

Unity Spiritual Center Of Gulfport

1700 E. Railroad Street
P.O. Box 1025
Gulfport, MS 39502
www.unitygulfport.com



Easter, 2020

Our own Tailor-made Good Friday and Easter Experience

For centuries now, the story of Easter, to most Christian Churches, has been the account of the literal retelling of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. To others, the story of the crucifixion and resurrection is a metaphor about transformation. The Easter story is also a retelling of all ancient stories of rebirth and renewal. Long before the life of Jesus, humanity celebrated the coming of Spring. The name Easter come from the Ancient Goddess Oestere or Ostara. The word “East” as in the sun rising in the East also comes from this ancient word. The bunny as the symbol of fertility also came from this ancient tradition.



Someone asked me recently about all the differing rituals in the churches such as crossing, bowing and genuflecting. I said if it makes you feel good and closer to God, then do it. If it doesn't, then don't. These are all man-made rituals created to reflect the inner experience. All religions have come about by someone attaining enlightenment, then trying to explain it with words to others, to show them the way, how to find the Divine in their own hearts.

The right answer for you is to find the Divine Presence within your own heart. If there are certain rituals that help, do those. If you need to go into the Wilderness, do that. This time of reflection, just as we have now with the need to stay home during the coronavirus outbreak, can turn out to be the time when we really commune with the Divine. Our experience when we return to the world may never be the normal that we knew before, but we know that all will be well. So, let us use our time to reflect and decide how we will start over. In her essay, High Tide in Tucson, Barbara Kingsolver speaks about the all too common experience of finding ourselves with the need to start over: “Every one of us is called upon, probably many times, to start a new life. A frightening diagnosis, a move, loss of a job or a limb or a loved one, and it's impossible to think at first how this all will be possible. Eventually, what moves it all forward is the subterranean ebb and flow of being alive among the living... We hold fast to the old passions of endurance that buckle and creak beneath us, dovetailed, tight as a good wooden boat to carry us onward. And onward full tilt we go, pitched and wrecked and absurdly resolute, driven in spite of everything to make good on a new shore.”

It is easy to feel stuck or hopeless. Hope is the light that guides us to move forward. The hope that says that tomorrow can and will be better – the hope that says that a new happier, more fulfilled life is possible.

What is stirring in you right now that wants to be born? What old worn out story are you carrying around that needs to be rewritten?

I came across a quote a few days ago that really touched my heart. In 1952, at the threshold of the Cold War, Harry Emerson Fosdick spoke to students and faculty at the Pacific School of Religion. After acknowledging the uncertainty and chaos in the world at that time, he spoke these now-famous words:

“The highest use of a shaken time is to discover the unshakable.”

This stood out to me because as you will most assuredly agree, we are certainly in the midst of a shaken time. Therefore, I invite you to discover the unshakable. The Unshakable is that One Power and One Presence that we speak of so often. You will find it in the Stillness. It is there. It never left you. Please remember during this time that light is preceded by darkness. There can be no Easter without Good Friday.

This changing and evolving is no easy feat – it is not a magic trick that transforms us without effort and struggle. It is exhausting work that doesn't happen quickly. Like a chick emerging from its egg, rebirth is a struggle that may require a hard beak and a lot of patience.

Catherine Ponder said that the real message of Easter is in going through tough times, learning from them, then letting the Christ Presence resurrect our lives out of painful circumstances into something better.

Blessings to you all. If you are working, work safely and know that our love and appreciation are with you. If you are home, use the time to reflect, heal and become your highest and best. The Love of the Christ is flowing through to each of you. Allow it to touch your heart.

With Love Always, Rev. Judy

Importance of Prayer



In this time of disruption, **we continue together in peaceful prayer.**

As we take a deep breath, we allow ourselves to become more aware of the presence of God.

The divine presence of love protects us. It guides us and prospers us.

Through this, we experience a deep level of trust and faith that brings us into a harmonious state of inner peace.

We are centered in God, and we claim God's grace.

In the midst of all that is taking place in our lives, **we affirm *God is***, and we know peace within.

Article by Rev. Judy



God's Boundless Love

Thoughts That Sustain Me

1. In God I live and move all my being.
2. Living in this abundant universe—I open my mind, my heart and my spirit—in conscious awareness of the Grace and Love of God.
3. When I put God first, Divine Order prevails in my life. I am grateful and I move forward with confidence.

Divine Being,

Please grant us peace, acceptance, non-judgmental understanding and compassion. May we be constantly aware of your boundless Love blessing humanity, Earth, and the universe.

The peace of God lives in the quiet of my heart. Each day is a new beginning and filled with promise.

Yours in Light, Love, and Joy

Sharon Price

Poem by Kathleen O'Mara

Written in 1869 and reprinted in 1919 during the Spanish Flu Pandemic and again today:

*And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.*

90 Years of Inspiration: Celebrating Daily Word

In July 1924, “devoted to the daily practice of Christian truths,” *Unity Daily Word* made its debut. The cost was \$.10 a copy or \$1 a year.

Rev. Eric Page, archivist at Unity Village, says the publication was created to meet requests for a monthly manual of daily meditations and spiritual instruction. “Man finds the lost word when he finds within himself his God-given power to create through his word,” read the cover message of that historic issue.



Because Unity encouraged the use of affirmations to positively change one’s thinking, the “word” in *Daily Word*® refers to meditating on an affirmative idea daily.

The idea for the magazine originated with Frank B. Whitney, a dentist who came to work for Unity School of Christianity and Silent Unity in 1915. A year later, he married Clara May Hoagland, the director of Silent Unity, and then served as dean of the Unity Correspondence School.

In 1924 Whitney came up with the idea for *Unity Daily Word* and served as the publication’s editor. For the first 14 years, Whitney’s writing and poetry made up most of the content of *Unity Daily Word*, which was shortened to *Daily Word* in 1937.

“*Daily Word* has remained steadfast for 90 years,” says Page. “People from around the world, including many who have no other affiliation with Unity, read the magazine.” Charles Fillmore, Unity’s cofounder wrote, “*Daily Word* reaches across religious lines. Anyone in any denomination can receive inspiration from it.”

During its history, *Daily Word* has been printed in 15 languages, from English to Afrikaans to Chinese to Dutch to Russian. It has also helped launch many Unity ministries around the world often after a minister or study group leader would call for *Daily Word* readers to gather together for study and prayer.

Since Whitney’s tenure as *Daily Word* editor, the magazine has been led by female editors: Bernice Minter, Martha Smock (editor for 33 years), Billie Freeman, Jeanne Allen, Colleen Zuck (editor for 25 years), and most recently Laura Harvey.

When she interviewed for the position Zuck says she was so nervous she kept playing with a paperclip she found in her jacket pocket. “As I look back at my years at Unity, I understand that every position I held, every class I had taken, and every mentor who had invested in me was preparing me to be editor,” she notes.

Zuck says she always felt she received more than she was giving as editor. “Located in the Silent Unity Building, I felt a part of Silent Unity. I attended the prayer services and *Daily Word* meetings and was involved in creating positive, life-affirming, spiritually enriching messages that were based on Truth teachings that reached people in different parts of the world in several languages. I was part of a movement that blessed individuals and the world as a whole.”

This could occasionally make the job intimidating she recalls. “Sure the pressure of starting from scratch each month was daunting at times,” says Zuck. “But I understood I was just one in a team of hundreds of awesome coworkers at Unity Village that would, in one way or another, contribute creativity, dedication, and a loving touch to each issue.”

Continued on page 4....

Continued from page 3:

As she applied the teachings in her own life, Zuck came to understand that she was—and always will be—a beloved child of God. “Knowing this Truth was just the beginning of my journey of spiritual awareness. I am still learning to live this Truth every day.”

Zuck’s love of the magazine is apparent. “*Daily Word* has never been just a publication,” she explains. “It’s a daily devotional, a lifeline to many. It’s a treasure that has been read and passed down through generations of families and friends.”

Zuck remained editor for 25 years—and continued to write for the publication after stepping down because she loved what she was doing and felt fulfilled by the work.

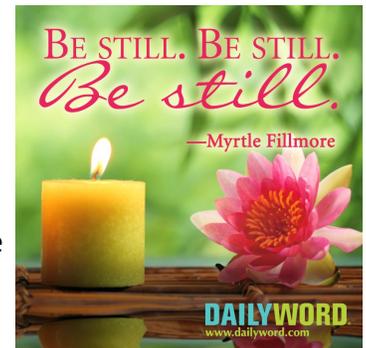
Her successor, Laura Harvey, says it was daunting to follow in the footsteps of such outstanding editors before her. “[Colleen] welcomed me in and shared her love for the readers of *Daily Word* with me. I felt such a weight of responsibility for sharing the message of Unity accurately. People relied on this magazine to start their day. I didn’t want to let them down,” she remembers.

Harvey’s first issue as editor was the 85th anniversary issue, July/August 2009— also the first issue to be delivered in a bimonthly format.

Harvey encourages readers to live life with purpose. “Conscious awareness is key. When we are conscious of the presence of Spirit in and through all of life, we are able to see the presence of good everywhere. I love encouraging people to be strong, brave, and conscious. That’s why meditation and prayer are such important elements of the *Daily Word* message.”

The dailyword.com website tells readers:

... Every day hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life are reading *Daily Word*, affirming the same universal Truth, and applying the same spiritual principles to their lives. Together we form a great daily prayer group that extends throughout the world. In Spirit, we are one.



Both Zuck and Harvey believe it’s the positive nature of the *Daily Word* messages that will ensure the magazine thrives going forward. Harvey says, “*Daily Word* reminds us all of our divine inner wisdom, strength, and power, and that we are here to use that power for good.”

Daily Word is available in print (regular, large type, Braille, and Spanish). It is also available digitally through email, online, or app. Free trials of *Daily Word* are available at dailyword.com/subscribe.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Are you able to Zoom? If so, we are getting together on Sunday afternoons at 2:00 pm. We are sending out an invitation by email and also posting a notice on Facebook. Please look for those notices and tune in.

Also, the Tuesday Morning Women’s Prayer Team is meeting by Zoom on Tuesday mornings too. Zoom is very easy to download to your laptop or phone. Please stay in touch. If you need to reach us, call 228 871-7004 and leave a message. You may contact us by email at admin@unitygulfport.com. Stay in touch! We’ll be back together again soon.