

# AWAKENING HEART

**INTERFAITH BUDDHIST SPIRITUALITY** inspired by the inclusive teachings and integral practices of Zen Master THICH NHAT HANH as facilitated by BROTHER CHISING

**MARCH - APRIL - MAY 2009**

**Spring Newsletter #1**

**SUNDAYS in DALLAS (5:30-7:30 pm)**

## **"AWAKENING HEART"**

(Community of Mindful Living)

@ **The UNITY CHURCH of Dallas**

6525 Forest Ln (btwn Preston & Hillcrest), Dallas 75230

4:00 Mindfulness YOGA w/ Susan Rainey  
5:00 (optional early meditation)  
5:30 **MEDITATION, MUSIC, MESSAGE & MORE**  
7:30 (optional dinner meetings)

**Facilitated by Brother ChiSing, M.Div., M.A.**

\*\*\* CHILDCARE is provided EVERY Sunday \*\*\*

## **"PRACTICAL ENLIGHTENMENT"**

(Wisdom and Compassion in Action)

**MARCH 1 - MINDFULNESS FOR ALL AGES**  
(please bring your children & teens)  
**"Practical Enlightenment"**  
(Next Generation UNITY – all young adults 18-35'ish are invited to have dinner together after at 7:30 pm)  
**MARCH 8 - "Wisdom and Compassion in Action"**  
(Community Planning Meeting dinner at 7:30 pm)  
**MARCH 15 - "Practical Enlightenment"**  
(Spanish-speaking dinner meeting at 7:30 pm)  
**MARCH 22 - \* SPRING EQUINOX Celebration !!!**  
(All Vegetarian Potluck Dinner at 7:30 pm)  
**MARCH 29 - "Practical Enlightenment"**  
(GLBT & friends dinner meeting at 7:30 pm)

## **"SEVEN SPIRITUAL LAWS OF SUCCESS"**

(Deepak Chopra)

**APRIL 5 - MINDFULNESS FOR ALL AGES**  
(please bring your children & teens)  
**"1 - Law of Pure Potentiality"**  
(Next Generation UNITY – all young adults 18-35'ish are invited to have dinner together after at 7:30 pm)  
**APRIL 12 - "2 - Law of Giving and Receiving"**  
(Community Planning Meeting dinner at 7:30 pm)

**APRIL 19 - Special Guest Speaker**  
**APRIL 26 - "3 - Law of Karma (Cause & Effect)"**

**MAY 3 - \* BUDDHA DAY Celebration !!!**  
**plus MINDFULNESS FOR ALL AGES**  
(please bring your children & teens)  
**"4 - Law of Least Effort"**  
(Next Generation UNITY at 7:30 pm)  
(All Vegetarian Potluck Dinner at 7:30 pm)  
**MAY 10 - MOTHER'S DAY**  
**"5 - Law of Intention and Desire"**  
**MAY 17 - "6 - Law of Detachment"**  
(Community Planning Meeting dinner at 7:30 pm)  
**MAY 24 - Special Guest Speaker**  
**MAY 31 - "7 - Law of Dharma (Purpose in Life)"**

**TUESDAYS in GRAPEVINE (7-9 pm)**

## **"METAMORPHOSIS"**

**Midweek Mindfulness Meditation in the Midcities**  
**Facilitated by Brother ChiSing**

@ **The Unity Church in GRAPEVINE**

1650 Hughes Rd (Hwy 121 & Glade), Grapevine 76051  
\*\*\* see WEBSITE for details & topics \*\*\*

**THURSDAYS in RICHARDSON (7-9 pm)**

## **"DIVING DEEPER"**

**Longer Meditation, Book Study & Discussion Group**  
**@ a member's home in Richardson, TX**  
\*\*\* see WEBSITE for details & location \*\*\*

**SATURDAY Retreats (9 am - 5 pm)**

**Next "DAY OF MINDFULNESS" Retreats:**  
**April 11 @ The Unity Church in GRAPEVINE,**  
**May 16 @ Community U.U. Church (Plano)**  
\*\*\* see WEBSITE for details & registration \*\*\*

**www.AWAKENINGHEART.org ... interfaith \* inclusive \* integral \* inspired**

## Brother ChiSing: “RESERVOIRS OF POSITIVE ENERGY”



How do you create reservoirs of positive energy? Well, traditionally in the Buddhist path, the practice of generosity and giving to those who are spiritual givers is one major way. In Buddhism we call it "creating merit," but I don't necessarily think the word "merit" means much to us as Americans so that's why I'm using the word "reservoirs of positive energy" – same thing. When people give food to Buddhist monks and nuns or give to the community temple to support their spiritual activities, it creates great merit, it creates great reservoirs of positive energy. Even to bow to someone who is a spiritual person in service to other beings, even one bow, creates wonderful positive energy.

In some ways it is better to support and give to someone such as a monk or nun or someone who is a spiritual giver in the world; it's almost better to do that than to give to someone who is not giving at all to the world but who needs your help. Now, I'm not saying you should choose between the two. Of course, we should help those who are needy. So why would I say that to help someone who is a giver creates more positive energy? Well, if you give to someone who's really needing your help but whose lifestyle is not such that it's going to be creating very much positive effect in the world at this time, you give, but many times it helps them but it doesn't go any further than that.

But if you help someone who's giving to others and supporting and empowering others, then you are giving to all those others that that person is supporting. And that's why I said that. Now, please don't take my words wrong. I still believe we have to help all those who are in need of our help. The Buddha said: "Please don't be jealous that I am giving more attention, time, effort and teachings to those who are on the bodhisattva path than to those who are just on the non-bodhisattva path." What he was pointing out was that those who are on the bodhisattva path are not only trying to become enlightened for themselves, they are also trying to build up spiritual skills to help many others to become enlightened as well. Whereas, his non-bodhisattva students were basically doing pretty good just trying to get enlightened for themselves and didn't have much thought about maybe helping many other beings. So, the Buddha said, "Please don't be jealous. I concentrate and focus on those who are on the bodhisattva path because to support them is then to support all these other beings too." So, please support those who are doing spiritual work that is beneficial in the world. Support monks and nuns, support sanghas and organizations that do a lot of good work in the world. And of course, support one on one those you meet along the way who just need a helping hand. Because, you never know – they might actually be an angel or a bodhisattva in disguise.

Another way, traditionally, that we create merit or these reservoirs of positive energy is through the practice of the mindfulness trainings, of intentionally making certain vows and living by them – perhaps the vows of practicing with the five ethical precepts of non-violence, non-stealing, sexual responsibility, mindful speech, and mindful consumption. And of course, we can create merit and great reservoirs of positive energy through the practice of meditation – regular meditation, faithful meditation, consistent meditation.

What I realized during my winter retreat was that: if we can at least just meditate between one to twenty minutes every day or every other day or even once a week, it is wonderful and beneficial to our life. But if we can extend that from twenty minutes or more every day, or at least as much of every day as we can, then that is for the sake of all beings. So if you can meditate up to twenty minutes, that's for yourself; and if you can meditate from twenty minutes to more, that's for all beings. And if you already meditate that long every day, then consider this – your morning meditation is for yourself and your evening meditation is for all beings. Or, maybe you're not yet to the point of daily meditation, ok; so then coming to the weekly meditation group and meditating with us once a week is for yourself. And if you can meditate outside of the meditation group at home, then that's for all beings.

And this attitude, of meditating for all beings, creates great merit, creates powerful reservoirs of positive energy, and that is going to come back to you and support you in your life and your practice. Traditionally, in Buddhism, we practice: 1) Dana, and 2) Sila, and 3) Samadhi (also called Bhavana). This means generosity, mindful ethical living, and meditation. And these three together create great reservoirs of positive energy.

And we need this so that we're not just struggling and only getting by in our life and our practice. Even the practice of prostrations and bowing, though it's foreign to us Americans, creates great merit, great reservoirs of positive energy. We don't currently do prostrations during our Sunday evening meditations only because we're trying to be beginner-friendly and it's too foreign to beginners. But at home, you can practice full bows and prostrations. And we're not bowing to an idol. We're not bowing to some external force; we're allowing our whole being to surrender to the universe for the sake of all beings. We don't bow for ourselves, but we will definitely get the benefit for ourselves. We bow in honor of all beings – body, speech and mind - fully present. Perhaps you might think of the first bow for yourself but every bow after that for all beings. You know, one of my meditation students once told me that she thought bowing and prostrating, well, it just wasn't her thing: "I don't want to do that" and "It doesn't feel right", or "It's just an Asian custom" etc., but she tried it anyway. And it was amazing – something happened within her when she did it after several times and something shifted inside her heart. And now she realizes that there really is something powerful about this practice. So, I know it is a foreign practice to you, but give full bowing and prostrations a try. It's not just for yourself, it's for all beings. It's a way of releasing, a way of letting go and fully surrendering in humble trust to Life.

You know, Zen masters and other spiritually enlightened persons in the world can sometimes just simply say one word or do one action and suddenly their students may have a breakthrough experience. The reason why they can do that is because of the great merit and reservoirs of positive energy they've cultivated for many, many years. So that just one word, one look, one action, can be full of great power. It can be the same with us – one word, one hug, one smile, can *ripple* across the Universe! ☺

## ☺ Brother ChiSing's WISH LIST ☺

### Immediate Need:

- ☺ 40 black or brown blankets (\$5/each) = \$200
- ☺ childcare (\$30/Sunday) = \$120-\$150/month
- ☺ 100 CD's to give away each month = \$100/month
- ☺ Rent to Unity Church of Dallas = \$300-\$375/month

### Eventual Need:

- ☺ digital mp3 recording device = \$200-\$300
- ☺ sound system, amps and mics = \$500-\$1,000
- ☺ Admin. Assistant, Children's Director & Music Director

### Future Need:

- ☺ \$1.08 million "INTERFAITH MEDITATION CENTER"



LUNAR NEW YEAR – "Goddesses" of Awakening Heart!



## THURSDAYS: "Diving Deeper" Longer Meditation, Book Study & Discussion Group

7 - 9 pm @ A Mindful Home in RICHARDSON, TX

Come practice each Thursday evening as we dive deeply into the teachings of Awakened Teachers and apply the Truths we learn to our daily lives. Experience the benefits of extended meditation as we simply sit observing the constructed self with compassion and attentiveness and as we learn to dwell in the present moment in a surrendered state of consciousness.

The Thursday DIVING DEEPER mini-sangha actively studies teachings from **Thich Nhat Hanh**, **Eckhart Tolle**, **Jack Kornfield** and others, utilizing a dharma discussion format for sharing among members.

Bring your desire, your diligence, and your daily practice, and come join us!

– Monica Lecrone

\* For details & location, visit our website at:

**[www.AwakeningHeart.org](http://www.AwakeningHeart.org)**

## MARCH 22: Spring Equinox Celebration!

AWAKENING HEART (Community of Mindful Living)  
Sunday 5:30 pm @ The UNITY CHURCH of Dallas  
(All Vegetarian Potluck Dinner at 7:30 pm)

## \* MAY 3: "Buddha Day" Celebration !!!

AWAKENING HEART (Community of Mindful Living)  
Sunday 5:30 pm @ The UNITY CHURCH of Dallas  
(All Vegetarian Potluck Dinner at 7:30 pm)

### MINDFULNESS FOR ALL AGES

(please bring your children & teens)

"The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success:  
4 - THE LAW OF LEAST EFFORT"

\* Next Generation UNITY – all young adults 18-35'ish are invited to have dinner together after at 7:30 pm

## JUNE 27: Summer SolstiCelebration !!!

Earth Rhythms along with Awakening Heart  
(and our friends at **Ananda**) invite you to join us for:

**SUMMER SOLSTICELEBRATION 2009!**  
"We Are All One Under the Sun"

Saturday, June 27, 12 noon - 10 pm

**Bath House Cultural Center** in DALLAS  
521 E. Lawther Dr. (access Northcliff off Buckner)

**[www.EarthRhythms.org](http://www.EarthRhythms.org) 214-261-5599**

## Awakening the CHRIST Within

A "Day of Mindfulness" Retreat with Brother ChiSing  
(between Good Friday and Easter Sunday)

Holy Saturday, **APRIL 11**, 9 am - 5 pm

Location: **The Unity Church in GRAPEVINE**  
1650 Hughes Rd. (near Hwy 121 & Glade),  
Grapevine, TX 76051

Donation requested: \$50 (includes lunch)

Go to our website for more details and  
please register online by April 8 at:

[www.AwakeningHeart.org](http://www.AwakeningHeart.org)

## Empowering the LIBERAL Heart

A "Day of Mindfulness" Retreat with Brother ChiSing  
(for everyone, especially Unitarian Universalists)

Saturday, **MAY 16**, 9 am - 5 pm

Location: **Community Unitarian Universalist Church**  
2875 E. Parker Rd. (east of Jupiter Rd.)  
Plano, TX 75074

Donation requested: \$50 (includes lunch)

Go to our website for more details and  
please register online by May 13 at:

[www.AwakeningHeart.org](http://www.AwakeningHeart.org)

### About AWAKENING HEART (Interfaith Mindfulness Ministries):

**Awakening Heart**, currently based in Dallas, Texas, was founded by **Brother ChiSing, M.Div., M.A.**, as a spiritual ministry inspired by the universal teachings and practices of the contemporary Buddhist teacher, **Thich Nhat Hanh**, and his "**Order of Interbeing**" composed of both lay and monastic members worldwide.

Spirituality, meditation, and "**The Art of Mindful Living**" are the basis of our classes, workshops, retreats, special events and communities. Buddhist spirituality, as it was originally intended by the Buddha, is not exclusively "Buddhist" but universally applicable and **beneficial for people of all faiths**. The word "Buddha" simply means to be "awake" or "enlightened," which is the potential in every person. Mindfulness is not limited to one religion, it is an ecumenical spiritual practice and a non-sectarian way of life that can benefit anyone and everyone, whether Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, or those of other faiths as well as the non-religious.

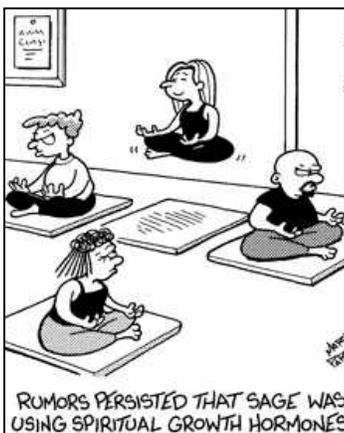
We are intentionally very **beginner-friendly**, and we warmly welcome and affirm people of all ages, religions, genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations, abilities, classes and levels of meditation experience. We especially welcome those who have been spiritually abused by religious fundamentalism and who are seeking a safe refuge for inner healing within genuine spiritual community.

Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey, **you are welcome here.**

**"I have arrived, I am home."**

### **AWAKENING HEART (Brother ChiSing)**

P.O. Box 863961, Plano, TX 75086



*"Our true home is in the present moment. To live in the present moment is a miracle. The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now." ~ Thich Nhat Hanh*