will be delivered via email to those who request it.

Follow us on Facebook to see updates and other great Unity related content.