

Charles Fillmore said: “Even one person living in harmony with spiritual principles quickens the pulse of the community around them. Through one of the most significant paradigm shifts in contemporary history our Unity movement has made its own shift as well. I believe that we can be the model of the possibilities for others to follow but, as Cindy Wigglesworth mentioned yesterday, we have to lead ourselves first. And I believe for any entity like us to thrive, we must continuously evolve.

We want to fully acknowledge and of course give credit for those who have brought the Association to the point that it is now. I believe we are on the edge of being uniquely positioned to make a much needed spiritual contribution at this time in history. And I believe that our charge is to move forward to build on that which has been built before us. I believe for our Association, our Unity movement to do this, it is going to take all of us. It's going to take the collective wisdom and all of our involvement and just as there are challenges that we face in our country, in our world, they cannot be solved by one person or one country alone for all of us to fulfill our potential as a movement. We must do it as a unified energy field.

Obviously, I can't do it, the board alone cannot do it; it must take all of us, all of our spiritual communities. And of course, recognizing that, earlier on in my tenure I asked all of our members who are *owners* of our movement for your input on what was most important—what are the most important things that we should focus on for our spiritual communities and for our Association.

What came up of course was that we really want to come out of hiding, to be a growing movement, and we clarified what our statement of basic principles are that created that pathway of spiritual living all across our movement as a starting point, and those who have been new and in pioneering ministries have asked for assistance about how we can develop those ministries. We hired Rev. Robin Ferguson as Director of Ministry Expansion to come on board to give us that ongoing support. She's being the champion also for creating new models for ministries in our movement. And while we are

in a process of developing our leadership and ministry development programs, as I'll talk about a little bit later, we created our first Thriving in Unity program in which over 200 ministries have used in some capacity or another; there are benchmarks that can serve as a roadmap to help deepen consciousness and organizational effectiveness of our ministries.

We felt we needed to re-look at our Youth of Unity program and we felt we needed to step back and say what would be appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. So, we brought all the stakeholders together in an appreciative process to say what is the vision that you would like to have as participants in that. That new program will be unfolding this month.

And as a result of your feedback, we are going to do our next iteration of the Thriving in Unity program; it has just been completed and you will hear more about that, and we see doing that in upcoming years.

As Marilyn indicated, probably one of the most valuable projects that we can engage in is to help deepen the awareness of our Unity movement; we are going to engage in a branding project that we will embark on with our partner, Unity School, so we can come up with a single overarching message for our movement, and this builds upon the recommendation that came from our Healing Congress in 2005 that we have a common vision for our movement. This may prepare us for a national/ international awareness campaign for Unity so we have a clear, unambiguous unified message that will enable us to spread the awareness of Unity like never before. (Applause)

I know that you know, and as Bishop Spong mentioned, and Cindy Wigglesworth mentioned, our world is hungry for what we have to offer. Many people do not know we exist. I mentioned to someone earlier that I went to my 35<sup>th</sup> college reunion a couple of weeks ago; I cannot believe that—you know, I feel young on the inside still. And they asked me to do our memorial service for our classmates who had made their transitions, and the normal person who had done that was not available and they wanted someone who can do kind of like an ecumenical service with a Christian base. I said, “Cool, I can do that.” And so I gave them a basic Unity message—you know, what we do at our memorial services, our celebration services, and many of them were just overwhelmed by the words and asked me what I was from and I told them Unity and they said they never

heard of Unity before. That just lets us know that we have an opportunity, for many people are hungry for what we have to offer. And I believe our role among other things is to get to the point as I like to say from time to time, that whenever we mention the word Unity we no longer have to explain what that is—*people will know*. That's what we're about.

(Applause)

I think Charles Fillmore would be all over this. And I think Jesus would probably be saying the same thing, saying you know, even greater things that I have done you shall do. He'd say look at us today, you've got all this stuff available to you—you've got fax machines, internet, cell phones, Blackberries, satellites and TVs and iPods and Facebook and Twitter and whatever else was invented since this morning. And he would tell us probably, "I on the other hand had to go from mountainside to mountainside on foot, teaching the Sermon on the Mount. But you on the other hand have the opportunity to do great things in spreading the message of Truth." And I believe that the work that we do gives us an opportunity to do that. Our identity is probably one of the most important messages that we could give along the way.

An area of high priority of course, that has been and is asked of us, is to focus on leadership and ministry development—the heart of our clarified mission as your home office. And as Charles Fillmore said, something to the effect that there is a great need for leadership under the banner of Christ that embodies love.

An important component of spiritual leadership is that we cannot go beyond the reality of our leadership consciousness. And leadership under the Christ is, among other things, bringing out people to work through the most challenging of circumstances. Today it is increasingly clear that no one person has all of the answers, that the paradigm of leadership is about how to bring out the leadership potential that is within all of us to serve the higher good—in our ministers, our spiritual leaders, our boards, our licensed Unity teachers, our lay leaders.

And we're not talking about changing principle at all. You know, principles do not change. What we are doing is looking at the fact that any time there is progress that is made in a short period of time, people are just taking an original principle and expanded

upon that. They've taken the principle, say, of aerodynamics and moved from simple flying machines of the Wright brothers, to basic planes, to commercial planes, to jets, to rockets, to space challengers; they've taken the original principle and expanded upon it, bringing something new into this experience that was not here before. And I believe that we are here to do the same thing, to take our understanding of the principles and apply them in a way that adapts to our *evolving* awareness of what's happening in our world that we find ourselves in today. It's going to take all of us to do that.

We're working on a number of programs under the leadership of Rev. Deborah Frownfelter and you'll hear more about that in the Enlightened Leadership program, or pilot programs, and they're going to be exceptional. I will say they're not going to be perfect; as someone told me, if anyone is perfect, please levitate from your seat and flow to the front of the room and tell us how you did that. We need to hear. But we're going to need everyone here to help us make us better, to continue to improve on what we are creating. With your feedback, your input, we'll be able to benefit our entire movement, and put together a program to benefit our movement and anyone who crosses our path. We have to see ourselves as partners, working together for the best that we can become. And as partners, we have a stake and a role to play in the direction of our movement and our Association and everyone here is an owner in that, and as an owner all of us are affected.

I want to presence in my report one item that we need to presence; I'm sure that you are aware that some have experienced the economic stresses that have buffeted against us as a result of economic fluctuations. And some are not affected at all, some are affected more or less than others, and spiritually we know that it is temporary and will pass. We know that the inexhaustible supply of Spirit is the *ultimate* reality. Yet in the meantime, we have to make temporary adjustments, we have to make choices, we have to do that until the new flow of prosperity renews itself in certain areas of our experience. And your Association understands it is *your* Association—it does not belong to anyone but *you*. It's just part of that *whole* and is not, you know, as a home office over here, and the regions over here and the sub-regions over there and spiritual communities down there and ministers in this corner and teachers over in this corner and the board over

there—there's only one thing going on—and that's God. That's the only one thing going on.

(Applause)

In the meantime we make our adjustments, and so yes we have had to significantly cut our expenses by probably \$700,000 this fiscal year; we've had to stop making contributions to our retirement plan for our employees; we haven't filled vacancies that we desperately need, we carried on our vision and our mission and the existing staff is really making a way out of no way. So we are at a choice point in our movement. Yet in the meantime we have a great opportunity to demonstrate the principles that we all believe in and prove that there is never a lack of resources, only a lack of full application of spiritual principle, that we know that we can make the difference in our lives, in our movement, and in our world.

Our board has looked at our own tithing policy and made an adjustment along the way to make sure we are fully in compliance with what we know tithing is about, because we feel that we cannot really expect anyone to do what we are not willing to do ourselves and be that energy field for our movement. Yes.

(Applause)

So we have moved away from what could be interpreted as expenses filling and calling it a tithe, and doing a full 10%; this just means of course a significant increase of about \$250,000 actual cash, but I tell you, if you believe in principle, you believe in principle and you just follow that.

(Applause)

We have been blessed by the support of our member ministries and the owners that are here, but I think now is the time more than ever to fully apply spiritual principle and activate the source of prosperity itself. We need to do this for Unity to carry out its spiritual purpose *for which we were born*. This is why we are here. Now is our time. One of the things that came back to me as we are looking at our own giving patterns of our movement, we have about a 1.58% giving across the movement on average, but I would say it is time for all of us to come and demonstrate our support for Unity. *Now*. Not tomorrow—right now. Spirit is telling us that now is the time. Spirit is telling us we are

the ones. I believe that we are on the edge of a breakthrough but it will not happen on the “wheels of inevitability,” as Dr. King reminds us.

For all of us who love this movement, now is not the time to step back, if anything, now is the time for us to step *up* like never before. The world needs us. It’s banging and knocking and calling our name and *we need to answer*. We need to answer.  
(Applause)

The board has stepped out on faith in support of our financial vision, our budget, that you will hear about shortly. It is time for us to support our movement that we love totally; it’s time to rally; it’s no time to wait. When I say the movement I’m not talking about just our Association but our Unity Institute, our Silent Unity, our regions, and every aspect of our Unity movement. And one action to take is when we can actually fully participate in the tithing principle, really devoted to our movement *now*. We’re not talking about a year from now. Because everyone will benefit, everyone will be blessed; it will help our movement as a whole. When we pull our energy field together we’ll vibrate and create something magnificent.

So I leave you with the question, what relationship do you want to create with your Association, your movement, for it to be successful? Just hold that for a moment, just hold that in consciousness, just for a moment of quiet. What relationship do I need to create with our Association and our movement for it to be successful? Spirit will guide you.

Someone has come forward with a wonderful opportunity to prime the pump, to increase our prosperity level, and has given us a \$250,000 matching gift challenge. We have about \$190,000 to go. Let’s try to match that in the next 90 days. Begin today.  
(Applause)

On your way out, you have an opportunity to leave a check or cash or fill out a credit card form—this will help prime the pump. Obviously we are going to have to continue over time, this is just a one-time thing, but this will begin to get us moving. We’re poised to be a major player in transformation in people’s lives and our communities and our world. It will only happen if we do it in the spirit of unity, working together to

support a common vision, for a purpose that transcends the small self and contributes to the common good.

It doesn't mean that we are always going to agree. We're always going to have good spirited debate on how to determine the best path to reach our goal, because diverse ideas can come together to yield solutions that will take us from where we are to where the Spirit of the living God wants us to be. It is never about a person, it is never about a personality, it is always about how to best anchor our movement in a divine and perfect spiritual idea that the Holy Spirit has for us.

You know, long ago there was some military leaders who learned not to march armies in cadence across bridges. When they came to a bridge they would stop marching; the soldiers would walk across the bridge one at a time because they would find out that if they marched in unison they would create a vibration that would shake the bridge off its foundation. Let us think about that idea of those soldiers when we envision the future of our Association and our Unity movement. As more of us harbor the same vision of the high possibilities of Unity, and march in a unified vibration, anything that we can seed will be accomplished.

We need everyone. One person alone cannot do it; a group acting alone cannot do it, it's going to take *all of us*. And our collective energy, united in God awareness, united in a unity of awareness, will move mountains. As Charles Fillmore reminds us, in substance we will quicken the pulse of our community and I would say, our world. This is what we are about. This is why we are here. I say, let's do it, let's do it in unity, and let's do it *now*. We're the ones. God bless you.