

# EarthCare Connections



Fostering awareness of our spiritual oneness with the earth and promoting active care of creation.

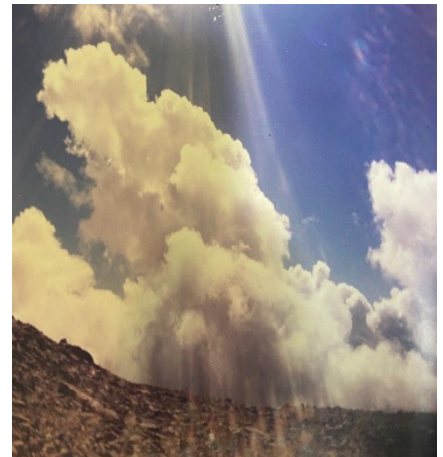
<https://www.unitywm.org/earthcare>  
[earthcare@unity.org](mailto:earthcare@unity.org)

*The earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth. This we know.  
All things are connected like the blood that unites one family.  
Chief Seattle*



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Trail to the summit of Longs Peak, CO (14,259'), Mike McCord, 1999.

## It's all a Question of Story

Thomas Berry writes, "It's all a question of story." We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how we fit into it, is no longer effective. Yet we have not learned the new story."

The current story, that most people seem to operate in, is the **Business as Usual story**, where the goal is to maximize profits, at the expense of people and the planet. Faster, Busy and More are common mantras in this linear, power-over, extraction-based system built on the fallacy of unlimited growth.

Many scientists, scholars, and others waking up from the delusions of consumer-driven society often put much of their energy into detailing how Business as Usual is leading to the **Great**

**Unraveling**, from dire predictions about the consequences of climate change to the economic and political instability that will inevitably follow. While it is crucial to detail the likely effects of our unsustainable way of life, when the story ends here, it often causes people to shut down, or dwell in dystopian scenarios. There are entire sections of bookstores and video streaming services devoted to dystopian novels and series.

Rev. Deborah Johnson and other spiritual leaders have observed that “Pain pushes, until vision pulls.” It seems that our collective pain is pushing us towards telling the story of the Great Unraveling, but what if we redirected that energy and used our moral imagination to tell the stories of the **Great Turning** as we turn from an industrial growth society to a life-sustaining society?

What if these utopian visions permeated our culture as much as, or more than, stories like *The Handmaid’s Tale* or *The Hunger Games*?

If Einstein is correct, and our imagination is a preview of life’s coming attractions, then let’s tell a new story, a story of a sustainable community, where people are in harmony with the earth and with each other.

From “A Universe Story,” by Thomas Berry.

<https://thomasberry.org/life-and-thought/about-thomas-berry/a-universe-story/>

## The Power of Strength

<https://www.unityuwm.org/ec-curriculum-strength>

As a spiritual principle that is infinitely active in and through all creation, the **Unity spiritual power of Strength** is the divine idea of enduring integrity. Greater than ‘muscling’ through challenges, more than dogged persistence, Divine Strength is the divine design to endure as the integrity of Oneness and interdependence.

### Unit Focus

As a spiritual principle that is infinitely active in and through all action, the **Unity spiritual power of Strength** is the divine idea of enduring integrity. Greater than ‘muscling’ through challenges, more than dogged persistence, Divine Strength is the divine design to endure as the integrity of Oneness and interdependence.

The Unity spiritual power of Strength goes far beyond physical ability. It includes:

- Divine Strength is a divine idea and spiritual principle active in all creation
- Divine Strength is realized in humans through the mind of the heart
- Divine Strength is the spiritual integrity of interdependent systems throughout creation
- Divine Strength is unending endurance

### Unit Learning Objectives

By the end of this module learners will be able to:

- Describe their understanding of Divine STRENGTH as a divine idea lived
- Describe examples of Divine Strength working as a design in all creation.
- Identify the human role in living Divine STRENGTH as endurance to care for creation
- Integrate the spiritual principle of Divine STRENGTH as related to care for the planet by

listing three spiritual practices that reveal Divine Strength in a Unity service, class, or service project.

To view all the information and resources contained in the curriculum, please go to:

<https://www.unityuwm.org/ec-curriculum-strength>



Thirteen (13) spiritual centers received the *Green Star Award for Environmental Excellence* this year, an all-time record! Each Spiritual Center demonstrated their commitment to protecting and preserving the environment of our Earth home. Here they are:

**Unity of Fayetteville, AR**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:  
President/Chair of Governing Body:  
Contact Person:  
**No. of accomplishments:**

Rev. Katherine “Annette” Olsen  
Kristal Joy Wyatt  
Katherine Guendling, LUT  
**14**

**Unity Lansing, MI**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:  
President/Chair of Governing Body:  
Contact Person:  
**No. of accomplishments:**

Rev. Sharon Ketchum  
Chrissie Shearer  
Jessica Shelton, Office Manager  
**3**

**Unity of the Blue Ridge, Mills River, NC**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:  
President/Chair of Governing Body:  
Contact Person:  
**No. of accomplishments:**

Rev. Darlene Strickland  
Bobbi Flowers-Owenby,  
Judie McKown  
**5**

**Unity Walnut Creek, Walnut Creek, CA**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:  
President/Chair of Governing Body:  
Contact Person:  
**No. of Accomplishments:**

Rev. Kristin Powell  
Richard Flander  
Lee Sparling (Green team lead)  
**7**

**Unity Bay Area Houston, South City:**

League City, TX

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:

President/Chair of Governing Body:

Contact Person:

**No of Accomplishments:**

Rev. Kyra Baehr

Cathy Kemper

Cathy Kemper Pelle

**19**

**Unity Minneapolis**

Sr. Minister, Rev.

President/Chairman of Board:

Contact Person:

**No. of Accomplishments:**

Pat Williamson

Rev. Toni Fish

Becky Haaf

**3**

**Unity Spiritual Center of Vero Beach,**

**Vero Beach, FL**

**Sr. Minister:**

President/Chair:

Contact Person: Sr. Minister:

**No. of Accomplishments:**

Rev Clyde DeLoporte

Marty Menalko

Rev Clyde DeLoporte

**3**

**Unity of Fort Collins, CO**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:

President/Chair of Governing Body:

Contact Person:

**No. of Accomplishments:**

Sharon Bush and Jim Yeaw

Anne Hudgens

Leane Gabel

**3**

**Unity Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:

President/Chair of Governing Body:

Contact Person:

**No. of accomplishments:**

Rev. Liz Luoma

Tom McCrory

Rev. Liz Luoma

**11**

**Unity of Whidbey, Langley, WA**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:

President/Chair of Governing Body:

Contact Person:

**No.of Accomplishments:**

Joanna Gabriel

Phil Byrne

Barbara Johns

**3**

**Midtown Unity, St Petersburg, FL**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:

President/Chair of Governing Body:

Contact Person:

**No.of Accomplishments**

Rev Linda McLeod

Bill Puller

Mary Gerken

**3**

**Unity of Traverse City**

**- Unity Spiritual Center**

Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader:

President/Chair of Governing Body:

Contact Person:

**No. of Accomplishments:**

Rev. Judith Grimes

Libby Robold

Maryann Cacciaglia

**5**

**Unity Spiritual Center of Spokane, WA**

Senior Minister: Vacant  
President/Chair: Rick Hutchins  
Vice-President: Douglas E. Ladwig  
Contact Person: Deanna Doyle  
**No. of Accomplishments:** 3

Congratulations to each of these spiritual centers for being good stewards of the environment and honoring the balance between our individual needs and those of nature!

For a detailed look at each accomplishment, go to the EarthCare Webpage <https://www.unityuwm.org/earthcare>. Under 2024 Green Star Award Winners, “Click here for all of the details on our awardees.”

**EarthCare News**

A new category called the **Green Star Constellation Award** has been created. Its purpose is to recognize the collective efforts of faith-based communities to work together to cultivate awareness, advocacy and care for all creation.

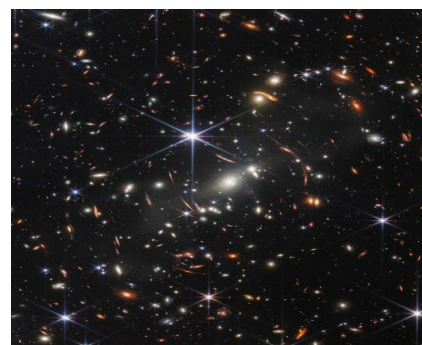
**Any Unity or non-Unity** faith-based collaborative organization, group or coalition is eligible. It must have been in existence at least two years and consist of at least three faith-based organizations that have agreed to work with one another to share information and support its individual congregation’s projects as well as hosting joint activities.

To receive the award, collaboratives must have completed at least **three** significant environmental activities together in the preceding calendar year.

Awards will be announced in 2025. Here is the proposed certificate:

**Green Star Constellation Award**

*Stars are symbols of leadership, guidance, protection, and trust. Throughout history, they have been a Divine symbol of hope for humanity. In recognition of their efforts to work together on behalf of Mother Earth, the Unity Worldwide Ministries EarthCare Team hereby presents the Green Star Constellation award to:*



Name

This \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael L. McCord  
EarthCare Team Leader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Valerie Mansfield  
Acting President and CEO  
Unity Worldwide Ministries

## Mentoring/Collaborative Calls



Mary Gerken, a member of the EarthCare core team, hosts these calls monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday at 12 Noon Eastern time. One of the benefits of participating in these calls is that they provide a way for you to connect with other churches, open new avenues to collaborate and share your ideas, successes, and challenges. A different topic is selected at each meeting and creative ideas are shared. Recent ideas include: “Forest or Nature bathing/ Circulation Day” in which items no longer needed are shared and given away, having native plant tours and partnering with other faith organization for speakers.

For the date and time, please [email Mary](mailto:Mary@agreatpickle@gmail.com), at [agreatpickle@gmail.com](mailto:agreatpickle@gmail.com).

## Facebook

Beth Remmes administers EarthCare’s Facebook Page. Over 1600 followers have discovered the timely resources and interchange of ideas that it contains. To join them, please go to:

[www.facebook.com/UnityEarthCare](https://www.facebook.com/UnityEarthCare)



## YouTube Channel

Angela Tetrault is the host of EarthCare’s YouTube channel. The channel contains links to numerous videos in the areas of Social Justice, Educational, Spiritual, Poems and Inspiration, and Music. Check it out!

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4iYARFqsgLhuodoDC52R5Q/playlists>



## Questions? Here's Where to Go.

If you have any questions, please contact the representative for your region. You also may email [earthcare@unity.org](mailto:earthcare@unity.org) or call Mike McCord at 913.907.4061.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
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Eastern	Martha Powers or Mary Gerken	<a href="mailto:mpowers7@gmail.com">mpowers7@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:agreatpickle@gmail.com">agreatpickle@gmail.com</a>
Great Lakes	Kathy Harwood Long	<a href="mailto:kathyharwoodlong@gmail.com">kathyharwoodlong@gmail.com</a>
Northwest	Cylvia Hayes	<a href="mailto:cylvia@3strategies.org">cylvia@3strategies.org</a>
West Central	Mary Gerken	<a href="mailto:agreatpickle@gmail.com">agreatpickle@gmail.com</a>
Pacific Rim	Cylvia Hayes	<a href="mailto:cylvia@3strategies.org">cylvia@3strategies.org</a>
South Central	Mike McCord	<a href="mailto:michael_mccord@sbcglobal.net">michael_mccord@sbcglobal.net</a>
South East	Beth Remmes	<a href="mailto:bremmes@hotmail.com">bremmes@hotmail.com</a>
South West	Helen Wright	<a href="mailto:wrighthf@gmail.com">wrighthf@gmail.com</a>



**Mike McCord, Editor**