LENT 2015

Learning to Let Go
A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT

Our ministry is supported primarily by the freewill offerings of friends like you. Your generosity helps make it possible for us to offer this inspirational booklet. Our desire is to make Unity literature available to everyone who wants it, especially those most in need of spiritual encouragement.
Lent is the name given to a period of fasting and abstinence in traditional Christian churches—specifically, the 40 days (plus six Sundays) between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. The word “lent” comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for “spring,” which in turn is derived from the Germanic root for “long”—referring to the fact that in the spring, the days become noticeably longer.

Just as spring is the season for new and expanded life, Lent is a time of spiritual rebirth and renewal. It is a time for realigning ourselves with the Christ Mind and allowing ourselves to be transformed at depth. We may consciously choose to forego (or “fast” from) negative thoughts or behaviors that create a sense of separation from God or from our own authentic selves. Or we may simply devote additional time to prayer, meditation, and thoughtful reflection.

The spiritual process of Lent was so important to Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore that he made it the subject of one of his most helpful books, *Keep a True Lent.*
In it he defines a 46-day process, with an individual focus and affirmation for each day. In this booklet a number of Unity writers have chosen to follow his structure, contributing their own thoughts and affirmations for each day.

Lent is a time for progressive unfoldment. As we heed the guidance of the still, small voice within us, the way is made clear. As we commit to following the steps we have outlined for ourselves, we are transformed. We are renewed, restored, rejuvenated—reborn!

Blessings on your journey,

Your Friends in Unity
Internal Spring-Cleaning

By Rev. Ed Townley

Years ago, in the early stages of my 12-step recovery, I was experiencing a major crisis. Today, I can’t even remember what that crisis was about, but it seemed earth-shaking at the time. In desperation I called my sponsor, who calmly suggested I might find an answer in those 12 steps.

“The steps won’t help,” I replied impatiently, “I’ve already done the steps.”

“You don’t do the steps once,” he gently explained. “It needs to be an ongoing practice.”
I think we often approach a spiritual practice like the 46 days of Lent in the same way. “Lent? Oh, no. I did that last year.”

But a lot of mental debris can accumulate in our individual consciousness in a year. Fears, resentments, limitations find their way in when we don’t even notice. And they quietly, subtly begin to affect the beliefs defining our life experience.

Lent as a spiritual practice is a mental and emotional spring-cleaning. It allows us to examine the accumulated thoughts and attitudes in consciousness, and decide what we want to keep and what we can joyfully release.

When you finish a spring-cleaning of your physical environment, you don’t expect it to remain in that pristine state forever. A year unfolds, a day at a time. People come and go. Things come and stay. Life happens and, item by item, the closets and drawers fill to overflowing. It’s time for another spring-cleaning!

Lent is like that. We need to center ourselves once again in the universal spiritual principles that have become the focus and purpose of our lives, and to gently remove any accumulated beliefs that don’t belong.

As spiritual beings we move through this human experience like magnets, picking up all kinds of idle
thoughts and musty beliefs along the way. It’s not that we’re doing anything wrong. It’s how life works. It’s how the creative process works.

We once believed ourselves to be victims of those fear-based beliefs, powerless to prevent them from defining our lives. Now we know we are truly beings of infinite power. That means this Lenten spring-cleaning can be joyful and easy—“like brushing away cobwebs” according to Charles Fillmore, the great American mystic and cofounder of Unity.

We can, of course, use this spiritual process for any 46-day period. However, if we choose to begin on Ash Wednesday with the intention of embracing the power of Easter with more love and clarity, we will feel the loving support of many others joining us in a great collective clearing and cleaning. We can be certain the result will be an Easter experience that will allow us to appreciate ourselves and our lives from a higher spiritual consciousness than ever before.

As for me, I can’t pretend, even to myself, I don’t have a few cobwebs to clear. So, yes, I’m going to “do” another Lent. I invite you to join in—both for the clearing that will happen in your consciousness and because the divine light of your Beingness will make the process easier and more joyful for all.
1st Day of Lent
Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2015

Denial

By Rev. Claudell County

No thought, belief, or experience has the power to limit my spirit.

Denials are consciously chosen thoughts that remove the energy from something disturbing us and invest it instead in a choice that brings peace and clarity. We all experience fear or worry. However, we can choose to remove the power from these thoughts and place it in the Divine Presence of faith, courage, and trust.

Instead of succumbing to irritation, frustration, or discouragement, we can disempower these thoughts and focus our attention on the Divine Presence of patience and acceptance. Rather than blaming, judging, or feeling helpless, we can choose the Divine Presence of compassion and forgiveness.

The power of choice is always ours. We can consciously shift the focus from what we don’t want to experience, to what we want most of all.
2nd Day of Lent
Thursday, February 19, 2015

Affirmation
By Rev. Claudell County

I affirm my good and attract even greater good.

An affirmation is a statement of Truth. It may not reflect our current experience in the outer, but it already exists in the inner realm of divine ideas. We use affirmations to manifest divine ideas in the physical world. The empowering words connect us to the energy, imagination, and power to bring forth our desires. As we speak affirming words, we anchor them in body, mind, and spirit. We trust them to do their perfect work, guiding and equipping us to take right action.

An affirmation is our inner voice giving birth to the highest truth, such as:

- I am in tune with Divine Love and Wisdom that guides all my decisions.
- All countries are now in harmony with an abundance of health, prosperity, and peace.
- There is one Holy Presence in my life, and I have faith that all is well.
- I am vibrantly alive with a clear path and the courage to follow it.
God

By Rev. Pat Veenema

*There is only One Presence and One Power in the Universe and in my life, God the Good.*

Today’s affirmation reflects a nondualistic concept of God. There is only One Presence in the Universe, and we humans are one with and part of that Oneness which is God. All of creation is the living action and essence of God.

When we see life from this perspective, our worldview changes dramatically. Jealousy, greed, killing, bullying, and dishonor are negated. Power struggles fall by the wayside. We see that in essence, we are all one. With clarity and ease, we embrace and live the truth taught by our Way Shower, Jesus, to “love God and your neighbor as yourself.”
I am in God, and God is in me, as me.

When Moses asked the burning bush on Mt. Horeb, “Who shall I tell the children of Israel has sent me?” the voice from the bush said, “I AM hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:14 KJV). The writers of the Hebrew Bible were identifying our divine nature with that of God Nature. So when Pharaoh asked Moses, “Who is your god?” the answer was, “I AM.”

As we focus on the truth that God is All That Is, we know at a deep level God reveals Itself in this world as us. When we interact with the world, we choose how we display the presence and power of God in us. Rather than identifying our I AM nature with negative attributes—I am sick or I am poor or I am unworthy—we can choose the positive: I am Love. We can choose to show up as love in our families, workplaces, spiritual communities, and elsewhere. As we radiate love, we express the pure and perfect essence of God.
My thoughts are renewed by the creative spirit of God within me.

In Romans 12:2, it is written, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

The altar represents the sacred point of the divine renewal at the center of our being. It is the place in consciousness where our human nature meets and gives way to our divine nature. Our lower thoughts are released to make room for higher thoughts to appear. Discernment occurs through the creative power of Spirit, and in a holy instant, we know “what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Through prayer and meditation we kneel at the inner altar with a desire for spiritual growth, a longing for a greater experience of God. We surrender to a higher order and are lifted in consciousness as our awareness of God expands.
Twelve Powers

By Revs. Paula Mekdeci and Paul Hasselbeck

I draw on my spiritual abilities to more fully express the Christ in me.

Each of us has 12 divine abilities within us that constitute a storehouse of spiritual gifts. We can choose to more consciously express these attributes in order to live more fully and abundantly. Our Twelve Powers are: Faith, Strength, Wisdom, Love, Power, Imagination, Understanding, Will, Order, Zeal, Elimination, and Life. Everything we could ever want or need!

Just as Jesus went apart to pray and reconnect with the Divine, we can turn within to become more centered, aware, and awake. As we do, we rediscover the divine powers within us, and the opportunities to use them in our daily lives. Attuned to Spirit, we let go of limiting thoughts, fears, and doubts, and clear the way for the full expression of who we truly are.
6TH DAY OF LENT
Tuesday, February 24, 2015

Faith

By Rev. Paula Mekdeci

I am confident and faith-filled as I step into all I can be.

Faith is our ability to believe beyond what we can perceive through our five senses. It is an innate knowing. When we are filled with faith, we are calm, steady, and optimistic. We know that despite any temporary appearances, at the deepest level, all is well, and all will be well.

We all have our moments of fear and doubt, but when we reconnect with Spirit, we feel a greater power within taking hold. It is the power to move through any challenge or storm; the power of God moving through us. As we breathe, relax, and trust, the way is made clear.
I am stronger than any challenge, inside or out.

Strength is our divine power to stay the course, persevere, and withstand temptation. We often think in terms of physical strength, but our spiritual strength is so much greater. Our spiritual strength is the power of who we truly are—our integrity, our convictions, our unflagging commitment to doing what is ours to do. It is the foundation for our courage and tenacity.

When Jesus was confronted by the religious authorities of his day, he used his spiritual strength to stick to what he believed. In spite of pressure to change, he held to his Truth and lived from it.

When we apply our divine strength, we are empowered and emboldened to step into our greatness. We are free to be the unique expression of God we are.
Wisdom

By Rev. Paula Mekdeci

I awaken to the higher wisdom within me.

Many of us admire and appreciate the people in our lives we consider to be wise. We think of them as having a broader perspective, a depth of experience, and a seemingly effortless ability to compare and contrast, evaluate and consider from a well-reasoned point of view.

We have this same wisdom within us. As we step back from our daily affairs, we can connect more deeply with our divine wisdom, and activate it more fully. Wisdom allows us to observe our own thoughts and actions, and to discern between the voice of ego and the voice of higher consciousness. We can be reasoned and methodical in evaluating any situation, and move forward with confidence, purpose, and grace.

By consciously using our power of wisdom, we can open to the guidance of Spirit and discern how to do and be our best.
I am blessed by the overcoming power of Love.

We are told in 1 Corinthians 13:8 that “love never ends.” All other things may pass away, but love endures. Love is another name for God, the Divine Source of all. Love is God, the binding substance that holds all creation together.

As we expand our awareness, we see love binds our world together. When challenges arise, love is the energy carrying us through. It gives us the strength to endure beyond the present moment. It guides us forward to be healed and restored. Love opens the way.

The human love we share is only a tiny facet of the great love God is expressing through all of creation. We open our hearts and know God’s love is always with us.
I use my power to manifest the life I want.

Although we sometimes think life happens to us, life happens through us—and we direct its course. We have the innate power to choose and direct our thoughts and feelings. At any moment, we can decide how we wish to think about ourselves and others. In any situation, we can consciously choose how to respond.

We can use our divine power to overcome negative self-talk, to avoid “we/they” thinking, and to find the opportunity in every challenge. We can expand our awareness by choosing thoughts aligned with Spirit rather than ego.

We are the artists painting the picture of our own lives. Through the wise use of our divine power, we create a life of triumph, fulfillment, and joy.
I use my imagination in positive and creative ways that serve my highest good and the highest good of others.

Imagination makes it possible to experience a whole world inside our minds. Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore said imagination is “the common meeting ground between God and man.” It allows us to see any situation from a different point of view or to create a new one.

Children have a natural ability to play in the field of imagination. But as we grow older, we may get so caught up in our busy lives, we fail to use our imagination constructively to dream, visualize, imagine, and create. Reactivating our power of Imagination requires sacred time—a time in which we rediscover the child within us, and let our imagination roam free.

In Matthew 18:1-3, Jesus is quoted as saying, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Childlike freedom comes with an authentic approach to the kingdom within. Free creative expression is our natural state. The field of imagination is always awaiting our return to play. Through imagination, we have the power to create and set free our own bright, colorful, and promising world.
I extend myself to understand others.

I have the divine ability to not only comprehend with my head, but understand with my heart. I move from intellectual knowledge to spiritual understanding. I not only grasp what is said, but the meaning behind it.

Through the power of Understanding, I make a heart connection with others. I sense their needs and feelings. I expand my awareness to see through their eyes. The more I open my heart, the more compassion I feel.

At the core of Jesus’ ministry was love and compassion. As we draw on the power of understanding within us, we remember that at heart and in spirit, we are one.
I make and implement decisions that support my highest good.

Each of us has an internal compass pointing to our “true north.” As we release outer distractions and turn within, we connect with divine guidance. Centered in Spirit, we tap into the will to make wise decisions and put them into action. We gracefully and easily choose, decide, command, and direct. Our head and heart are aligned, and we step forward with calm self-assurance.

We may sometimes feel weak or inadequate—but in Truth, we have all the will, wisdom, and clarity we need. We find our power not in outside sources, but in the deep well of Christ potential within.
13th Day of Lent

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Order

By Rev. Paula Mekdeci

My life is unfolding in perfect order.

Beneath any seeming chaos in my inner or outer life is a pattern of order waiting to be brought forward. As I tap into the power of order within me, I easily and naturally prioritize, organize, adjust, and balance all involved.

I can create greater order in my inner world as well as in the outer. I use my power of order to assess my life and put first the thoughts and feelings that help me express Christ Consciousness. I am clear as I bring to the forefront life-giving, oneness-affirming thoughts and actions, and release judgmental, negative, or counterproductive beliefs and ways. I allow Spirit to guide me in releasing what no longer serves me, and focus on my highest good. I live a life of order and alignment.
Zeal
By Rev. Jeanmarie Eck

The power of Zeal is awakened within me.
I accomplish all things with renewed enthusiasm.

From our human perspective, life can sometimes seem routine. We may lose touch with our passion for living life fully. But when we see the world from a spiritual perspective, we behold the glory of God’s creation and know we can live each day as a divine celebration.

Just as flowers open their petals to the sun as if to say, “The glory of God expresses as me now!” we, too, can fling wide our arms and affirm with zeal and enthusiasm, “The glory of God expresses as me now!”

Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore once wrote: “Zeal is the great universal force that impels man to spring forward in a field of endeavor and accomplish the seemingly miraculous” (Atom-Smashing Power of Mind, p. 26). Today we allow that great universal force to renew us and spur us forward to accomplish more than we thought possible.
I release what no longer serves my highest good.

In this season of transformation, we shed any thoughts, habits, feelings, or belongings that do not serve us. We gently release anything that does not further or support the greater expression of our innate Divinity.

Just as some animals shed their old skins, we prayerfully eliminate old ways no longer meant to be ours. We create space for what is new in us to grow and shine.

If a new habit is to be formed, we pray and begin it today. If a possession no longer serves us, we return it to the universe for recirculation. If our thoughts are not uplifting, we cleanse our minds of fear and doubt. We make sacred space for new, ever-better ways of being who we are meant to be.
Thank you, Spirit, for the gift of Life!

In Thornton Wilder’s play, *Our Town*, a young woman dies but is granted her request to return to earth for just one day. In the middle of her day of return, she is overcome by the amazing experience of Life. She asks to return to the land of the dead, exclaiming that the earth and life are “too wonderful.” Then she asks if any people ever realize the awesome and wonderful nature of Life while they are living? In response to this question, the narrator of the play responds: “No—the saints and poets maybe.”

However, we have the power to change this response. We can awaken to the miracle of life right here, right now. The same spark of Divinity that was in Jesus is in all of us. The Christ within is our real essence and true nature—giving us full capacity to know and appreciate our oneness with all that is.

Like saints and poets, we have the power to “see things rightly,” as Rev. Eric Butterworth once said. Life may seem “too wonderful” for words, but this day—and every day—we can know the Truth and say, “Thank you, Spirit, for the gift of Life!”
Today I see our planet Earth as the expression of divine love and infinite possibility it truly is. I accept my role in maintaining its perfect health.

We rarely think of conservation as an aspect of our spiritual path. More often, we use “conservation” to describe the importance of preserving the natural resources of our planet. That kind of conservation is, of course, important. It is an aspect of humankind’s responsibility for all expressions of life described as “dominion” in the Book of Genesis.

Nevertheless, we cannot conserve the blessings of our planet unless we recognize the ways we are contributing to its problems. Negative environmental impacts are the result of ignorant or unconscious use of our own creative power. We inherited a perfect world, and we can maintain its perfection through the careful, conscious, and loving use of our creative power. One of the joyful by-products of our Lenten journey is becoming conscious conservators of our mortal home.
I follow Jesus Christ, allowing his love and wisdom to transform me and bless others with inspiration.

Jesus’ life and teachings are as relevant today as ever. According to Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore, Jesus most fully demonstrated the Christ nature, which is the true identity of every human being (The Revealing Word, p. 111). This means we all may choose to become Jesus’ disciples, following in his footsteps and looking to his example for spiritual transformation.

Jesus knew God as unlimited love, abundant life, divine wisdom, and enduring strength. Yet, he is not simply a figure of the past. Jesus is always present and available for guidance and inspiration, as Fillmore says, having never “left us or gone to some faraway heaven” (Talks on Truth, p. 169). Through scripture and prayer, we can attune ourselves to the perfect pattern of God revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The more we align ourselves with Jesus, the more we incarnate God in our daily lives, becoming the site at which true resurrection takes place.
As we center ourselves in the presence of God, our Christ nature unfolds.

Spiritual growth is the unfoldment of our Christ nature. It cannot be forced, but rather is called forth as we spend time in prayer and meditation. When we center ourselves in the presence of God within us, we become aware that we are co-creators of our lives and set our intentions on expressing our true nature, our spiritual consciousness.

Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore wrote that humanity is “the garden of God, of which the soil is the omnipresent thought substance” (The Revealing Word, p. 100). When we think about creating the kingdom of heaven within us, we set forth the creative process by which the kingdom becomes manifest.
Surrender

By Evelyn Foreman

Surrendering to Spirit, I experience peace and wholeness.

A Spirit-filled life means fearless living. We bravely surrender our hearts, personalities, and human desires to the Spirit of Christ within. Through faith and courage, we open to the divine guidance and perfect order of God.

In prayer and meditation, our way is made clear. Our communion with God empowers us to release and let go of any personal limitations.

The transcending power of the Christ Spirit within guides us and reveals in perfect time all that is ours to do and all that is ours to know.

As we release outer attachments and trust in divine guidance, we manifest the unfolding pattern of good that is God.
Created in the image of God, I am whole in body, mind, and spirit.

In Truth, we are always in our wholeness—body, mind, and spirit. However, in experience, we sometimes lose sight of this truth. When we are hurting or suffering, we may believe we are less than whole. Through prayer, our inner eye sees through the illusion and restores our awareness of wholeness. Allowing ourselves to be guided by Spirit to a realization of Truth is the path of healing.

We are perfect expressions in every experience, and if we allow it, our experiences can point us back to the truth of wholeness. If we are suffering in body, mind, or spirit, it is an experience that will pass. Truth abides. We can return to center at any time, rediscovering the presence of God within us and our Truth of Wholeness.
Grace

By Evelyn Foreman

Grace flows through me, as me.

Grace is the activity of the One Power and One Presence of God. It is the transforming power of God allowing us to freely and openly express our Christ nature. Through the Christ nature within, we allow mercy, compassion, goodwill, and favor to channel in us, through us, and as us.

The conscious awareness that we live and move and have our being in the midst of God allows us to realize grace. As children of the most high, we are blessed not only as the recipients of God's grace, but as the very channels through which grace flows.

Grace is realized through abiding faith in the ceaseless, creative, loving energy of God, which knows only good for us. This good conspires, aligns, and puts in perfect divine order all people, places, circumstances, and situations to foster our personal expression of our Christ nature.
As I move from my head to my heart, my perspective expands and solutions appear.

In the same way I adjust a telescope to see more clearly, I can shift my perspective to gain a clearer view. I can focus my attention for a sharper understanding or expand my view for greater context.

Jesus, our Master Teacher, often suggested a change in perspective. In the Beatitudes, he suggested we adjust our thinking. In Matthew 5:3, Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” In Matthew 5:8, he said: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” We see from a different view when we move from our head to our heart.

As we expand and refine our perspective, we gain a deeper understanding and open to right solutions.
I rest and am restored through the power of silence.

Although we think of the Sabbath as a day of rest, it serves a high spiritual purpose. The Sabbath marks the final step of the creative process—a time when our thoughts and activities take hold by becoming deeply rooted. In the stillness, we connect more deeply with who we are and all that is. We tap into infinite possibility.

Our greatest insights often come in these “down times.” Quiet in mind and body, we are fully open to the voice and presence of Spirit. We are open receptacles for wisdom and inspiration. The loving, healing power of God moves easily through every cell of our being, and we are renewed. We pause, breathe, and look at life from a broader perspective: Life is good, and all is well.
Consciousness

By Rev. Ed Townley

I AM a complete and perfect expression of divine love, joy, and abundance.

Now halfway through our Lenten process, we have brushed away many cobwebs. Today, we begin to understand more clearly the Truth that has been lying hidden behind the debris of ignorance and error thought. This Truth is the magnificent power of our own consciousness.

Our creative power has been obscured by false, error thoughts about who, in Truth, we are. We are not victims. We are not flawed or imperfect in any way. We are never separate from the infinite love of the Divine. We are, in Truth, divine consciousness in individual expression. Emboldened and empowered by this awareness, we turn to the journey ahead with confidence. We are ready to experience each step toward our resurrection into a unity of awareness and choice that will lift our consciousness to the new dimension Jesus Christ called “the kingdom of heaven.”
The healing power of God is always active in my mind, my body, and my life. I am healthy, whole, and well.

All healing is spiritual healing—and it is unlimited. With each breath, our mind, body, and spirit are engaged in the ongoing activity of the Divine within us. God within is always doing perfect work. This is our very nature—to heal and be healed. Jesus knew this and demonstrated it, teaching that we are far more than we believe.

We are healed by our faith—not from the outside, but in partnership with the divine activity of Spirit within. We are not weak, broken, or limited. The restoring power of Spirit is present in every cell and every thought. Every experience contains within it our perfect wholeness, abundant energy, and well-being. Even times of sadness expand our capacity for joy. From disappointment comes new possibilities. Spiritual healing is always available to us. It is our Christ nature to heal and be healed.
Nonresistance

By Elise Cowan

Regardless of outer circumstances, I remain centered in the peace of God.

Sometimes things don’t go the way we would like them to go. We may feel we have been treated rudely, unkindly, or unfairly. Yet despite outer conditions, we can choose to stay centered in the love of God. When we do, peace permeates our very being.

In Matthew 5:43-45, Jesus taught we are not to question someone’s motive but to love them without judgment. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven.” What happens when we love our enemies? We no longer have enemies! When we practice nonresistance, we allow the kingdom of heaven to be made manifest this very moment.
I am an open channel for the good that is always seeking to express through me.

In the first creation story (Gen. 1:1-31), God spoke into being the substance of all that would ever be, including the idea of man created in the image and likeness of the Divine. Every idea, because it came from God and was called “good” by God, was perfect.

In the second creation story (Gen. 2:1-25), the “physical” man, Adam, was created to bring those perfect ideas into manifestation in the realm known as Eden, or divine consciousness, where all possibilities of growth exist.

The kingdom of heaven is a place in consciousness where the perfectly ideated creation awaits to be birthed through us—on earth as it is in Heaven. The kingdom of heaven is available to all beings right here and now.

Whenever we create something in our lives, the idea for it originates in the kingdom. It was born through us and appears on earth as perfectly as our level of understanding allows it to appear.
God as Principle

By Revs. Paula Mekdeci and Paul Hasselbeck

God is always present and available to me.

Change is the law of life, but some things never change—like the power and presence of God. If at any time I feel removed from or separate from God, it is I who have moved—not God. As I turn within, I rediscover the presence that never leaves. I am comforted, reassured, and guided.

God is the unchangeable principle that underlies all existence. Just as the principles and laws of mathematics and science are utterly dependable, so, too, are the qualities of God.

Anytime I feel alone or afraid, I can lean on the everlasting presence of God and know I am safe, I am loved, and all is well. All that God is, is present and available to me now and always.
Miracles

By Elise Cowan

Centered on the omnipresent expression of God, I manifest abundant blessings.

The New Testament is filled with stories of Jesus healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and achieving miraculous feats. Jesus taught that these were not miracles, but expressions of pure being. He taught that what he did, we could do, too, and greater things still.

It is through our faith in the omnipresent laws of Spirit that miracles occur. Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore wrote, “In reality miracles are events that take place as a result of the operation of a higher, unknown law” (The Revealing Word, p. 135). When we keep our awareness on this higher law, we manifest healing in our lives and in the lives of others. We are expressions of the infinite, dynamic power of thought.
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

When South Africa triumphantly overcame apartheid, it did so largely because of the courageous leadership of Nelson Mandela. Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years, many of them in an excruciatingly small jail cell on Robben Island.

Despite this confinement and the mental and emotional strain and humiliation, Mandela claimed he was always “free.” Like the apostle Paul, he had “learned the secret of being content in any and every situation.” As Paul proclaimed: “I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

We may not face the magnitude of trials endured by Nelson Mandela or the apostle Paul. However, their overcoming can inspire us and remind us that the Christ within is more powerful than any challenge we may confront. We can always choose to be spiritually free.
29th Day of Lent
Monday, March 23, 2015

Patience
By Rev. Barbara Hadley

I set aside concerns with the material world and put on the mind of Christ.

When we trust in God, we invite poise, calm, and harmony into all experiences. We become patient.

During Lent we can consciously take a break from the constant use of our phones and computers to rest in prayer. We can patiently trust that God is the power of love, resolving all difficulties. As we put on the mind of Christ by centering in love, we develop a greater sense of freedom from our personal struggles. We experience calm and inner peace.

Remembering that our connection with God is primary to our well-being, we gain a spiritual understanding of everything in our lives and expand our ability to be patient. We know no matter what the outer circumstance, all is well.
I trust my Inner Guidance.

The Internet and social media provide many opportunities to form judgments and make comments. It’s as easy as typing and posting a quick response.

We are gifted with intellect, allowing us to make quick decisions. However, quick judgments often come straight from the ego. They are tainted with ingrained biases and individual preferences.

Spiritual judgment comes from a different level of awareness. It arises from deep wisdom, heart-centered discernment, and an understanding of the realm of God as Love.

When we are tempted to jump to quick judgments, we can pause for a moment, breathe, drop our attention to our heart, and remember our God Self, which is Love. We can then drop into our solar plexus, the place of Inner Guidance. From there we can discern the loving response we truly wish to give another.
The word for Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for “spring,” and it is the season of healing, of mother nature being in a space of darkness and then starting to bud as life moves toward the light. It is the season when we celebrate what is new in nature.

Germination is the energy of sprouting forth, of nature’s life force coming into existence.

The same is true for us as we approach Easter. Space, time, and silence are the conditions for germinating ideas, understanding, and feelings emerging from our changing and growing minds. Lent is the season of taking time and space before entering into our greatest work of all—that which is sprouting forth and new as a result of embracing the resurrection story. Lent is the season of diving deeply into that reservoir of self, where the answers to our futures have been germinating.
I am one with the Power that created me.

The word “atonement” can trigger thoughts of guilt, shame, and sin. But these are man-made; they are not from God.

If we read and say the word as “at-one-ment,” we feel a shift inside. We remember we are one with God. Living this truth frees us from concerns.

This is the real meaning of atonement. It means alignment with the divine presence that is always directing us to our good—reconciliation with our own nature as the Christ, both human and divine. Jesus Christ demonstrated how to overcome false fears, illusions of lack, limitation, disease, and even death. At-one-ment with God rescues us from limited thinking and frees us from harmful patterns, addictions, financial fears, self-centeredness, and insecurities.

We embrace our wholeness in mind and body. Just as our Master Teacher showed, in Christ Consciousness we are in sacred alignment with God and all of life. To fully express this consciousness requires spiritual practice and insight. But the joys of at-one-ment, knowing God as Jesus did as unconditional love and eternal life, are available to us every moment.
The “Transfiguration of Jesus” is an event in the New Testament narrative in which Jesus is transfigured, or metamorphosed, becoming radiant on the top of a mountain with three of his disciples. It is one of the miracles of Jesus in the gospels.

The word “transfiguration” literally means to change shape—to move from one form to another. It signifies profound change of some kind. Where else do we experience a more profound change then when we are intimately in communion with God? And what is this communion? It is prayer.

The purpose of prayer is simply to transform us, to help us put on the “mind of Christ.” We go to prayer to be transfigured, to come to see the world in a new form, to practice the presence of God, to put on a heart of justice, love, and compassion. When we are transfigured, we become a new soul expressing radiance—not just on a mountaintop, but everywhere!
Transmutation

By Rev. Kelly Isola

I create my new reality through the process of transmutation.

While transformation is healing, transmutation is empowering. It leads us to a doorway that, when entered, becomes the journey of bringing the divine into our human experience.

Transmutation is our ability to change the nature of something. It is literally the miracle of imagining a space within ourselves and with each other, that not only embodies the qualities of creation, but is creation.

The Lenten path to Easter is a demonstration of transmutation because it is our imagination creating a new world that supports all life through our individual and collective resurrections. This season of death and rebirth is a time spent in our heart center where the forces of our divine nature are transmuted, realizing universal love and compassion.

When we accept this realization, we are creating our reality and tapping into transmutation. Our true power of I AM CREATOR is exemplified. With our power of transmutation, we embrace imagination to rebirth and sculpt our world for the greatest good of all humanity.
Today I see the promise of Lent as a clear and joyful vision of the possibilities of my spiritual commitment. I move forward fearlessly, eager to experience my personal resurrection into a new dimension of experience and expression.

Charles Fillmore describes Jerusalem metaphysically as “the habitation of peace, possession of peace, vision of peace [and] abode of prosperity” (Keep a True Lent, p. 188). Just as Jesus entered Jerusalem fully aware of the pain and joy that awaited, so do we enter this day in our Lenten process with the end in view.

Our spiritual journey is not yet complete; there are painful choices still to be made, pesky cobwebs still to clear. Today we appreciate the distance we have come and the shadows we have dissolved in the process. Today we see the “vision of peace” as a promise that the fulfillment of this journey will be well worth the effort. The ultimate resurrection is assured. We will be truly reborn into that joyful place of peace and prosperity that Jerusalem represents.
I lift my heart and mind and transcend my limited understanding.

Suppose for a moment life is like a jigsaw puzzle. Every choice we make puts a piece into place. When we can’t see the big picture, life may seem random and meaningless. When the picture is revealed, we suddenly see how the pieces fit together and why. We experience transcendence.

We transcend our own life’s puzzles by viewing them from a higher spiritual level. From this vantage point, we see that all of life’s experiences contain gifts and meaning. We transcend our mistakes when we realize they are lessons learned. We transcend our pains when we realize they are wake-up calls for self-care. We transcend our grief by reaching out to one another. We transcend our fears when we realize we do not walk in the dark alone. By staying attuned to the bigger picture, we can live a transcendent life.
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Forgiveness

By Rev. Jeanmarie Eck

I forgive fully and completely.

As Jesus was being crucified, Luke 23:34 reports him saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”

At the level of our humanity, it may seem impossible to forgive a wrongdoing as violent as murder, or as heartbreaking as divorce, theft, or deception. At the human level, Jesus could not forgive, but at the level of his Divinity, calling upon the Father within, his inner strength empowered him to forgive the cruel way in which he died.

As we relate to Jesus’ last moments, we may recall an event that remains unresolved. We can surrender this pain to God, and know God will guide us in experiencing total forgiveness. We may need to release our hurt to God repeatedly, but it will not be a burden forever. Through the power of God within, we are free to forgive fully and completely.
Communion

By Rev. Toni Stephens Coleman

I release anything that stands between me and my highest good. I become still and receptive as I commune with God.

When Jesus taught his disciples to take and eat the bread as his body, and drink the wine as his blood, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” (John 6:60) They didn’t understand Jesus was presenting his body as a metaphor for the body of spiritual ideas he had taught them. He presented his blood as a metaphor for the substance of life, always circulating and purifying. He offered a clue to the deeper metaphysical meaning when he said, “… the one who eats this bread will live forever” (John 6:58).

Jesus taught us to absorb his teachings into our lives. What we hold in our hearts and minds creates the sacred feast of communion with the Holy Spirit of God. God is constant and unchanging. In our thoughts, prayers, and intentions, we align ourselves with the Divine through sacred communion. One with the One, we are guided to our highest good.
I surrender my will to the One Will and I am guided and supported by my faculties of Faith, Wisdom, and Love.

For Jesus, the Gethsemane experience was about surrender and overcoming fear. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus took Peter, James, and John—who represent Faith, Wisdom, and Love—to the garden to pray. Three times when Jesus returned from prayer, he found them “asleep.” Sometimes our fear is so great that it overshadows our faith, bypasses our wisdom, and causes us to act from ego instead of love.

In our own lives, a Gethsemane experience represents a renewal of the mind and a surrendering of the lower, fearful, ego-centered will to the One Will that is God. We relinquish ego consciousness in favor of Christ Consciousness; fear in favor of Truth.

We have our own Gethsemane experience of agony and suffering when “the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” We may instinctively cling to the past. We may want to step into a new realm of being, but feel afraid to let go and trust. When Jesus surrendered with the words “yet, not my will but yours be done,” according to Luke 22:43, “Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength.” When we finally push through fear and choose Truth, we are empowered and strengthened by Spirit.
I release old limited thought patterns and replace them with the divine knowing within me.

Resurrection is the lifting of the whole person, spirit, soul, and body, into Christ Consciousness. It means raising our awareness from sense consciousness to spiritual consciousness. First we must experience the crucifixion, the crossing out of old limited ways of seeing the world, to be born anew into right thinking.

As we look at life through the consciousness of Spirit, we begin to understand a larger love than old limited ways of thinking, and we begin to express universal love. Through the resurrection within us we are born to new life, to new vision, and to a new way of being. It is the quickening power of the Holy Spirit within each of us.

Jesus taught us to turn our intentions to the Father within and express the I AM consciousness that gives us everlasting life.
Complete in my process, I await a new beginning.

The Saturday between Good Friday and Easter always seems to be the forgotten piece of Holy Week. From Palm Sunday forward, the week builds up to the events of Holy Thursday and Good Friday; then there’s a daylong lull as we wait impatiently for the profound power of Easter.

In truth, the Saturday energy is at least as important as the preceding days. It represents the seventh day of creation as described in Genesis—a time when the need for choice and action has come to an end. What remains is the challenge of resting quietly in the tomb in full faith that the resurrection is guaranteed. We may try to rush directly from the painful drama of Good Friday to the joyful fulfillment of Easter, but the spiritual realization that has been the purpose of our entire Lenten process requires one final step of surrender. It is in the silence of Saturday that our personal work ends and the Divine carries us, with infinite love, to the magic and mystery of Easter morning.
Easter Sunday
April 5, 2015

Easter
By Elise Cowan

*Today and every day I stay centered in the light and power of God.*

Easter is the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from sense consciousness to spiritual consciousness. Jesus is our Way Shower, helping us see and understand a new way of being. We celebrate Easter by following Jesus into the I AM consciousness to express life abundantly. We have crossed out old ways of thinking and now see we are expressions of God.

As we live, we give glory to that which we are. We are free from any belief in sin, sickness, and death, as we express our oneness with Spirit. As we go forth and keep our focus on the Christ within us, we triumph over every trial because we are no longer locked in a world of limitation; we are born to new life. It is a life filled with the light and power of God.
Thank you, God, for your love and support through this Lenten process, and for the changes in consciousness that are expressing in every area of my life as love, health, joy, and abundance. As I move forward into new challenges and new dimensions of spiritual possibility, I will return to this process when I need to remember and appreciate how far my journey has taken me. I am grateful for all that has been, and for all that is expressing in my life at this moment. And I am open and fully receptive to all that is yet to be experienced, discovered, and shared.
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