

Dear Unity family,

Welcome Rev Diane Stark!

We are *blessed and eager* to welcome the warm, enthusiastic spiritual leadership of Rev Diane Stark. Join us April 1st as we welcome her to Grand Rapids, home of the “most loving and friendly Unity people” either side of the Atlantic. We are pleased to partner with Rev Diane in this God-centered, open and welcoming spiritual community of love, healing, peace and Truth. For two years we have had the opportunity to prepare ourselves as an organization emotionally and financially for this present moment. Thank you, God!

Financial Progress and Minister Fund

As of the end of '06 we have \$14,300 in our general checking account.

Since December of '05, the Board began to set money aside every month to finance a part time minister. After all expenses and moving allotment, we still have \$19,500 ± remaining, as of Feb' 07, in the “Ministers Fund.” As our offerings support it, we will be able to offer more minister services.

As recommended by one of our valued members to “fully step into the flow,” the board decided to tith an extra \$2,000 this year to quicken the “law of attraction” for all the good we experience now and coming our way. It is the principal of *paying it forward* (like the movie). In '06, the income from offerings increased \$13,400 over offerings of '05.

As stated last year, one of our blessings of being an established community is that the property and church are owned free and clear, with no mortgage or faith bonds outstanding. We are grateful to those before us, who made this so. This board has worked hard to remain debt free and prepare financially for our future.

In '07, our offerings will need to increase again to maintain our commitment to our new minister and to prepare for future structural building needs.

Building and Maintenance

This is truly a church that was built with love and dedication. In a cold winter in the early '60's, volunteers from this congregation physically built the original portion of this church. Forty years later, as with any aging building, ours is experiencing stress. The roof is not draining properly, causing water damage to the fascia and soffits as it drains over the sides instead of down the drain spouts. Volunteers repaired the roof coating, and we can do a few minimal repairs, but they are only temporary fixes. We will need to be planning for a new roof in the *near* future. We are advised that our options are:

- 1) *re-roof*, which means removing the old roof and replacing it, or
- 2) adding a pitched roof.

Because the building does not dry out well, it has served as a host for termites. This last year we spent \$2,500 to treat for termites; and volunteers removed the dirt from touching the siding, so termites and carpenter ants do not have a pathway for entry.

Volunteers also removed the coverings on the sanctuary windows, as they were holding moisture and leaves. Next year the rotted wood will have to be removed and the window casings will have to be rebuilt. Cost of this is not yet known.

The sanctuary floor was shored up in the basement, and new tile was laid. The bookstore ceiling and wall behind the shelves was repaired where there was a leak in the roof. Both of these projects were also done by volunteers.

Again, volunteers stepped up to fix the drywall and replace the tile floor in the men's bathroom. In the process, they discovered that a slow leak in the plumbing had caused more profound issues within the wall than were anticipated. This requires the wall between the men's and women's bathrooms to be torn out and replaced to fix the problem of damaged studs exposed to prolonged moisture. Suddenly a relatively "simple, inexpensive fix" turned into a major remodeling project of both bathrooms. Once again, we are blessed. Not only do we have the cash to pay for the repair, but also a donor has offered to finance new fixtures for both bathrooms! So, soon, we will have new, updated bathroom facilities for a total cost of about \$7,000 for all materials and labor.

The bigger project of reframing and rebuilding a portion of the outside wall in Fellowship Hall facing the parking lot, damaged from termites, we hired done for a cost of \$3,200.

In summary, pending maintenance issues at this time are:

\$50,000±	Roof repair or replacement	not bid yet
\$ 4,000±	Replace the rotted wood around the sanctuary windows	not bid yet
\$ 8,000±	Repair the parking lot surface	(have bids)
\$ 7,000±	Bathrooms by sanctuary (\$2000 has been donated for all new fixtures, <i>Thank you!</i>)	collecting bids
\$ 3,000±	outside wall in copier room	not bid yet

These are "guesstimates" from various conversations with individuals who are more "in the know." The roof is a serious priority and will require that we do something *very soon*. The beautiful thing is God is the Source of all our Good, and all happens in Divine Order.

Mark your Calendar

Sat, April 21 Aloha and Mahalo Luau
"Hello" Rev Diane and "Thank You" Volunteers

Sat, May 19 Once again UCPC is hosting the Great Lakes Music Conference May18-20. For those who attended two years ago when we hosted, they put on a

superb array of music for the fabulous Sat night Java Jive that you will not want to miss!

Sun, Sept 30 Nationally known prosperity lecturer and author, Edwene Gaines, will be here to speak for the Sunday service and a workshop that afternoon, sharing her book, The Four Spiritual Laws of Prosperity. She shares her wisdom in a Southern, down-home, warm, witty and spiritually “right on” fashion. We will be co-hosting this event with Unity Church of Peace.

In Appreciation

It takes community effort to keep an organization running. Although six of us have served on the Board, and we have worked hard, there are many more that make all the details of a church operate. There are volunteers who paint, weed flower beds, prune shrubs, make cookies and coffee, teach youth education, usher, greet, count offerings, change light bulbs, make repairs, shovel walks, create music, run sound and Power Point, do platform, provide tech help, market activities, update the website, run the bookstore, send prayers and cards, call and provide help to those in need. All individual contributions are important, but collectively we are synergistically extraordinary!

Your love, encouragement, dedication and support of me, the entire Board and this church are deeply moving. Words can not adequately express the gratitude and appreciation I feel to each of you for the generous gift of cash to use for my spiritual renewal. (That’s a message when your best friends collect money to send you away!) I hope to coordinate my schedule to spend a week with the Ishayas Monks soon, enjoying the cleansing and purification that ascension (meditating) provides. Although board service has been a lot of work, it has also been a pleasure and joy. But it wouldn’t have been any fun without the love and support of our wonderful “Unity tribe.” Thank you to everyone for being amazingly supportive. 2007 holds a whole new field of infinite possibilities.

One person in particular, who often works behind the scenes, affords me the freedom, flexibility and support to do what I do. Although he never complains, he was visibly and audibly relieved when I decided not to re- run for the board. The price of board service has been tangible to him. To my quiet, gentle, loving husband, Jim, THANK YOU for being *the wind beneath my wings*.

Together as a group we weave the fabric of love, gratitude, and compassion—and, as Rev. Gary Simmons says, “The difference we make here impacts the world.” So go out and shine, for...

You are the Light of the World.

Laurie Lamothe
Unity Church of Practical Christianity
Board of Trustees, President