



October 2013
From the Desk of
Rev. Chuck

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Dear Friends,

October has always been a month of change for me that brought closings and openings of one kind or another. One such change is the closing of a year and beginning another as I celebrate my birthday. I also loved the change of seasons as the air got crisper and cooler and leaves on the trees turned colors and then fell to the ground in preparation for winter.

When I look back over my life I have noticed that change has had a major influence on my spiritual journey from there to here. Sometimes I didn't know what the change would bring and I have to admit I felt anxious and somewhat fearful. But one thing always remained with me during all the changes, my ability to take the risk and put one foot in front of the other as I moved forward in faith.

I also prayed, in my own way of course. And I guess that is what true prayer is after all, a personal communication with the Lord of our Being. Unity was built on the power of prayer, healing prayer in fact. Prayer, as Charles Fillmore called it is *the most accelerated mind action known*. When we activate that power by calling on the power of Spirit to guide, direct, and inspire us in the right and perfect way, miracles happen. This is what the Fillmores demonstrated to the world, and what Silent Unity continues to provide. There is power in numbers, there is power in prayer.

Once such individual with a strong belief in the power of prayer came to Bakersfield in 1928. After being ordained as a Unity minister by Charles Fillmore, Della Strutts came to Bakersfield and started a study group in her home on Monterey Street. That small and committed group of truth students soon turned into a congregation .

Since then Unity of Bakersfield has undergone numerous changes, with the face of the congregation being one of them. I recently received a packet in the mail from someone in Arizona. It was a Unity Center directory of pictures and names of the congregation at that time. Donald O'Connor was the minister at the time (1968-1973). There were pictures of Ada Davis,

the David Selzam family, and Lee Ann Mattly. What stuck me was they are the only three supporting members left from that era. Wow, how we have changed.

Unity of Bakersfield has always been a place where people have been able to come for a more progressive, practical, and spiritual approach to understanding the teachings of Jesus and all the great spiritual leaders. As I begin my 20th year I am faced with another major change in my life and in my career as a Unity minister. It is this change that I am asking for your prayer support, not of me, but for the future of Unity in Bakersfield.

Unity has touched the lives of thousands since 1928. I know that Unity as a spiritual presence will continue to live in Bakersfield. How it will show up is really up to everyone that Unity has helped over the years. Your board and I are asking everyone to pray with us so that we may move through the changes that face us. We are asking for prayer support in the following areas:

1. Financial. Over the past five years we have lost many of our old tithers due to death or moving. We have taken all the steps we can to reduce the cost of keeping the doors open. It currently takes \$6,800 a month just to meet our current financial obligations. This figure does not include a reserve for any major repairs or replacements.

2. Sunday service. It seems that our website has become a major source where people get their spiritual food. This is both a blessing and a curse as Sunday attendance and love offerings have dropped off. The church has become too big to maintain for a 20-30 person congregation. The website is not free and we are not getting enough funding to keep it and the church going at the same time.

3. Minister. Unless something changes by the first of the year, we will not be able to pay a minister and keep the building open. This means that I will have to leave and take a job elsewhere, or sell the building and move to a smaller meeting place for Sunday services.

These are major changes for Unity in Bakersfield. We have weathered changes before and we can again. It will take all of us searching our hearts in prayer and asking, "What can I do?" and then do it. As they say, "It's your call." Only you, the individual who has called Unity your home can help. What you decide will determine how we will be able to meet these changes.