

Dear Friends,

From time to time I get to share my excitement with others here at the church. During a Sunday lesson or a class I will blurt out, *“I love this job!”* When I think back to all the events that led me to where I am, I stand in awe of how Spirit works in our lives and affairs to help us along life’s path.

I recall a story once told by one of my teachers at Unity Village while in ministerial school: *Imagine a caterpillar crawling across an intricately designed Oriental carpet. This caterpillar sees nothing but an endless series of colors changing from one to another. Yet, a butterfly flying above the carpet can readily see the pattern underlying the caterpillar’s journey. Indeed, there is a pattern, a plan, for each of us; although, most of us are like the caterpillar on the carpet, we see only a series of apparently unrelated events occurring before us.*

At any given time we can sit back and reflect on where we have been and where we are now. With 20/20 hindsight we can see how the ‘hand of God’ has directed us along our spiritual path. As we take a moment to rise above our daily routines to see how beautiful our lives have been we find that the pattern of our experiences is woven together to create our spiritual tapestry.

The caterpillar represents our physical attachment to the world and to our daily routines. We move along in life without an awareness that there is something more that can enhance our senses and our spiritual well-being. We only “see” what’s in front of us and can’t imagine anything more.

The butterfly represents our spiritual nature and ability to look above and beyond our limitations. We are able to soar on the unseen air currents to view a greater dimension of our world. As we continue in our journey of flight we “see” more than we could ever have imagined while crawling on the ground.

Jesus made mention of this activity when he responded to the disciples that: *“I am in the world, but not of it.”* He was teaching them to become aware to their true potential.

Yes, we are in this world, but do we have to be of it? Only if we choose to. Made in the image and likeness of God we have the opportunity to seek our spiritual purpose and plan. Go to God in prayer, meditation, and listen to the spiritual insights that are given to you. These insights are talking to your butterfly, asking that you allow it to soar, to see the bigger picture. Spirit is asking you to become aware of how all your experiences have led you to this precious moment in time.

I love this story told of Buddha as he was walking down a road after his enlightenment:

A young man approached the Buddha and asked, “Sir, are you a god?”

Buddha replied, “No.”

“Then are you a man?”

“No,” the Buddha replied again.

“Well, what are you?”

The Buddha replied, “I am awake.”

I love being awake and aware of the potential that is available for me. That’s why I love this job! I get to share all my experiences, insights, thoughts, ideas, concepts, methods, models, and practical applications with those who are also on a spiritual journey of an awakened consciousness of being. When I see the “light” shine through their joy, understanding, and epiphanies I smile and say, *Thank you, God!*

As we head into the summer may your days be filled with wonder and awe as you open yourself to the great vision God has for you. May you awaken to the wonder that is you.

Blessings,



**Unity Center - Bakersfield**  
 1619 E Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301  
*Your Spiritual Home for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Mailed with abundant blessings to...

- Rev. Ruinese Cassandra's class Spirit/Soul Adventure - Tuesdays at 10 a.m. through June 10<sup>th</sup>**
- Rev. Chuck's class during Healing Prayer Services 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays**
- Zen Buddhist Meditation w/ Lou Marino - Every Sunday 2 p.m.(not meeting May 4<sup>th</sup> & May 11<sup>th</sup>)**
- Y.U.M.M. (YOU's Monthly Meeting) - May 10<sup>th</sup> at Border's Café at 2 p.m., ages 14-19**
- Y.O.U. Regional May Rally - Senora, CA May 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> ages 14 and up**
- GUEST SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Ruinese Cassandra Sheard - Sunday, May 18, 2008 at 10 a.m.**
- After Services on Sundays June 1-22, Video of Nonviolent Communication w/ Deborah Goldman**
- GUEST SPEAKER: Chaplain Ray Wallace - Sunday, June 15, 2008 at 10 a.m. (Father's Day)**
- Y.U.M.M. (YOU's Monthly Meeting) - June 21<sup>st</sup> at Border's Café at 2 p.m., ages 14-19**

Dearly Beloved,

We believe in the power of prayer. During the months of May and June we affirm with you that your faith in God's love is your source of health, vitality, peace, abundance, guidance, and well-being. We affirm divine wisdom, harmony, and understanding in all you do and say. Your prayer request will be kept in our prayer box and affirmed each Wednesday at the healing prayer meeting for 30 days. Then we send it to Silent Unity for another 30 days. We welcome your request.

Please pray with me concerning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please accept this gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to keep this important work going in Bakersfield.

**Abundant Blessings** is a bimonthly newsletter. It is our hope that the articles, activities, and information shared within these pages help you to create and live a more abundant life.

**Unity Church of Bakersfield**

2001 Truxtun Ave, Bakersfield CA 93301

**Office & Bookstore**

1619 E Street, Bakersfield CA 93301

Phone: 661-327-8614

Website: [www.unityofbakersfield.org](http://www.unityofbakersfield.org)

Prayer: 1-800-669-7729

**Those Who Serve You In Love...**

- Rev. Chuck Courneya, Minister
- Rev. Shirley Bring, Minister Emeritus
- Rev. Dr. R. Cassandra Sheard, Community Liaison, Prayer Team
- Ray Wallace, President of Board of Trustees, Prayer Team, Music Team
- Eric Foss, Vice-Pres. of Board, Webmaster, Audio-Visual Team
- Owen Kulewicz, Sec.-Treas. of Board, Office Team, Y.O.U.
- Mark Harris, Member of Board, Maintenance, Social Team
- Sue Berry, Member of Board, Usher/Greeters Team, SOUL
- Margaret Smith, Alternate Member of Board
- KD Vargo-Courneya, Youth Ed Coordinator, YOU Sponsor
- Deborah Goaldman, Coordinator of Bookstore Volunteers
- Beverly Marino, Coordinator of Church Services, Music Director
- Stephanie Apsit, Coordinator of Fellowship Volunteers



The gift of life is one of the greatest blessings we can have. With that in mind it is our pleasure to celebrate the following birthdays:

**May**

- Krystal Davis
- Carmen Alderete
- Vera Mainus
- Jerry Palmateer
- Jill Schwocho
- Debi Brockman
- Cynclare Campbell
- Betty Woods
- Stephanie Apsit
- David Selzam
- Christina Harris
- Pamela Howard
- Ray Smith
- Casey Best
- Jeff Silva
- Adam Cosper
- Marsha Thomas
- Beverly Marino
- Emily Gellman
- Patricia Shake
- Ben Johnson
- John Perfect
- Deborah Goaldman, Josh Wallach
- Joanie Steckel, Daryl Davis

**June**

- Karen Mathis
- Brittany Drumright
- Marian Peters
- Dwayne Bohannon
- Rueben Flores
- Marion Owen
- Rev. Dr. Ruinese Sheard
- John Calanchini
- Jessica Harris
- Eric Anderson
- Trystan Woodard
- Unity Center - Bakersfield
- Melvin Thomas
- Jennifer Bowling
- Melanie Evans
- Staci Salcedo
- Georgia Povkovich
- Raymond Courneya
- Tyffanee Davis
- Margaret Smith
- Tim Irwin, Tina Brewster
- Michael St. John,
- Betty Tobias



Our greatest asset is our volunteers. Your greatest gift to God is to be of service for it enriches the lives of all who are touched by it. When you see the following individuals around the church give them a hug for sharing their “gift of service.”

**May**

**Ushers/Greeters:**

- Judy & Tom Soucy
- Lynnette Anderson & Wynter Campbell
- Felicia & Owen Kulewicz
- Y.O.U.

**Fellowship:**

- Stephanie Apsit
- Y.O.U.
- Stephanie Apsit
- Sue Berry

**Bookstore:**

- Joanie Steckel
- Deborah Goaldman
- Char & Ray Wallace

**Platform Assistant:**

- Mike Oldershaw
- Marion Owen
- Deborah Goaldman
- Ray Wallace

**June**

**Ushers/Greeters:**

- Marilyn Yeich & Stephanie Apsit
- Sandy Wagner & Sue Berry
- Wynter Campbell & Marion Owen
- Darlene Saunders & Sue Berry
- Y.O.U.

**Fellowship:**

- Diane Cooper
- Darlene Saunders
- Y.O.U.
- Jennifer Cecero
- Felicia Pusateri

**Bookstore:**

- Joanie Steckel
- Deborah Goaldman
- Char & Ray Wallace

**Platform Assistant:**

- Mike Oldershaw
- Marion Owen
- Deborah Goaldman
- Ray Wallace
- Margaret Smith

**Our Abundance Factor:**

Year To Date Income: \$28,477.69  
 Year To Date Expenses: \$27,024.65  
 Difference: \$ 1,453.04



**As of March 31, 2008**

We affirm that our church, Unity Church of Bakersfield, is absolutely, positively financially abundant. All thoughts of financial lack have been released. We go forth knowing we continue to prosper through You, God. Thank You, God! Thank You, God! Thank You, God!

Blessings,  
**Owen Kulewicz**  
 Secretary/Treasurer

**Unity Life**  
**May, 2008**

**Who is God?**  
By Jaye Naomi

For my birthday, I received the DVD of one of my favorite movies: The Chosen, starring Rod Steiger, Maximilian Schell, and Robbie Benson, based on the book by Chaim Potok. It's about two Jewish boys growing up in New York City during and just after World War II. I highly recommend both movie and book.

Picture a buddy movie set among the very religious Jewish community, with all the richness of that life – with a lot of wonderful ideas about God and metaphysics, and you have a fair idea of it. The main character finds out that his friend's father has raised him in Silence – he has talked to him only to help him study Torah (Bible) and Talmud (the Rabbinical bible commentaries a religious Jewish boy must also learn).

The rest of the book and movie are about the two characters' efforts to come to terms with that Silent upbringing.

I had read and seen the book and movie three decades ago, long before Unity, and loved them, but on seeing the movie again, I found a lot that I had not noticed before.

If we look at each character as a part of ourselves, as we do with the Bible, what does it say about us? How about looking at every character as God?

What if God gave us every answer the moment we asked a question? How would we learn to approach Him? Why would we go back to Him for His sake? Would God then just be our Magical Answer Man, or would He still be our Beloved Mystery of the Universe, our Everything? If God gave everything to us when we asked for it, would he not then become simply our gimme-box? I don't know about you, but there are things that after 20, 30 years, I am extremely grateful I was denied! I realize my life would have been horrible had I been given them! God was infinitely wiser than I was when I was demanding those things!

What is God to you? More importantly, who is God to you?

When you enter the Silence, do you go looking for answers, or do you go looking for God?

What you look for is what you find.

Blessings on you, and on your house.

## **THE COBBLESTONE PATH**

Across time and space you speak to me  
You speak of things past and yet to be  
The song of the birds whispers my name  
My heart joins them in their game  
Along the cobblestone path I stroll  
The hidden garden warms my soul  
The gazebo beckons me linger there  
And breathe in the perfume on the air  
This is my inner garden you see  
My special place I commune with thee  
I enter my garden with a thankful heart  
I ask how I can play my part  
You tell me of a love so high and grand  
Than heaven on earth is right at hand  
You say in times of doubt and fear  
You silently await me there  
I need not travel far and wide  
Within my heart is where you reside  
So when back up the cobblestone path I stroll  
I know I can always return here to renew my soul

Thank you, God

Char Wallace

## **Outreach Opportunity**

Did you know that your gently used clothing can help others enter the workforce?

We are collecting interview clothing for the Mojave Career Closet. We are especially in need of men's dress shirts, ties, and dress slacks.

Please drop your donations by the church.

**BUDDHISM AND ZEN  
AS A WAY TO BETTER  
COMPREHEND  
THE TRUE NATURE  
OF REALITY**

April 6th was the starting date for a new class meeting at 2 p.m. on Sundays in the Ada Davis room, hosted by Lou Marino. The class will meet every Sunday except for May 4, May 11, and June 8, and includes guidance into 20-minutes of silent meditation. The book "The Key, and the Name of the Key is Willingness" by Cheri Huber, available in the church bookstore, will be used. The class includes discussion of various subjects in the light of Lou's experience of the Buddhist way. Lou studied with a Zen Buddhist Roshi (teacher) for 6 years and was in training to become a Zen Buddhist priest. He was a full-time resident in the Vichara Monastery (near Coulterville, CA) for 2 of those years. If you have any questions, contact the church office at 327-8614 or Lou at 587-9312.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** We need volunteers for fellowship and ushers! Please call the church office or sign up in the bookstore if you'd like to help. Thanks!

**DVD Presentation on  
The Basics of Nonviolent  
Communication  
by Marshall B. Rosenberg,  
PH.D.**

See and hear the man himself, founder of the Center for Nonviolent Communication and author of "Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life," as he teaches the principles of what he calls natural giving. This presentation will be shown over four consecutive Sundays after church services starting June 1. Each part is approximately 50 minutes long. Deborah Goaldman will be facilitating this presentation and may be contacted at 871-9578 or goaldmand@yahoo.com. If interested in attending please sign up in the church office.

**DO YOU HAVE ONE OF THE TWO  
GIFT CERTIFICATES FROM THE  
CHURCH BOOKSTORE THAT  
WERE WON AT LAST YEAR'S  
BINGO GAMES? If so, please come  
by the bookstore and purchase  
something or swap them for cash.  
Thank you!**

**COME & VISIT WITH OUR HAWAII  
FRIENDS,  
DEBI & ROBERT BROCKMAN!!!**

**DEBI & ROBERT WILL BE IN TOWN & HAVE  
A POTLUCK LUNCH WITH US ON  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 21<sup>ST</sup> AT NOON IN THE  
CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL.**

**LATER THAT SAME EVENING AT 6:30 p.m.  
WE WILL HAVE DINNER AT A LOCAL  
MEXICAN RESTAURANT WITH DEBI &  
ROBERT, SO THOSE WHO WORK CAN  
STILL GET TO VISIT WITH THEM.**

**CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 327-8614 TO  
LET US KNOW IF YOU'LL JOIN US FOR  
LUNCH OR DINNER (OR BOTH!)  
ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 21<sup>ST</sup>!**

**ALOHA!**