

THE LIGHTHOUSE NOVEMBER 2009



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## Collaboration: An Evolving Paradigm

To collaborate has an easy definition as it means to work together, play together or create together. (Well in the dictionary it only said work but I chose to embellish the definition with other important activities.) Everyday we collaborate with each other at some level, be it body, mind and/or spirit. For me, what is evolving is the quality and the way in which we are with each other. There is no hierarchy in collaboration, for everything has value and is valuable for the highest good of all, a treasure to behold.

How much heart are we willing to put into assisting or taking the lead in any given moment? How much are we willing to let go of expectations and outcome of ourselves and others and just be with what is being offered and what we can offer in the moment? Are we choosing acceptance for ourselves and others as we are? Let's think about the "Emotional Components of Successful Collaboration"? Are we choosing discord or harmony? Collaborative leadership has an ebb and flow between my turn, your turn and our turn.

We've been talking about leadership and being leader-full. I love that term because it implies that each one of us has something to contribute. When we are leader-full, the best way to serve is by "Honoring Our Calling". What calling is that, you say? Well think of it as anything from cleaning, to singing, to organizing, to speaking, to setting up, giving voice to an opinion that needs to be heard, creating changes, listening, honoring, being present in the moment, to volunteering. I am sure we could continue the list for a very long time. Listening to our Calling is Spirit driven. In other words everything being offered is a welcomed gift. How can we go wrong with that?

Our "Ability to Respond" is of the essence, for we are all needed to step up to the plate at this time with our valuable gifts. We need to think very carefully at what gifts we have and make the offerings. Take the risk. This is not a time to let a few show off their gifts but for ALL of us to shine the light through who were are.

# *The Lighthouse November 2009*

**A Newsletter for Friends of the Church  
The Church of Truth - Community of Conscious Living**

We are a supportive community of spiritual discovery that encourages and supports the concept that the responsibility to connect with Spirit or the Divine is ultimately that of the individual.

Through study and contemplation we can attune to Spirit or the Divine, giving us greater insight into our place in the structure of life as well as our interconnection with all things. We respect the inter-connectedness of all life. Moreover, in achieving a deeper attunement with Spirit we can be of greater service to our community and to our world.

We acknowledge and respect the contributions of all established religions.

Programs established or sanctioned by the Community respect each individual's path to spiritual growth.

“Within our Church community there exists a rich field of changing elements made up of the collective energies of our community. We strive to reflect the ecology of our community in ways which encourage exploration and respect for our diversity.”

**We welcome all who want to share this sacred place, this adventure, this CELEBRATION**

## **Sunday Service - 11 am Working for you - Your Board of Directors**

<b>President</b>	<b>Brian Martin</b>	<b>778-430-1872</b>
<b>Past President</b>	<b>Roy Leaman</b>	<b>778-430-1905</b>
<b>Treasurer/SDC Liaison</b>	<b>Esther Hart</b>	<b>294-6416</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Eleanor McKinnon</b>	<b>474-2715</b>
<b>Rentals</b>	<b>Patti Huot</b>	<b>385 0941</b>
<b>Inside Maintenance</b>	<b>Nathaniel Poole</b>	<b>984-4024</b>
<b>Outside Maintenance</b>	<b>Marie Logan</b>	<b>652 8586</b>

**Community Care Liaison – Lorna Rennie 361-2079**

**Newsletter—Deborah Hawkey Email [dbhawkey@gmail.com](mailto:dbhawkey@gmail.com)  
Newsletter Submissions welcomed by the 15th of each month**

### **Spiritual Directions Committee**

<b>Brian Martin</b>	<b>778-430-1872</b>
<b>Cedona Holly</b>	<b>642-1060</b>
<b>Joyanna Wilkinson</b>	<b>361-3181</b>
<b>Esther Hart</b>	<b>294-6416</b>
<b>Nikki Menard</b>	<b>1-250-537-9380</b>

Linda Chan <http://cot.rd123.ca/>

**Rev. Joan Hopper Pastoral Care for free consultation call 250-384-3637**

# Sunday Service Schedule for November 2009

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November 1	Honouring our Calling Speaker Nikki Menard and Joyanna Wilkinson Moderating Esther Hart Meditation Nikki Menard
November 8	Coordinator: Joyanna Wilkinson Physical – Response Ability
November 15	Coordinators: Carol Douglas and Esther Hart Mental – The Thinking Heart
November 22	Coordinator: Cedona Holly Emotional
November 29	Coordinator: Brian Martin Spiritual – Walking with Spirit

Con't from page 1

How can we go wrong when we come forth with our gifts, with and through our heart? Our heart is pure and reflects our Soul. We can honor our hearts and free ourselves by sharing our gifts freely and with confidence. The angel within us wants to be active, especially at the heart level. Activate your "Thinking Heart" now.

"Walk With Spirit" and with yourself. Share your essence with the all and the One. Be daring. Allow for the paradigm to shift into a collaboration with soulful knowing that will be magical and enhance our lives. Participate in the collaboration that is evolving into a new paradigm. The time is now, choose it.

Nikki Menard SDC

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Nov.1 - Our Fifth Fruit Sunday!

Please remember the Homeless by mindfully purchasing some fruit and bringing it Sun. Nov.1. A little bit, or a lot, it's up to you! We will take all contributions to Our Place Society on Mon. Nov. 2.

Many Thanks  
Rev. Cedona Holly

## October 19 Open Discussion

Brian introduced the evening by telling us that he had been inspired by Greg's talk to suggest that we pay attention to what questions need to be asked.

The questions that came up were:

1. Do we want a leader to lead us?
2. How can we continue to evolve through committee?
3. How do we serve each other?
4. If I want something to change, am I willing to participate in the change?
5. How can I participate in the change?
6. If we follow the present format (moderator, mediation, speaker) do the guidelines need reviewing?
7. Do we need to raise our profile in the larger community
8. If I have a conflict within the community, what is the process to address the situation?
9. How can all of our needs be met?

The answers are summarized as follows:

Questions 1 and 2

We are following the direction of a collaborative, co-creative, leaderful community.

Question 3

By honouring and sharing our own gifts and those of others without judgment no matter how those gifts are presented

Questions 4 and 5

Ginny read Lorna's submission to the September issue of the Lighthouse which was felt to answer the questions.

Question 6

The guidelines for speakers, moderators and meditators will always be reviewed if there is a concern being expressed. The spiritual directions committee requests input of specific concerns.

Questions 7

Yes. Create a profile committee.

Questions 8 and 9

Set aside an evening to design a conflict resolution process for our community.

Then next meeting will be November 9 to design the conflict resolutions process.

On November 30 we will meet to discuss the name change issue.

A facilitator is being sought to assist at both of these events.



# Our Writer's Corner

## "From the Womb of Creation Come Notes on the Page"

- A Pianist's Perspective of Julie Salisbury's Evening



When I entered the sanctuary of our Church my senses were enlivened by the colours of Autumn's foliage that flanked either side of the altar. My body felt the familiar warmth of home heated cozily for guests and my eyes caught the sparkle of chandeliers that reflected a lively spirit in the room. The notes danced beneath my fingers as I sat at the grand piano and began to play the hauntingly beautiful melodies that were written as notes on the page long ago. A sacred womb of creation, the sanctuary of our little Church cradled precious dreams yet to be birthed into this world.



When my work was done, I sat with the others and my spirit was delighted as words of our speaker inspired and challenged me to higher and higher heights. With confidence, she said that each one of us had our own special message. She encouraged us with passion, "Why not do it? Why not!" Her smile touched me from across the room and her spark of light ignited my heart which was ready and waiting. "You have a unique story," she affirmed. "You have something special and different to offer others. Don't doubt it!"

## **A Rare and Inspirational Literary Event Nov. 15!**

Through the inspiration and hard work of Patricia Miller, Julie Salisbury (of InspireABook) and the COT authors, the Church is hosting a rare event!

This event is both to showcase existing authors and to inspire new writers to publish their own work!

You are all invited to meet, greet and celebrate the six COT self-published authors as well as

six of Julie's published authors (coached by Julie) on Nov.15, 1:30-4:30pm. We hope to see you all there!

There will be a panel of all of the authors, each speaking briefly about their book, possibly including a brief reading also. There will be an opportunity to view and purchase their books and have them autographed as well. We will have break-out sessions, where the authors can speak with the public about their work in

small groups and answer any questions. The media have been invited and we are hoping they accept our invitation!

Hopefully by speaking with self published authors as well as authors who have gone through the more formal publishing process we will be able to demystify the whole process for those who wish they could do what we have done already. We can help others launch their creative projects!

At the time of this writing the COT authors are getting ready to be tutored by Julie in how to do radio and TV interviews! This is a time for the authors to grow and spread our wings as we inspire each other to become even more visible and accessible to the public, and to develop new skills.

There will be a raffle to support the women and children of Cambodia. Twelve lucky people will each win a book and have the privilege of helping others at the same time. The tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. At these prices even those on a tight budget might go home with a brand new book!

Please bring and share a finger food pot luck lunch with us after the Nov.15 Sun. Service.

Cedona Holly  
Meditation Manual for the Modern Day Mystic

## **A Book Review by Rev. Greg Skala**

**Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin** (Penguin Books, 2006)

In 1993, Greg Mortenson was a thirty-five-year-old American vagabond, taking part in a climbing expedition in the Himalayas, determined to plant a memorial to his beloved and recently deceased sister Christa on the summit of the world's second-highest mountain, a peak known to climbers as "K2," located right on the border between Pakistan and China. The ascent was a failure because one member of the group became disabled and the rest of the expedition had to abandon their plans and devote themselves to his

We hope in this way to make it easy for members and friends to stay.

We invite you all to join us in this extraordinary opportunity to celebrate the authors and also to SELLabrate with us! This is a super time to pick up those early seasonal gifts and to go for the win/win, helping to keep the literary arts alive and thriving!

With many new people coming to our Church for this public event, we imagine there might be new interest in our inspirational Community also. We are hoping for a full house!

And please consider volunteering that day, as we can use a LOT of extra help: at the front door, serving refreshments, setting up and cleaning up after the event. Light refreshments will be offered at the event

\*\*\*Please meet with us Sun. Nov.1, after the Sun. Service, at 12:30\*\*\*if you would like to volunteer. This will be an exciting meeting of ALL of the authors for the very first time and a time to meet with the volunteers.

We thank everyone who is working hard to make this a huge success!

Be as careful of the books you read, as of the company you keep; for your habits and character will be as much influenced by the former as by the latter.

[Paxton Hood](#)

rescue. Then, Greg Mortenson became separated from his group and was himself found and rescued by Balti tribesmen of the village of Korphe in Northern Pakistan.

Three Cups of Tea is the tremendously moving story of how Mortenson became aware of the crying need for schools in villages like Korphe, especially schools that girls could attend, and of how he redirected his life to raising funds for building such schools. Rising from failure, Greg Mortenson has achieved the kind of success

that marks him as a true hero of the human race. Through 2006, he and the movement he began have built schools in Korphe and at fifty-four other locations in some of the most poverty-stricken areas of Planet Earth, which he acknowledges is a far more meaningful tribute to Christa than a token left at the top of K2 could ever have been.

Mortenson's first school could only be built after a bridge had been constructed to provide better access to Korphe than the existing rope-and-basket cable car had provided. The bridge was eventually built after Mortenson had written 580 fundraising appeal letters in North America and managed to raise \$12,000. Fundraising has accelerated since then, though it has never come truly easily. Mortenson has worked tirelessly, speaking to alpinist groups, philanthropic groups, and even the United States Congress, presenting his homemade slide shows and pleading that education is the surest course toward establishing peace and stability in a part of the world that is politically volatile and vulnerable to extremists.

Pakistan's hold on its Northern Provinces has often been tenuous, money for building infrastructure and schools in remote villages has been scarce, and sometimes outsiders have announced that they will only help these areas to develop schools exclusively for male students. Mortenson and the charitable Central Asia Institute he now represents build schools that teach the same curriculum that Pakistani Government schools teach where they exist, not an extremist sectarian curriculum which might be all too available otherwise. The CAI respects and utilizes local initiatives and priorities.

Some of the most heart-warming passages in Three Cups of Tea tell of such things as a village's senior citizens insisting that they must be allowed to help with the cartage of supplies and other formidable tasks of school building. In other equally moving passages, villages may use the occasion of a school project to tackle equally ambitious and necessary work, such as the digging of a new clean well. The CAI is primarily focused on building durable schools, providing school supplies for students, and guaranteeing salaries and training for teachers; however, as necessary, the Institute has helped to fund bridges, wells, etc.

Over the years, Mortenson also found that he could not turn his back on the plight of war-torn nearby Afghanistan. Afghan refugees who escaped into Pakistan have had a CAI school built for them right in their refugee camp.

Kirghiz horsemen, who are nominally Afghan citizens but who lead an independent style of life that seems to belong to some distant past century, once rode across the border to meet the saintly man they had heard about and to plead for a school in their own territory. Mortenson promised them he would come and build their children a school. It was years before Mortenson could keep that promise. He had to "climb many mountains" before he could, confronted by corruption and greed, personal physical dangers, disruptions caused by war, and the constant challenge of fundraising. One of his heroes has always been Mother Teresa, and the way he has devoted himself to the world's poorest people convinces me that he and she are kindred souls



# Oneness Wednesdays

Church of Truth, Community of Conscious Living

111 Superior Street

Every Wednesday, 7- 8:30 p.m.

Everyone Welcome!

Free or by donation Information:

Linda at 250-380-6383 or <http://cot.seedwiki.com>

## Broken Open: Embracing Change, Welcoming the Unknown

With Joy Emmanuel

As the seasons shift from the fullness of summer's play to a focus on fall's activities and gently moves us toward the growing darkness and inner stillness of winter's embrace, we know in the core of our being that one thing we can count on in life is change. The river of life is the river of change. We are constantly being asked to redefine who we are and what is important. Change may be welcomed – such as when we begin a relationship or new job, or when we become a grandparent; but, change can also shift the ground of our being in a way that is deeply challenging and take us into unknown and unwelcomed territory. Broken Open is a four part

series oriented to exploring those unknown waters in a safe and supportive way. It is a time to dance with our shadow, befriend the gifts of uncertainty, and find our light in the darkness.

Although the four sessions will build on one another, they will also be set up as stand-alone events. Each session will cover a variety of activities, including: guided meditation, writing and reflective exercises, gentle movement, readings, and optional sharing. Time: 7 to 8:45 each Wednesday evening in November.

### About Joy Emmanuel:

Joy Emmanuel has trained in Transformational Leadership and adult education for over twenty five years including the Healing Journey (the work of Brandon Bays), Harville Hendrix Relationship therapy, Council facilitation, and Joanna Macy's The Work that Reconnects. Recently she completed training in Transformational Coaching and now offers this service to the broader community.

Joy believes that "Each of us hold the seeds of inner wisdom, resourcefulness, and possibility to heal ourselves and the planet and create a more just, loving and sustainable world. The intent of spiritual practice is to help us connect with that deep inner source of guidance and peace.

Nov 4 – **Into the Desert** – Connecting with our stories, mapping the territory

Nov 11 – **Broken Open** – Dancing with our shadows and letting go of emotional baggage

Nov 18 – **Bowing into the Unknown** – Re-framing the map from a new vantage point

Nov 25 – **The Hero's Journey** – Returning home to reintegrate the gifts of the journey

# PosiPalooza!



**Harold Payne**  
2 Time Posi Award  
Nominee

## The Concert Tour of



Presents

## *"Music that Matters"* *In the Round!*

**7:00 pm Tuesday**  
**November 10**

**Victoria Conservatory of**  
**Music**  
**Alix Golden Hall**

**Corner Quadra & Pandora**

**Tickets**  
**\$20**

**Available from Brian and**  
**Laura**



**David Roth**  
Time Posi Award  
Nominee



**Richard Mekdeci**  
President  
emPower M&A



**Sue K Riley**  
Vice President  
emPower M&A

20% of the proceeds from tickets sold by Brian and Laura will be donated to the Church of Truth Community of Conscious Living

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

*We celebrate with you!*

Nov. 4 Tony DeBruyne

Nov. 4 Raku Pope

Nov. 21 Deborah Hawkey



**Nathaniel Poole** is interested in starting an art therapy support group at the church on Monday evenings. We would meet in a group setting once a week to do art and then explore the meanings of what is created. The cost would be by donation to cover materials. No artistic “skill” or

training is required; if you can squiggle a line with a crayon you can do this kind of exploration.

If there are difficulties in your life that you would like support with, or simply want to understand yourself better, this could be the program for you. As this would be a group, a minimum 6-week commitment is required.

Nathaniel is a trained and certified art therapist and a graduate of the Vancouver Art Therapy Institute. If you are interested, email Nathaniel at [myth.wright@gmail.com](mailto:myth.wright@gmail.com), or phone at 250 857 8185

## Walking the Talk

By Gordon Thurston

**F**or me the trouble with phrases like “walking the talk” is that it is assumed that everyone knows what is meant by them. I realize that the intention in this case is for one to put into action what one says he or she believes – or in the vernacular, putting one’s money where one’s mouth is. So what is being implied is being true to one’s beliefs in some definable way – thus “walking the talk” has to do with knowing where I am going with a definite sense of direction.

It is essential then to be able to articulate – to share – in some way what that is. Perhaps that is what is meant for us here in this church by conscious living – being able to give voice to the things that matter to us – and then putting them into action. So the prerequisite to walking the talk is being able to talk the walk first.

It is with this understanding of walking the talk and talking the walk that my hope meter for this

## Halloween Scary Movie Night

On Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>

**At: Church of Truth, Community of Conscious Living**

Join us in the church sanctuary from 7:30 pm onwards (Don’t worry if you come late). DVD will start playing at 8:00 p.m. Popcorn will be provided. Costumes encouraged but totally optional. Come check out our wonderful new DVD projector and screen hooked up to our awesome sound system.

**Be prepared to have fun!**

For additional information, please contact Patti at (250) 385-0941

church went way up. After attending three of – how many? – four or five get-togethers about “growing our church” it was the last meeting that peaked my interest most. The notes from that open discussion on September 9<sup>th</sup> can be found on page six of October’s Lighthouse (our church newsletter). It was in that session for me that we finally found our focus as a church for walking our talk – and it had to do with turning that phrase around. What is it that we *say* we are about? In both of the other events Heather and I attended it seemed that we as a group kept getting stuck on changing our name as a way of encouraging new membership and increasing attendance. That for me misses the real point to becoming conscious in our living as a community. I am not suggesting that changing our name is not what we should do – but it is not the first thing. And that was also the consensus at the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. What we realized is that there are two things we need to examine before we can even consider a name change: 1) what is our mission and purpose (or what are we about) AND; 2) how do we give voice to that and who is going to do it, which comes down to spiritual leadership?

However everyone that has taken time to read our mission statement has found it to be quite remarkable, myself included. That is why all that we are really left with before we can put that statement of purpose into action is examining the question of leadership.

Sounds simple and straightforward, right? I don’t think so – nor does anyone else either. The easy and quick answer of course is to find some charismatic person to come in and inspire the pants off us – motivating us and giving us a definite sense of direction on our spiritual journey. As a clergyman who in past has been given that job to do my response is, NOT ME, not ever again. The story I have told you before about when I knew I was in trouble in that regard was several years into my ministry within the United Church of Canada. It happened as I was greeting an eighty-year old woman at the door after the service one Sunday morning when she said to me, “But Mr. Thurston, why don’t you just tell us what to do.” I knew then and there that the kind of leadership role I wanted to play had nothing to do with having that kind of power. The problem with leaders, charismatic or not, is that the line between empowering people and

over powering them is impossible to know. What makes it so elusive is that when people do not have a sense of direction for themselves they are more than willing to almost sell their souls to anyone who can seem to give them one. That is what I realized in an instant when that dear old soul said, “But Mr. Thurston, why don’t you just tell us what to do.”

However that does not mean that I am not a spiritual leader – because I very much am one. The difference since abdicating the formal role as minister in a church has been realized not only in my style of leadership but also and even more so the context in which I provide it now. The underlying difference is the sense of authority with which I operate. I have come to realize that when it comes to being an authority of sorts, because that is what one is given as an ordained minister, the critical point is *knowing* what that means and how it is to be expressed – and for me it has everything to do with the question of power. How does one become and remain an *empowering* personality without crossing over and becoming *overpowering*? For me it cannot be done as a paid minister responsible for the day-to-day operations of a church (and more importantly for growing that church). Why? Because as a clergyman one is invariably judged by how successful one is – and that has to do with increasing membership, and more importantly filling the coffers. There again money talks, and that old expression of “putting one’s money where one’s mouth is” quickly gets translated for a minister into issues of measuring his or her success by church attendance and even more importantly how much goes into the collection plate. And we come by that honestly. Biblically it is written in Deuteronomy and repeated elsewhere, “Keep the words of God’s covenant and prosperity will fall upon you.” The problem is that it is so easy to turn that around to infer that if you prosper then you are doing God’s will. Thus for clergy operating in the church the end becomes more a monetary one and not as much a spiritual one. And that is what paid ministers are invariably up against and what makes it a slippery slope from being *empowering* to becoming *overpowering* because their success and salary depends on it.

Of course our ministers here are not on salary and so we are safe, right? Wrong.

We still are saying that what we want and need is effective leadership. And yet for me, in this context, the most exciting and hopeful thing about the Church of Truth is that while we have had a full-time minister or two in past, most do not want to go there again. We can't afford it on the one hand and which has led us to approach the question of leadership from another perspective on the other. And that is where my hope lies. It has been said that we are not a leaderless but rather a leader-full church. And that for me has been evidenced best on community Sundays where several people from the congregation speak on a given topic – and then again any of the others Sundays when someone other than clergy rises to the occasion to speak – to talk their walk. That is where real leadership begins. And it has to do with discovering a sense of authority NOT “over” others but rather from “within” oneself. Leadership from within like that is wonderful. What is more it almost guarantees that issues of power land on the side of empowerment and not overpowerment. Without prosperity and success becoming an issue (whenever someone here stands up to be heard and to speak about the things that matter to him or her) that person is empowered in a good and healthy way. And the only way to walk the talk is to first be able to talk – to share in some understandable way the direction one is going. There is no empowerment quite like it, for both the speaker and the listener.

For me I empower and am empowered by giving voice to other people's stories through funeral and memorial services, along with a few weddings and baptisms – and occasionally as a key-note speaker for a birthday or anniversary. The difference for me is that the only authority given me on these special

occasions is as a storyteller. And because they are not my stories all I can do is honour and hopefully empower the people I serve to realize their own gifts in life through what they have told me. That style of ministry works very well for me. I mean how can anyone get it wrong? – unless of course he succumbs to issues of power and does a little preaching – as in pontificating.

The question for this leader-full church is what for each of us is his or her style of empowering leadership? There is a lot of evidence that it exists here. How else have we remained in existence this long! In whatever way we express ourselves the bottom line for each one of us has to do with what gives us a unique sense of direction, as in being able to walk our talk. But first it is a matter of having a sense of self-determination.

Knowing what matters to us as individuals is what indeed enables each of us to walk our talk. That's real and true empowerment it seems to me. And in the context of this church that is all any one of us can bring to this community anyway, personal empowerment.

So the challenge for us is to provide encouragement and support for the kind of leadership that comes from within. Perhaps that is what the spirit of conscious and I suppose conscientious community is essentially about.

The place to begin it seems to me is to define what that kind of leadership is for us as a church. But don't take my word for it because there are lots of words written on the subject. Only each person can be the authority in determining what that ought to be however.

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## Spiritual Leadership: Walking Our Talk

Rev. Cedona Holly

**T**wenty years ago, in 1989 I took the proverbial leap off the cliff into the great unknown. I sold my house in East Vancouver and gave up my career as a classical pianist and piano teacher. I had been in a car accident the year before. Instead of spending the

day cross country skiing in the pristine snowy wilderness of Manning Park, three of us ended up instead careening off the icy highway, flying through the air, turning upside down, bumping against the snowy embankment and landing fortunately, right side up in the cold wintry river. I

remember clearly climbing out the non-existent side window to stand on the hood of my car. Little did I know how much that day would change my life...for the better!

The subsequent discomfort in my left shoulder over the next year adding to the already existing discomfort in my other shoulder, prompted me to finally leave my professional musical career of twelve years. I had been sitting on the fence with it anyway. Now this was the final push. I surrendered to the great unknown, sold my house and headed South.

All I knew was I had never been to San Francisco and felt I would like to go now, with lots of cash in my pocket from the excellent sale of my house. So off I went theoretically for about a month to drive down the beautiful coastal highway to head for San Francisco.

Well, I never did make it to my destination, at least not until much later. I miraculously and serendipitously found myself instead at Heartwood Institute, a school for the Healing Arts. This beautiful secluded haven about four hours north of San Francisco set amidst rolling hills was found at the end of a very long, very dry and very bumpy road. I went for one day to check it out and left fourteen months later with a certificate as a Transformational Therapist. Why is this an integral part of my story today? Because the motto of Heartwood was: "Planetary Transformation through Personal Healing". We were being trained to be healed healers so we could both BE and facilitate the change we all wanted to see manifesting on Earth.

During the twelve months I spent enrolled in this residential course at this beautiful secluded haven of unconditional support and love, we all ended up taking a deep dive into the hitherto uncharted territory of our subconscious minds. Those of us in the Transformational Therapy program were required to participate in a Rebirthing session each and every week. These sessions were intended to help us release cellular trauma, to give us the time, space and permission to yell, scream, pound pillows, kick legs, cry and vent and after all that was released, to come home to the sweetest inner

peace. It worked. I opened up, released a ton of baggage and set out to help others do the same.

I remember leaving Heartwood with visions of setting up padded rooms on every corner so others could benefit from the kinds of release we had. I had changed. I was uplifted and free in a way I had not been before. I left Heartwood hugely expanded and was then the peace I wanted the world to be. I was radiant. Little did I know there would be many twists and turns after that, all Divinely orchestrated to bring me to this very moment in time, sitting here with you, telling you my personal story. Some of those stories will have to wait for another time. But let me backtrack for a moment....way back!

After a traumatic event at the age of three I gained a lot of weight, became an overweight child and was put on diet pills at the age of fifteen on the insistence of my mother. In my teens and early twenties I took myself to Weight Watchers a total of 7 separate times in order to try to conquer my serious addictions to food, and in particular to the irresistible comfort of eating sweets. Nothing worked until I finally went to Heartwood and began to address and release my deeper traumas. Finally then, at the age of 39, my weight stabilized instead of roller coasting up and down. I have been able since that time to enjoy food in balance in my life, no longer eating to try to fill the bottomless hole of unresolved pain.

We were at Heartwood to become healers to help others heal. We were also there for our own personal healing, in order to effectively help uplift the planet. We surrendered all our work to Spirit for the Highest Good of all beings. This was the first installment in my life of consciously healing in order to become the change I wished to see.

Onto my adventures with CoreLight. Ten years later in 1999, I commenced my studies with Leslie Temple-Thurston. I have noticed that the greatest gifts in my life have come to me by surprise! I discovered Heartwood without consciously looking for it and I discovered CoreLight and a spiritual teacher without consciously looking either. Yet, there isn't the slightest doubt in my mind that all has been orchestrated by my Higher Self to facilitate my soul's evolution.

CoreLight is “Dedicated to Inner and Outer Peace” through Enlightenment Training.

We do our best to create peace in the world by becoming ever more peaceful inside ourselves. In fact the Core of Light in each and every person’s body is at peace already. My ideal of spiritual leadership is to be with those who can hold the central column of Light, the CoreLight, all the time and in so doing be the eye of the storm for the world. That is what Leslie models for us and that is what I myself hope to be able to do very soon, to hold this Core at all times.

I am so very grateful I met a teacher who insists there is NOTHING that cannot be cleared. All it takes is tenacity and the clear will to do so. Leslie models what she teaches, as her own clearing work not only healed her body but eventually took her through the doorways to Enlightenment. I have found her to be a very clear teacher of truth.

What was at the heart of the first year of our training as Spiritual Warriors? It was cultivating our neutral witness. In fact that means calling forth the Higher Self, the Truth of who we are, our Buddha nature, to be present and aware at ALL times! Why? Because we cannot change what we are not aware of. I repeat, we cannot change what we are not aware of. We were asked to continuously increase our ability to witness ourselves clearly. What I learned was it is necessary indeed to develop the courage and tenacity of a Spiritual Warrior in order to face our deeper shadows, as coming face to face with the deepest levels of our subconscious mind is, in a sense, a hero’s journey.

We learned that the ego has hidden contracts to NOT see, as the level of shadow present would be too overwhelming to face. How can we as spiritual leaders walk our talk if we are not able to see ourselves clearly? I am eternally grateful that I found a spiritual teacher who has asked all of us to make deep commitments not only to having a wide-awake witness, but also to honesty, integrity, impeccability and to live in truth. I have come to see just how extraordinary these commitments are in our world. I have seen how most others try to get away with little places of fudging the truth, with rationalizations in order to try to make it all OK. For myself I do my best to witness all the places I

have fudged myself, and to bring every aspect of my life into a place of impeccability in order to become a clear role model for others, as we all teach by example.

In addition we make commitments to “love no matter what”. This is a big deal, as making a commitment to love no matter what means we choose to walk the path of unconditional forgiveness. How can we find love and forgiveness for those who perpetrate violence in this world?

Well, there is a surprising answer: we own everything in the world as us. Yes, this is a radical teaching, one which has indeed helped me walk the path of forgiveness. If I know that I carry traces of everything I see in the world in my very own make up, held in the unconscious mind, then I am much more likely to forgive, as everyone is just a mirror of my own mind.

A favorite game of the ego is to say: THEY out THERE are....fill in the blank: I would never do that! This thought facilitates the old game of superiority, where the ego gets to play king-of-the-castle and keeps us separate from others. Instead we are asked to get humble and eventually to own everything in the world as a mirror of our own unconscious mind.

We are asked to serve others by becoming accountable for what is happening on the planet and to dedicate our lives to clearing our own shadow in order to help the planet ascend. After all that is why we chose to come here at THIS time I believe, to use adversity in order to grow by leaps and bounds, to use adversity to awaken to the love we ARE.

I believe each person in this room today has chosen to be here by consent, to become love to the best of our ability and to shine that beacon of love out to the world. We in this room are here to walk the talk of love, tolerance, forgiveness, equality and peace. We in this room know we must “become the change” for outer change to manifest. We in this room care about others and strive to live a life of compassion.

What is my unique offering as a Minister through the work I have done with my teacher? I believe it is my commitment to continue to become

completely clear and in so doing become love fully, that is to say, release the residue veils which block the awareness of love's Presence!

I would like to clear up a common misconception I have found in others who have shied away from doing shadow clearing work. Being able to hold opposites at once, holding paradox, is a key component of sticking with clearing shadow. It is because we are able to hold paradox that we tenaciously clear our issues with the understanding that **WE AT THE CORE ARE NOT** the shadow we are clearing! At our essence we are pure Light and Love, boundless and Eternal Oneness who never dies.

What we do in order to come more into alignment with that clear Light and Love is roll up our sleeves as Spiritual Warriors, take a brave peek into the garden of the unconscious mind and begin the process of weeding, using the processing tools we are given during the Teacher Training program. We begin weeding our OWN garden with love and humility knowing that each weed we pull helps everyone everywhere, because we are all connected. And indeed it has been my experience that my day to day life has changed dramatically since doing the CoreLight inner work of weeding. My meditations are deep and profound and my mind and body have settled into deeper and deeper states of inner peace, love and joy. I have found that the excitement of witnessing my own inner transformation has offered me an unparalleled sense of victory. This is the kind of joy and accomplishment no money on Earth can buy, climbing my own inner mountains as I leave my limited self behind, bit by bit. I know others in this room have experienced this also.

I fully embraced this clearing work for the last decade and what a surprise it was when several years ago I went to my first yoga class in years and was able to sit in full lotus position. My body was so flexible that I was actually shocked by it. I had never once practiced going into the lotus position. Yet I was clearly shown that the mental and emotional clearing work I had been doing was rendering physical flexibility along with the other kinds of flexibility I was achieving. I offer this not as boasting but as inspiration and as tangible proof that inner flexibility can become literally physical.

As graduates of the four-year Teacher Training program and as Ministers, some of us have felt called to share the clearing tools of CoreLight to help others who are ready to begin the weeding process. We can hold up a beautiful bouquet of fresh flowers to others and say, "Here, this is the garden you can grow too, if you are wishing to spend the time planting seeds and doing some watering and weeding.

This is a garden anyone can cultivate! Let me show you how!"

Now let me bring what I have shared with you even closer to home. About fifteen years ago I went to an event in Vancouver with someone who read the Akashic records. He was speaking to us about the year 2012 and was selling his book: The Twelve Days of Light. In essence he was letting us know that the energies on the planet were speeding up and would be continuing to do so until some kind of extraordinary opening was to happen in Dec. 2012. We were warned that by that time our thoughts were going to instantly manifest. Now imagine everyone's thoughts instantly manifesting. What kind of thoughts would you like to be having if your thoughts instantly manifest? This information has been a great incentive for me to keep doing my clearing work!

Since then the message about the Law of Attraction has gone out into the general population and has done us a great service I feel, teaching us that we create our reality with our thoughts and beliefs. The movie "The Secret" showed up to confirm that indeed we do create our reality as manifesters. Since then just a very few have come forward to make one slight but huge correction: we manifest not only what is in our conscious mind but what is in our UNconscious mind also!

Perhaps some of you have noticed this by now. Our lives may not be going as smoothly as before. Challenges may be increasing for ourselves and those around us. What we used to be able to sweep under the carpet just will not stay under there now! Those days are over! Life on planet Earth has changed. The opportunity to grow, to clear our shadow has never been more opportune and more needed by the planet!

So have I become the perfected human being with all this work I have done? Do I walk my talk now perfectly? I would say my witness is now strong. When I speak something a bit off centre of the absolute truth I feel it in my body now and promise to do my best to hit the mark the next time. Sometimes I catch my self-sabotages only after the fact. Self-forgiveness is a necessary component of taking on the work of weeding the garden. Reminding myself my shadow is not who I really am is also important! Yes, I simply consider myself to be a work in progress, coming ever more into alignment with the Truth in the Core of my being. I do my best to be gentle with myself, yet I personally have made the commitment to keep going, to become as clear as I can possibly be in this lifetime! This is a life long commitment for me. I see this as the most perfect win/win. In becoming ever more peaceful and loving the global community also becomes more peaceful and loving as each of us affects the whole.

I believe whatever I don't clear in this lifetime I have to come back to clear in the next. The only thing we take with us into the next world is the level of love we have grown into. The shadows we don't clear come with us to clear the next time! I am coming to understand more deeply that this is my life path: I will continually be growing into deeper and deeper states of love, selfless service and unconditional forgiveness.

I believe we come to Earth to become love fully and when we do we are complete with our life cycles until such a time as we actually choose to

return as Boddhisattvas to help others become love fully. The journey to become love fully is everyone's soul purpose I believe and so everyone, whether they are aware of it or not, is on the path of awakening.

Each moment is an opportunity to become love even more fully. Here at our Church we have been practicing unconditional forgiveness through Ho'oponono. What a blessing this has been. Unconditional forgiveness is the key which unlocks the door to the fully opened heart, the heart which never shuts down.

And so in closing, I find this Church to be an extraordinary place facilitating personal growth, magical happenings and lots of love. We are ushering in the new paradigm here, the paradigm of equality, of reverence, of respect for all beings. In our newly drafted Purpose, we even speak of listening to the Guidance of what is called Universal Spirit . Listening to Guidance is unique I would say in a Church community. We are interested in becoming our own authority, in getting in touch with our own inner wisdom rather than letting others tell us what to think and how to behave. I believe we are all here to BE the change, to walk our talk both as individuals and as a Community wishing to live in heart centered consciousness.

I feel truly blessed to share my life with this Community of souls who are here to grow, to evolve, to walk our talk and to celebrate life together. I thank you for this opportunity to be here with you.



### ANGELS NEEDED

We are looking for volunteers to assist with preparing coffee/tea Sunday mornings before the service and/or helping with clean-up afterwards. The morning duties involve arriving at church about 10:30am to start the coffee urn and ginger tea, set up the tea service cart (with cups, saucers, spoons, sugar), put the snacks on a plate etc. The clean-up involves putting dishes in the dishwasher, washing the coffee urn and teapots and general tidy up in the kitchen.

It seems to work best if a volunteer can assume the job for a month at a time although any assistance would be much appreciated. If you are able to help or would like more information about the job please feel free to talk with Tracy or Lorna at church.

Thank you,

Tracy