



## HELP FOR THE UNITY OF TUSTIN BOARD of DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors has approved the formation of a new Advisory Committee to assist, at the Board's discretion, in providing rationale for the Board's decision making. The committee's five to seven appointees will be church members diverse in experience, respected and informed, who are willing to use their talents for the benefit of Unity of Tustin.

Unity of Tustin is a relatively small church community with limited administrative resources, and the new Advisory Committee will be able to take on projects to ease the research and fact-finding load, as requested. For example, the Committee could be asked to

research one or more projects currently before the Board and report its findings, and possibly its recommendations, to the Board, thus giving the Board more information for decision-making purposes. Of course, the Committee will have no voting power or decision-making authority outside of its own deliberations.

Beverley Campbell has been asked to chair the Committee which is still in its formative stage. Updates will be forthcoming.

By Beverley Campbell



## Reinventing the Bookstore

A third Listening & Heartstorming Session was held on April 2nd. Rev. Shara described it as "Quite a bit of sharing from the heart—multiple points of view respectfully expressed as continued conversation and clarity about the future of the bookstore emerged."

It is crystal clear that all want something to fill the void resulting from the closing of the original bookstore, and that something is happening! Session attendees envision the wonderful, exciting development of Bookstore 2.0 unfolding in divine order and with perfect timing, resulting in the highest and best outcome for all.

A Transition Team was formed to "kick this proverbial ball down the road." Its members are AJ Lipscomb, Bruce Baird, Margie Carrigan, Julie Shafor, Jon Claud Pinto, and Stephanie Aho. The Team has begun assessing the current book inventory, and is planning a series of "lighten-ing" sales to reduce inventory by offering significant price reductions for those familiar treasures we've all browsed through on many occasions.

Here is the Team's "working" mission statement: The mission of the Unity of Tustin [name to be decided] is to be an inviting, inspirational space for one and all to access resources and materials for spiritual and personal exploration.

The next Listening & Heartstorming session will be Tuesday, April 30th at noon in YFL Room 5. Everyone is welcome! Please join us!

By Stephanie Aho



## The Power of Choice from Your New Prayer Chaplain Director

My White Stone Sunday word for this year is choice. All the grasping and wanting and achieving is no longer necessary. The green grass I always thought was “out there” is here, now, and present in my heart. I take a breath, fall into my heart, and sit in the silence for a few moments. Then, I open my eyes and before me is “my green grass”, that which I had always sought.

I was called to the question: If there is something I could do to spend more time developing a deep personal relationship with people, haplain Director be the absolute best choice of all? The answer was yes. So, here I am, Lord.



I am honored and blessed to be your new Prayer Chaplain Director. Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine I would manage, direct or lead this beloved group. I thought to be a Prayer Chaplain making wellness calls, standing before you to read the Daily Word; and being a part of this wonderful community of Unity of Tustin; and holding you in my heart and you holding me, and sharing our spiritual experiences together—in good times and difficult times, and throughout mundane moments—was, and is a very good role indeed.

As a group, The Prayer Chaplains have asked: What do we want as individual Prayer Chaplains? What do we want to give to our community? How best do we serve? As the year unfolds, answers to these questions will become clear, and hopes and wants will be realized through our Faith in God the Good.

Please stop by the entrance to the Gardens on Sunday mornings and spend some time with us in prayer or quiet conversation. All will be known and will unfold into this: Our green grasses—our dreams and hopes—are here now. How best can we express them?

By Bonnie Gosline

## Easter Sunday Splendor

The Easter Sunday service at Unity of Tustin was outstanding with an estimated 150 people attending in person or on Facebook. The Unity Choir pictured above, led by the inimitable Carol Roman and reinforced by Hitoshi Suzuki (left) and Tina Meeks (center), was at its finest. Reverend Shara’s topic “Easter: The Story of Liberation” was right on target. The rain could not dampen the spirit of joy and fellowship felt by all, and the brunch in Victoria House after the service was even more frosting on the cake.

By Beverley Campbell



## Celebrating the Spirit Group Experience

Dear Myrtle Fillmore,

The facilitator of my Spirit Group is asking whether I'm planning on coming to the ending celebration. To tell the truth, I'm reluctant. After participating in an opening week, six weeks of class, a service project, and a social get-together isn't this meeting at the end just too much?

Signed,  
Reluctant

Dear Reluctant,

I was a school teacher before marrying Charles, and Charles and I wanted our centers to have small groups – Charles wrote about classes in a publication called *Methods and Ideals for Conducting Centers and Study Classes* – so I'm enthusiastic about Spirit Groups. Try thinking about it this way: Talking about what went on with the others in your group at a different time and space than your meeting is refreshing. You asked each other a lot of questions as you explored the material during the six content weeks, and this is your chance to ask yourself and each other questions of a different nature: What happened? What did we create?

It's powerful to say in front of others "This is what is happening to me and through me!" I'll bet you'll be surprised by what you will say -- insights you wouldn't have on your own, and you'll also be pleasantly surprised by what the others at the meeting say. The ending meeting is part of the full recipe for producing individuals who are thoroughly capable of making their own contact with Spirit and standing upon their own divine realizations.

Ten weeks gives you time to develop the habit of being in relationship with your new friends, and to be lifted by practicing the challenge you took on in the first week. Celebrating what happened and formally recognizing the end energetically clears you to start fresh with a new configuration of your spiritual family.

Yours in love and Truth,

Myrtle

By Kathy Andrews



## Integral Spirituality in YFL – Collaboration, Participation, Ownership

Recently, our YSG's (Youth Spiritual Guides), along with our Teen Y.O.U. President met for a team meeting. Freshly inducted prayer chaplain Nicole Osborne's powerful prayer consciousness opened the circle, followed by a Connecting Group activity led by powerhouse duo Emily & Joe Celis. Reports were given by YFL Director Erin Hostetler on the subject of Integral Spirituality/IMP implementation in YFL; by Gary Godshall on Wisdom Council Meetings with "Flo"; and by Ron Green on Igniting Teen Emergence & Y.O.U. in Tustin. Saving the best for last, 14-year-old Emma Green presented an inspiring Evolutionary Update representing our joyous teens. Emily Celis gracefully closed with prayer honoring our connection with each other and our evolutionary purpose. Mare Stephens worked in overdrive as the meeting secretary, meticulously documenting our electrifying visionary dialogue. This is integral spirituality in action!

You can discover more about what Unity of Tustin's Youth & Family Life is up to by following us on Facebook or Instagram @unity\_of\_tustin\_yfl

You can also contact Erin Hostetler at erin@unitytustin.org for more information about Sunday classes and events.

By Erin Hostetler



Emma, Ron, Joe, Emily, Pam,  
Nicole, Mare, Gary, Erin, & Deanna



## The Evolution of the Meditation Gardens

The Meditation Gardens are the jewel of Unity of Tustin. People come to our campus and exclaim that they had no idea something like this existed in Orange County. Site Seven, the Glass Panorama of Religions, was the final site to be completed (2012). Maintenance and small improvements have continued over the years, but the gardens are now loudly calling us to continue its evolution.

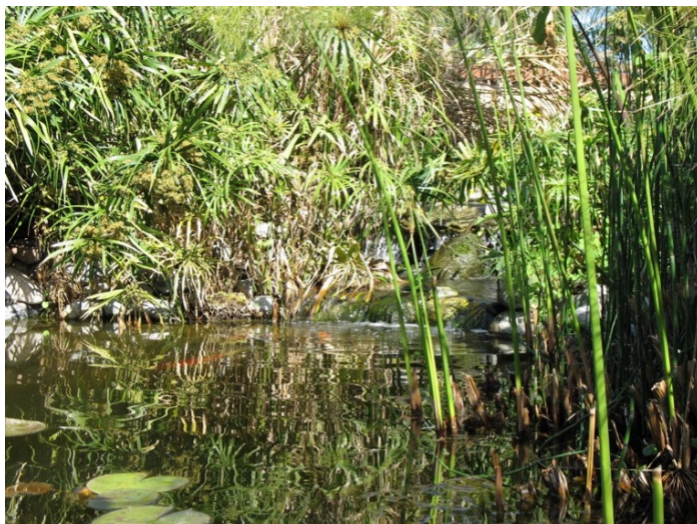
Site One, the first sites to be completed, has subsequently been in need of re-imagining. Originally, it featured a wooden altar popular with termites. Because of its location, it's the focus of attention when beginning the tour as step one in the stages of awakening. The beautiful white angel with her torch remains steadfast, but the rest of the site, which should be a metaphor for the entry to the spiritual path, the point of "let there be light", requires reinvention.

Site Five is currently in need of the most attention. For many years, the koi pond filled this space with beautiful plants, a viewing platform, and of course, the vibrant, swirling koi fish. The fish represented "sea monsters" as described in this stage of awakening. In classical mysticism, this is the stage of the Dark Night of the Soul. This term has become popular in our culture to describe serious life challenges, or even mental illness, but this is not what a dark night means in classical mysticism. A dark night of the soul is when God appears to withdraw after the four other stages of awakening have been completed. This is particularly excruciating after we have come to know the unconditional love and guidance of the Divine, and our prayers and meditations feel empty and dry, devoid of comfort, as though we're simply going through the motions.

For a number of reasons, the gardens are not suited to support live creatures such as koi fish, so other visions are being born for Site 5. One possibility is a small amphitheater with tiers that represent a feeling of depth and invite us to simply sit, "awaiting the return of God." Another idea I got while watching the television show "Shogun" is to create a rock garden with sand around the perimeter. I watched devotees rake the sand in a circular pattern over and over and it reminded me of an external practice that mimics the internal sense of worldly resignation, the surrender that is our only recourse until "our divine connection returns."

On June 23, my talk will be about the Meditation Gardens and the various ways we can interpret the eight sites. As we contemplate how to allocate funds collected after retiring our mortgage, I'm putting forward the idea of using some of these funds to rehabilitate Sites One and Five. Our jewel in Orange County needs to shine brighter.

By Mary Jeanne Hawes



## Craig Stephen Phillips Road to Minsistry

I sometimes get asked what it was that led me to want to become a minister. The short answer is 9/11. All of us can remember that tragic day; where we were and who we were with when the news of the terrorist attacks happened in New York City. Like everyone, I was in a state of shock and disbelief as I watched the Twin Towers fall on live TV, and like everyone, I felt a strong sense of sadness and anger at what had befallen our country.



In the days that followed the events on 9/11, as my feelings of anger gave way to grief, I remember seeing stories in the news of people who wanted vengeance on the perpetrators of the attacks. As the calls for war grew louder and louder, there were even Christian Ministers who were calling for revenge in Jesus' name. Although by this time I was practicing buddhism and taoism, my own love and admiration for the teachings of Christ were very much a part of my own spiritual path. From my own deep experience of those teachings, I just couldn't understand how anyone, let alone a Christian minister, could advocate for killing other human beings in the name of Jesus, or any other spiritual teacher.

These feelings of bewilderment grew in me, until one day while our for a run, I had what can only be described as an epiphany or spiritual revelation. I was overwhelmed by the inspiration to become a minister myself so that I could bring what I felt were the true teachings of Jesus; Love, forgiveness and compassion into a world that, in some instances, had completely twisted his message into something I couldn't even recognize. This feeling stayed with me for many days, and though it faded somewhat in the coming years, it never really left me.

During the next six years, the long and winding road of my life was to take me to the island of Kauai, where I lived for almost four years teaching the Taoist arts of Tai Chi and Qigong, and finally brought me full circle to my wish of serving God as an Interfaith Minister. In June of 2007 I enrolled in the country's first, and oldest Interfaith program at the New Seminary in New York City. I often think about what a perfect place it was for me to embark on my journey, the city from where my inspiration to be a minister had arisen out of the events of 9/11, a city that lives in me to this day.

## Support and Information for Caregivers

Unity of Tustin is partnering with the Caregiver Resource Center at Saint Jude's Heritage i Hospital, which is the premier caregiving support organization in Orange County. Through this partnership, we will be able to receive education, training and support, and numerous resources for caregivers in our church community during meetings each month here on campus. Resources include comprehensive assessments, case management, and individual counseling.



If you are caring for someone in your family, or a friend or associate, please consider this great opportunity to help both yourself as a caregiver and your patient as the recipient of superb medical and professional help. You can contact Beverley Campbell to find out more about this start-up support group at [bev.campbell444@gmail.com](mailto:bev.campbell444@gmail.com) or 714-473-4297.

By Beverley Campbell

### How to Access the Newsletter Online:

- Go to [UnityTustin.org](http://UnityTustin.org)
- Click on the heading "About"
- Click on "Community Updates"
- Click on "Monthly Newsletters"

or use the camera app on your phone to scan the QR code →

