



# Brentwood Unity

## CLARITY of PURPOSE *Clearly Seeing Our Role in the World*

Volume 3, Issue 1

January 2018

### Got Clarity?

While meditation is a great practice for listening, so is asking a direct question. As a young boy, I was always confused about the apparent need to approach God through other people. I was taught how to pray, but not so much to ask a question and then stick around to listen. I mean really, if I were to ask you the time of day and immediately did an about face and walked away, you'd think I had a screw loose. Why couldn't I ask God, Spirit, Source a question and wait on an answer without the help of another human?

It was this need for another person to give me my answers that prodded me to explore. And even though our church didn't use a priest in a confessional, there still existed the structure or pathway to God that made me feel like I needed to get good before I could get God. I already felt good inside. Why did everyone want to tell me how bad I was?

Departing from my early, spoonfed dogma of being born sinful and taught that I was full of shame and guilt and needed to find salvation through a condemning God, I branched out to investigate many different disciplines and practices to discover a method to gain clarity in my life regarding challenges I was having. My first "aha moment" was the realization that I was not broken but had been operating under faulty programs or beliefs handed down to me by well meaning people.

As I met people who were not subjected to the same childhood indoctrination, I noticed that they did not suffer from the same fears of damnation as I did, however, they did have challenges in their lives, and were also looking for answers not readily found in the physical world. My next aha moment was that these "challenges" were, in fact, opportunities for growth through greater awareness, no matter how painful they felt.

The real payoff began to happen when I stopped living my life in the "I know" state of mind and began living in the question. I had been asking myself very unproductive questions such as, "Why does this always happen to me?" or "What's wrong with me?" A simple rephrasing of my questioning was all it took to start gaining clarity.

Rather than asking, "What's wrong with me?" a better question is "What is going on with me?" Continuing to refine this method when faced with a "growth opportunity", I realized I could ask, "What do I need to see to be ok in this situation?" A great question for clarity is, "What is the origin or root of this issue?"

I have found that the answers come more quickly all the time now. While this may seem like a great relief, there is a vital component behind the question, and that is am I ready to learn the truth and live from that truth. For many reasons, much of our early trauma is buried deep. We have spent much time in distraction to not face what we truly know as the source of pain. We also innately know something else, that if we sit with these opportunities, we clear what stands in the way of our ultimate Truth--that we are nothing short of Divinity and have the potential to live a life of unlimited possibilities.

Always Seeking Clarity,

*Gregory*

### Cultivating A Clear View

What is clarity? Webster's defines clarity as the quality or state of being clear. Oftentimes, people share with me that they don't feel clear and they're seeking clarity of purpose, clarity regarding life situations and clarity about divine guidance. So, how do we gain clarity?

We all know that we find the answers when we look within. What if when we look within, we find distraction, disorganization and confusion instead of a state of being clear? We may be tempted to look upon these mental states as negative, but I like to look at them as my divine alarm clock and use them for my highest good. They are a gauge for me and I become alerted if I feel off-kilter.

Just as I watch my puppy become quickly and easily distracted by the smallest thing, I too, can be easily distracted. If I find myself distracted, which to me means that my attention is pulled away from my intention, I can begin by course-correcting. I set an intention for my day, and if I notice that I am "off-course" I simply remind myself to get back on my intended course by organizing my priorities.

Disorganization can show up in both our inner and outer realm. I have found that when I feel disorganized internally, lack of order in my thinking which can hinder my productivity, my outer world manifests this disorganized feeling in form. When I focus on my priorities, the things I have declared as most important, and set aside non-essentials, I clear the clutter in my mind (and in my kitchen, as well).

Confusion dissipates when we have declared our priorities. This is different from setting an order to my priorities. Declaring priorities means naming the most important things in your life. Do you choose peace over anger? Do you choose meditation or scrolling Facebook? Do you choose to take a walk or go to the movies? How do you nurture yourself, others around you? Is this a priority to you?

By regularly offering ourselves meditation where we can experience the cluttered and active mind settling down into the space of effortless calm and clarity we are more readily able to make conscious choices, at any given time, living from our truth.

When we know the truth of who we are, and affirm our purpose is to BE the essence of Love in this world by gifting our individuality, we feel less confused, distracted and disorganized.

When you know thyself, you know who you are and where you're going. You can name and order priorities and clear the clutter which distracts. Our book of the month is a journal entitled, *Start Where You Are*. I cannot emphasize this enough. Distracting ourselves with the past or overly preoccupying ourselves with the future can detour our destiny and create a mind full of clutter. Oftentimes, the key to clarity is simply asking, what am I called to do right now in this moment?

As we enter this New Year, I see you knowing the truth of who you are, with an ease of naming and prioritizing your intentions and cultivating a clear view in your daily life.

May Blessings Abound!  
In Love and Gratitude,

*Amey*



**Sunday Experience and Children's Power Hour at 10am**  
50 Sand Creek Road #60, Brentwood, CA 94513 ph: 925.420.5847  
web: [brentwoodunity.org](http://brentwoodunity.org) email: [brentwoodunity@brentwoodunity.org](mailto:brentwoodunity@brentwoodunity.org)



## *Mindful Musings*

### Clarity?

Once thought to be clarity  
 Mislead by our very own thought  
 What we do know, What we don't know  
 Comes into question  
 As a riddle it is continuously pondered  
 Circle in circle, round and round  
 No answers to be found  
 Listen to the heart, for it holds key  
 From beat to beat,  
 it needs no reason for clarity  
*anonymous*

### Your Reflection

Sometimes you are caught  
 Between the intersections  
 Of you and your reflection  
 Wondering, about the reality  
 So much happens between  
 Exchanges with your reflection  
 Mirroring what you want to see  
 And what reality actually is  
 Try to touch the portrayed image  
 Segregate the inner reality  
 And the outer façade for the world  
 Mirror what you really are  
 And your reflection will embrace you  
 Given the clarity that shatters  
 The reflection of a reflection  
 Thus blossoms the image from the heart  
 Mirror will be glistening with pride

*William Brightly*

## The Night of Awakening

In the lovely grove of the forest where the River Naranjara flowed clear, Siddhartha practised meditation. Meditating at night, he came face to face with the terrifying noises of the forest. There was the coming and going of nocturnal creatures, the rustling of fallen leaves and the chilling cries of the wind, of owls and of night prowlers. Maintaining his inner calm, Siddhartha dispelled any fear that arose in him. If fear came to him when he was walking, he would continue walking unaffected. If fear came to him when he was sitting, he would maintain his sitting undisturbed. If fear appeared in his thoughts, he would look at them gently and let them go on their way.

On the full moon of the fourth lunar month, the sun was about to set, Siddhartha sat under the great pippala tree. He vowed, "I will find an end to the misery and suffering of all living beings; until I do, I shall not rise from this seat." His body was calm. He turned his attention inward and concentrated. Gradually, his mind was freed of all attachments. Thoughts of attractions and aversions no longer held him. He rested in a state of perfect calm and equanimity.

Siddhartha's mind was so clear. He saw that before his present life born as a prince, he had many past lives. He recollected each birth, living, and death passing by in an endless cycle. The entire process of his reincarnations was revealed in his mind. He understood how in this way his mind had experienced innumerable lives.

Siddhartha looked deeper and deeper. His mind grew brighter and clearer. He realized the true nature of mind. He realized that everything is from mind. In that moment, meditator and meditation became one. There was no longer a separation between the watcher and the watched. All dualistic experiences and concepts dissolved.

Siddhartha was at one with mind. He came face to face with mind. He saw how mind is naturally joyful. There is no tension. There is no struggle. There is no hope, or fear. There is no wanting. There is no grasping. The joy of mind is naturally there. It does not depend on exterior conditions. It does not change when things change. This wondrous joy is the nature of mind. And every single living being has mind. With this joy there is no suffering. When the sun is shining, there is no darkness.

Siddhartha saw how the mind is so clear that it reveals everything like a perfectly clear mirror. Yet nothing can stain or take away its clarity. And so mind is timelessly pure and unchanging. Thoughts and appearances come and go in our minds like images in a mirror but they can never become the mirror, nor could they change it in any way. But mind is aware. Mind is aware of itself. It is aware of everything.

Siddhartha also saw that this clear and joyful mind is at the same time empty of existence. We cannot say that mind exists and yet we cannot say that it does not exist. We cannot point to it and say this is mind. Words, definitions, or labels cannot describe it. Mind is empty of form. It is colourless, odourless, and shapeless. It is timeless and without dimensions. Mind is empty of a single, definable identity. This is what Siddhartha saw as the emptiness of mind.

But it is because mind is essentially empty of anything that anything and everything can take place in the mind. If *today* were something real, unchanging, and solid, then *tomorrow* would never come because *today* would block its coming.

Siddhartha saw how for a long time now, his mind had been confused into thinking that the appearances in its own clarity were real. This was much like taking the reflections in a mirror to be the real thing. As a result, mind grasps at appearances and becomes attached to them. It is this mistaken attachment that is the root of suffering. The "self" is all important and satisfying the desires and needs of this self becomes a goal in life. The original mind is covered up as if it had gone to sleep. The self helplessly goes through countless rebirths. But because the self, the world, and its inhabitants are all impermanent and ever changing, lasting happiness cannot be found.

Siddhartha realized that by clearing the confusion in the mind, people would *wake up* by themselves from the illusion. The rebirths of the self with all their sufferings will be broken forever. Siddhartha had found the answer to end suffering. He thought to himself, "This is my last life. I have uncovered the original nature of mind. How wondrous!"

The sun was just about to rise. It was morning.

# Brentwood Unity Weekly Groups

## **Mondays:**

### **Imagine the Possibilities**

1:00 – 2:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Imagine the Possibilities affords the group the opportunity to access and catalyze creative imagination in our lives. Einstein asserted that imagination is ultimately greater than knowledge. Why is that so? Imagination is in the moment. It is creative, it is playful and it is in the Now!

Contact: **Ron Vieira:** [925.354.5003](tel:925.354.5003)

### **Women In Harmony**

#### **MLK Living Jazz in Oakland, January 14 Cost \$25**

This month, the Women of Harmony are attending the Living Jazz event in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. There will be carpooling, so do not let a ride issue hold you up. Contact Kathy for more info.

Contact: **Kathy Cullar:** [925.586.1025](tel:925.586.1025)

## **Tuesdays:**

### **Book Study and Meditation**

**1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 10 am**

Join us for reading and meditation. Afterward, we enjoy lunch together,  
So feel free to bring something to eat. Coffee & tea are provided.

Contact **Gail Caruso:** [925.778.2702](tel:925.778.2702)

### **Holistic Energy Group**

#### **Every Tuesday from 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the Fellowship Room**

Come explore ways to support a healthy mind, body and spirit!!!

Contact **Ray Wilson:** [925.759.8676](tel:925.759.8676)

## **Thursdays:**

### **Come Experience Reiki Energy**

**Thursdays (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>) 6:00 – 7:30pm** Reiki Distant Global Healing Work

**Thursdays (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) 6:00 – 7:30pm** Reiki Hands-On Healing Working

Contact **Bonnie Daniel:** [925.989.5960](tel:925.989.5960) or **Ray Wilson:** [925.759.8676](tel:925.759.8676)

### **Meditation for Genuine Holiday Happiness**

#### **Thursdays, January 11, 2018 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm**

How do you deal with the daily madness, chaos and challenges of life that intensify during the holidays? Let's take this 8-week journey together to ensure that this holiday season is more meaningful and joy filled for us than ever before. This class is deliberately designed for practical application during the holidays.

Contact **Bry'Andi Brandon:** [510.566.2455](tel:510.566.2455)

## *Holding Space*

What is Holding Space? The meaning behind this term has been understood by many indigineous tribes long before the Western mind got a hold of it. It is simply holding an intention of what we see as our reality. You may hold space for a person who needs love, or a place or a thing you visualize coming into manifestation.

Here, at Brentwood Unity, we are holding space in our community as being a vital resource for the well being of all those here and those yet to come, joining in community to support one another in changing the world for the better...one life at a time.

We hold space by staying in Abundance Mindfulness, staying out of lack and victim mentality, knowing that **all of our needs** are provided for in order to carry out our mission of being available to others when needed.

We know that nature abhors a vacuum and brings to us what we fill our minds with, so we live in prosperity consciousness, enabling us to joyfully receive and freely give as needed to create a more compassionate world.

**We Know that We Are Blessed Beyond Measure!**

## Prayer & Healing

You may add your first name to the prayer list, or the first name of someone to receive prayer. One of our Unity Angels will put you on the prayer list or call to schedule a time to visit with you.

Please make us aware of anyone that is home ill, injured or in the hospital. We desire to serve all with calls and visits!

Please call for more information:

Bettie Danley [925.757.8431](tel:925.757.8431)

or email: [bdanley3@juno.com](mailto:bdanley3@juno.com)

**Silent Unity Prayer Line:** [800.669.7729](tel:800.669.7729)

## **Potluck-January 28-After Service**

***Bring your favorite dish, but mostly bring yourself!***

# January Guest Speakers

Brentwood Unity values our gifted speakers and workshop facilitators.  
We equally value our members and guests, welcoming all, regardless of financial contribution.  
Our *suggested* love offering for workshops is \$10-\$25.

**January 7**

**Charley Thweatt**

[musicangel.com](http://musicangel.com)

## We Are The Bows of Our Boats

Are we our history? Are we the baggage we might feel that we carry? Or are we something far beyond all of that? Through stories, recent insights and a brand new song, Charley takes us to a new edge of how to reframe this life we're living.

**January 14**

**Ray Wilson**

<https://tinyurl.com/reikiwithray>

## Finding Clarity Amidst Chaos

Life is an adventure we each have before us to individually experience, One Day at a Time. Sometimes, chaos appears in our great life adventure! How can we find clarity when we find chaos deep within? Let's explore this mystery together.

**January 21**

**Laura Taylor**

[unitysf.com](http://unitysf.com)

## The Artist in You

In this upbeat talk, the elusiveness of revealing our inner joy is explored. We will journey into what holds us back from our joy, illuminating the shifts needed to liberate our delight. Spiritual tools will be offered that will give you access to a softer, sweeter way to ride on the freeway of your essential and joyful self.

**January 28**

**Patricia Keel**

[patriciakeel.com](http://patriciakeel.com)

## Inner Clarity: Seeing With The Single Eye

"The outer world is a reflection of our inner world." *"The light of the body is the eye: if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."* Matthew 6:22. Are we willing to turn our attention within to focus awareness on that which is beyond appearance? The single eye is higher consciousness and in our human experience we often find it challenging to live in the oneness of God's love and light universe. Division, separation, judgment keep us from being the LIGHT. Join Rev. Dr. Patricia and experience the Single Eye Practice.

## Just for the Sake of Clarity

There is a beauty and clarity that comes from simplicity that we sometimes do not appreciate in our thirst for intricate solutions.

*Dieter F. Uchtdorf*

Clarity is the most important thing. I can compare clarity to pruning in gardening. You know, you need to be clear. If you are not clear, nothing is going to happen. You have to be clear. Then you have to be confident about your vision. And after that, you just have to put a lot of work in.

*Diane Von Furstenberg*

"The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish spurting out ink."

*George Orwell*

"What you are, and who you are should provide greater clarity about where you have been and where you are headed. Although one distinguishes spiritual from physical nature, the ultimate unification of the two is the consequence of the struggle for internal, external and eternal – peace."

*TF Hodge*

"But can one actually see beauty with eyes blurred by the lack of almost everything a human being needs?"

*Palo Lins*



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# January Workshops

**Brentwood Unity values our gifted speakers and workshop facilitators.**

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Our *suggested* love offering for workshops is \$10-\$25.

<b>January 7</b>	<b>Charley Thweatt in Concert</b>	<b>See Below</b>
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<b>January 14</b>	<b>Amy &amp; Gregory Gaining Clarity</b>	<b>brentwoodunity.org</b>
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Do you have issues that prevent you from living a fuller life and expanding your awareness toward greater understanding? There is a simple method for gaining clarity through the use of proper questions. Come experience a simple way of gaining insight through the use of the question. Gregory & Amy are co-directors of Brentwood Unity.

<b>January 21</b>	<b>Laura Taylor</b>	<b>unitysf.com</b>
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Have you ever wanted to really get clear guidance from within about things that bother you or know what would serve you most? Show up for this experiential workshop as we explore our truths already living as energy within. Learn a simple, yet deep process to hear your own spiritual guidance. When we know, really know, what is right for us, it brings a fulfilling sense of confidence, a deep peace and allows us to move forward with ease. Fun, educational and transformational!

<b>January 28</b>	<b>Patricia Keel</b>	<b>patriciakeel.com</b>
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So often we find ourselves defending, judging, wanting the other to be different so that we can feel OK. We have their best advice before we are even asked! This is the seat of CONFLICT in our relationships. Yet we have the capacity to move above the level of conflict and tune inside to listen from the heart of higher consciousness. The result is a better knowing of WHO we are, and a softening of the heart as we feel our true connection with the other.

## WinterLand Concert Series

<b>January 7</b>	<b>Charley Thweatt</b>	<b>11:45 am</b>
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Charley Thweatt brings his gifts of warmth, humor, presence and ease to any gathering. He has been a favorite with Unity groups since the early '80s, when he took a leap of faith from his budding architecture career into touring full time with his spiritual concerts and workshops. Charley has a talent for turning a room full of strangers into connected family, by sharing his original music, his angelic voice and his insightful workshops.

<b>February 3</b>	<b>John Shinn Singing Crystal Bowls</b>	<b>7pm</b>
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In this workshop, we will examine the science and metaphysics used by sound and crystals healing techniques and have the opportunity to experience their effects on our individual and group harmony.

Dr. John Shinn (PhD Engineering, UC Berkeley) combines experience as a musician and performer/composer of spiritual music as well as that of a scientist and metaphysical healing practitioner. He has worked with crystals since childhood and has performed spiritual music throughout the Bay Area for many decades.

**John will be doing private 20 minute sound healing sessions by appointment before the concert. A love offering between \$25-50 is suggested, but no one turned away. Call Gregory for a session at 925.665.4004**

<b>March 3</b>	<b>Kalyani Marsh Tom DeMaranville</b>	<b>7pm</b>
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Singer/Songwriter Kalyani creates a healing space for listeners to understand the Truth within Self through song. Kalyani shares her medicinal music with a warm, heartfelt, approachable Presence. Her unique songwriting style and passionate voice allows the listener to experience being immersed within the qualities of wholeness, Love, Light, Peace and Joy. Joining Kalyani will be her partner, Tom DeMaranville using his Singing Bowls.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

## Board Corner

As 2017 passes into memory, we have so much to be grateful for in our community. At our Annual Board Retreat, the board used a process that created our new mission statement with great ease. It is *"We are an open, welcoming community, supporting connection and personal growth."*

We have added many new people and so many are stepping up to carry out the functions that keeps our center operating smoothly. This is due to the warm, welcoming atmosphere of our loving community.

We have been so blessed with great speakers and musicians, and this coming from an initial place of uncertainty as to how it would all play out. We are now connected to so many other centers and people in the Bay Area. Chuck Turner planted a seed of his vision for tying New Thought communities together in what is now called BANTER – Bay Area New Thought Evolving & Rising. This group is now making known all of the available centers to the millions now reading New Thought materials without knowing like-minded communities exist. Thank you, Chuck!

Our year culminated in a beautiful, joyous Christmas Eve Candlelight Celebration. It was well attended with many new faces. We closed out 2017 Burning Bowl Ceremony that brought those participating in a strong vision of the unlimited possibilities for our Center.

We Are All so Blessed for Everyone  
That makes Brentwood Unity Their Home!

Look out 2018, this Center has Clarity of Purpose!  
Board of Trustees, Brentwood Unity



## A Big Thank You!

To everyone who donated their time, treasures and talents over the holiday season, we honor you and are grateful for you! The Loaves & Fishes Drive was a huge success, thanks to people pulling together. The residents of Wollam House and Lone Tree Convalescent greatly appreciated all of us who delighted them with caroling, gifts and food.

## Looking For a Good Book?

Our Inspiration Nook is filled with Inspiration in every nook and cranny. Feel free to borrow or buy a book. If you see a book you'd like to purchase, just put the money in an envelope provided and stick it in the Abundance Box located on the side of the bookcase.



## Jerri's Fund

Jerri's book is always available. And it's a great gift for anyone and it **builds** our building fund with every purchase!

It is **only \$15!**  
Located on the  
Book of the Month Table

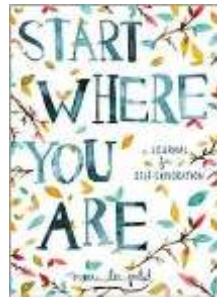
## Like to Help at Our Center?

Ask Amy or Gregory how you can get involved.  
We Are **100% VOLUNTEER!**

## January Book of the Month

### Start Where You Are

Meera Lee Patel



Start Where You Are is an interactive journal designed to help readers nurture their creativity, mindfulness, and self-motivation. It helps readers navigate the confusion and chaos of daily life with a simple reminder: that by taking the time to know ourselves and what those dreams are, we can appreciate the world around us and achieve our dreams.

Featuring inspiring quotes from writers, artists, and other visionaries paired with open-ended questions and prompts, with plenty of room for writing and reflecting, this appealing full-color book will make a perfect gift and keepsake as well as being a powerful tool.

**Available Now for \$14**

Use one of the envelopes next to the books for sale and place the money in the Abundance Box in the Inspiration Nook.



January 19 at 7 pm

**Doors Open at 6pm**

We'll play Apples to Apples, then we will decide which game to play for February's Game Night.

**Come out and enjoy a fun evening!**



It's a hilarious game that requires you to pay attention to the person "holding the card." Feel free to bring some refreshments to share!

## Annual Celebration January 14

We will gather immediately following our Sunday service to hold our Annual Celebration. Here, we will present the 2018 budget and share with our members our forecast for the upcoming year. Please join us and participate in the direction our center will take for our community!

## Interested In Starting A Small Group?

Starting a small group is a great way to connect with other members of our community and to bring in new people to introduce them to what we do here. You can use just about anything for a group to find cohesion: spiritual book, games, meditation practice or cooking. Explore your options and start!

*See Amy or Gregory on how to get started.*