

“Love is who  
I am.  
Abundance is  
my nature.  
Gratitude is  
my attitude.  
Well-being is  
my birth right.”  
-Rev Jon Scott



# Discovery

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## Membership Class Manual

First Unity Spiritual Campus  
460 46th Ave North  
St Petersburg, FL 33703  
(727) 527-2222  
[www.firstunity.org](http://www.firstunity.org)

FIRST **unity**<sup>®</sup>  
SPIRITUAL CAMPUS



# Our Mission

We inspire, ignite, and invigorate ourselves to pave our spiritual path.

# Our Vision

We envision a world that gives, embraces, embodies and expresses unity.



# Our Core Values

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## Growing with Intention:

First Unity Spiritual Campus commits to inspiring people to live their greatest life through Sunday services, our online presence and beyond. We understand that as more people embrace teachings of unity, the world is more loving, healthier, safer and a more abundant place for all.

## Expressing through the Arts:

First Unity Spiritual Campus honors the creative process as a spiritual practice. We provide the teachings and environment that encourage individuals to experience the Divinity within themselves through a variety of artistic endeavors and experiences.

## Inclusion and Diversity:

First Unity Spiritual Campus is a diverse, radically inclusive, and vibrant community of all people. The individuals and families that call First Unity their community express Divinity in a myriad of ways.

## Sacred Community:

Service: First Unity Spiritual Campus encourages people to lead through sacred community service. We recognize that service to others in our community and in our world promotes a consciousness of oneness.

## Leading Edge:

First Unity Spiritual Campus is known as a leading edge and dynamic community around the world. Through innovative use of the arts, technology and human resourcefulness, our community models excellence in all we are and do.

# First Unity Spiritual Campus'

## Statement of Faith

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- We affirm there is One God, One Source present in all of creation and resident within all of humanity.
  - We affirm that God (Source, ground of being) is bigger than any one religion, or religious expression and yet can be discovered in most religions.
  - We affirm that we are eternal spirits, having temporary human experience and expression, and that labels of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, country, culture and political party are temporary, sometimes divisive and have often served as obstacles to the realization of the oneness of the human family.
  - We affirm that problems cannot be solved using the same mindset and thinking that created them. Therefore, we will not practice the dominance of one religion, holy book, name for God or savior character over another. We are ONE
  - We affirm that Christ Consciousness was fully resident within Jesus of Nazareth, Sidhartha Ghatama, Lao Tzu, Krishna, and many other great sages and teachers throughout history, and is present within us, and is bigger than any person and any religion.
  - We affirm Christ Consciousness has not necessarily returned and was never born but has always been in the world and has expressed Itself in those who have surrendered and awakened to Its presence. Therefore, we affirm that the dimension of God (Divine Source) is not on the way, but already here and resides within all living beings.
  - We affirm that God does not demand blood to reconnect with, or reconcile, humanity. Yet, we remain grateful that Jesus of Nazareth, and other savior figures, willingly shed their own blood to appease humanity's sin-conscious mind, to speak our language, and to restore our minds from the illusion of separation from God.
  - We affirm that we are not our beliefs, thoughts, feelings, or emotions, but spirits capable of having and changing beliefs. Therefore, we celebrate the beginners mind, truth as a journey, not a destination, and are mindful that truth is available daily as we embody a humble and teachable attitude.
  - Thus, we know that these affirmations and statements of faith are fluid and ever evolving.
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# Five Basic Unity Principles

1. The nature of God is altogether good – active in all things, at all times.
2. All individuals are inherently good because God's divinity is inherent in everyone.
3. People create their life experiences by what they choose to think, believe, and feel.
4. Through affirmative prayer and meditation, people can connect with Spirit (source, God) and manifest the best that life has to offer.
5. Talking about the Truth is not enough, everyone must live their own Truth.



# A Brief History of our Evolution as a Spiritual Community.



First Unity began as a study class established in 1924, led by a retired Methodist minister exploring the teachings of Charles Fillmore (<https://www.unity.org/article/charles-fillmore-american-mystic>). The organization was officially incorporated as a church under the laws of Florida in 1930.

Rev. Louise Beaty, an ordained Unity minister, served as the Associate Minister in 1940 and was appointed as Senior Minister in 1942 until she retired in 1964.

During the mid-1960s and 1970s, several different senior and associate ministers served as spiritual leaders. In 1972, some members left the church to establish a separate Unity Christ Church in St. Petersburg.

Rev. Leslie D. Saunders was selected as minister in 1975, and he served until his retirement in 1993. Rev. Alan Rowbotham served with his wife, Rev. Kathryn Rowbotham, as Senior Minister from 1993 to 2005.

The organization changed its names and eventually the word “church” was removed to align with an expansive spiritual consciousness that went beyond traditional unity teachings.

Rev. Temple Hayes who served as Spiritual Leader of First Unity from 2005-2022 heralded in a gradual movement away from traditional Unity teachings {based on teaching of Charles Fillmore} and expanded the consciousness forward toward New thought. Rev. Temple combined both Charles Fillmore's Unity teachings together with Ernest Holmes's Science of Mind and initiated helping to heal the divide within the New Thought Movement itself.

Rev. Jon Scott came on board as Spiritual Leader in June 2022. Alongside Rev. Jon we are now continuously expanding our consciousness as a community to awaken and grow as a Transdenominational Spiritual Center focused on Love.

Who We Are

# We honor the FIVE major world religions:



Judaism



Christianity



Islam



Hinduism



Buddhism

& Earth religions and Indigenous ceremonies

# Our Philosophy - What do we teach?



Following are some examples that might help you understand how we perceive religious concepts and beliefs in the light of Love and expanding consciousness.

## About God

{Yahweh, Adonai, Elohim, Abba, Jehovah Jireh... Source, Spirit, Creator, Intelligence, Divine Mind and Sustainer of all....}. there is no one word that can describe the indescribable. The words and label {are not the thing itself} only point us in the direction of God.

## God is within you.

We believe in a loving, not judging, God. God is not some human-like being, far away, but a very real spiritual presence that indwells us all. God has many names-we encourage you to choose the God or the name that resonates with you.

**God is the Source, Spirit, Creator, Intelligence, Divine Mind and Sustainer of all.**

## Jesus and others as examples

We believe in the divinity of the historic Jesus, and we believe in the divinity of other great leaders in humanity. The spark of the divine indwells in all of us. We do not believe that the only way to God is through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ showed the way, but Jesus Christ is not the way. Jesus Christ was not the great exception, but rather the great example.

**We also encourage you to explore other great teachers and Spiritual leaders like:**

Dr. Martin Luther King  
 Ram Dass  
 Dr Wayne Dyer  
 Mother Teresa  
 Mohammad  
 Swami Vivekananda  
 Prophet Muhammad  
 Dalai Lama  
 Saint Augustine  
 Kabir  
 Paramahansa Yogananda  
 Thomas Aquinas  
 and many others....





# About Consciousness..

- Thought is formative.
- We see the world not as it is, but as we are.
- We co-create our life with God.
- And when we change our thoughts—our consciousness— we change our world.

# About the Bible..

- We accept the Bible as a body of history, a moral and ethical teaching, and a great literary work.
- We do not believe that all passages of scripture are equally significant, nor do we believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God.
- The word metaphysical is taken from two Greek words: meta meaning 'above, beyond, or over' and physika meaning 'physics.' Metaphysical literally means 'beyond the physical.' So when we interpret the Bible metaphysically, we find personal meanings beyond the words.
- If we study the Bible as religious history only, the living inner reality is lost. We fail to see it as an idealistic portrayal of our own spiritual development. Clearly, for those of us willing to look past the words, the Bible is a story of our own personal evolution. It is an allegory, story, and parable. It details how we were created with divine potential, how we have misplaced our divine heritage and, most importantly, how we can find it again.

# About the Bible..



- The Ten Commandments are the cornerstone of the Hebrew Scriptures and represent its consciousness. Immutably carved in stone, they imply that if you do certain things (love God, honor your parents, keep the Sabbath holy) and don't do other things (kill, steal, covet) this will make you worthy of God's good. In other words, if you do something in the outer, you change your inner self and become a better person.
- 'Jesus' life represents spiritual humanity in expression, the person each of us is destined to become.
- The saga of Jesus is the saga of your own soul, not necessarily where it's been but where it is capable of going.
- His birth to a virgin represents the birth of the Christ in you, capable of being conceived only by God.
- Jesus was born of Mary, a woman.
- A woman in the Scriptures usually symbolizes your feeling, emotional, and intuitive nature.
- The realization of the Christ in you is born in your feeling nature. It can't be intellectualized or analyzed. It can only be brought forth on an intuitive level.
- So, the Bible takes us from Adam to Jesus, from unenlightened human consciousness to enlightened Christ consciousness. Viewed this way, the Bible is one great epic quest. It is the evolution of a soul—a journey we all must make, and the Scriptures tell us how to do it.

# About the Continuity of Life..



- Where was the soul before it was born in a physical body?
- Have we been here before?
- Accepting the existence of the soul prior to its earthly appearance seems as logical as accepting its existence after it departs from its earthly sojourn.
- We believe in eternal life {we just change form {transition} when as we shed our earthly body}

## About Sin..

- Sin means missing the mark.
- We are not punished for our sins; we are punished by them.
- We live in a spiritual universe, governed by spiritual law and we are always reaping what we have sown.

## WHAT WE PRACTICE AT FIRST UNITY SPIRITUAL CAMPUS

We promote the five principles as follows:

1. The Presence of God through Prayer and Meditation Putting God first in our day
2. Unconditional Love - Putting God first in our relationships
3. Forgiveness - Putting Principle (God) over personality
4. Service as an Act of Devotion to God - Putting God first in our actions
5. Giving Back and Monetary Support /offering - Putting God first in our energy of Prosperity (sharing your time, talents and treasures)

## 1. We Practice The Presence of God (of your understanding) through Prayer and Meditation

- Meditation and concentration are techniques we use in prayer to help us attain the realization of God we seek. There are many types of meditation and concentration methods used in the various spiritual disciplines of the world.
- All of us must learn to contact the voice of God within ourselves and become accustomed to it. This inner voice comes from the silence within us, and it will teach us exactly what we need to know and do to unfold spiritually. The still small voice will direct and guide us in definite ways once we learn to hear and trust it.

## 2. We Practice Unconditional Love

Love The only commandment Jesus gave us was to “love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12).

“Love is who I am.

Gratitude is my attitude.

Abundance is my nature.

Well-being is my birth right.”



## 3. We Practice Forgiveness

- Holding grudges and hanging onto anger and hatred are self-destructive. No matter how educated we are in spiritual principles, unless there is complete forgiveness in our lives, we wither and die spiritually, emotionally, and sometimes even physically because we are working in such opposition to our basic nature, which is to love.
- Without complete forgiveness, we ultimately deny ourselves access to total healing (emotionally and physically), abundant prosperity, permanent peace, and all of the other good which God wants us to experience.

## 4. We Practice Service as an Act of Devotion to God

- We believe all service is an act of devotion to God. We draw closer to God as we draw closer, in loving service, to each other. Service is a key part of spiritual growth and personal transformation.
- We believe that everyone has something to give.
- And we believe that everyone is called to service.
- There are many places to become involved here at the church and accelerate your growth through service. You can be involved a lot or a little. Behind the scenes or out in front . . . it's up to you. We have a place for you. Our staff is happy to talk with you and help you find that perfect place.

## 5. We Practice Giving and Sharing our time, talent, and treasure.

- Those who give in return will leave with something more, however. They will also leave with the gift of growth and transformation because they did not merely witness the service; they invested themselves in it.
- We know that some who really can only give a little. But we metaphysically believe that this 'lack' is only temporary and will change through the principle of giving and receiving. It's simply the laws of the Universe: give out love, you receive love; give out mercy, you receive mercy; and give out tithes from your prosperity and you receive into your prosperity.

TIME 

 TALENT

 TREASURE 

# What Giving and Sharing does..



- Giving reminds you of your Source
- Giving is a consistent, methodical way of practicing good stewardship
- Giving opens new channels of supply
- Giving strengthens your faith
- Giving “shapes” consciousness as nothing else does

## MEMBERSHIP IN FIRST UNITY SPIRITUAL CAMPUS

- Members of First Unity have a desire to develop a meaningful relationship with God; stay awake spiritually and be a supporting member of the campus community through sharing of their time, talent and treasures.
- Just as a family cannot be healthy if each member does not take an active part in contributing to the household, so it is with a spiritual family.
- Members can contribute their time, talent and treasure by serving at least once a month in some area of the campus and contributing financially to the campus.
- Membership provides you the opportunity to vote and elect Board members etc.
- As a sustaining member you have an opportunity to participate more fully in spiritual community.

# SPIRITUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM



- Sunday celebrations are awesome within a spiritual community; yet it is in the classroom environment that we have hands-on experience with truth teachings, we meet new people who view us in unique and different ways, and we make friends that can last for a lifetime.
- Our ongoing classes (Lifelong Learning Institute ) and workshops will help you deepen and enrich your spiritual experience, as part of a congregation of sincere, dedicated and open-minded individuals who share the truth of your innermost divine nature.
- Spiritual leaders all agree that the most involved people on the planet are the most evolved. As spiritual students of truth, it is crucial that we give our minds and our emotions opportunities to heal and reveal. One of these ways is through education.
- An educated spiritual mind opens to the ability to heal old wounds, to expand beyond current circumstances and embrace the spiritual abundance which lies within.
- Many classes available on campus and online on the Lifelong Learning Institute are offered for you to expand the mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of your being.
- For more information, visit the website and explore at [www.firstunity.org](http://www.firstunity.org), or call (727) 527-2222.

# GET INVOLVED

What are your gifts and talents?

- Our volunteer program is based on the truth that each of us has spiritual gifts and unique talents to offer one another, and that these gifts are woven together to create a vibrant and growing spiritual community. If you are looking to get more involved, there is no better place than volunteering. Your level of involvement is up to you—we appreciate each and every one of our volunteers.
- Without you we would not be able to do all that we can for our congregation, our campus and our community. If, after trying any of our volunteer service opportunities, you love it and feel energized about serving in that capacity we will gladly sign you up. If you decide that particular area is not what interests you, then you are free to try something else until we find the spot where you are excited to be serving!

Call our office at (727) 527-2222 x100 to learn more.



# Chaplains



Chaplains are here to support you on your spiritual journey. They will pray with you, listen to you, and hold what they hear in confidence. Unlike hospital chaplains, Unity chaplains are not ordained and are not trained to counsel. Our chaplains make monthly wellness calls to all church members, offering to pray with them. All requests for prayer are held in the strictest confidence. Chaplains also are available for individual prayer after each Sunday service, or you may leave a message at (727) 527-2222 x100.

## Prayer Box and Gratitude Box

The Prayer and Gratitude Boxes are located inside the Sanctuary. There you will find prayer request and gratitude cards for your use. You may also send prayers to us at [firstunity.org](http://firstunity.org). Our prayer team and Reverends will join in prayer for your needs, and then prayer requests are sent to Silent Unity, where they will be held in prayer for 30 days.

All prayer requests found in Boxes are held in the strictest confidence.



# Spiritual Counseling



We have professional counseling, coaching, and spiritual guidance available by appointment, on a love offering basis. Look or ask for information at our administration help desk or visit our website at [www.firstunity.org](http://www.firstunity.org).

## Youth Expressing Spirit

- Allow and support creative play and curiosity-based learning.
- Recognize that there are many expressions of family life.
- Create an affirming environment that encourages positive self-image, personal responsibility, unconditional love and acceptance.
- Behold all youth as whole and perfect expressions of Spirit.
- Empower youth to fulfill their divine potential.



# Your Spiritual Leadership Team



**Rev Jon Scott**



**Rev Dr Aileen Curtin**

## Your Spiritual Support Team



**Prayer  
Chaplains**

**Ushers**



# Recommended Explorations



“Belief compelled through fear is not belief, it is blind and forced obedience.”

- Carlton D. Pearson, *God Is Not a Christian, Nor a Jew, Muslim, Hindu...: God Dwells with Us, in Us, Around Us, as Us*

<https://www.bishoppearson.com/>

“The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it.”

- Eckhart Tolle, *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*

<https://eckharttolle.com/>

“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”

- Mother Teresa

<https://www.biography.com/religious-figures/mother-teresa>

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”

- Maya Angelou

<https://www.mayaangelou.com/>

“You can either be a host to God, or a hostage to your ego. ...”

- Dr. Wayne Dyer

<https://www.drwaynedyer.com/>

“We’re fascinated by the words, but where we meet is in the silence behind them.”

- Ram Dass

<https://www.ramdass.org/about-ram-dass/>

# Recommended Explorations

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” ...

- Lao Tzu

<https://oll.libertyfund.org/person/lao-tzu>

“Be where you are; otherwise you will miss your life.”

- Siddhartha Gautama

<https://www.biography.com/religious-figures/buddha>

"The most wonderful elements on this planet can't be viewed or listened to but must be felt with the heart."

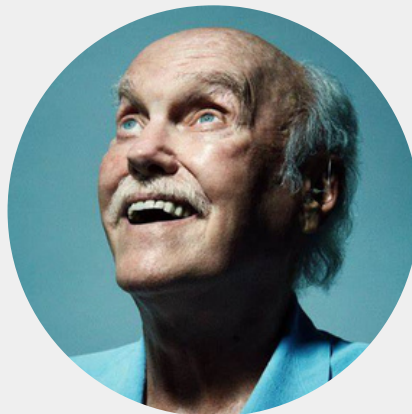
- Lord Krishna

<https://www.krishna.com/info/about-krishna>

"No thought has any power. You have power. And when you identify and believe in the thought you give power to the thought."

- Mooji

<https://mooji.org/>



# STAY CONNECTED



“For more information about upcoming events and classes, sign up for eNews weekly updates from First Unity at [www.firstunity.org](http://www.firstunity.org).

First Unity 460 46th Ave North St Petersburg, FL (727)527-2222

Join the Unity Campus Facebook community at [facebook.com/unitycampus](https://facebook.com/unitycampus)

Instagram: [@firstunityspiritualcampus](https://www.instagram.com/firstunityspiritualcampus)

Watch us at [Youtube.com/firstunityspiritualcampus](https://Youtube.com/firstunityspiritualcampus)

The Center for the Arts @ First Unity [www.arts464.org](http://www.arts464.org)

The Institute for Leadership and Lifelong Learning International  
[www.illi.org](http://www.illi.org)

Meetup [meetup.com/firstunityspiritualcampus](https://meetup.com/firstunityspiritualcampus)

Eventbrite [Eventbrite.com/firstunityspiritualcampus](https://Eventbrite.com/firstunityspiritualcampus)

