


unity®
of the Valley

December 2021



Advent: Finding the Christ Within

**Sunday Livestream & In Person Service
10:30 a.m.**

Ministerial Team

Rev. Inge Tarantola Rev. Sherry Lady Jon West

Music Director
Laura DuBois

ADVENT: Finding the Christ Within

A message from our Ministerial Team

If you have ever gazed into the eyes of a newborn child and wondered, "What is the potential of this being?" then you've caught a glimpse of the infinite. Why? Because on some intuitive/spiritual level, we know that a child's potential is infinite. If you have ever wondered why so few of us grow up to express our highest selves, then you have glimpsed one of life's great truths: That nearly all of us need some deeper education and inner awakening to fully "arrive" in this world.



In Unity, we find many keys to personal and spiritual growth by looking beneath the surface of religion. In the traditional season of Advent, three avenues of the advent or "arrival" of Christ are honored: the birth of Jesus, the receiving of Christ in the heart, and the return of Christ in the "end times." Regardless of our religious affiliation or degree of faith, there are powerful lessons to be explored here for everyone sincerely interested in inner growth.

- The birth of Jesus is not only a tale of a single cosmic event. It reflects the hidden potential within every child, and the capacity we all have to recognize that divine essence.
- The "receiving of Christ in the heart" can be taken in the traditional Christian sense of accepting the "Son of God as one's personal savior." Yet at a deeper level, it refers to the soul turning wholeheartedly to the spiritual path, regardless of our culture or religion.
- Finally, we come to the Second Coming of Christ. A careful reading of Jesus' words reveals that this isn't a one-time physical occurrence. It's the dawning of higher consciousness that must eventually occur for each of us, in our own time.

Throughout this Advent season, we will invite our infinite potential to come forth more fully. Our journey begins with HOPE in the possibility of inner growth. Then we step into the practice of divine LOVE for all life. Continuing in love, we experience a profound sense of PEACE that blesses ourselves and those around us. Finally, our peace blossoms into the pure JOY of the soul, bringing a wondrous sense of rebirth as the Christ Light within us breaks through the dark.

May you be blessed with the advent of your own inner awakening this holy season.

SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Sunday, December 5: "A Love So Great." Speaker: Dr. Serenee Smith. During the Christmas season, many experience the birthing of a Great Love in their hearts as the momentum of Christ's arrival nears. We nurture this love through our gift giving, our celebrations, and joyous activities. But how do we sustain this love through our daily lives for each and every person in the world, regardless of who they are or what they may have done? Perhaps the Love So Great that we feel at Christmas is in truth the Lord of Love's gift to each and every one of us, given freely that we might learn to Love One Another, even as He has loved us.

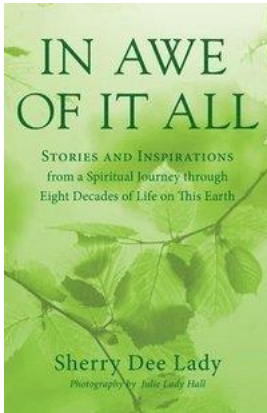
Sunday, December 12: "Peace & Potholes on the Road to Bethlehem." Speaker: Jon West. The traditional story of the birth of Jesus contains scenes of tension and hardship as well as moments of profound peace and clarity of mind. In this third week of Advent, the journey of Mary and Joseph provides timeless insights into the dawning of true peace in the heart and the larger world.

Sunday, December 19: "The Inner Gift of Joy." Speaker: Rev. Inge Tarantola. There is an ongoing debate about joy. Does it come from within or is it triggered by outer events? What's the difference between happiness and joy? Together we can explore how we experience joy in our lives.

Sunday, December 26: "Following the Star." Speaker: Rev. Sherry Lady. "The birth of Jesus was not the end of the story. Nor is the birth of our personal recognition of the Light within us, the Star of our Being, the end of our spiritual evolution. At that birthing point we, as did the Christ child, begin to experience challenges we had not expected. Yet as we follow our star, we will receive the grace of unexpected, immeasurable blessings. Together we will explore some of these challenges and richly graced blessings in preparation for the new year that will open for us soon.



Book Signing with Rev. Sherry Lady Sunday, December 5th 11:30 a.m.



One cannot make it through eight decades of life without having learned at least one important thing.

One day I was asked to write something of spiritual encouragement for a monthly church bulletin. That step began the formation of thoughts, feelings, inspirations, and stories from life experiences and energized the bringing forth of all that I had held inside. Adding to that were inspirations from friends, their

stories, and a heart opening that allowed me to view all of life at more depth.

I stepped out of my usual routine and into gathering the writings, organizing them, adding my daughter's photography, and, along with my son's support, to share it all in a book titled ***In Awe of it All***, which I truly am. I hope somewhere along the reader's path some of what I share will be meaningful and bring perhaps new perspectives as well as add a smile to their day. That would bring me great joy.

Rev. Sherry Lady has been a part of Unity of the Valley since 1985. Please join her in the Foyer after the service and pick up your copy and get it signed too. Hard and soft copies available.



* A portion of the day's sales will be donated to the church.

Life is a series of awakenings.
~Sivananda

A UNITY CHRISTMAS EVE



Unity of the Valley
39th & Hilyard



Join us on this holy night for inspiring music, prayer and universal wisdom.

Live-streamed and in-person services at 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

COVID PRECAUTIONS: Limit of 70 in-person attendees per service (35% room capacity). Please reserve your spot ASAP. Proof of vaccination required (ideally at time of reservation). Contact Gena at unityval@rioussa.com or call 541-345-9913, ext. 11 with the number in your party and preferred service time. Please dress warmly as we will be ventilating fresh air.

www.facebook.com/unityofthevalley



Notes from our Music Director



As 2021 comes to an end, my heart is overflowing with gratitude. I still remember the feelings of dread and uncertainty at the beginning of the pandemic, with the world seeming to fall apart. Now, almost two years later, I am in awe of how we've not only survived, but come through stronger than before. We've been there for each other through the highs and lows, and it's been a sacred and incredible journey.

To the UV Ministers, Board of Trustees & Shared Leadership:

Thank you for your tireless efforts and dedication to keeping Unity of the Valley running during this time of crisis. You have navigated safely through treacherous waters, and it's because of your amazing work that we are thriving.

To Our Donors:

Thank you for your incredible financial support! Because of you, our music team has been able to reach new levels of professionalism and artistry. In the last year and a half, the principal in our anonymous trust fund has grown from \$50,000 to \$66,000 - that's a very big increase! After a year and a half, we received our first distribution of the dividends from that fund, a larger than expected payment of \$3,126. This has been a huge help to the work we do! In addition to the trust fund, several of you have made donations directly to our piano fund and to our music team. Every single donation is deeply appreciated!!!

To the Music Team: What can I say? Words can't express what I feel for you, but I'll try. Working with you is a dream come true. Each and every one of you is precious!!! Time and again, I ask so much of you, and you give freely, with complete dedication and faith. Your artistry and your love shine through your music, and you are a treasure beyond compare! I love you!!!

To Ryan Zimmer: You are my hero, Ryan! You take all that we create and bring it to the world. Your technical skills combined with your artistic brilliance bring the best possible performances to our audience. Thank you, and bless you!

To Géna Duel: You make work a total joy! Your support is vital to the work we do, and I am eternally grateful to you!

To the Phone Connection Team: The bonds created during our calls, weekly check-ins, and walks are something I will always hold in my heart with a smile. I can't imagine getting through the pandemic without you, and I am so grateful for our times together!

With love,
Laura DuBois

Christmas Eve Ushers Needed

We are looking for one more Usher for each of our Christmas Eve Candle-Lighting Services, which will be held at 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

If you would like to serve at one of these wonderful services, please contact Géna at unityval@riousa.com or 541-345-9913, ext. 11.

Christmas Singalong

Monday, December 20th
7:00 p.m.



As we move into the holidays, a wonderful way to celebrate is to sing Christmas Carols. Their timeless melodies fill our hearts with joy and reconnect us to the truths of giving, peace, and love.

Join our music team on the 20th at 7:00 p.m. for a delightful Christmas Singalong.

You may attend in person*, or join us on Facebook Live.

From *Silver Bells* to *Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire*, we'll fill the evening with songs you love to sing!

*in-person attendance requires proof of vaccination and wearing a mask while inside the building.

FINANCIAL REPORT: COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

MONTH(S)	INCOME	EXPENSES	NET
SEPTEMBER	\$13,516	\$13,735	(\$219)
OCTOBER	\$14,252	\$15,343	(\$1,091)

Thank you! Your generosity keeps our financial picture strong despite additional expenses. Currently, we are replacing outdated sanctuary lights and fixing ongoing drainage issues.

NOTE: If you can contribute to our Endowment Fund or put Unity in your Will, please contact unityval@riousa.com.

In loving gratitude,
your Unity Board of Trustees



Scan to reach
Unity homepage.
Click DONATE
on right side

BOARD of Trustees' MEETING

**Tuesday December 21
6:30 p.m.**

All Board meetings are currently being held via Zoom. All are welcome to attend.

If you would like to attend and/or speak at the meeting, please contact **Serenee Smith** at sereneeheart@yahoo.com.

December Affirmation

Looking inward, I find my divine essence and share it with the world.



HAPPY

Birthday

December Born



Board Trustees Needed

The Unity Board Nominating Committee is seeking potential candidates for 3-year positions on our Board of Trustees. To fill our three open seats, two current trustees are willing to run for re-election. So we are in need of at least one candidate to fill the remaining position.

If you are interested in being of service to our spiritual community in this way, please contact Jon West at jwest97405@gmail.com.

I see God in everything.
I recognize my oneness with all mankind
and my oneness with God.

~Peace Pilgrim

UNITY'S BOOKSTORE IS OPEN

The Bookstore has been closed since March of last year due to the COVID pandemic.

The long-awaited reopening is Sunday, December 5th just in time for your holiday shopping.



Besides carrying many new and gently used books, the bookstore has lovely gift ideas for you or someone on your holiday list. Choose from prayer and affirmation flags, art, journals, jewelry, and much more! Come browse to your heart's content after the service on Sundays and find the special gifts you've been looking for, while supporting our community at the same time!

DECEMBER PRAYER

from Rev. Sherry



THE COMING



As we speak to our oneness in Spirit during this Holy and Joyful month, we offer this prayer:

Sweet Spirit,

we come into your Presence with open hearts that transcend all limitations and nurture the highest potential in us, our children, and the world.

We hold in our hearts the Hope that propels us from darkness to light, the Love that is the indwelling and outpouring expression of highest truth, the Peace that nurtures goodwill, understanding, and the infilling of the Christ essence in all peoples, and the Joy that resounds through all the world when a wondrous event occurs in its consciousness.

Come Holy Spirit in all your newborn glory and lead us from darkness into Light.

Amen

Healing Prayer Circle

We meet weekly via ZOOM to offer focused healing prayer to individuals who request it. For more information and to make an appointment, contact **Rev. Inge Tarantola at 541-968-5540.**

I am a living embodiment of the Christ Spirit.

Prayer Requests

Email your name and prayer request to Rev. Inge Tarantola at ingetar@pacinfo.com.

UNITY ONLINE

Sunday Services. Although the facility is closed, you can join us and many other friends of Unity of the Valley live at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday at

<https://www.facebook.com/unityofthevalley> (you don't have to be a Facebook member).

Unity's Music Releases can be found at

<https://www.facebook.com/unityofthevalley/videos/368369060857899/>

CONNECTING VIA ZOOM

Community Connect, Wednesdays 2:00-3:00 p.m.

This is a one hour, drop in, chatting session for discussing topics of spiritual interest, personal growth, etc. There is a new topic each Wednesday. Your moderator is Rev. Dick Everts. To take part, send an email request to Rev. Dick at richard.everts@comcast.net.

Sacred Wednesday Morning Yoga Class Via Zoom with Donna O'Neil. 10:00-11:15 a.m. – Hatha Yoga: Mindful yoga practices for strength, balance, and flexibility. (Level 1) See **Donna's Schedule Page** for cost and more details at <https://yogawithdonna.com/classes-and-schedule>. Contact Donna at yogawithdonna@gmail.com or text to 541-632-0105. Let her know you're coming at least 15 minutes before the start of class, so you can get the Zoom link.

SATURDAYS (9:45 a.m.) - Join Sunny & Vicky Hills for a Meditation & Gong Relaxation Experience Online, \$5.

Register Here:

<https://www.sunnyhillsmeditation.com/saturday-gong-meditation-class>.



THE MISSION OF UNITY OF THE VALLEY IS

**To celebrate and express
the light and love of God
in each other and all things.**

UNITY'S FIVE BASIC PRINCIPLES

- 1. There is one Presence and one Power: God, the Absolute Good.**
- 2. We are spiritual beings, created in God's image. The spirit of God lives within each person; therefore, all people are inherently good.**
- 3. What we think, feel, and believe reflects in our life experience.**
- 4. Affirmative prayer and meditation heighten our connection with God.**
- 5. Knowledge of these spiritual principles is not enough. We must live them.**

CONTACT INFO

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Office: (541) 345-9913 • Fax: (541) 345-9182
www.unityofthevalley.org

OFFICE & BOOKSTORE HOURS

Tues–Fri, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

(We are currently closed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic)

BUSINESS OFFICE

(541) 345-9913
Géna Duel, Administrator

BOOKSTORE

(541) 345-9913, Ext. 12

MUSIC DIRECTOR

(541) 345-9913, Ext. 8

POSITIVE PRAYER LINE

(541) 345-9913, Ext. 7

SILENT UNITY

(800) 669-7729

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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John Garrett, Vice-President
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