

# LIVING TODAY

| Where Positive Minded People Come Together |

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## **NAKED SPIRITUALITY: A Life with God in 12 Simple Words by Brian McLaren**

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Lent can be more experiential, so plan on expanding your spiritual practices with Rev. Paula Skiles on Sundays from Feb. 4th through Mar 4th.

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## **TIME CHANGE Sunday, March 11**

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No one wants to miss even one of our wonderful services. So here's just a reminder. Let's be sure and set our clocks ahead one hour on March 10.



## **Let's see what's happening...**

As we start a new year, our board is considering the process of stepping into the Unity Movement in a unique way. For several years now, Unity has been implementing a shift in consciousness so that we are recognized around the world by trademark logo. This shift begins with a branding archetype (seen above) and establishes meaning and relevance at a subconscious level by defining a personality for our movement as a whole. We keep this in mind as we communicate who we are to the world as an individual church and as a movement. The trademark above includes the proprietary visual, emotional and cultural image that has been chosen by our movement. Our board is in the process of seeing how we might be a part of this process. For now, we see this could be a mutually beneficial alignment with our greater movement and the churches it represents. We are seeing it as a "trustmark" that we are entrusted with, helping us to build a relationship of trust with people who see it recognizing our church as a vital part of that movement. We can still utilize our circle and bird, but only in conjunction, rather than representing our logo as a movement. We look forward to your thoughts.



### Rev. Paula Skiles

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**Need Prayer?** A Prayer Box is located at back of Sanctuary. We pray on your request for 30 days and then forward to Silent Unity, who also pray on the request for 30 days.

**Recorded Prayer Line  
512-396-5433**

**24/7 Silent Unity Prayer  
Partner Line 800-669-7729**

## THE HOLY WAY..

*“And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, ‘Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. I knew that thou hearest me always’...” Jn 11:41-42*

This Bible verse begins the dramatic raising of Lazarus from the dead. It is important to note that Jesus lifted up his eyes. This is not meant to be a description of Jesus looking into the sky. It is an Arabic way of phrasing the concept of seeing beyond appearances to the spiritual reality, the truth that is everywhere present.

Our co-founder Charles Fillmore said it this way, “God is the source of a mighty stream of substance, and you are a tributary of that stream, a channel of expression. Blessing the substance increases its flow. If your money supply is low or your purse seems empty, take it in your hands and bless it.” Substance is like the air we breathe, it is everywhere and there is no lack of it. Imagine it as a phosphorescent, warm, tingly energy of light that surrounds you and is the energy Presence of Spirit, omnipresent. Then, hold in your mind the idea that you are that channel which it loves to come through and breathe it into and out of your body. Release your fears and use the faith you have to decree the blessings of God. Praise what you have, regardless of how little, and insist that it is constantly growing larger.

What are the rules of the law? First, God is good and second, all His creations are good. That means God is not moving on a whim to decide whether we have earned what we seek. When we first begin to think of God as everywhere present substance, we might not be able to believe it continuously. If our attention drops after awhile we may think, “I haven’t enough to meet all my bills, etc.” This creates a break in the momentum of our Faith in our good and it is important that we step quickly back into the mind set of substance is my supply to keep our faith strong.

Jesus said that His words were





Spirit and life. We can increase and multiply what we have by speaking words of life. Did you ever think your word is charged with great spiritual energy? It is true, but to bring forth the good we seek using the power of word, we must remove our belief in anything less than God. To demonstrate as Jesus did it means we have faith in God. In the morning, immediately upon awakening take a quiet meditative thought. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock, my redeemer.” Think of the meaning of these words—the words

of your mouth...the thoughts of your heart are even now molding spiritual substance. Then, as you start your work, whatever it is, declare: *“I set God before me this day, to guide and guard, to protect and prosper me”* or *“I am always provided for because I have faith in Spirit as my omnipresent abundance.”*

Do you really believe that Faith can change things? Eric Butterworth in Spiritual Economics, answers that question this way. “Faith isn’t about believing *in* something; rather it is a positive act of *turning* on something... The power is already within you...Your Faith is an activity that goes forth... There is a changing process, like light streaming into the room when you open the drapes. However, faith doesn’t change the nature of reality; any more than opening the drapes change the nature of light. Faith tunes to reality and releases the ‘imprisoned splendor.’” Faith is a believing attitude that acknowledges the Presence of Spirit in which we live and have being- that brings forth our good by our attunement with the creative flow of substance.

For many of us there is either a feast or famine when it comes to money, health, or a good relationship... which means we have yet to make this substance that our faith has brought to mind, abiding or enduring. One of the main ways we can use to identify with the Law of Substance is to truly understand it is the nature of God to give and our true nature as well. God is changeless, and if we are receiving in one moment, it is also true that God will continue to give eternally. In Faith, we have freely received, we must keep the flow of substance going by freely giving, being confident in our unlimited supply, so that our supply is undiminished when people talk of banks failing or disease is inevitable or true love is impossible. If you allow these thoughts to take hold in your own mind as real, know that you are talking of something that has no place in the mind of God. In effect, you are no longer acknowledging Spirit in all your ways, but are acknowledging error and saying that the world has its source in outer things. Charge your mind with statements that express plenty. Remember, we are not looking so much for God to perform a miracle for us, as we are expecting the Law of Substance, that which we have identified with to work out our problem by means of the latent possibilities in and around you.

Think on this...blessings, Rev Paula



**Musical Variety Show**  
**Tuesday, Mar. 20th**  
**@ 6:00 p.m.**

An evening of Music, Message and Mirth....

International performers and recording artists, Armand and Angelina have been living their dream together since 2001.

They offer a fantastic, uplifting show, full of humor, passion for life and love for each other. Their music is a unique blend of rock and opera incorporating Native American flute. Armand and Angelina will be performing their versions of *Hallelujah*, *Age of Aquarius*, songs from *Phantom of the Opera* plus their own original love ballads and humorous songs.

It's been coined a variety show because their performance is filled with music, comedy, dance and more. Come see them and learn a new twist on giving and receiving. They love giving away stuff!

**Armand and Angelina deliver a show like no other!**

**Keeping it Real!**

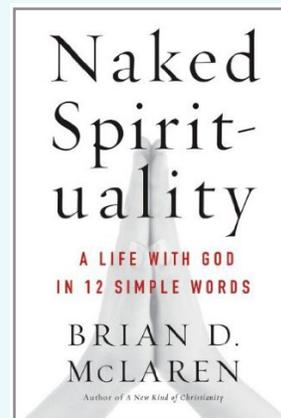


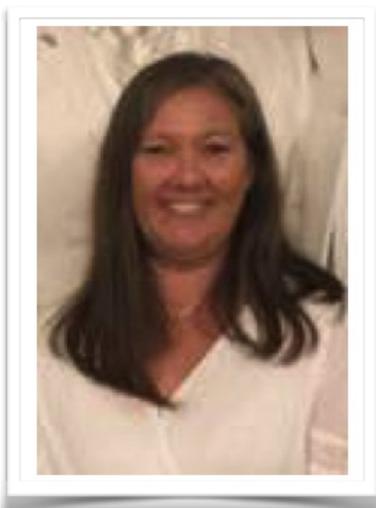
**NAKED SPIRITUALITY**  
*A Life With God in Twelve Simple Words*

Sundays, Feb. 4-Mar 4  
12:30-2p.m.

**Join Rev. Skiles as we take a fresh approach to our spiritual journey. Come deepen your experience with Spirit in this unique style of questioning and learning. Being truly open before God takes less effort and is more enjoyable than you might believe.**

**Discover “a life centered on simple, doable, durable practices that will help you begin and sustain a naked encounter with the holy mystery and pure loving presence that people commonly call God. “**





## Inspiration from Rev. Marygrace

### **Resolutions & The Spiritual Discipline of Silent Meditation**

Traditionally, January is seen as the time of year we make resolutions, or declarations for how we wish to change, and resolutions require *discipline* to succeed.

#### ***So, what exactly is discipline?***

As a word, *discipline* means an “*activity or experience that provides mental or physical training.*” This definition of *discipline* speaks directly to the fourth principle of Unity teachings which says: “Through prayer and meditation, we align our heart-mind with God” and with affirmative prayer we increase our awareness of our oneness with God.

#### **Rev. Marygrace Sorensen**

So, the *discipline* of Unity teachings says we can align our heart-mind with God with “prayer and meditation.” Following a *spiritual discipline* is making time to increase our awareness of our oneness with God. This powerful principle is one of the cornerstones of Unity teachings, but it is virtually meaningless if we do not take action to live its truth.

#### **Time in the silence is time spent with God.**

Unless we make a *resolution* to spend time in the silence, we will not be able to “align our heart-mind with God” and “increase our awareness” of our oneness with God. How do we evaluate ourselves, in measurable terms, as to how we are doing in our *spiritual discipline*? Can we empirically say, “I am so much closer to God because I meditate three mornings a week?” How much closer to the awareness of our oneness with God does three meditations a week get us?

Even just one single moment spent immersed in an awareness of our oneness with God brings us immeasurably closer to God, because the experience of that moment also brings the knowledge that we are as close to God as we believe we are.

Unity’s poet laureate, James Dillet Freeman believed that silent prayer and meditation is the way we keep our “inner spiritual compass focused on God.” Charles Fillmore stated, “It is difficult to improve upon [Jesus’] simple method” of going into the silence. While, Emilie Cady, the author of Unity’s classic text *Lessons in Truth*, tells us that even our acts “unselfish doing [service]...would better be left undone” if it meant we would “neglect regular meditation.”

#### **Make no decisions before spending time in the silence.**

If you have a meditation ritual or *discipline* that works and helps you make the connection to the awareness of your own fundamental unity with God, then by all means, keep using it! However, if you find all the different modalities of meditation practices to be confusing, just know that, perhaps the most powerful practice of all is to just simply sit down, be still, get quiet, and listen as long as it takes for you to connect with your own indwelling Christ Presence and to hear the “still voice within” that will tell you most clearly what you need to do to support your highest good. It’s always best to make a New Year’s resolution by first spending time in the silence, connecting with the awareness of our oneness with God and the power that is available to us because of our fundamental unity.

INSPIRATION From Rev. Marygrace - Cont.

Once we have connected with that awareness, then we can make resolutions for positive change. Knowing that all power is with us when we make a resolution will definitely improve our success rate.

As you contemplate your New Year's resolution, choose to demonstrate the power of your own *spiritual discipline* by seeking the silence in secret prayer and meditation before deciding anything. Once you have connected with the "still voice within" and received its guidance, then declare your resolution knowing that all creative power in the Universe is with you and completely available to facilitate your success. Follow this discipline and the next resolution you make could change the world!

Blessings, Rev. Marygrace Sorensen

**NATIVE FLUTE PLAYSHOP**



**WEDNESDAY MORNING  
PLAYSHOP**

**Mar. 21, @ 10 a.m.**

**Are you ready to play the Native American Flute?**

**For centuries people have been mesmerized by the hypnotic sounds from these gentle, easy to play flutes.**

**Whether you have a musical background or have always wanted to play a musical instrument, this playshop is for YOU.**

**Please join us for a fun, magical day of music.**

***We will have flutes available or you may purchase one from us.***

## Prayer Friends Training

Monday, January 8 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Prayer Friends training is for those who are looking to deepen their connection to Spirit through prayer and service. Prayer Friends serve our congregation by offering individual prayer on Sunday mornings and through praying weekly for the prayer list. This ministry is a powerful way to connect to our community in a deep and meaningful way by holding sacred space and practicing kindness and compassion.

What is required? Simply listening, caring and praying with anyone who asks; and putting our faith and love to work for your church. We are asking you to commit to being present at least one Sunday per month prepared to pray, support one another, and to build a love centered, sharing community. No prior experience in prayer or praying with others is required.

The Prayer Friends ministry is an extension of pastoral care services provided by our ministers. If you are interested in this training facilitated by Rev. Marygrace, please sign up at the church.



## Keeping Lent Personal

Sunday, February 4th

12:30-2:30p.m.

Lent is simply letting go of that which no longer serves our greatest good. Making Lent Personal is an exploration of history, tradition and metaphysics regarding this sacred time of year and how we might free ourselves from limitation. Join Rev Marygrace to discover the Lenten season through a new lens. If you are interested in this workshop facilitated by Rev. Mg, please sign up at the church.