



# A Brief History of Unity EarthCare



*The following chronological summation gives a condensed idea of the way that EarthCare came to the forefront as an overt commitment in the Unity movement.*

*What it cannot do is accurately report and honor the many unheralded people and the thousands of selfless hours of effort, skills, commitment, and grassroots struggle that accomplished this international recognition of the spiritual importance of caring for Divine Creation. We are forever in the debt of the spiritual champions that led us forward.*

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**Myrtle Fillmore** --- "I was almost accused of being a nature worshiper when I was a little girl. And I have always loved what I see in nature, as well as in all artists who are so close to the beauty side of God. Nature is surely the glorified face of Good. See the beauty about you and you do see the manifestation of the infinite Mind." (Quoted in *Myrtle Fillmore: Mother of Unity* by Thomas Witherspoon, p. 280)

**Charles Fillmore** --- "[I]ntelligence [is] inherent in every form, animate or inanimate.... [E]ven rocks and all minerals have life.... We should be speaking words of truth to everything, not only to [hu]mankind but to the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms." (*Christian Healing*, p. 68)

**Rickert Fillmore** --- designs Unity Village to be self-sustaining, using building materials from the land and creating "air-conditioning" with circulating fountain water.

## 2001

- Unity minister Kathy Harwood Long represents Unity at "Sacred Encounters," an interfaith conference on the environment in the Pacific Northwest.

## 2002

- Unity's NW Regional Conference adopts earth care work in the Region. Blessing of the Waters ceremony presented. A task team is given a 5-year charge to develop the NW Region's vision for caring for creation.
- Unity Church of Portland publishes booklet "A Moving Guide to EarthCare."

## 2003

- NW Region begins development of ideas for a Unity Earth Care International Team. Initiates mentoring for other Unity churches interested in earth care. Creates Earth Care Banner and shares with other ministries. Develops 7-fold "Path" as model for earth care work in a church community: pray, vision, educate, inspire, network, communicate, and act.

## 2004

- NW Region includes Earth Care Program as annual budgeted item. Develops and disseminates information packets for ministries. Establishes earth care email address. Publishes articles, activity sheets, earth-centered prayers. Develops Resource Book. Establishes earth care presence at national conference.

## 2005

- AUC's *Just in Time* newsletter publishes article by Unity minister Kathy Harwood Long, now in Great Lakes Region.
- NW Region develops workshop *Spirit Walks the Earth* to help groups start earth care work.

## 2006

- Great Lakes Region adopts Earth Care as part of their ministering efforts in the Region.
- NW Region establishes link on AUC website to Earth Care page on NW Region's website.
- Appreciative Inquiry Summits reveal extensive interest in Earth Care work and in Spiritual Social Action. AUC Ministry Team of EarthCare forms under umbrella of Spiritual Social Action.

## 2007

- First AUC Earth Care table is sponsored at AUCI People's Convention by Great Lakes and Northwest Regions, and Unity of Overland Park, KS. *Spirit Walks the Earth* workshop is presented.
- International EarthCare Team begins conference calls to further EarthCare work.
- Unity Village Hotel and Conference Center becomes first hotel in Midwest (and 4<sup>th</sup> in U.S.) to receive "green" LEED certification from the United States Green Building Council.

## 2008

- 3 members of Unity international EarthCare Team attend January Mid-year meetings at Unity Village to firm up EarthCare activities, goals, and documents.
- International EarthCare gets own logo and AUCI-authorized name: Unity Churches International EarthCare (UCIE) Team
- Documents are developed for EarthCare Covenant, Commitment, and Certification of individual churches by UCIE.
- Documents are developed to help any ministry or Region begin EarthCare work.
- EarthCare establishes section as part of SSA webpage on AUCI's unity.org

- AUCI Thriving In Unity 1.0 program includes EarthCare as a Benchmark and component.

## **2009**

- Contact magazine features SSA, with articles specific to EarthCare.
- AUCI publishes *Small Group Ministry Study Guide* on “Spiritual Social Action,” with a lesson featuring EarthCare.
- 2 churches achieve EarthCare Certification, and are honored at AUCI People’s Convention.
- AUCI Thriving In Unity 2.0 program again includes EarthCare as a Benchmark and component.
- UCIE has table at People’s Convention, with presence in “Awakening the Dreamer” symposium and in SSA video. UCIE presentations made at 3 Regional meetings.