

**This information brought to you by your Association of Unity Churches..**

## **BURNING BOWL SERVICE 1988**

by Shay St John

Living, loving Creator,

This night we come before You, hearts open, minds receptive to the gifts of this New Year. We still our thoughts that we may hear Thy thoughts speaking to us and through us now.

Open us to the vision of Your divine Will at work in all we do. Let us perceive the potential of this day and every day to create for us the Goodness of Your Purposes.

Still the noise of our cluttered minds...as we rest into the depths of meditation and prayer...responsive to new understandings of Truth.

We now let go...and allow these words to guide the meditation of our hearts.

Yes, God...

I know that this is a YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION...

I believe in the beauty, the possibilities, the transformations and the promises of this New Year.

Within me is the assurance that seeds sleeping in the earth's cradle will awaken, break through into their divine fulfillment and become radiant expressions of Your Divine Plan for Beauty.

Yes, Lord, I know that trees now resting into the stillness of January's cold will burst forth in opulent splendor as the spring rains quicken their growth. Their treasures of shade and fruit and cooling, rustling leaves can even now be sensed in their naked garment of the New Year's beginning.

And, Yes, God, I understand that cycles will be fulfilled: caterpillars will be transformed into golden-winged butterflies dreams will manifest as I allow Your Will to flow through me; the healing rays of the sun will greet the morning; rains will bathe the earth in showers of love; mountains will stand before the winds in their overshadowing beauty; rainbows will reflect through the prism of my mind the promise of perfect transformation.

## SOLO

Right now, dear God, I greet this New Year...  
aware that I am your Divine Seed...  
inlilled with all the potentials for growth, perfection & transformation that the rainbow  
reveals.

Your Truth is now living within every cell and fiber of my being.  
Your Love now activates my every thought and word.  
The joy of Your Life moving through me now quickens my actions.  
The Presence of the living Christ assures me that all is well.  
Ideas that are as yet dormant will awaken to the promise of this New Year.  
Poems that are as yet unwritten will flow through me to touch the hearts of others. Books  
that are still embryos in my mind will mature into the inspiring revelation of Your Light in  
the months ahead.  
Friendships will strenghten in this year of transforming power...  
the synergy of caring enfolds me in the willingness to REACH OUT and touch my fellow  
travelers along life's Pathway.

In this Ncw Year, Dear Lord, I know that You are with me... empowering me to transform  
difficulties into steppingstones to mastery... Challenges are overcome in the victorious  
light of Your truth.

Truly this is the BEST YEAR OF MY LIFE...FOR IT IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE ETERNAL  
NOW. I MOVE FORWARD INTO EACH DAY OF THIS NEW YEAR...ALERT TO ITS GIFTS,

READY FOR ITS TRANSFORMATIONS, GRATEFUL FOR ITS LESSONS.

THIS IS THE YEAR THAT THE LORD HATH MADE. I WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT.

THANK YOU, GOD, THAT I AM FREE...AND UNLIMITED...IN THIS NEW YEAR- FOR SO IT  
IS.

SONG: I AM FREE. I AM UNLIMITED

Rest into the stillness for a time...connect with that power of God moving in and through  
you now.

Realize that before you now is the fabric of a New Year...ready for you to design in  
whatever way you choose.

How will you create this New Year? What are your goals...your dreams... your plans?

To know your fulfillment of these desires, what do you need to release? You are free...

unlimited...infinitely endowed by your Creator... but our human self holds on to old ideas...habits...limitations.

As the music plays now...listen to the Voice of God within you... directing you onward, upward... guiding you in directions that enable you to KNOW YOUR FREEDOM.

When you came in, you were given a LETTER TO GOD...

and in the quiet of this time...use it to write your intentions in this new year. communicate your dreams in writing...look at them in the stillness of your own being...let them state your affirmative prayers for the New Year. To guide you in your creation, I share with you my letter to God:

Dear God,

I resolve to begin this New Year with the first four words found in Scripture: beginning God."

In this New Year, let me remember to put You first in my every endeavor; to walk in Your footsteps as I grow forward in my understanding; to follow the Path of my Elder Brother and Way Shower, who declared, "Not my will, but thine be done."

I resolve to see the radiant, living Christ in every person I meet...and in myself as well. I now state my affirmative prayer that I may greet the joys of 1987 free of criticism, judgment and condemnation of others.

This day, dear God, I resolve to let Love be the focus of my sharing, peace be the example of my living and Oneness be the keynote of my experience of ministering.

I resolve to accept now your strength to help me become free of limiting habits and attitudes, and I accept your constant gifts of health, happiness, prosperity and fulfilment.

I resolve to give freely to you and to your creation of all my resources ....use my time, my talents and my financial substance to expand Your light in the world. Right now, dear Lord, I am grateful for all the blessings apparent in my world, and I say THANK YOU, GOD, for filling my world with Your Light and Your love.

This is my resolve for 1987.

Signed, *Shay St. John*

Take some time now to create your letter to God.

**SPACE AND TIME OF ORGAN MUSIC WHILE THEY WRITE...** if you feel inspired to sing anything quiet...please do so. (In the Garden would be lovely)

Reread your letter now...reflect on Spirit's Truth revealed to you...and be at peace with it .

Fold your letter to God now and put it in your purse or pocket to take home with you. It is your private commitment to Spirit. Put it someplace that is your private place. And draw it forth whenever you feel a new commitment to your Self and God growing in this new year.

Know that as you have asked...so will it be given to you...and all the strength, power, love and wholeness you affirm is right now gathering within you to enable you to know the strength of your convictions.

Let us be still once again...and flow with the words to SWEEP OVER MY SOUL...

(pause between each verse...let me lead them into a guided time of meditation while you play it through once...and then we will pick up the next verse.)

Come, gentle Spirit...sweep over my soul.

When we open ourselves to the infilling of Spirit, we need to create a space in which Spirit may work. And so it is that I invite you to consider what is now within your consciousness that you would like to release...place in the burning bowl and see transformed by the flame of Spirit.

As many things as you desire may be placed on your slip of paper...you may abbreviate or simply communicate your ideas through prayer to the clean, white paper you hold in your hand. God promises us He will do a New thing through us...when we give Him the opportunity to work with us. And so now we open the way for Spirit to work... releasing the old ideas and limitations of 1987 so that 1988 may gift us with its heaven!

One by one we will come forth...bring our slip of paper and hold it in the candle's flame... watch it as the Holy Spirit of Love consumes it in its purifying fire and drop in into the burning bowl.

Then it is that we can share a moment of personal prayer with one another... receiving a blessing from Spirit...before we return to our seats to meditate and bless those who will follow us.

SOLO: STARTING HERE, STARTING NOW as people begin to release - and then go into ALLELUIA or some other simple chant (Keep playing through this time of sharing. It may take awhile...depending on how many are here.)

Now we behold the power and the beauty of this time of sharing... looking around us into

the radiant faces of our brothers and sisters.

In so many ways we have been gifted by this experience...and we now prepare to return to God a portion of the Good we have received... expressing our faith in the unlimited circulation of God Sub-stance in all we do. We take our gifts in our hands...imbuing them now with the quality of our spiritual commitment to Life in this New Year... and we affirm the Truth: I give as I receive: joyously, lovingly, aware of God as the Source of all my Good.

Offering collected...as we sing together..."GOD IS SO **GOOD**..." (WE'LL DO THREE VERSES...GOD IS SO GOOD...HE IS SO GOOD TO ME...GOD IS SO GOOD...SHE IS SO GOOD TO ME...I AM SO GOOD..I AM SO GOOD TO ME.

Stand...form a circle...sing: MAY THE BLESSINGS OF GOD REST UPON YOU...

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## **BURNING BOWL CEREMONY**

### **UNITY CHURCH OF FOUR TOWNES**

From scripture we read :

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Jesus answered and said unto him: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old?

Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

Jesus answered: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." (John 3: 1-6)

Scripture Interpretation:

In this scripture, Jesus explained to Nicodemus, that the new birth was one of the mind and heart. Nicodemus had intellectual but not spiritual understanding. Jesus said spiritual understanding requires two things to be born of water and the Spirit.

To be born of water is symbolic of cleansing and purifying...we cleanse our subconscious mind through denial of destructive thoughts and emotions.

To be born of Spirit is the realization of our spiritual identity .... we do this by affirming love, life, and peace. To be born of the Spirit is to remember that there is something in us that is divine, that assures us of reason for hope, for perfection, for divinity...that urges us to be noble and fine and true.

In a few moments we are going to move into a brief time of meditation and silence, after which we will invite you to write words of denial to the conditions from which you desire release.

And so now lets just relax, close our eyes, take several deep cleansing breaths, and internalize these words of truth concerning ourself.

"I AM FREE FROM THE PAST AND THE MISTAKES OF THE PAST. I AM FREE TOO FROM THE RESULTS OF THESE ERRORS. I KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH MAKES ME FREE."

IN THE QUIET

And now, as we gently bring our attention back to this present moment, allow any thoughts that you wouldlike to release to come forth into your conscious mind.

Take a few moments now to write your words of denial on the slips of paper provided. >

When the usher directs you, please come forward, igniting your written denials and dropping them into the recepticle. Together let us know that this burning is merely symbolic of the fleeting quality of negative conditions and of our acceptance of the indwelling light of Christ.

As you consciously release your negative conditions and place them in the recepticle, repeat silently, yet firmly:

"I LOOSE YOU AND LET YOU GO:"

INVITATION TO CONGREGATION TO COME FORWARD AND BURN DENIALS (congregation comes forward one row at a time)

-FOLLOWING BURNING EXPERIENCE

You have just released some of your past, some things, conditions, situations that you no longer need. -By doing so you have created a vacuum, a space for new ideas, new

relationships, new conditions. In releasing, through denial, the energy invested in negative thoughts, you can now choose to re-invest your mind energy in the affirmative, positive and rewarding thoughts you desire to manifest in your life in the new year to come.

Take some time now to write any conditions that you wish to attract into your life.

It is releasing the old and accepting and giving thanks for the new that true freedom is ours. In the words of Jesus:

"Father, I thank thee that thou hearest me. And I know that thou hearest me always.

PLEASE RISE AND JOIN IN THE RESPONSIVE READING FOUND ON PAGE 521 OF *WINGS OF SONG*.

Following responsive reading join together in singing I AM FREE...I AM UNLIMITED (J.B. Manning) three times...

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