

## **ABOUT UNITY OF DAYTON**

***Unity of Dayton is a Center of Spiritual Growth for the individual based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. We honor the diversity of all people. We are committed to the highest spiritual purposes of Universal Love, Peace, Prosperity, Service, and Oneness with God.***

### **1889: Words of Faith**

The Unity movement officially began when Charles Fillmore published the first issue of Modern Thought, which is today known as Unity magazine.

### **1890: Roots in Prayer**

Silent Unity began as The Society of Silent Help when Myrtle Fillmore urged readers of Modern Thought to "meet in silent soul communion every night at ten o'clock all those who are in trouble, sickness, or poverty, and who sincerely desire the help of the good Father." Today, Silent Unity is a 24-hour prayer ministry staffed by more than 135 employees. Each year, Silent Unity answers more than 2.2 million letters and calls for prayer from people of all religious backgrounds.

To pray with Silent Unity, call (816) 969-2000 or (800) 669-7729.

### **1903: Practical Christianity**

The Fillmore's incorporated the Unity Society of Practical Christianity. They specifically stated that Unity was not a church, and encouraged people to maintain their memberships in their own churches while attending Unity's educational meetings in the evening.

### **1906: The Unity Ministry**

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, along with seven others, were ordained as Unity's first ministers.

### **1924: A Year of Great Beginnings**

Unity of Dayton began on October 24, 1924, under the name Unity Center. It was located at the Davies building at Fourth and Main streets in downtown Dayton, and was run by center leader Lida Disher. With a seating capacity of 80, it was open every day except Saturday from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday services, as well as weekday healing services and classes were held. Lida Disher had previously served in Silent Unity. The name was changed to the Unity Society of

Christianity, and they met in the Canby Building at 137 S. Main Street.

In November 1943 the center was moved to a lower floor of the Canby Building to provide more spacious quarters. The ministry moved into its own building in September 1952, when it purchased a large house at 1008 Grand Ave.

**1941: Prayer for Protection**

The light of God surrounds us;

The love of God enfolds us;

The power of God protects us;

The presence of God watches over us;

Wherever we are, God is!

And all is well.

This prayer, which is well known to all who have attended Unity services, was written in 1941 and revised in 1943 by James Dillet Freeman. He was asked to write a prayer, which would give comfort to soldiers in battle during World War II. Countless people from all religions as a reassurance that God will guide and protect them have used the prayer.

**1957 to 1960: The Ministry of Michael Giannuzzi**

Michael Giannuzzi took over leadership of the center when Ethel Crouch left the ministry on April 28, 1957. During Giannuzzi's tenure, his wife Luella spearheaded efforts to beautify the building and make it more serviceable for the congregation. Giannuzzi resigned on March 13, 1960, due to a health challenge.

The next several years proved to be difficult for the small Unity congregation, but a small but dedicated and faithful group of people held the group together. After Giannuzzi resigned, guest speakers from Cincinnati came in on Sundays while the center looked for a new leader.

**1960 to 1962: The Ministry of Joel Boehr**

On June 1, 1960, Joel Boehr became the minister, coming to Dayton after spending a year with Eric Butterworth's ministry in Detroit. When asked about his stint in Dayton, Boehr reported in a letter that on his first Sunday, the entire congregation arrived in just two cars. Boehr also said that they had suspected that the house on Grand Avenue had been a hideout for slaves escaping from the South, and that he and his family were sure the house was haunted. The house was sold near the end of Boehr's two years in Dayton.

During Boehr's two years in Dayton, Sunday services were moved to the Gibson Hotel (now the Doubletree Hotel on Ludlow Street) to provide a larger meeting place. The name was officially changed to Unity of Dayton during this time. Boehr resigned as minister of Unity of Dayton in June 1962. He now leads Unity Church of Mesa in Arizona. Boehr served as President of the Association of Unity Churches 1995-1996.

For the next six months, the work was held together, with regular services and Sunday school, until a new minister could be found. All of the Center furnishings had been placed in storage, and they met at the Young Women's League on West Fourth Street.

### **1962: The Start of a 32-year Ministry**

Bette DeTurk conducted her first service as the new minister of Unity of Dayton on November 18, 1962. This was the beginning of 32 years that Bette DeTurk spent in the Dayton ministry, and also marked the beginning of growth for us.

DeTurk added the stability that was needed for Unity of Dayton's growth. Her two sons, Charles and Larry, worked with her in re-establishing the Unity work in Dayton.

DeTurk was active in working with children and young people beginning in the early '50s and served local, regional and international Youth of Unity for 18 years. She was the first Y.O.U. Minister Advisor in the Great Lakes Unity Region.

Although the congregation would change over the years, DeTurk's commitment was sure. She had a strong sense of direction for the ministry and the ability to stay focused on the basic principles of Unity. She had a passion for living according to principle and was dedicated to teaching this to others.

### **1962 to 1967: The Search for a Permanent Home**

In December 1962 the center furnishings were moved out of storage and into a small house at 1112 W. Hillcrest Avenue. The house served as a center for offices and weekday classes and literature sales. The congregation continued to meet at the Young Women's League on Sundays through September 27, 1964.

After almost two years of looking for a suitable building, Unity of Dayton moved all its activities into 735 S. Main Street on September 29, 1964. This location held the offices, services, classes and other activities.

Unity was sub-letting this location, and one year later a new lease could not be negotiated. The offices were later moved temporarily to the minister's apartment

at 1120 Hillcrest Avenue. Services were held at the Y.W.C.A. at 141 W. Third Street. On April 1, 1966, 1331 Wyoming Street was acquired temporarily for center offices and weekday classes. Sunday services and classes were still held at the Y.W.C.A. On September 23, 1966, Unity of Dayton purchased the land at 5158 Old Troy Pike and moved into a building at 4232 Leston Avenue, just a block and a half from the new property.

Groundbreaking for the new building was held October 19, 1966. Work actually began on the building on July 25, 1967, and it was finished on October 29, 1967. The first service held in the new location was a Consecration/Thanksgiving service on Sunday, November 5, 1967.

By March 1974, Unity of Dayton had already paid off half of its 30-year mortgage in six years on the property at 5158 Old Troy Pike (renumbered to 5176 Old Troy Pike after Wayne Township became Huber Heights). In preparation for the 50th Anniversary, the center received new draperies, new lighting, a new air purifier and a new storage shed.

#### **1974: Unity Celebrates 50 Years**

The entire month of October 1974 was a month of joyous celebration for Unity of Dayton with several guest speakers. It was highlighted by the presence of Rev. Richard Dale Billings of Oak Park, Illinois speaking at the Anniversary Service on October 13. On Wednesday, October 30, an Open House and Anniversary Party was held.

The first 50 years of Unity in Dayton were a truly changing, evolving work, taking on many forms in order to continue spreading the Christ Teachings throughout the greater Dayton area. There were many people involved in those changes over the years. Sometimes the changes were easy and smooth and sometimes they were hard and difficult, but let us not forget that what is past is past, that the only relation it had to this stage in our history is the fact that it is the road which led the Unity work in Dayton to the 51st year. Whether easy or difficult, it was all important in making Unity of Dayton the vibrant force for good that it was the first 50 years and remains today, and calls for gratitude for all those involved in the evolution of this work, past and present.

#### **1977: Unity Grows in Dayton, Ohio Honors Myrtle Fillmore**

In May 1977, Gladys Larson, Bette DeTurk's sister, came to Dayton and began

work in Unity as the Bookkeeper. The following year, Charles DeTurk resigned as Office Manager and Gladys assumed that position also.

In July 1977, a Study Group, under the leadership of Virginia Wolford, was begun in Lima, OH. This group was carried as a satellite of Unity of Dayton for tax and accreditation. On the 6th of August 1977, Unity of Dayton and many others in the Miami Valley joined with the State of Ohio to dedicate a Historical Marker to Myrtle Fillmore in Pagetown, Ohio, (25 miles north of Columbus). This was her birthplace and the ceremony was conducted on the anniversary of her 100th birthday.

#### **1980: Proven Prosperity**

In 1980, the 30-year loan that was incurred in 1968 for Old Troy Pike was completely paid off, taking only 12 years.

#### **1982: Land Purchase**

In January 1982, Unity of Dayton purchased our present location on Chambersburg Road. Inasmuch as we were not ready to begin building, we rented the land back to the owner and were paid \$450 for our share of the wheat crop in 1982.

Finally, in November 1983, we began to realize our dream by breaking ground for the current facility on Chambersburg Road.

#### **1984: Building a Vision**

On Sunday, January 15, 1984, the Dedication of the new property at 6741 Chambersburg Road in Huber Heights was held. This was the beginning of the fulfillment of a long held vision: a permanent center on its own grounds that would be able to expand along with Unity of Dayton and its prosperous, ever-growing consciousness. In preparation for the transition from 5176 Old Troy Pike to the nearly completed Center on Chambersburg, the building/property on Old Troy Pike was sold to Victory Baptist Temple. Our last service there was held on Sunday, August 31 and we again sought temporary quarters. So on September 2, 1986, Unity of Dayton's final temporary location was 6182 Chambersburg Road in the Huber Center. Our last service there was Sunday, November 2, 1986.

#### **1986: Home At Last**

On Sunday, November 9, 1986, our dream came true as the first service was held in the new building at 6741 Chambersburg Road.

The following year saw the visit of two special guests. The Rev. Richard Billings, minister at the Unity Church in Oak Park, Illinois, and the Rev. Charles King, director of Wings Over Jordan vocal group, who participated in the dedication service on April 5. An open house was from 2:30 to 5 p.m. This was a joyous time as the new building was filled to overflowing.

This capped the culmination of the efforts of many people over the years which held the vision that we would one day have our own center on land that would allow to expand as our desires grow.

The new, one-story, concrete-block building has 5,400 square feet of space and cost about \$450,000. It includes a 150-seat sanctuary, Sunday school rooms, social room, offices, nursery, youth meeting room and library. The building received an award for design excellence from the Ohio Masonry Council.

Since we moved to the new center, the parking lot has been expanded to accommodate the larger attendance, and a second service has been added. In addition, offices have been updated to accommodate our growth, and new computer systems have been added for administrative efficiency. The Landscaping Committee, headed at the time by Ramona Cann and later by Paula Davis, brought much beauty to the grounds. This included flowerbeds, benches and a lighted sign. Other improvements include a new sound system and the hookup to the city sewer system.

#### **1988: A Teaching Church**

In August 1988 we became a Teaching Church for United Theological Seminary in Dayton, with Unity of Dayton member David Hiatt as the student minister.

#### **1989: Associate Minister**

In October 1989 Virginia Wolford came back to Unity of Dayton as an Associate Minister. She was retained in this position until January 31, 1990.

#### **1990: Stained Glass**

In November 1990, Gladys Larson made her transition. Al Smith took over the responsibilities of the Bookkeeper and her other duties were assumed by various members of the congregation.

Also in November 1990, Ken and Marguerite Stutzman installed the stained glass

windows that were designed by Betty Wagner.

**1993: Study Group**

In September 1993, the Study Group in Chillicothe, led by Ruth Ann Grow, ceased to exist as a satellite of Unity of Dayton.

**1994: Bette's Bon Voyage**

On November 22, 1994, The Rev. Bette (Elizabeth) DeTurk made her transition after an extended bout with cancer.

The Rev. Richard Billings from Oak Park Unity Church in Illinois became our spiritual leader until a replacement could be found.

**1995: The Ministry of Claudette Farone**

In April 1995, The Rev. Claudette Farone was asked by The Rev. Richard Billings to fill in at Unity of Dayton until a replacement for Bette could be found. The following month she was asked by the Unity of Dayton Board of Directors to accept the position permanently, and in June 1995 she accepted the permanent position.

In December of 1997, Rev. Claudette Farone retired from Unity of Dayton for health reasons. She made her transition in July 1999.

**1998: Rev. Lisa Davis**

On the 10th of June 1998, Rev. Lisa Davis was offered the permanent position of minister and Spiritual Leader of the Unity of Dayton. She accepted.

Lisa grew up in Unity churches; her mother, Rev. Billie Blain, was a Unity minister in Sacramento, California. She met her husband, Lloyd at a young adult retreat at Unity Village. She came to Dayton to visit him, and decided to stay (despite her mother's advice that she should go back to college). They were married in 1981.

Before becoming the minister of Unity of Dayton, Lisa served as the Y.O.U. advisor, youth education director and was a licensed teacher. She was ordained in June 1998.

Rev. Lisa and Rev. Billie, who relocated to the area and also supported Unity of Dayton, both moved to Oregon in 2005, tearfully leaving Unity of Dayton behind.

**2005: Rev. Pat Barker**

Unity of Dayton's light was handed over to Rev. Pat Barker, who along with her husband Rev. Jack, came to us from Unity of Dayton of Cincinnati where they had retired from being their co-ministers for nearly 30 years.

Pat served as president of The Association of Unity Churches in 1994-1995 and her husband Jack served in the same capacity in 1982-83

**2007: Rev. Daniel Douglas**

Daniel grew up with Unity from childhood and after graduating college taught in public schools. He was ordained in 1974 and over the years served in Palo Alto, California; Hamilton, Ohio; Monroe, Ohio; Syracuse, New York and was with us in Dayton until early 2008.

**2008, Team Ministry:**

From April of 2008 until March of 2012, we were blessed by the support of a number of inspiring guest speakers and by the outstanding leadership of a team ministry led by Revs. Pat and Jack Barker. The Revs. Barker, along with team members Rev. George Whitton and his wife, Licensed Unity Teacher Nancy Whitton provided loving guidance through a challenging period of transition.

They still lovingly remain as our friends, strong supporters and advisers to Unity of Dayton.

**Today:**

Rev. Cindy White took over as our full-time minister on March 1, 2012. Rev. Cindy is a Professional Clinical Counselor and holds a Master of Science Degree in Education from the University of Dayton and a Master of Divinity Degree from Unity Institute and Seminary.

Cindy has been a member of Unity of Dayton since 1992, and served here as Prayer Ministry Coordinator. While completing the Ministry and Religious Studies Program at Unity Institute, she was a member of the Silent Unity prayer team and a contributing author to Unity publication, *The Daily Word*. She is also the author of ***The Other Side of the Crisis: Embracing a Spiritual Solution***, available in our Book Nook.

In January 2012, Cindy completed her Licensing and Ordination interviews and was ordained on February 12, 2012 by Rev. Pat Barker here at Unity of Dayton.



Unity of Dayton has become a vibrant force for spiritual enrichment and change in the Dayton area. Interesting facts about us include:

- Nearly 200 members call Unity of Dayton their spiritual home. This is just the tip of the iceberg since Unity does not require or impose membership. Our mailing list contains more than 600 names of people interested in Unity of Dayton.
- Our Sunday Celebration Service is at 11:00 a.m. with childcare provided and youth classes for preschoolers through high school.
- A variety of helpful teams volunteer their time to meet our needs.
- Classes and workshops are held frequently continuing to hold to the idea that Unity of Dayton is a teaching ministry where we can gather tools for practical spirituality in action. Some of the classes and workshops include: prayer, healing, prosperity, Unity basic principles, spiritual ideas, and many more exciting Truth Teachings