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HAPPY  
new  
YEAR



### HAPPY NEW YEAR COU FAMILY FRIENDS!

January has become my favorite time of year because it is filled with expectancy and unlimited possibilities. For many years, I have participated in a Burning Bowl ceremony—a meaningful practice that supports me in releasing what no longer serves me and in creating a clear vision of what I desire to be, do, and have in the coming year. If you missed the service led by GiGi Johnson, LUT, on December 28, you can still create your own ritual or participate by watching the recording on our Facebook or YouTube channel. I remain deeply expectant because I have witnessed, time and again, the amazing ways my visions come into manifestation.

The White Stone ceremony on January 4 offers a powerful opportunity to discover the word that Spirit is inviting you to cultivate in 2026. When you pair this guiding word with a strong vision, you step fully into your role as a co-creator with the Divine.

Everyone is invited to attend our Annual Meeting on February 1, 2026, at 12:15 p.m. A light meal will be provided immediately following the service. Together, we will review the highlights of 2025, share the vision for 2026, and active members will vote on two new board members.

Join us as we expectantly hold a unified vision for Center of Unity in all that we are called to be, do, and have in 2026!

With anticipation and gratitude,

*Rev Linda*

## WHO WE ARE AT COU

### OUR MISSION

Transforming lives and inspiring people to make a positive difference in the world.

### OUR VISION

Centered in God, we envision a world free of judgment and filled with love.

### OUR CORE VALUES

Spirit-led, Service, Inclusive, Joy, and Prosperous

# JOIN US FOR SUNDAY service

SUNDAYS | 10:30 AM

Join us each Sunday for an uplifting and heart-centered service. Whether you're seeking spiritual growth, connection, healing, or simply a peaceful place to reflect, you'll find an open and inclusive community ready to welcome you.

Each week, we explore universal principles, meditation, prayer, and inspirational teachings that help you create a more meaningful, joy-filled life.

## WHITE STONE Ceremony

JANUARY 4TH  
10:30 AM

WHAT WILL YOUR  
WORD BE?

### Start 2026 with Intention

Step into a sacred and transformative experience at our **White Stone Ceremony**, a ritual that has the power to shape your year and inspire those around you.

During the service, each participant receives a white stone. You will be guided to connect deeply with Spirit and invited to discover the word or words that will represent your highest intention for the new year. This word is then inscribed on your stone, serving as a tangible reminder of your commitment and intention throughout 2026.

The White Stone ceremony is inspired by **Revelation 2:17**: *"Are your ears awake? Listen. Listen to the Wind Words, the Spirit blowing through the churches. I'll give the sacred manna to every conqueror; I'll also give a clear, smooth stone inscribed with your new name, your secret new name."*

Can't join us in person? You can still create this sacred ritual at home. Pick up a stone from the church ahead of time or choose one from your surroundings and set your intention for the year.

Begin the year with clarity, purpose, and spiritual connection, your 2026 intention awaits.

11th

"UNITY IN UNITY"

18th

GUEST SPEAKER -  
TBD

25th

GUEST SPEAKER -  
GIGI JOHNSON, LUT

# 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present you with the candidates who are running for the Board of Directors this year.

Four dedicated Center of Unity members, Maria Coward, Ben Cox, Amy Hairston and Susan Spradlin have stepped up to apply for the COU Board of Directors.

Get to know them below before the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 01, 2026.



## Maria Coward

Maria has been actively involved with the community for over a year and joined as a member in early 2025. Her volunteer contributions include coordinating and facilitating SpiritGroups, welcoming new guests, supporting the Body Mind & Spirit Fest, and assisting with general events—all of which have deepened her resonance and commitment to the community and its mission.

She brings a background in project management, communications, and strategic planning, alongside a strong capacity for collaborative leadership, curious listening, and emotional attunement. Maria's vision for Board service is to bring openness

and curiosity to her role, reflecting the community's evolving aspirations while fostering vibrancy, growth, and meaningful connection within and beyond COU. For Center of Unity, she envisions a vibrant, visible presence in the wider community—rooted in Unity principles and expressed through joyful, grounded service.

If elected, Maria is committed to supporting our beloved community in maintaining a healthy rhythm and clear focus we evolve and grow—strengthening relationships, staying focused on priorities, and encouraging shared ownership throughout the congregation. She attends with devotion and tithes faithfully. To her, Unity is not a doctrine but a living invitation to wholeness, one that respects both humanity and divinity, and a willingness to evolve with grace and an open heart.



## Ben Cox

Ben's journey with Center of Unity began two years ago, and in that time, he has grown not only in participation but in spirit. What has touched him most deeply are the moments of service where he could look directly into the eyes of those we support—whether through SHINE, PBNJ, Sunday School, or the Safety Team—and feel the joy, relief, and connection that arise when love is expressed in action. He speaks often about how these experiences opened his heart and

strengthened his sense of purpose, reminding him that service is one of the purest forms of spiritual practice.

He sees Center of Unity as a sanctuary where people are welcomed without judgment, encouraged to explore their spiritual path, and inspired to express their gifts with authenticity and courage. Unity has helped him shape an empowered worldview—one rooted in creativity, compassion, and responsibility—and he feels a deep gratitude for the ways this community has supported his own growth. It is from this place of gratitude that he seeks to serve.

If elected to the Board, Ben hopes to bring an open heart, a listening spirit, and a genuine desire to nurture the collective

wisdom of our community. He is committed to honoring COU's roots while helping cultivate new possibilities for outreach, growth, and deeper connection. He is passionate about exploring how we evolve as a spiritual family, how we expand our presence through service, and how we continue to uplift one another in meaningful ways. He also advocates for maintaining an online attendance option as an act of inclusivity—recognizing the real needs of those balancing family life, work, or distance.

Supporting these heartfelt intentions are Ben's professional strengths. He brings a mature business perspective, experience in leadership and strategic thinking, and a strong understanding of emerging technologies, including AI. He sees these skills not as the center of his candidacy, but as tools the Board can draw upon to help COU thrive in a changing world. He is committed to continuing his growth—whether in public speaking, spiritual embodiment, or collaborative leadership—always seeking to more fully live the principles Unity teaches.

Ben faithfully tithes, participates actively in services and community life, and embraces Unity as a lived recognition of our shared divinity and interconnectedness. To him, serving on the Board would be a sacred responsibility and an honor—an opportunity to help guide Center of Unity forward with love, clarity, and a spirit of joyful co-creation.





## Amy Hairston

Amy Hairston has been connected to Center of Unity since 2017, returning in 2021 and becoming a member in 2022. Her service to the church reflects both commitment and versatility. She has served as a church ambassador—her most rewarding role—welcoming visitors, giving tours, and sharing information with new attendees. She has also taught youth education classes, participated in spirit groups and their service projects, and contributed to practical needs such as decorating, painting, and landscaping.

Professionally and personally, Amy brings strengths in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and ethical leadership. She emphasizes transparency, accountability, and

thoughtful decision-making, and she values listening, asking good questions, and building consensus. Her vision for the Board centers on responsible stewardship, spiritual vitality, and fostering a welcoming, inclusive church culture. She believes the Board should model leadership, ensure wise use of resources, and support events and programs that deepen spirituality and draw new people into the community.

Amy envisions Center of Unity as a spiritually vibrant church known for meaningful education, inspiring speakers, and compassionate outreach. If elected to the Board, she would contribute steady, thoughtful leadership, a passion for spiritual growth, and a commitment to service. Her areas of interest include spiritual education and community outreach, which she sees as essential to the church's mission. She is fully able to commit to Board responsibilities, is a consistent giver, and describes Unity as an inclusive, open-minded spiritual path rooted in compassion and love.



## Susan Spradlin

Susan is deeply committed to the mission and vision of the Center of Unity and has felt called to serve in a greater capacity as a Board member. She has attended the COU for 16 years nearly every Sunday since June 2009. She became an official member in January 2010.

Over the years, she has served in many volunteer roles. These include greeter, usher, visitor guide, and volunteer coordinator. In addition, she participated on the Women of Wisdom Leadership Team and the Corked Planning Committee. In 2024, he recruited a team to plan, coordinate, and implement one of the largest Corked events to celebrate the Winter Solstice. On Sunday mornings, Susan enjoys greeting people by name as they arrive because it fosters connection and warmth with Unity. Recently, she was invited to join the Evolutionary Council and looks forward to contributing more after her retirement in February 2026.

Susan is capable of being a contributing member of the COU Board. Her professional history includes decades of experience in project management, event planning, budget oversight, and communication, which she believes will benefit the Board. Her vision is for the Board to lead by example, guided by Unity principles and prayer, and for the Center of Unity to be a diverse, inclusive spiritual community rooted in love and oneness with God. She is committed to supporting Unity's mission through faithful attendance, active involvement, and consistent tithing.

Unity has transformed her life, replacing self-centeredness with joy and service. Susan feels it would be an honor to bring her skills, passion, and dedication to the Board, working collaboratively to ensure the Center of Unity continues to thrive and touch lives through love, inclusivity, and spiritual growth.

# ANNUAL MEETING



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 01  
11:45 AM**

Our Annual Membership Meeting will be on Sunday, February 01, 2026, at 11:45 AM in the sanctuary.

A portion of the meeting will be dedicated to the election of new Board Members, whose profiles are above.

Each voting member and past, or non-voting, should have received a membership re-verification card in the mail. The completed card must be returned by January 25th to be eligible to vote on Sunday, February 1st, 2026. As you

complete it, please be sure to let the Care Team know if, and how, you'd like monthly wellness contacts throughout the year.

Please note that we will not be following up with existing members to see if they want to re-join membership this year, as we have in the past, per our bylaws.

For your convenience, membership renewal tables will be set up in the foyer on January 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.



# TAKE DOWN CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

SUN,  
JAN 4th

## Lend a Hand & Join the Holiday Fun!

Stick around after church and help us take down the Christmas decorations on January 4th! It's a great way to share laughs, catch up with friends, and enjoy some festive teamwork as we pack away the holiday cheer— together. Come for the camaraderie, stay for the smiles!

Plus, you can enjoy a bite to eat at the **Soup & Salad Potluck** at the First Sunday Lunch!



## CENTERING PRAYER

1st Sundays  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

## Sunday, January 4th

Join Mark and Dawn Morris in the Prayer Room for Centering Prayer, a type of Christian meditation. We will do two 20 minute sits, then spend a few minutes in Lectio Divina, a meditative scripture reading.

Visit [contemplativeoutreach.org](http://contemplativeoutreach.org) for more info.



## FIRST SUNDAY LUNCH

January: Soup & Salad Potluck

February: Luncheon

March: Corked Trip Around the World

April: Brunch

May: Cinco De Mayo Potluck

June: Family Barbecue

July: Vegetarian & Vegan Potluck

August: Italian

September: Southern

October: Chef's Favorites

November: Chili Cook-Off Competition

December: Baked Potato Bar

JOIN US THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
FOR GREAT FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP!  
LOVE OFFERING APPRECIATED



## START THE NEW YEAR WITH PURPOSE AT INNER JOURNEY BOOKSTORE

As we step into a new year, it's a wonderful time to align our intentions with meaningful choices. When you shop at **Inner Journey Bookstore**, you're doing more than purchasing a book or gift, you're directly supporting our church community. Inner Journey is **100% non-profit**, and every purchase helps support our spiritual home.

Begin the year by exploring our wide selection of **spiritual, metaphysical, and inspirational books and gifts**, perfect for setting intentions, deepening your spiritual practice, or finding a thoughtful gift for someone special.

**Shop with purpose. Shop with heart. Begin your year at Inner Journey.**



# CORKED

Join our Social Group for fun outings each month.

Contact

**Barbara Luders** | 682-208-9334 or [b.luders@yahoo.com](mailto:b.luders@yahoo.com)



## GAME ON! NEW YEAR FELLOWSHIP AFTERNOON

**Sunday, January 18**  
**12:00 pm**

ick off the new year with laughter, fun, and fellowship! Join us for an afternoon of games and connection in **Fellowship Hall**.

Bring an **appetizer to share**—beverages will be provided. We'll start with a fun icebreaker featuring the LCR dice game, so be sure to bring **three \$1 bills**. You might also find yourself jumping into some easy-to-learn (and possibly crazy!) card games—having three quarters on hand is a good idea, just in case!

Board games and the ever-popular Corked game may also make an appearance.

Come ready to laugh, play, and enjoy wonderful fellowship with your church family.

**Please RSVP by January 14** so we can prepare accordingly. We can't wait to see you there!



As we begin a new year, the Care Team wants you to remember that we're here for you with wellness calls, prayer requests, cards, hospital visits, and other needs you may have.

If you would like someone to pray with, please look for any member of the team after service, or call or email. We'll be honored to support you through challenges and for celebratory situations as well, so try us! You'll like us!

**- YOUR CARE TEAM**



## LIFT YOUR VOICE: JOIN THE CHOIR!

Have you ever felt the joy of song? Do you find yourself humming along during Sunday services or tapping your foot to the rhythm? If so, the church choir may be calling your name!

- ♥ Build lasting friendships and find encouragement.
- ♥ Use your gift of music.
- ♥ Strengthen your musical skills.
- ♥ Experience the spiritual and emotional uplift that comes with harmonizing.

No auditions are required—just a willing heart. Rehearsals are held every Sunday at 8:30 am in the choir room. All voice parts and experience levels are welcome!

Come be a part of something meaningful. Come sing with us.  
**We'd love to welcome you to the choir family!**



Bring non-perishables to Fellowship Hall **the last Sunday of each month** for distribution to the GRACE Food Pantry clients. You don't have to wait until last Sunday, though; bring shelf-stable foods any time during the month and place them in the marked receptacle in Fellowship Hall. Spam is still welcomed; the foods suggested here may be a bit healthier than that "traditional" donation. You might consider low-sodium, low-sugar, high-fiber foods in your selections.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR ITEMS ARE NOT EXPIRED. Like all of us, GRACE clients prefer to eat food that is not expired.

DISCOVER NEW HORIZONS



## Unity Intelligence

UNITY & AI

## Special Workshop: Exploring AI with Heart & Wisdom

Sunday, January 25 | 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Facilitated by: Ben Cox

Join us for a thought-provoking workshop with Ben Cox on Sunday, January 25, from Noon–2:00 PM. This interactive session offers a heart-centered approach to understanding and engaging with today's emerging AI tools—grounded in wisdom, intention, and spiritual awareness.

Together, we'll explore the **Three Expressions of Intelligence**:

- **Divine Intelligence** → The source of wisdom
- **Human Intelligence** → The interpreter, creator, and heart
- **Artificial Intelligence** → The amplifier of intention

This workshop is designed to empower you with a courageous, integrated outlook on AI, one that honors spiritual principles while embracing innovation.

Whether you're curious, cautious, or excited about AI, this workshop offers a welcoming space to learn, reflect, and expand your understanding.

# CREATIVE EXPRESSION

## Make 2026 Your Year of Creative Expression!

Calling All Painters, Sculptors & Creators! This New Year, challenge yourself, try something new, and share your talents with the community! We're transforming the hallway between Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary into a **vibrant art gallery**, and we want your creativity to help bring it to life.

Imagine the walls alive with **bold acrylics, delicate watercolors, vibrant oil paintings, mixed-media masterpieces, drawings, and even sculpture**—art that uplifts, inspires, and celebrates the beauty of our congregation. This is your chance to **showcase your work, inspire others, and step into the spotlight**.

Artists are invited to display their work for **90 days**, with the option to make pieces available for purchase. A portion of any sales will go back to support COU, helping our church continue to thrive.

We're thrilled to introduce our **first featured artist, Abedeh Shirazian**! Her work is already on display, offered at a **20% discount**, with 20% of sales generously donated back to COU. Contact Abedeh directly if you're interested in purchasing one of her stunning pieces.

**Let's fill our hallway with color, creativity, and joy—and make 2026 a year of bold artistic expression!**

**Interested? Contact: June Brookshire at (817) 868-1400**

Limit: 3 pieces per artist for this first phase.

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many ways you can help — assisting with office tasks, supporting Sunday services, or offering your time and presence in other areas. Your willingness to serve is a beautiful expression of love in action.

- ♥ SUNDAY HOSPITALITY (30 MIN. BEFORE & AFTER SERVICES)
- ♥ USHER/AMBASSADOR/GREETER (ONE SUNDAY A MONTH)
- ♥ TAKE THE FOOD TO GRACE (MONTHLY)
- ♥ BACKUP FOR CAMERAS/POWERPOINT (AS NEEDED)
- ♥ BACKUP FOR SOUND SYSTEM (AS NEEDED)
- ♥ DISPOSE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIAL (OLD PAINT CANS, OLD TV, OLD MICROWAVE)
- ♥ ON CALL HELP

**SIGN UP**

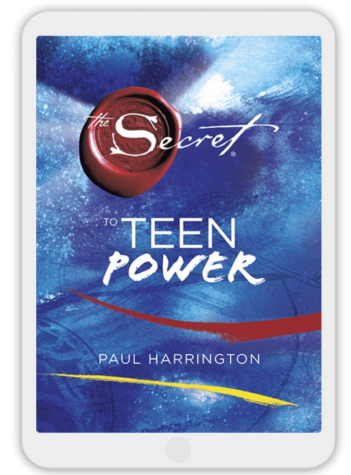




## Sundays in Youth Ed

We resume our regular curriculum in January! Our youngest learners will resume ***What a Wonderful World***, while our grade schoolers will continue exploring ***Celebrating My God Self***.

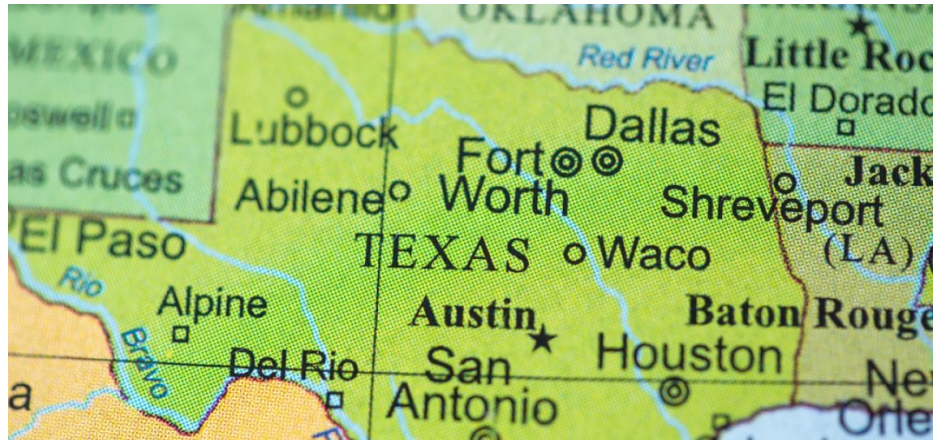
Our older youth will explore *The Secret to Teen Power*, inspired by Rhonda Byrne's *The Secret*. This study helps teens discover that their greatest strength comes from within as they learn how positive thinking, prayer, and spiritual awareness support confident choices and meeting life's challenges with peace and purpose.



## SAN ANTONIO, HERE WE COME!

Our older youth will be heading to Winter Lally (Winter Retreat) in San Antonio on January 17, returning on January 19 after marching in the MLK Parade. They're excited to reconnect with youth they met in October and to continue building meaningful friendships and memories.

Thank you for your continued support of our youth and their journeys!



## WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

WE ♥ VOLUNTEERS!



We're looking for two more loving volunteers to support our 4-year-old to Kindergarten class on the third and fourth Sundays of each month.

These little ones are full of energy, curiosity, and wonder! No lesson prep required—everything is already ready for you to dive in. All you need to bring is your smile, a heart full of love, and a spirit of encouragement.



Do you have a Roku device that you no longer use? Youth Ed can make use of it for one of the classrooms.

If you feel called to help nurture our youngest learners, please reach out to Debie for more details about joining this joyful team.

### Join Our 1st–4th Grade Team!

We have an opening for a caring adult to join our **1st–4th grade class** on **second Sundays**. This group of young learners is **insightful, energetic**, and truly a joy to be with!

All lesson materials are ready for you—just come with your **enthusiasm** and a heart for **supporting and connecting** with our students.

If you feel called to help nurture their spiritual growth, please reach out to **Debie** to learn more about joining the team.

**EMAIL DEBIE**





# 100 New Year's Resolutions

## you can actually keep!

- Take more baths.
- Play like a child.
- Be happy with the life you have.
- Be open to seeing a therapist.
- Learn a new skill.
- Clean out your closet.
- Try a new "diet."
- Hunt for the perfect, comfy workout clothes.
- Turn on music instead of the TV.
- Cut back on streaming services.
- Face your fears.
- Get plenty of sunlight.
- Eat more vegetables.
- Start lifting weights.
- Mute social media for 24 hours.
- Spend an hour every day on **your** goals.
- Change your look.
- Take the stairs.
- Stop apologizing.
- Be *actively* kind to people.
- Keep up with the news.
- Find a home for everything in your kitchen.
- Get your grown-up documents in order.
- Drink **less**.
- Try planking
- Practice saying "no."
- Create a detailed budget.
- Try a new recipe each week.
- Slow down while eating.
- Make your own coffee.
- Take more walks.
- Find healthier recipes for foods you love.
- Cash your paychecks and track where they go.
- Plan your meals before grocery shopping each week.
- Reduce your screen time.
- Make daily to-do lists.
- *Actually* start flossing.
- Study a foreign culture you know *nothing* about.
- Make an upbeat playlist
- Stop buying things you don't need, especially "stuff."
- Stop judging others.
- Delegate as much as possible.
- Create a "me time" arrangement with your partner.
- Start a side hustle.
- Practice meditation.
- Put everything for the whole year into your planner.
- Create a budget, then use your credit card for cash back.
- Pick up a new hobby.
- Let go of grudges.
- Join a club or group.
- Create a skincare routine.
- Visit art museums.
- Quit smoking and vaping.
- Find a charity you care about.
- Plan a vacation.
- Take your vitamins.
- Learn how to eat intuitively.
- Cut back on caffeine.
- Adopt a pet.
- Keep a journal every day.
- Get in touch with nature.
- Rotate your fitness routines.
- Invest in bins, bags, and shelves to aid in tidiness.
- Save the money each month on an expense you *hope* to have.
- Plan fun, free activities every month.
- Stop over-researching every decision.





## ONLINE BIBLE STUDY

**TUESDAYS | 11:30 AM**

Discover deeper spiritual meaning in scripture and reconnect with the good that God is unfolding in your life right now. Each class stands on its own—join any time and drop in as you're able. All are welcome!

**ZOOM ID 702 400 166**



## ADULT Sunday School

SUNDAYS | 9:30 AM

ZOOM ID 85810265049

**SUNDAYS | 9:30AM**

Looking to explore last Sunday's message more deeply? Join us for thoughtful conversation and spiritual connection—whether you're joining in person or online. Each session is self-contained, so you can drop in anytime!

**ZOOM ID 858 102 650 49**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Elaine Murphy	01
Suzanne Henderson	08
Grace Langtree Price	08
Harry Lantvit	08
Cathy Schmidtberger	09
Jim Brunelle	12
Trisha Adams	13
Virginia Urban	18
Pam Vardaman	18
Sherrie Dotson	19
Denise Teague	27
Phyllis Lantvit	29
Norma Crawford	31

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Glen & Sherrie Dotson	05
Jeff & Amber Holland	15
Peter & Thayne Rooney	20

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY KIDS

Henry Salazar	02
Maylene Southlard	07
Beau Richardson	30

## after service fellowship EVERY SUNDAY

Each week, we ask those whose last name matches the schedule to bring a healthy snack to share with the community.

5th Sundays we invite ALL to share a snack.

**07  
A-G**

**14  
H-M**

**21  
N-S**

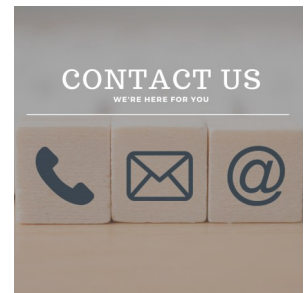
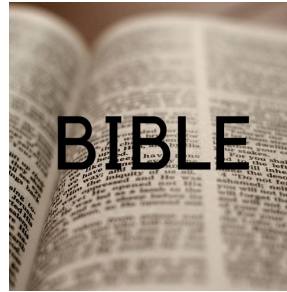
**28  
T-Z**





# RESOURCES

simply click the pic to be re-directed to the information you want



1650 Hughes Road, P.O. Box 667  
Grapevine, TX 76051  
817-488-1008  
[www.centerofunity.org](http://www.centerofunity.org)

## Our Mission:

Transforming lives and inspiring people to make a positive difference in the world.

## Our Vision:

Centered in God, we envision a world free of judgment and filled with love.

# FINANCIAL NEWS

God is the Source of Center of Unity. We are lavishly prospered in all ways. Thank you, God!

## November General Fund

Income: \$22,254

Expenses: (\$14,405)

Net: \$7,849

## YTD General Fund

Income: \$267,923

Expenses: (\$267,630)

Net: \$292

# JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2 Office Closed	3
4 Fellowship Snacks: A –G  8:30 am: Choir Practice 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School 10:30 am: White Stone Ceremony  11:45 am: 1st Sunday Lunch & Take Down Christmas Decos.  6:30 pm: Centering Prayer	5	6  11:30 am Metaphysical Bible Study	7	8	9 Office Closed	10
11 Fellowship Snacks: H –M  8:30 am: Choir Practice 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School 10:30 am: Unity in Unity	12	13  11:30 am Metaphysical Bible Study	14	15	16 Office Closed	17 Uniteen Winter Retreat
18 Fellowship Snacks: N – S  8:30 am: Choir Practice 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School 10:30 am: Guest Speaker  12:00 pm: Corked  Uniteen Winter Retreat	19  Uniteen Winter Retreat	20  11:30 am Metaphysical Bible Study	21	22	23 Office Closed	24
25 Fellowship Snacks: T – Z Membership Reverification Due  8:30 am: Choir Practice 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School 10:30 am: Guest Speaker, Gigi Johnson, LUT  12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Exploring AI with Heart & Wisdom Workshop	26	27  11:30 am Metaphysical Bible Study	28	29	30 Office Closed	31