



The Temple Artisan

2025 Issue

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Theosophy. Mysticism and Social Science

**THE TEMPLE OF THE PEOPLE
HALCYON, CALIFORNIA**

The Temple Artisan

devoted to

Theosophy, Mysticism, and Social Science

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THE TEMPLE OF THE PEOPLE

Cosmically, the Temple of the People corresponds to the Temple of Humanity. The Temple of Humanity consists of all humans who, having been awakened into a knowledge of their own divinity, have undertaken to tread the Path, and of those who devote their lives to the unselfish service of mankind. Specifically, the Temple of the People is one of the bodies, or vehicles, for the manifestation of the Avatar, or Christos, for the New Dispensation, the dawn of the new Civilization for the races of the Earth. It was founded in New York State in the second cycle of the Great Lodge movement in November 1898, by three Masters, assisted by others, for the laying of mental, physical, and spiritual foundations of the coming sixth race.

The objects of the Temple are:

First: To formulate the truths of religion as the fundamental factors of the evolution of the human race. This does not mean the formulation of a creed.

Second: To set forth a philosophy of life that is in accord with natural and divine law.

Third: To promote the study of the sciences and the fundamental facts and laws upon which the sciences are based, which will permit us to extend our belief and knowledge from what is known to the unknown.

Fourth: To promote the study and practice of art on fundamental lines, showing that art is, in reality, the application of knowledge to human good and welfare, and that the Christos can speak to humanity through art as well as through any other fundamental line of manifestation.

Fifth: The promotion of a knowledge of true social science based on immutable law, showing the relationship between one human being and another, and between human beings, God, and nature. When these relationships are understood, we will, instinctively, formulate and follow the Law of true Brother / Sisterhood: the unity of ALL life.

Religion, science, and economics: These are the foundation stones of The Temple. There can be no true religion without its scientific basis, and there can be no right economic system not based on a science that is religious and a religion that is scientific.

The Temple Artisan

2025 Issue

Behold, I give



unto thee a key.

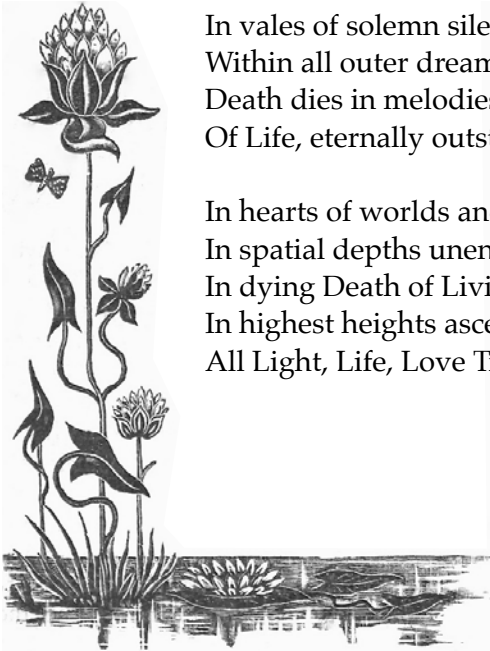
THE MOUNTAIN TOP

In snowy robes of Living Light,
I AM with mystic meaning,
Where Spirit sounds the chords of Life,
And Life is past all seeming.

In vales of solemn silence deep,
Within all outer dreaming,
Death dies in melodies
Of Life, eternally outstreaming.

In hearts of worlds and swinging suns,
In spatial depths unending,
In dying Death of Living Life, I AM
In highest heights ascending,
All Light, Life, Love Transcending.

— *W. H. Dower*



EDITORIAL MIRROR

The 2025 issue of the *Temple Artisan* is the second in our new series of annual issues. This year's issue is devoted to coverage of the 126th Temple Convention, held in Halcyon from August 2nd to August 10th, 2025.

Convention was an intense, meaningful, and activity-filled time at the Center. Amongst the highlights was the debut of the Halcyon Women's Ensemble, led by Yuliya Smirnov and consisting of 16 singers who performed the song "We Shall Be Known" and sang "Warriors of Light" at the Formal Opening.

Two sound bath meditations at the Temple were led by Daryl Kehres. Leo Frost and Yuliya Smirnov led a meditation in the University Center focused on the extraordinary Legend of the Peacemaker paintings by Harold Forgostein, 4th Guardian in Chief. Vladan Mijatovic Zivojnov showed his new Dalai Lama documentary in commemoration of the Tibetan leader's 90th birthday and led a Tibetan meditation as well as a special presentation of the Medicine Buddha Mandala Virtual Reality Game.

A ceremony and meditation was held at the Temple to honor the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, where the song "1,000 Cranes" by Janice Bell was played. On display were 1,000 origami cranes made by the Bumpus family. Additional cranes in the Lodge were made by Karen White and company.

Dr. Paul Ivey gave a talk about the William Quan Judge Library and Archive project. The Halcyon Players offered a musical revue of calypso songs at the Lodge. At the Informal Opening, we enjoyed a talent show with performances from many members as well as visitors from the Tierra Nueva co-housing community.

Special programs for the Tuesday and Friday study classes were devoted to discussion of the Temple Seal and the Temple Square Diagram.

Many Temple members traveled to Halcyon to join us for these events and for breakfasts, potlucks, a campfire and other

memorable gatherings. Others who could not join us in person attended services and meetings on Zoom. The Convention theme “Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power” was felt by all.

In this Convention issue, we offer the Master’s Message to the 126th Convention as well as the reports of the Guardian in Chief and Temple Officers. We print contributions from many Temple members to the Convention tradition of Social Science Talks on this year’s theme.

Also in this issue, we honor the passing of the 5th Guardian in Chief of the Temple, Eleanor Shumway, who left this plane just after Convention, as well as the passing of our dear Temple brother Aureliano Rodriguez.

In addition to the printed *Artisan*, this issue will also be available online at our website, templeofthepeople.org.



Opening Sunday of Convention 2025. Photo by Madonna Dunbar.

THE MASTER'S MESSAGE TO THE 2025 CONVENTION

Again, I welcome you as we enter the next new ring within the Tree of Life. And again, I propose the opportunity for more of you to firmly take My Hand.

But first, I would ask you to fully appreciate *your* hand. This taken-for-granted design corresponds to your inner potential for acquiring and holding onto life's offerings, as best you can. As over-satiation during this evolving cycle intensifies, many of you are sensing all that you deem most valuable to be slipping further from your grasp. Despite my many years of encouraging cooperation within the hierarchies of life and amongst the status of your individual rankings, you persist in not taking My Hand.

When your survival appears to be at risk, the potential nature of fear can stimulate the need for safety. With the release of this revived strength, will you be driven into a sense of panic, or will you reach for My Hand to embrace the Realms of responsible caring and courageous common sense?

Whatever level of certainty you may be clinging to, you will never cease dwelling in a state of temporary illusions while you remain mesmerized by the desire to hold at bay what you consider to be the forces of uncertainty. It is only through the benefit of hindsight that Reality is being revealed to Humanity as a result of the Evolution of Matter, Force, and Consciousness — The Triple Key. Whatever is now known was once unknown to you, and yet it is within the Unknown that you will come to know the permanent Certainty of Reality.

While many of you accept the necessity for change, your Inner understanding and respect for the Laws of Nature and the Law of Karma are far from mature. My Hand is One with the Light of Love, the Light of Law, the Light of Life. You have been handed all that is needed to Nurture Oneness as a Living Power in your lives.

Nurturing Oneness is the means for clearing the path towards certainty. The certainty I refer to may be resurrected by unlimited

possibilities, but only if based on a foundation of Honesty, Service, and Obedience to the Golden Rule. It is the loyal intention beneath this principled foundation that will nourish your inner well-being and strengthen your intuition to navigate these turbulent times.

The Initiating Breath brought forth by the Absolute, the Unknowable Creator, emanates through the Central Spiritual Sun, penetrates the womb of material existence, and is the origin of your Oneness. Without a daily practice for holding to the basic Laws of Life, your study and faith in this Universal Principle begets the potential for folly. You may be certain that Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power does not require scholarship, whereas the attitudes of devotion, respect, and sincerity are necessities.

The Initiating Breath continues to hold a sacred position within all aspects of your lives. You can understand this by simply imagining yourself in the process of drowning and unable to breathe, for the prospect of going without water, food, or shelter, while disconcerting and daunting, rivals not the sacred need for Breath. Breath is never to be taken for granted; there is nothing more precious to the existence of Life.

The Great Breath holds the Key to opening your conscious awareness to the Inseparable Oneness between Matter and Spirit and the seemingly impenetrable Gate that guards the Threshold between the two. The Great Breath has given you the gift of ideation, of turning your thoughts into words, first spoken and then written. No matter how ideation may now be revealed, it is the Breath — the Word — that holds the Key to Creation and Disintegration, to Life and to Death.

It is by the Great Breath that “Out of the darkness shineth the Light of the Glorified Triple Star into the hearts of humanity, raising the pulse of the Cosmic Heart and driving the shadows into the blackness of the Great Abyss.”

Through your understanding of the Law of Correspondences, you may come to know the means by which the constituent parts of your physical body — be they cells, organs, or systems — use a form of communication to maintain wellbeing, as in providing

proper assessment and distribution of nutritional value. This corresponds to the communication by which the health of the individual units within the Body of Humanity may be organized and held together in harmony. It is the Micro-Macro-Spirit of Light within both these bodies that is at risk of being drowned out in a communication which fosters deception, by intensifying the appearance of the waning of Light. But never can that Light be extinguished.

So many words, be they nourishing or toxic, even when utilized within the same language, may now be cloaked beyond your capacity to make sense of their meaning and intent. The formation of your words would not be possible without the Great Breath, which animates the unceasing pulse of your Inner Hearts, a connection that has been nearly severed as you flounder to become One with Mother Nature. While words can lead you to the realization of your Inseparable Connection — your Unity with All Life and Light — more beguiling words than you can imagine stealthily adorn the nature of a pestilential potential.

The Principles and Laws that have been revealed by the Lodge of Light are as certain as is the necessity for Evolution. Even the most harmless of the most innocent creature harbors the potential for triggering a plague when the Law of Balance is challenged beyond the Aeonian Poise of Harmony.

Remember: "Thou shalt not speak falsely, unnecessarily or critically against thy neighbor and so put in action the converse force of creative sound and word; for the Higher Law will reverse the action of the force thus directed and bring back upon thee, with intensified strength, the results of the broken Law."

Despite your human potential for recalibration, you have not the power to hold at bay the ultimate results for the breaking of the Higher Law, any more than you can prevent a plague, once unleashed, from altering your lives. The instinctual element of self-restraint existing within the grasshopper has lost its sanctuary within the locust. Self-restraint is another Key to becoming One with the Law of Love. It is the burning of the dross from your

have been placed by Divine Justice in the learning process of Life. The Conscious Cohesion of diverse polarities is the aspirational action of Oneness. Time is of the essence for you to cooperate with one another in the endeavor to be living as One.

Take My Hand.

— *Morya*

REPORT OF THE GUARDIAN IN CHIEF

From the present position of the Temple's Central Point, as I endeavor to reflect on what has passed and what the future may hold, with respect to "Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power," the varying essence of the word "mean" comes to mind.

Meaning, could one discover the "meaning of life" by meditating on this year's Convention theme? What is the meaning of the Temple, of Halcyon, of our relationship to the Temple Work and to each other? By what means did our Temple Founders leave us with the means to carry forward?

I'm fond of acknowledging that every living thing or creature needs to make a living. Believe it or not, with rare exception, Mother Nature has provided all that lives with the means to make a living. What I find most wondrous is that nearly every living thing and creature, while making their living, simultaneously serves their fellow living things and creatures. Miraculously and for the most part, they all live within their means while serving each other. This sacred act is rarely performed without sacrifice.

While the symbolic nature of everything may appear hidden from most of us, I am delighted by the bee's need to make honey while pollinating and all flowers, most of which evolve into nourishment for our bodies, minds, and spirits. From a blade of grass to a frog, a beaver, a bison, a wolf, to a dove, and even to a flea; we are all meant to be and serve a purpose.

As the first Guardian in Chief with grandchildren, the

Haudenosaunee's seventh generation principle is especially precious to me in the way it highlights the necessity for ranking our priorities. Key to leaving our world habitable for future generations is choosing to honor the sacred need for living within our means.

During my present lifetime, the profound changes in the ways one may now be living within their means gives me pause, if not guides my choices that may nurture the nature of future generations to "Thrive in Balance."

Ironically, Halcyon continues to find itself facing a modernizing force, not unlike the once upon a time transformative force that dramatically altered the ability of the Haudenosaunee to make their living within their age-old traditional means.

I find that the unintended consequences of progress continue to be taken for granted in the name of convenience, profit, and ego gratification, with not enough regard for the future tradeoffs not so evident in the present. In other words, no matter how brilliant we may perceive ourselves to be, we continue to attribute less relevance to what is truly invaluable, as what is truly invaluable has become less recognizable, let alone discernible, during our

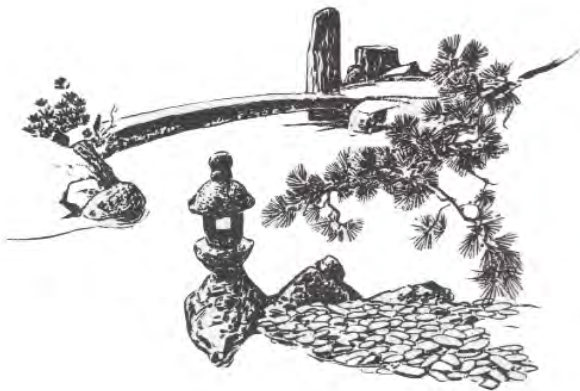


Illustration by Edwin Eberman

lifetimes. Forgive my blasphemy, but there will come a time when the inorganic hypnotic nature of “screen time,” while appearing to have exceptional value, will not hold a candle to the organic natures of our once pervasive and pristine oceans, forests, and great plains, now in the process of transitioning.

Here, too, within the vicinity of Halcyon, we are now witnessing an uptick in the perceived need for a category of growth and developing that tends to encourage an increase in density, along with an inauthentic respect for our natural resources.

While these outer forces challenge our potential for making a living within our old-fashioned means, individually and organizationally, there is an ever-growing Inner Force calling out to the one living thing and creature that is deficient in the necessities of charitableness, self-responsibleness, and accountableness.

I assure you that I refer not to the honeybee, a creature whose instinctual behaviors exemplify the core aspects of charity, self-responsibility, and accountability. The honeybee clearly knows its priorities, especially when allowed to operate and flourish under the intended design of Mother Nature.

From Corinthians 13:13, we find, “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” I call our attention to this biblical passage as a potential means for coming to terms with “Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power.”

Imagine for a moment if the following was a biblical quote: “And now abideth charity, accountability, and self-responsibility, these three; but the greatest of these is self-responsibility.”

Truly, we are the one living thing and creature that must find the ways and means to reconcile the compatibility between charity or compassion and self-responsibility. This reconciliation needs to be done consciously and mindfully, day by day, if not hour by hour.

For the most part, and in the interest of brevity, it is generally accepted that to be self-sufficient, one needs to be self-responsible. This is especially true for the honeybee. When all honeybees are taking care of their individual business, the hive tends to thrive. I

would suggest that this concept corresponds to the productive nature of human beings and our ability to make ends meet.

Were everyone to be cooperatively making their living within their means, there just might be less of a need for tolerating, forgiving, and contributing to those of us who, for whatever reason, are not being as self-sufficient or resilient, as those of us who believe themselves to be pulling their own weight.

Of course, there is more to getting along, than all of us being self-sufficient. Throwing one's weight around, being pushy, and not minding one's own business, is not reserved to any one domain.

How we transform the more mundane meaning of charity from tolerating, forgiving, and contributing, to where we may be living instinctually within the means of universal love and kinship is the journey of Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power. This may never be a destination, only an unceasing practice guided by a form of art from the heart.

It is by the light of the Temple's higher purpose that the forces of disrespect, entitlement, and arrogance may be repelled from creeping into our mitts.

While the physical work of keeping the water flowing, the toilets flushing, the buildings and Eucalyptus trees standing, the lights on, keeping the more meddling weeds, bugs, and critters at bay, these hold not a candle to the strength required for holding the door open to acts of humility, mercy, and redemption.

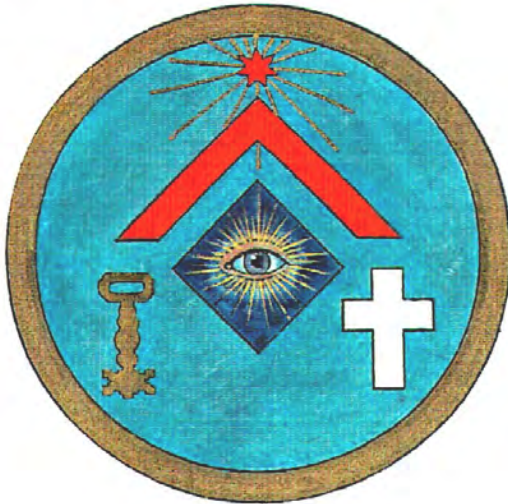
While nothing can grow without the element of self-responsibility, there can be no sustainable Oneness without humility, mercy, and redemption.

A tough assignment to be sure. Yet, the tension between self-responsibility and compassion can give birth to resiliency. This process is affirmed within the Temple motto: "Creeds Disappear — Hearts Remain."

Being Guardian in Chief, I have the challenge of prioritizing the inner and outer Work of the Temple of the People. As I endeavor to keep my priorities in order, I will ask all of you to be purposeful about your priorities as well.

In the meantime, I will be endeavoring to realize the presence of an entity who thrives without a mean bone in their body, as a Living Power in my life.

This past Temple Year has been another transformational one, with some of us needing to step up as others were required to step down, while still others endeavor to be holding their points. I promise you all that the energy required to keep the Temple and Halcyon alive and well is by no means a haphazard act. May we never cease being cordial to those of us directly involved with this herculean process, taking none for granted, while always greeting



The Temple Seal

each other with a smile. From the Library to the Lodge, and everything else around and in between, I remain grateful to each and every one of you who is choosing to be involved.

The officers of the Religious Society of the Temple of the People are the Inner Guard, Outer Guard, Scribe, Treasurer and three Delegates-at-Large. Each office symbolizes a certain aspect or facet of the Temple work. The office of Inner Guard symbolizes the responsibility to the feminine aspect of manifestation, the

nurturing, connecting, indwelling spiritual force. The position of Outer Guard symbolizes the responsibility to the masculine aspect, the protecting, questing, balancing force. The position of Treasurer symbolizes the responsibility to our storehouse of spiritual treasure filled with the jewels we have been given to use, to care for and enhance. The position of Scribe symbolizes the responsibility to the records of our aspirations, hopes, and faith and the flow of these to and from all human hearts and minds.

The three positions of Delegates-at-Large, chosen from those Temple members who do not live here in Halcyon, symbolize the many members world-wide whose dedication to the Truth expressed through the Temple teachings is inspiring.

They are meeting the challenge of putting these teachings into daily practice without the outer group support and daily in-person meetings that we are privileged to enjoy here at the Center.

These officers are not elected, rather they are appointed at the suggestion of the Master. They meet with me regularly to discuss matters that relate directly to the Religious Society and the out-picturing of the inner work of the Temple. As in years gone by, each one will bring their own consciousness to the office, thereby



Volunteers preparing for Convention. Photo by Roman Patiichuk.

enlarging, sustaining, and nurturing the Temple, themselves, and all of us. I'm grateful to all of the Officers for their service during this past year.

For the ensuing year, the officers of the Religious Society of the Temple of the People will be Rita Moiseyeva, Inner Guard; George Colendich, Outer Guard; Marti Fast, Treasurer; Richard Berg, Scribe; and Elaine Cole, Tatyana Meshkova, and Damian Rollison will be our Delegates-at-Large.

Twenty-five years ago, our Guardian in Chief Emerita closed her Guardian in Chief's report with the following words:

"You and I must walk serenely together where duty directs, letting our entire being mirror the indwelling, upwelling infinite Spirit, the jewel in the Heart of God. Together we will experience joy and sorrow, together we will learn to love one another, and together we will forge the bonds of Brotherhood Sisterhood and Unity. Only in this way will we enter together the fulfillment that comes with being one with God and all Good."

May we be bonded together in Unity, Usefulness, and Unwavering Love.

— *Richard A. London*
Sixth Guardian in Chief

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Report of the Inner Guard

Good evening, everyone — both here and at home! Happy 126th Convention!

The position of the Inner Guard symbolizes responsibility to the feminine aspect of manifestation: the nurturing, connected, indwelling spiritual force.

The theme of this year's convention is "Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power." So, how do we do that? Where do we start?

We can — and probably need to — start with what is closest at hand: our immediate family, our neighbors, our community. This means keeping our hearts and homes open, even to family

members who may be difficult to connect with. It means offering kindness, patience, and presence — not just to those who are easy to love, but especially to those who challenge us. Nurturing Oneness starts with choosing connection over convenience, understanding over avoidance.

Only if and when we master Oneness at this seemingly basic level will we be able to expand that practice into the larger community — and ultimately, into the world.

We are blessed to live in an intentional community. We have the opportunity to come together and work toward a common purpose. A beautiful example of this is the new incarnation of the Halcyon Chamber Choir, which came to life somewhat spontaneously just a few weeks before Convention. What a joy it has been to rehearse together and build Oneness through singing!

In my mind, there is nothing more powerful for learning to listen to one another — and truly hear one another — than singing together and striving to create a beautiful, unified sound. When we sing together, we don't just make sound — we attune to one another. We strive for balance, blend, resonance. We feel the presence of something greater than any one voice.

The vibration, the radiance that is created when working for the common good — whether it be singing, baking, working on the cranes project, or anything else we do together — is contagious!

Remember the words of Master H. about harmony? They are not just a figure of speech or poetic metaphor. Just listen to them:

“Preserve harmony in your own soul, and it will flow out to all others, for it is more powerful than you understand, and more far-reaching.”

“United, harmonious, your power is limitless. Without these, you can do nothing.”

The world needs this now. We need this now. So let us not delay. Let us make Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power more than a theme. Let us make it a practice — a way of life. And let us begin today.

— *Rita Moiseyeva*
Inner Guard

Report of the Outer Guard

Greetings, all Templars! I stand before you in the Temple at convention, greeting each and every one of you individually and the invisible ones who cannot be seen but are felt. I am speaking as if you are the only person in the room — one single unique person.

In this work it is vastly important to be able to stand alone and be still deep inside. That alone part of you must always remain free. We can have our friends, husbands, wives, children, partners, careers, things, etc., and lead normal full lives, but our real freedom resides in our advancement along the path in the working out of our single Temple stone karma.

A Templar is likened to a planet. The trouble is if you settle with being a moon you will never be a planet. You may need to be a moon but only for a season.

We are all here collectively — now — caught up in the spirit of the convention moment. All true Templars everywhere are here in the “mind of the Temple” during convention. This is not poetry or symbology. This is the growing planetary-wide Templar Mind, at the very least consisting of all Temple members that have passed through its gates.

This is also not a history lesson, but recognition that each one of us are or will be one of the “peculiar people” described in the introduction to *Temple Teachings*, Vol. 1. I used to think it meant the odd, strange, unusual or bizarre people, maybe particular or special. But it’s more simple.

It is those people whose path and what they really are somehow fits, like in a puzzle, in the nuts and bolts of the building of the Temple in the most direct way. They are directly in line in the required sequence of people that have to flow through this center. It is karmic law in action placing us all in the right place and time and in order with the right number. They are the forerunners of the coming 6th race.

Perhaps you are one who has caught this Templar dream, the dream of dreams, but you may not recognize it. You want to become

it. It's a mystery, a living organic process that leaves us trying to move and work in harmony with natural forces and Mother Nature.

There are many Temple stones here and scattered all over the earth. There have been other Temple Officers and Outer Guards who stood here to represent the point that it is, and there will be more to come in the future, marking this Temple of the People yearly cycle. The yearly cycle marks our lives as a stopping point at the end of the previous year and makes us pause as we enter the next ensuing year for new challenges and struggle to work out old ones. We just simply stop and are grateful that we have the opportunity to participate in this group while reflecting on our old successes, and especially our neglected regrets, contemplating in the context of your single Temple stone that you are building into the guardian wall. Much faith and trust are required in this process.

Just believing in karma and reincarnation is not enough. The old adage that "you can't take it with you" is false. Minus our worn out old physical bodies after death, we take all emotional and mental impressions — our tendencies, dreams, regrets and everything of like nature — with us to be safely put in storage, and they greet us again on our return descent in a new fresh body. It is easy to get a new body. That new body on earth will continue along its old Temple path until its stone is firmly secured in the Temple foundation of the guardian wall.

The position of Outer Guard symbolizes the responsibility to the masculine aspect, the questing balancing force through strengths of will, clarity, and focus. It is the Father force and is magnetically positive and like a compass points northward. The keyword is responsibility, ultimately only to the master Mason, who is in charge of the building of the Temple edifice. Its elementary form is FIRE and it challenges us all to aspire to any kind of service that is needed, including all Temple positions.

It's the people that count the most. The Temple is being built and is not static, always evolving the expression of its original founding words and principles. It is "of the people, for the people,

by the people” — as a whole thing. The Temple is also a militant movement in which we offer our real lives and hearts’ blood with nothing held back.

My essential duty as Outer Guard is to serve on the Temple altar during the Feast, which celebrates the living presence of the Avatar, and also to serve in the meditation meeting, which allows us to read and think about past Masters’ messages. Beyond that, it is the simple day-to-day living in the context, purpose, and future of the sanctuary village of Halcyon.

There are many Temple writings and books with thousands of pages that may inadvertently promote the idea and illusion that it’s overly complicated. Rather, every Temple Teachings lesson has at least one simple dominating idea, but it is written on many levels for the future people. The Temple Teachings have been written as to last at least 1,000 years, and contain many things and ideas that science discovered after their publication, and there will be many more new discoveries to come in the future — also already contained in the Temple Teachings.

A part of the Higher Purpose message from Master Hilarion states that “the aim of all true Templars was and still is the preparation of a place where it might be possible for the overshadowing Christ to enter.” It could be that the preparation of a place starts with ourselves — the maturing of our minds, hearts, and bodies, and the creation of “the city that is to be,” a city that no earthly power can break, and far-reaching changes and purification of all earthly conditions resulting in the one Temple of all humanity.

I will leave you with this statement:

The Temple is mine. It’s my Temple.

The Temple is yours. It’s your Temple.

The Temple is all of humanity’s.

There is only ONE TEMPLE.

— *George Colendich*
Outer Guard

Report of the Treasurer

The position of Treasurer symbolizes the responsibility to our storehouse of spiritual treasure filled with the jewels we have been given to use, to care for, and enhance.

Each year of Temple life has its own rhythm and rhyme, its choices and challenges, its particular menu of experiences we are here to learn. Each unique individual grows by virtue of the push-pull polarities within as well as between us, in a mysterious dance between irritation and enlightenment. Eleanor referred to this spiritual testing as *sandpapering*, a visceral process that most often grinds down the rough places so more delicate patterns and inner qualities can reveal themselves. Ultimately, we grow both *because of* and *in spite of* one another.

We are here because we fit the definition of those “peculiar people” called here by the Temple work. In this intentional spiritual community, we are bound together on a deep and powerful karmic level, called to better ourselves and work together in all things. As kith and kin, we are learning to be clearer channels for the Lodge impulse to manifest in everything we do. We are One.

This year’s Convention theme urges us on nurture that Oneness so we are able to prepare “a place where it might become possible for the overshadowing Christ to enter and send forth the message which the world has waited for so long.” That place is within us in our hearts and minds, and outside of us through our words and deeds, so that the message of the Christ can flow from a *mini-Temple Treasury* residing within each Templar.

We must be mindful about the work we tend to, asking these questions regularly: How do I/we keep the Teachings and the Higher Purpose alive and well? How do we nurture one another, adapt to changing times and needs, and still elevate our aspirations and actions in daily life?

This Convention has brought opportunities to share joys, tears, prayers, and hearts, not only with those who live near this Center,

but also with those who have traveled great distances to be with us. Not only are we grateful to share with our sisters and brothers who join with us on Zoom, but we have heard how this technology has morphed into a vital connective tissue that links us together. Who would have guessed that Zoom could become such an integral element — a Treasure — supporting the interconnectedness of our Temple Family?

That interconnectedness is sometimes tested as we occasionally and inevitably lose someone in our Temple family. The Treasurer's report for this convention would be incomplete if it did not recognize the losses of three Temple priests this last year: Nashoma Carlson, who served as Treasurer for a time; Ron Carlson, who served as Outer Guard for many years; and Aureliano Rodriguez, who served as Maintenance Supervisor. All three nurtured and demonstrated the rich interdependence of Temple life, an interdependence that carries on with us as well as without us, in times of abundance as well as absence. I am certain our Oneness, especially during this very special Convention, is being nurtured by them as they join with our founders, mentors, and teachers from the inner planes.

Examples of Nurturing Oneness this year include the dedicated efforts of the committee tasked with reorganizing the WQJ Library archive for the future; the numerous potlucks and gatherings thoughtfully planned in the Lodge; the care and grooming of the Temple grounds; and a new handrail installed at the Apex Altar in the Temple. Through hands and hearts, commitment and creativity, our shared physical and spiritual endeavors at this Center are made manifest through our Temple family here and abroad..

I would like to close with a meaningful musical symbol of the Temple Treasury at work in preparation for this Convention. In a vibrant demonstration of "Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power," the Halcyon Women's Ensemble was formed in early June as a full-throated Yes! to an invitation to sing a meaningful prayer song for Convention. If you have never done so, singing without

accompaniment or conductor is, by necessity, a demonstration of unity, since the success of the group depends upon every individual singer working with and listening to the group as a unified whole. In an organic process, the many leave their egos at the door that they may intentionally become the One: One soul in mindfulness of timbre and tempo, one soul in the beat, the breath, and the prayer.

The vibrant symbolism exemplified in the combined efforts of this Temple year reflect the Temple Treasury within us all, as we work, Zoom, sing, study, play, pray, and in other ways Nurture Oneness as a Living Power. Happy Convention!

— *Marti Fast*
Temple Treasurer

Report of the Scribe

It has been a pleasure to serve as Scribe this past year. The main activities have been keeping a list of the discussion leaders and noting topics for the Tuesday and Friday classes at the Temple of the People.

This year's Convention is focused on Nurturing Oneness. The universe is in constant change, as it has been in the 126 years since the first Convention. Today we are inundated with evidence of change, and especially so in the form, in the current age, of social media, misinformation, conspiracy theories, and outlandish ideas marketed to influence people and consumers of Mammon. Templars have an obligation to resist untruthful information that is a distraction in the path towards our higher self. This we cannot do alone; we must have direction, leadership, inspiration, and warnings.

A warning from the Master in the article "From the Master" in the September 1900 issue of the *Artisan*:

"Many of you have been recently thinking that the general trend of things, Theosophical and Political, has had a tendency to detract from the value of certain truths imparted to you by us; and

also to wonder why directions should not be more explicitly given, though I have repeatedly told you that beyond a certain limited point, the law of individual responsibility and development made it impossible for us to interfere. 'It is only fools that rush in where angels fear to tread.' But it is permissible to say that after the years of study and direct assistance extended in helping you to assimilate the fruits of such study, many of you are negligent and careless in applying the lessons so learned toward the solution of the problem now confronting you on the outer plane of manifestation."

We are fortunate to benefit from the intervention of the Masters as expressed in Temple writings. Our goal is to strive to become one with the Law of Nature, the Law of Karma, and the Law of Love, the highest law. Applying these laws to life situations as expressed in Temple literature is one of the benefits of our lessons. The study of Temple literature under the guidelines of the Aids to Study facilitates understanding divine laws in nurturing our oneness with our higher selves.

Friday night classes are based on lessons published in Volume 1 of the *Temple Teachings*, which describe the applications of universal laws and spiritual truths, unencumbered by creeds and religious dogmas. The format of these lessons is a Socratic method of asking questions followed by discussion contributed by each member of the Temple Square. The lesson always results in a deeper understanding of the lesson by each participant. We each finish the lesson with more than we came in with. Remember the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

The Tuesday classes cover a variety of topics based on readings of the Temple and Theosophical literature written by Temple members, Masters, and Theosophists. We have been reading and discussing early writings from the Temple and especially the inspiring articles and essays published in the *Artisan* in first year of publication, 1900. We are exposed to universal truths as well as timeless and thought-provoking Laws of Nature.

We have studied Laws of Discipleship, the Prayer of the Order of 36, the Prayer of the Order of 28, and contributions to early *Artisan* publications. We have examined each issue of the *Artisan* from June to November of 1900. Recently, we have read and discussed the Master's Message to the 2024 Convention.

An example of nurturing the Oneness comes from another quote in the article "From the Master" in the September 1900 issue of the *Artisan*:

"The one great need of the hour is the awakening of the spirit of intuition and understanding. When one desires the truth above all things, even above their preconceived opinions of the duty of the Lodge to humanity and are willing to investigate unselfishly every fact that comes to them, of Nature or of man, they will invariably feel the soul within, stirring, and some bright day will come face to face with truth, and find that conscious contact has brought Love, Peace and Wisdom."

This is the essence of nurturing our oneness with the higher self and divine wisdom. Oneness is our theme today, oneness with the All, the universe, universal consciousness on every plane and with the brotherhood of man.

— *Richard Berg*
Temple Scribe

Reports of the Delegates at Large

I first came to Halcyon about 35 years ago. I was 33 years old, not married and worked in construction for the power company. I traveled up and down the state of California installing telecom equipment and was assigned to work on the Central Coast for a year. I was jogging near the little town of Avila Beach one morning when out of nowhere, I had a personal awakening that was completely unexpected. I wanted to talk to anyone that would listen but was met with odd looks as if I had two heads!

Eventually I was directed to a man named Rick Ricardo. He and his wife Karen were Temple members here in Halcyon and

they wanted to hear my story. Rick handed me a small book titled *The Occult*. I read the whole book in one night and called him the next day. I met them at their house that night and was informally introduced to Theosophy and the Temple of the People.

I lived on an ocean going sailboat I named Blue Star and for 32 years as I climbed on and off her, my thoughts would go to Halcyon. When I was asked to be a Delegate for the Temple of The People for a year and what that entailed, living with the Temple Teachings as my guide, my first thought was, that's what what I've been doing all this time, right?

Yes, I've had old habits and desires that were hard to break and many that required me bending and twisting before finally letting go. I am on the Path, inching forward with an open heart and open mind. Self examination has given me patience for myself and most importantly for others.

My new home is in Utah. I still travel often and always find Halcyon to be the safe harbor I can rely on to resupply with spiritual food, recalibrate my spiritual compass, and then weigh anchor and continue my journey. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

— Daryl Kehres
Delegate at Large

This is my first ever visit to the Temple and my first physical presence at the 126th Convention of the Temple of the People. It is such a delight to see you all, to be in the sacred place we all call our Temple.

A year has passed by and here are some of my thoughts I would like to share with you all. Looking back and reflecting on my experience over the past year — living among and interacting with people from different countries — I recognize some challenges and questions that arose, some situations I faced, and the lessons I am learning along the way. One of the most inspiring moments was being involved in communication and shared learning experience with fellow Temple members from both Russia and America.



Evening campfire at the Lodge. Photo by Roman Patiichuk.

Here are some questions representing challenges I met:

How can I preserve inner harmony and peace amidst external challenges and respond to such tension with peace and calm?

How can I live and move through my day while also being able to “hold to the Beauty and Truth of life” (Master Hilarion)?

Of course, I’m still in the process of exploring and finding my answers to these important questions. But what I know for sure is this: the process of inner cleansing, which should be in constant operation, may benefit in the case when we are being under intense pressure or testing and *still manage* to see our weaknesses, *admit* and *accept* them and work them out consequently.

My daily contacts may bring me happiness or something quite opposite, but all of them are my lessons. Among other lessons for me, it is still important how to recognize or feel subtle boundaries of situations or relationships, respect them, be cautious and prevent carelessness, because carelessness may entail destruction of an existing balance. At the same time, nothing can stop us from looking a bit deeper and a bit more attentively toward those who surround us and in many cases, there is a place for a friendly

smile, a glance of understanding, and any other support that may be deeply needed.

Living through my days, I am, like many of us, experiencing signs such as lack of trust, segregation, despair, and degradation, while trying to keep in my heart and mind centers the light of love and wisdom, and asking myself where I have succeeded and where I have fallen short — acknowledging, accepting, and beginning each day with a firm aspiration, faith, and hope, and remembering the words of the Master: “There Is No Going Back. You *must* go forward” (*From the Mountain Top*, Vol. 3).

In the words of Eleanor Shumway, “As we advance, step by step, on the Path of discipleship, the step behind drops off into the Great Abyss. There is only forward” (“Soul Choices,” 2018).

I remember there was instant, inner assurance of the truth when I first came across the words of one of the torch bearers: “Light always recognizes Light.” May this Light shine above all of us and lead us to the spiritual heights.

— *Olga Batyanova*
Delegate at Large

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I am deeply grateful to have served as Delegate at Large since the 125th Temple Convention, and I am truly honored to represent Temple members around the world.

For me, life is divided into “before” and “after” the Temple. The knowledge I have received — and continue to receive — through classes and materials has transformed how I view both the world and myself.

The Tuesday and Friday study sessions, in particular, have deepened my understanding of the Teachings and revealed that refining my character is essential to walking this path.

Our group first visited the Temple 15 years ago. At the time, much felt unfamiliar — but gradually, we found comfort and belonging within the Temple and its community. Through this connection, we experienced profound spiritual growth. Today, our group is larger and more engaged than ever. We meet twice a

month for thoughtful discussions that nourish our bond and deepen our understanding. Together, we've cultivated an atmosphere of genuine harmony.

This year's Convention theme, "Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power," speaks directly to our times. In our world shaken by division and unrest, Oneness is not merely an idea — it is an active, living goal, one that takes shape through our intentions, our actions, and our shared purpose. It is the bridge between souls. We thank the Temple of the People for the vision and light it brings to our lives.

— *Pauline Polovets*
Delegate at Large

SOCIAL SCIENCE TALKS

Opening Comments from the Guardian in Chief

Throughout the 30 Temple Conventions I have experienced, *From the Mountain Top* readings have been foundational to many of the Convention themes. This year, there was only "Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power" to read as the basic inspiration for this morning's Social Science Talk presentations.

As I have been preparing myself for this 126th Temple Convention, I have been noticing my Oneness with the essence of the Temple of the People strengthening day by day.

This Convention's Master's Message closes with, "The Conscious Cohesion of diverse polarities is the aspirational action of Oneness. Time is of the essence for you to cooperate with one another in the endeavor to be living as One. Take My Hand."

This corresponds to the Chinese philosophy, Yin and Yang, which illustrates the balancing nature of opposing forces. Within these pairs of opposites: light and dark, active and passive, hot and cold, male and female, there is the potential for an

interdependency that may come to know the living power of harmony. This potential holds true throughout humanity as well.

This morning is an opportunity to hear the thoughts and insights from Temple Members and friends on “Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power.” Social Science Talks represent one of the pillars of our annual Convention time together. This annual opportunity for expressing in words our heart-nurtured thought forms through the mental synthesizing of our past experiences can be most valuable when used to reflect on their practical manifestations in our deeds, what we actually do, and how we treat one another.

— *Richard A. London*
Sixth Guardian in Chief

Some talks have been edited for length and clarity.

Dear Temple Sisters and Brothers, dear Friends,

Once again, during the Convention, we gather under the umbrella of the Masters to receive their direct outpouring of energy and to pass it on to our surroundings for the benefit of all. May we show ourselves open and capable of joyfully fulfilling this task. The motto and mission for this year is “Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power.”

Wars are shaking the world, and we are far from Oneness. We know that we have all contributed to the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Every unkind thought, every demeaning word — whether justified or not — adds to discord and division. Like attracts like, thereby multiplying its force. None of us can claim to be free from such carelessness. But we can practice consciously living in Oneness with those in our sphere of influence. The temple Teachings give us plenty of helpful guidance for this.

“The Wisdom Religion, from which all religions and philosophies that have been based on fundamental truth have come, has ever taught from time immemorial the essential unity of all life, that everything in manifestation has come from the One,

and that this one fundamental Unity manifests in diversity“ (*Temple Teachings*, Volume 3, “Science and Religion“).

We are not alone in our crises.

“With the growth of the idea of the soul as being the important part comes the perception of the Unity of all life — for, as the soul frees herself from the hypnotic effect of matter it naturally gravitates to the upper pole of being and awakes to the consciousness of other beings, brothers more advanced in the scale of evolution, who have passed through all the phases of



Illustration by Linda Rollison

material life and transcended its limitations. The fundamental law of the life of these Great Ones is more and more developed in actions expressive of Unity and helpfulness, and it is their province and privilege to assist in the affairs of the humanity now passing through stages and crises of which they are thoroughly informed — always consciously directing as far as is possible the evolutionary forces belonging to each particular age or cycle“ (*Temple Teachings*, Volume 3, “Life’s Efflorescence“).

Yours as always with love, dear Ones, and have a wonderful strengthening Convention-Time.

— *Annegret Liebig*



Recently I read that in God's creation, planets, plants, animals, all fulfill their role, and only humans announce their grandness. I thought to myself, why did humans crown themselves the wreath of creation and the king of nature? Yes, we are given mind and consciousness, and due to this we have begun to oppose ourselves to the plant and animal kingdoms, leading to our separation.

Thinking about the topic of the Convention, I came to the idea that Unity is created by God and without it the world cannot exist; everything is connected. My goal is to feel myself as a part of this Unity, a part of "Thy will be done," and then the living power of the Master and Mother of the World is felt as it is said in the service: "There is a Power that maketh all things new. It lives and moves in those whose know the Self as One."

Unity
By Galina Miller

I am the Asphalt on the park path,
And people walk over me all day long.
And I'm huge. And they're just gnats.
But I like to reflect their shadows.

I am a Lantern, antique and beautiful.
The one in Blok's poems was my brother.
A candle in the night ... Is it for some purpose? Or is it
in vain?
But this light is all that I am rich in.

I am a chestnut Tree, blooming and green.
The wind from the mountains is playing in my foliage,
And beneath me is a young man in love
Having with himself — the miserable one! — a conversation.

I am the whole world in my mighty glory:
Here is the City I am in a blaze of lights,
Here I am the Bench, I am the Dawn, I am the Cloud,

Here I am, here I am the Sparrow.

Everything is a part of me. And everything about me
is wonderful.

I'm getting better day by day.

Yes, I am eternal. And you, I'll be honest,

You, Man! You're a part of me too.

— *Antonina Alexander*

Our topic is multifaceted and can be viewed from various perspectives. I chose to focus on strengthening unity within the family and through the family.

The family is those you care about the most.

The family is where you are expected and understood.

The family is about people who are close to one another.

In Russian, the word “family” implies seven “I’s,” seven individuals (parents, children, grandparents) whose inner essence —



Rick London and Paul Ivey at the Judge Library presentation.

Photo by Dmitry Taranov.

their “I” — is practically identical. In other words, these are people who live “soul to soul,” sharing similar worldviews, aspirations, and interests.

Almost our entire life is rooted in family. From birth to adolescence, we live in our parents’ home. A few years later, we marry and start our own family. The family is a school of love and morality, the source of our most intimate life values.

Unfortunately, some people distort the spiritual criteria that guide them when starting a family. Therefore, it is essential to remind ourselves, first and foremost, of God’s will regarding marriage and marital unity.

The unity of husband and wife is not based on mere social necessity or the “whim” of individuals. It embodies God’s will on earth. It is no accident that the primary goal of marriage is not childbearing but the complementarity of spouses. Raising children is also an important task, but it is secondary, as is parenting. To preserve marital and family harmony, it is crucial not to confuse this order of priorities.

When spouses complement each other, it serves as a means for them to move toward the Divine and connect with it. This journey is nothing less than the primary purpose God has set for humanity.

The unity of spouses is God’s will and, at the same time, a challenging path, a struggle, and a feat. This state is not granted effortlessly to those who marry. However, everyone receives grace in marriage, enabling them to achieve this unity, preserve it, and nurture it.

— *Nadezhda Borodavka*

The stumbling block to boundless union with All lies in the ego — the lower self. Sacrificial self-work for the benefit of others opens the flow of higher energies, drawing us into union with the higher spheres. This is the joyous, arduous, and noble labor of cultivating consciousness and mastering energies — the Living Force. When the personal is overcome, consciousness

expands, revealing possibilities for boundless co-operation and boundless union.

— *Stanislav Chelpachenko*

In the era of globalization and growing interdependence, the idea of unity is becoming not just an abstract ideal, but a vital force for the survival and prosperity of humanity. Unity, from interpersonal relationships to global interactions, is based on mutual understanding, cooperation, respect, and a common goal; it is more than just cooperation or compromise. This is a dynamic process that requires the conscious participation of each guardian of the Temple, and I must learn to accept the interconnectedness of everything that surrounds me — people, communities, countries, ecosystems.

Unity implies a common goal or vision of this goal, which unites us all as a family, as a spiritual group, and guides our efforts. This goal should be meaningful, inspiring, and focused on the well-being of the entire community.

The development and strengthening of Unity is not a static state, but a mutual process that requires constant adaptation to changing conditions and new life challenges; it is a willingness to change, tolerance, and flexibility of thinking.

One of the most powerful channels through which I feel the presence of life-giving power is nature. Sunlight reminds me of the cyclical nature of life. The soothing sound of rain banishes fatigue and anxiety. It is a connection with the rhythms of the earth, with its ability to purify and restore. The view of the starry sky reminds me of the scale of the universe and my humble but important place in it.

The power of the Avatar manifests itself in a spontaneous desire for creativity and travel. It allows me to explore my thoughts and feelings, find answers to difficult questions, and create something new. The ability to empathize and help others allows me to feel connected to all of humanity and contribute to the betterment of the world. The presence of life-giving power in a



Convention attendees in the Temple. Photo by Dmitry Taranov.

spiritual context is associated with vital energy, which comes from deep sources of the inner self and helps a person to stay alive and active even in the most difficult situations. Inner strength teaches us to listen to our voice, to trust our intuition and inner feelings.

I believe that together we can build a world in which everyone can realize their potential and live in harmony with themselves and the world around them. Unity is not a utopia, but a real opportunity in which each person participates with their thoughts, feelings, actions and deeds.

— *Marina Ryabinok*

As an epigraph, I would like to cite one of the translations of the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus:

“Truth, confidence, the most naive, devoid of lies. What’s above is below. What’s below is above. It is necessary to achieve the miracle of unity. Everything was created by the contemplation

of unity, everything is generated by unity, having undergone certain changes ...”

This postulate is an expression of divine wisdom and the theme of our 2025 convention. “Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power” is consonant with this expression.

What is a Living Power? It is a cosmic energy that performs a certain work, in accordance with a certain plan, outlined by the source of all life. Everything in this world lives, even if it seems to be stationary, inanimate, like a piece of rock or a river, not to mention the stars and planets. It’s just that an ordinary person doesn’t realize that life manifests itself in different ways.

And everything is connected by invisible threads. If you look at the external diversity of the world from the point of view of an ordinary person, you can hardly see a close connection between its various manifestations. But even at the dawn of the first human races, there was divine knowledge — the religion of wisdom, which spoke of divine laws that affect everything in this manifested world from the smallest cell to cosmic phenomena.

The first races were open to this knowledge. But the further humanity plunged into materialization, the more hidden this knowledge became for its understanding. After all, the spiritual centers were covered with matter of a denser plane, and humanity began to violate these divine laws.

What does the First Law of the Universe say, the Law of Unity? The whole universe exists as a Unity of everything with everything. Everything in the universe is interconnected, and man is part of a single whole.

— *Natalia Chinyakova*

In our current world, humans are often disconnected from each other, from nature, and even from themselves. The idea of Oneness offers deep healing for all of humanity.

In spiritual teachings, Oneness is not just a concept; it is a living force that flows through all life, waiting to be recognized and lived. To nurture this Oneness means aligning ourselves with

this force and allowing it to shape our thoughts, actions, and relationships.

Nature gives us the perfect example: every cell in the body works together to sustain life. The very existence of the human body depends on unity. When one part separates from the whole, imbalance and suffering follow.

True Oneness includes everything: the visible and the invisible, the spiritual and the material, the human and the divine. To live in Oneness is to move beyond division. One can only create unity by choosing love, by giving up selfishness, and living from a pure heart.

It asks us to act, to speak, and to serve for the good of all. Even small acts of kindness strengthen unity in the world.

A sincere willingness to say “I can” and “I will” opens the way for the power of unity to enter our lives. The great Masters of humanity have shown us this path. Their light lives in us when we follow their example and become channels of love, healing, and compassion. To nurture Oneness is to remember that all life is sacred.

— *Larissa Heinrich*

Greetings, beloved Sunshines, Brothers and Sisters of the Temple! The theme of this convention, “Nurturing Oneness as a Living Power,” is profoundly relevant today, this month, this year, and indeed, in all honesty, for our entire lifetime.

What is Unity? Unity is not merely cohesion into a single whole; it is Harmony, where all elements interact and support one another. It is not simply the absence of conflict, but mutual understanding, where diverse parts of the Whole blend into one integrated system, working for the Common Good.

An essential component of Unity is the recognition of differences. This does not mean all must be identical; on the contrary, Unity often lies in acknowledging and respecting differences while maintaining a shared Purpose and Divine Principles.

Unity is the ability of an individual to be in accord with their thoughts and actions. Where Unity exists, there can be no separateness. For within separateness, there can be no true heroism, no self-sacrifice. It is meaningless to sacrifice oneself solely for oneself.

Why is this a Living Force? For several days I observed a flock of birds that flew to the same tree at sunset to roost. The tree was surrounded by water, appearing a very safe place. How interesting, I thought. The birds, as one Whole. Evidently, they are governed by a Soul that unites them all. A Group Soul. And if one little bird were to lose its way, it could be in danger, for there are many hungry cats around. A single bird is unprotected, but together they can drive off all the cats. Together, they are Force. This is simply my observation.

And in conclusion, I wish to say to you all, dear Sunshines, future Stars, that nothing is more important than simple attention, a kind word, and a loving heart.

— Olya Sinichkina

What is the true purpose of man? At all times, great sages and true prophets, having realized and comprehended this truth, tried to convey it to people, putting it into forms accessible to human consciousness. Mysteries, legends, ballads, myths — all these are bright sparks of the teachings that make up the human heritage. The gradual development and consistent revelation of the truths were carried out by great initiates who led humanity along the path of evolution. The Latin word *evolutio* originally meant the unfolding of a scroll in the process of learning, so the path of evolution itself carries within it a deep esoteric meaning for those who discover it. Therefore, the esoteric doctrine is not an abstract teaching, but a Living Force that passes through the spirit and soul of initiates, and carries the impulse of awakening and rebirth to human souls and hearts.

The basic truth is very simple — the manifestation of God on earth is man. A single center, a single force, which people called God, emitted from itself, exhaled its essence — a single life, which scattered like sparks of the human spirit in the aura of the earth, then a dark star — dense, material, not emitting light.

Each spark, descending into matter, created its own form of dense life, and God became, as it were, scattered and fragmented in a multitude of forms. The spark of divine life was trapped in the matter of the body, in the depths of human consciousness, and shrouded in the qualities of human imperfection. Oneness became multiple through separation, and each particle of the one divine life was not just separated, but locked into ITS OWN form, began to create ITS OWN life.

The spirit, the higher self, the perfect man, who carries the essence of God within himself, turned out to be hidden in the infinite depths of human thoughts, desires, emotions and material forces. But he lives, vibrates inside a person, in his heart and consciousness, responding to every bright manifestation in life — mercy, compassion, mutual help, love — helps to find your true self and get on the path; hear a quiet voice sounding inside; light your lamp and maintain its light.

I AM ETERNALLY IN EVERYTHING AND EVERYTHING IS ETERNALLY IN ME.

— *Tatiana Meshkova*

The most important aspect in the evolutionary development of mankind is brotherhood. One person, by himself, cannot exist and develop. As soon as, for various reasons, he begins to mentally separate himself from his surroundings or elevate himself by finding convenient excuses, he becomes a potential candidate for the dark forces.

Since the beginning of time, Avatars have been coming to humanity and bringing knowledge and new ideas that are embodied in religions which unite people. This contributes to faster evolutionary development and achieving better results in a

short time. The more cohesive and spiritually harmonious a family, collective, nation, country, or race is, the more significant their evolutionary development is. The increase in positive Living Force with such Unity does not occur arithmetically, but geometrically exponentially (in an unwinding spiral). Humanity, at the moment, is not yet ready to consciously accept the concept of Brotherhood.

According to the laws of karma, global changes are taking place on all planes of life, bringing new conditions and opportunities. Everything that has lost the momentum of transformation and is no longer viable for change slows down the course of evolution, resisting everything new. The dark forces actively support this position. These trends always manifest themselves at the turn of epochs and centuries, especially bright at the turn of the millennia.

It is our privilege to live in such a time. Unfortunately, many people still live a material life, putting it first, to the detriment of spiritual development. The prosperous, well-fed and comfortable life achieved by more developed countries through the exploitation and robbery of less developed countries leads such peoples to arrogance, snobbery, and separation from all mankind. They strive to manage, pursuing their interests and benefits. We have witnessed such actions.

From the depths of your heart outwards, mentally and in every step of your life, creating a certain point of attraction, connecting energetically through Brotherhood Forces with other similar points, creating a monolithic energy sphere capable of resisting the dividing forces. This creates a luminous sphere of Living Force, uniting those who seek to create the Brotherhood of all mankind.

— *Vladimir Meshkov*

JOY

Joy, I to be walking the glory-robed beauty of the Earth,
 I to be here in Halcyon in the place of deep love,
 Where faces shine with glad tenderness when you pass,
 Where minds understand the deepness of existence,
 Where souls have understanding sympathy,
 Where hands are ever ready to help and comfort;

Where the ground is glad, welcoming the feet of the clan
 coming home,
 Where mountains reveal themselves more and more, their
 robes of beauty,
 Their whisperings in mysterious words of fellowship;

Where the ocean word in the pondering wave
 Is a broad word of peace, strong peace, deep rest,
 Where the sand whispers marvelous intangibilities,

Reveals itself in magical lights and
 colors that might be imagination,
 Where they take us into their
 consciousness, put their vast arms
 about us,
 Heal us, bless us.

It is joy I to be walking through the
 glory-robed beauty of the Earth,
 I to be here in Halcyon in the place
 of deep love,
 Where faces shine with glad
 tenderness as you pass,
 Where minds understand the
 deepness of existence.

— *John Varian*



Photo by Wilfred Von Dauster

**IN MEMORIAM: ELEANOR L. SHUMWAY,
5th GUARDIAN IN CHIEF OF THE TEMPLE**



Our beloved 5th Guardian in Chief of the Temple, Eleanor L. Shumway, died peacefully at her home in Arroyo Grande on August 12, 2025. She was 92.

Eleanor led an amazing life. She taught at the Navy Dependents School in Subic Bay, Philippines, and then served twice in Ethiopia as a Peace Corps volunteer. Later, as a beloved educator in the Lucia Mar School District, she taught hundreds of area middle schoolers the joys of reading and writing.

Eleanor's 32 years of leading the Halcyon community as Guardian in Chief began in 1990. One of her proudest

accomplishments was guiding the successful application process naming the community as a State and National Historic District.

A joy-filled Celebration of Life was held on September 6 in the Blue Star Memorial Temple.

Eulogy for Eleanor Shumway

I'm not sure exactly when I started thinking about this eulogy. On the day she died, I had known Eleanor for 50 years and a few days, through the thick and thin in both our lives. A few years ago — let alone 22 days ago — I thought I'd know exactly what to say about her and that this eulogy would write itself. But it's been a struggle, and yesterday, after tussling with it for over a week, it just didn't feel adequate. I have so many feelings for this remarkably complex being who became my godmother when I was 24, a woman who guided me spiritually, who helped me grow into an adult, who supported me, who tested me — and even let me down a few times, which I realize I did more than once with her. I think we all do our best in this life to be good and caring people, and the polarities of love and loss, of forgiveness and forbearance, create a kind of soul pattern that shines on, even after we're gone.

What five words would you use to describe Eleanor Shumway? I interviewed a few people, and their responses are printed on the back of the photo cards you received at the door. Some are: Adventurous. Complicated. Loving. Determined. Creative. Vulnerable. Teacher. Storyteller. Stately. Human. *Grappling*.

GRAPPLING: (grapple with) struggle with or work hard to deal with or overcome (a difficulty or challenge).

To me, this word expresses the energy, commitment, and drive Eleanor brought to living a meaningful life, of growing as a person, of being a big soul with larger than life promises to keep. She was a student of life, every day of her life, someone who learned early on to view its challenges through the lens of the Temple philosophy. Ever the teacher, she brought her best to seeing the bigger picture and helping us to see it as well, whether her students were

Ethiopian 3rd and 4th graders learning English in a mud hut, or Paulding School 7th graders learning the joys of reading and writing, or 50-something Sunday service visitors learning about Theosophy, or 80-something table-mates at Wyndham Residence, where she lived the last three years of her life.

The eldest of five siblings, Eleanor Louise Shumway was born May 12, 1933, to Kenneth and Roberta Shumway, two strongly spiritual people. After learning of the Temple from dear friends, they left Southern California and moved the family home, here, to Halcyon when Eleanor was 9. Kenneth, a general contractor, spent that first year building their family home on Ross Lane, a lovely, rambling place large enough for the vibrant household of seven to share. Family photos show Eleanor, Gloria, Robert, Barbara, and adopted sister Roselma fully engaged in community plays, potlucks, and Temple events. They palled around with other Halcyon kids their ages, walking to school and playing together. But this idyllic family picture was tragically upended in 1952. Eleanor was just 19 when her father died after suffering a heart attack. Not only did the kids lose their dad, but Roberta, suddenly widowed, was now responsible for supporting the family. Kenneth's loss imprinted itself on each Shumway as they tried to adapt, one day at a time.

To help support the family, Eleanor found a secretarial position working evenings, weekends, and vacations at Woods Funeral Home on Poole Street. She was steady in difficult times, gifted with a calming demeanor and a soothing presence when taking calls for mortuary help. She was equally suited for the task of accurately recording the full names and dates of the deceased, her beautifully legible handwriting flowing throughout the oversized mortuary record books she kept. Over the last few years she often mourned the loss of her handwriting skills, especially when she shakily signed a check or a document, loudly lamenting, "For God's sake, I used to teach handwriting — now look at me!"

Throughout her life, Eleanor often shared that she flunked out of college after her father died, perhaps to point out that even

teachers fail sometimes and need to persevere like everyone else. The second time around, she easily earned her teaching credential and then took a year-long teaching position in the Philippines, at the Subic Bay US Navy Dependents School.

Eleanor was always interested in people and far-off places, and considered joining the Air Force so she could see the world. She was equally guided by the importance of service, and was moved by JFK's inaugural speech when he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country. Ask not what America can do for you, but together what we can do for the freedom of man." She returned from Subic Bay dreaming about joining the Peace Corps, and after President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, she applied as soon as she could. "For me," she said, "it was almost a personal handing on of a torch, a quest ... On my birthday in May of 1964, I was notified of my acceptance for the English teaching program in Ethiopia." JFK's death became the light Eleanor used to change the course of her life.

It all seemed so wonderful from here, but Ethiopia was very far away, and even before landing in Addis Ababa, our homesick Eleanor was grappling with thoughts of resigning. But the 55 bright-eyed children waiting for her arrival captured her heart that very first day, and she was hooked. She taught 3rd and 4th graders the basics of English, starting with how to write their names in chalk on small slate tablets. She was 31 — vibrant, beautiful, smart, and creative in her teaching. The children loved her and she loved them — especially one little guy named Desta Gebeto, whom she ultimately adopted as her American son. They wrote and spoke frequently over the decades, and Desta, now a grandfather himself, always sent pictures of his growing family, which delighted our proudly maternal Eleanor to no end.

For Eleanor, serving in the Peace Corps was a vocation, and its significance called to the highest ideals within her — as well as to her very human side. The countless diary-like letters she mailed home over those two years chronicled her growth as a teacher, how she "came alive" when she fell in love for the first time, and then

the heartbreak when it was all over. “The letters home,” she said, “weren’t all of an uplifting nature or experience. There were times of boredom, heartache, conflict, depression, illness — but you get through these things, these times, as you get through the best of times: one step at a time, sometimes learning and sometimes not.”

“One day at a time” is the mindset Eleanor used as she grappled and grew through the challenges and disappointments of life. She had always dreamed of marrying and having a large family; and as life would have it, she never married, but she *did* have plenty of children, including hundreds of students who adored her, and her adopted son Desta, plus a flock of us goddaughters from here in Halcyon.

When Eleanor returned from Ethiopia, she began teaching in the Lucia Mar School District, bringing enthusiasm, a firm hand, and creative delight to her classes at Paulding Middle School, where she taught the joys of both reading and of being *read to*. They read Madeleine L’Engle’s *A Wrinkle In Time* series, books that remain favorites even after 50 years. Her students thrived under her high standards, her challenging assignments, her amazing bulletin boards, and most important of all, her belief in them as people.

She also shared the love of reading and learning with her nieces and nephew as they were growing up, and with *their* kids and more kids as the family grew. She was so very proud of her family — every single one — honoring birthdays and anniversaries, graduations and travels, and savoring the meaning of family throughout her life.

For Eleanor, who proudly identified as a quadruple Taurus, creating a beautiful and nurturing home was a basic need, almost as important as cooking beautiful meals. She loved to decorate and redecorate her home, sharing a strong sense of order and use with her (also very organized) nieces. One thing Eleanor did *not* like to do was dishes, so she contributed generously to the local economy during the years when she didn’t have a dishwasher. After throwing a large gathering featuring, say, home-cooked Ethiopian delights that required tons of pots and pans, she would

stow all the dirty dishes in the oven and then hire her nieces to wash them.

In 1990, Eleanor became the successor Guardian in Chief of the Temple of the People, a head-spinning role encompassing Town Mayor, Maintenance Supervisor, Religious Leader, Spiritual Counselor, and Giver of Sermons, among other responsibilities. She could be fierce and intractable in that work, and did not suffer fools lightly. If she said no, she meant no, and God help you if you asked again.

Two of her proudest accomplishments were overseeing the arduous process of establishing Halcyon as a National Historic District, and then collaborating with Karen White on a photo history book about Halcyon. As a clear writer and thinker, Eleanor also had the ability to illuminate and simplify complex ideas in the many Sunday talks she presented over the course of three decades.

Eleanor had always lived alone, but in 2001, she asked Anne and Will Dunbar to take up residence full time and serve as caretakers of the spacious Central Home duplex, and the four acres surrounding it. Over the course of the next 20 years, time for which the family is ever so grateful, the Dunbars gradually eased into caring for a functional, but often headstrong, octogenarian — and as wonderful as she could be, in my experience and perhaps in yours, Eleanor could also be a real pill.

A time came when her strength, resiliency, and balance became compromised. The verve of the young Peace Corps volunteer who confidently walked for miles in Ethiopia, the drive of the mature executive who rose at 5:00am to complete a full day's work by noon, and the sparkle of the seamstress who spent long, happy hours sewing a new fall wardrobe — all these facets began losing their luster and shine as her body began to wear out. First fracturing one knee and then the other in short order, she required rounds of PT and ever increasing help at home. Then came fractured hips, first the left and then the right, both with surgeries and rehab stays at the Arroyo Grande Care Center.

Eleanor was caught between the tides, one marking the surge

of her powerful, almost indefatigable spirit, the other marking the relentless ebb of physical decline that took a toll both emotionally and physically. And so it was that with the elegance, realism, and poise she had demonstrated throughout her long and amazing life, Eleanor gracefully resigned in 2022, after 32 years of service as the 5th — and longest serving — Guardian in Chief.

In her inimitable fashion she downsized, carefully packing and donating most of her household — except for the many elephants that would share her new little studio at Wyndham Residence, just across the hall from her sister Barbara. At first she grappled with the meaning of her life after stepping back from the role of Guardian in Chief — a position of power, authority, and responsibility — but as Eleanor began accepting things as they were, she shifted her attention to rummy, bingo, mealtime conversations, and sorting jewelry with Barbara.

“I’m learning to be 90 years old,” she told everyone at her 90th birthday celebration.

“I’m learning to be 91,” she said last year.

“I’m learning to be 92,” she said rather quietly this year.

Even before moving to Wyndham, she was more than ready to leave this earthly plane. She would say that to almost everyone, and then would reflect a moment before saying, “But there must still be something I need to learn.”

Perhaps, Eleanor, there was still something you needed to teach *us*.

And teach us she did, even during a rough patch early on, when she isolated in her room for weeks. Once Eleanor decided to engage in social activities there (the result of a major come-to-Jesus meeting with the staff), she cultivated new friends, found people from the Peace Corps, talked about teaching and philosophy with other retired teachers, and had as meaningful an impact on her Wyndham family as she’d had with her Temple family. Her physical being may have struggled to be here, but her spirit was bright and alive.

Eleanor was ever so graceful at the end, and the folks at

Wyndham were ever so kind. Lisa, Amber, and Barbara kept an eye on her needs, knowing before anyone else what would support the journey home. It seemed like she waited until the last night of a very busy 10-day Temple Convention before starting a beautiful and peaceful passage.

A simple call came the next morning: It's time — she's going to leave us soon. Eleanor was still conversant and alert as she took in the love from family phone calls. "Oh! It's you!" she'd say with a gentle smile.

Hands held hands as the day progressed, and she could still kind of say the Mantrams: "Though clouds and darkness seem to be about me, yet dwell I eternally in the Light." The room itself seemed to gradually fill with Light, with Beings of Light that were just beyond our vision but were very clearly in hers, as she pointed upward and murmured, "In the Light."

She rested. We waited.

And then there was a breath, held for the longest time ... and finally an exhale ...

... and a second breath, held ... and held ... and finally an exhale ...

...then a third breath, held ... and held ... and held ... and then there was stillness.

She was gone.

And yet, she is so very here.

How do we mourn a matriarch, a mentor, someone so deeply woven into our lives? How do we celebrate the birth of a Being of Light? We're here to find out, to do this together, to cry and to smile and share the many facets that comprised the soul, spirit, and life of Eleanor Louise Shumway.

— *Marti Fast*
September 6, 2025

IN MEMORIAM: AURELIANO RODRIGUEZ



Temple priest and Halcyon facilities manager Aureliano Rodriguez passed away on December 15, 2024. He is survived by his sons Fred and Emiliano (pictured at right above), his daughters Maya and Joy, three grandchildren, eight brothers, and two sisters.

Eulogy for Aureliano Rodriguez

Before he died of cancer in 1996, the astronomer Carl Sagan pondering the afterlife said, “The world is so exquisite with so much love and moral depth, that there is no reason to deceive ourselves with pretty stories for which there’s little good evidence. Far better it seems to me, in our vulnerability, to look death in the eye and to be grateful every day for the brief but magnificent opportunity that life provides.” So today I want to express my gratitude for the brief and precious time we had with my dad.

I’m grateful for every day that I got to experience my dad’s sense of humor. I’m grateful for every time that I went on vacation with him. I’m grateful for every afternoon we watched a football

game, especially the ones that were at Candlestick Park and especially when the 49ers actually won. I'm grateful for the memory that I have of the first time he laid eyes on Alexa when she was in the hospital and he quietly and suddenly burst into tears, overwhelmed at the love that he felt for his first grandchild. I'm so grateful that I got to witness what an incredible grandfather he was to his three grandchildren. He showed them the same love that he showed for us, maybe even more. In fact, my best memories of him are when he could be with all three of them together. Going on amusement park rides with them, dancing with them at concerts, acting up with them at restaurants, and even singing Disney songs. As a parent, nothing is more important than those closest to you showing love and care for your child. He exceeded all my expectations in that regard.

Finally, I'm grateful for those times that he dropped everything when I needed him. As recently as two years ago, he and my mother came to San Francisco to take care of me as I recovered from two major surgeries, caring for me as well as Emma. He nursed me back to health with lentil soup and guacamole, two things you wouldn't think would go together but exactly what I needed. And then in 2013, when my father-in-law died, he booked a flight to Denmark in January to attend his funeral and comfort us. This was especially moving because of my dad's legendary contempt for the cold. Fred and I have both invited him to the snow many times and each time it was a hard pass. But there he was in the snow in January and comforting and hugging us as we watched Jens's dad drive away in the hearse.

The day that my father died and before the mortuary came to pick him up, I read him a eulogy written by a physicist named Aaron Friedman. I took great comfort in these words and I believe he would have appreciated them as well:

"You want a physicist to speak at your funeral. You want the physicist to talk to your grieving friends and family about the conservation of energy, so they will understand that your energy has not died. You want the physicist to remind your daughters

about the first law of thermodynamics: no energy gets created in the universe and none is destroyed. You want them to know that all your energy, every vibration, every BTU of heat, every wave of every particle that was their beloved father remains with them in this world. You want the physicist to tell your grandchildren that amid the energies of the cosmos, you gave as good as you got.

“And at one point you’d hope that the physicist would step down from the pulpit and walk to your son there in the pew and tell him that all the photons that ever bounced off your face, all the particles whose paths were interrupted by your smile, by the touch of your hair, hundreds of trillions of particles, have raised off like children, their ways forever changed by you. And to your other son, may the physicists tell him that all the photons that bounced from you were gathered in the particle detectors that were his eyes, that those photons created electromagnetically charged neurons whose energy will go on forever.

“The physicist will remind your friends of how much all our energy is given off as heat, and the warmth that flowed through you in life is still here, still part of all that we are, even as we who mourn continue the heat of our own lives.

“And you’ll want the physicist to explain to those who loved you that they need not have faith; indeed, they should not have faith. Let them know that they can measure, that scientists have measured, precisely the conservation of energy and found it accurate, verifiable, and consistent across space and time. Your family and friends will examine the evidence and satisfy themselves that the science is sound, and they’ll be comforted to know your energy is still around. According to the law of the conservation of energy, not a bit of you is gone. You’re just less orderly.”

To live in the hearts of those who loved us is to live forever. Here in our hearts is where he will live until the last of us are gone. I can think of no better afterlife than that.

— *Maya Rodriguez Sorensen*
January 18, 2025

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES AND NOTICES

Hours listed for Temple services and study classes are in Pacific time. You can request to join us remotely by using the contact link on the Temple website at www.templeofthepeople.org.

The Temple Healing Service is held daily at noon in the Temple. This 15-minute service offers prayers and meditations for the health and safety of the world, every day of the year. The words to the service can be found on the Temple website.

Sunday Services are held in person and online at 10:30 a.m.

First Sunday of the month: The Feast of Fulfillment is the Temple Communion service. All are welcome.

Last Sunday of the month: Enter the Silence features inspirational readings and meditation, followed by the Temple Healing Service.

Other Sundays: These services feature talks by the Guardian in Chief or others on Temple-related topics. Featured talks can be found on the Temple website.

Temple Builders: The Temple Builders, our children's program, meets as scheduling permits.

Tuesday and Friday Study Classes are held online at 5:30 p.m.

Group study and discussion of the Teachings and selected Temple materials are held weekly for approximately one hour. Please use the contact form on the Temple website to indicate your interest in joining.



**EXCERPT FROM BUILDERS SUNDAY
SERVICE, CONVENTION 2025**

From my Inner Awareness, I continue to yearn for a time when we all remember to fully appreciate that every living thing and creature is endowed with an instinctual form of responsibility, usefulness, and the ability to survive. Over my lifetime, these three seem more prone to taking a back seat to the also invaluable aspects of kindness, compassion, and charity.

We tend to take for granted that even a blade of grass is totally grounded and instinctually in tune with being responsible and useful, and having the ability to survive.

Without the first three — responsibility, usefulness, and the ability to survive — there is no Order. With only the second three — kindness, compassion, and charity — there is no Order. Only with all six does Humanity begin to realize the potential possibility for the unfoldment of a loyalty and respectfulness that is absolutely necessary for the acceptance and embracement of living by the Golden Rule. Mother Nature and the cells that make up our individual bodies are “Explicitly One” with the first three and the Unity of all Life. Knowing that this is essential to our children’s futures and the Seventh Generation is of absolute necessity.

— Yellow Star

