

Sharing The Joy



January 2005

The Joy Cathedral

www.thejoycathedral.org

A Message from Reverend Vici Derrick

Namaskar!

Namaskar means I behold the Christ in you.
Beholding the Christ is what The Joy is all about.

- I believe that it is in acknowledging the Christ as a real presence in ourselves and others that we serve God.
- I believe that serving God is our true mission in life.
- I believe that we are anchors through which the Presence of God seeks expression.
- I believe that as we allow ourselves to become vulnerable to the Presence of God within us, we show forth this Presence and accomplish this mission.

The mission of The Joy is two-fold. The first part of the mission is to connect with the Presence and experience The Joy that is attendant with contact. This requires of us a vulnerability to God that is foreign to many of us. It requires of us an opening of the mind and an opening of the heart ("Where two shall agree on earth as touching, anything that they ask shall be done by my Father in heaven." Matthew 18:19) When we find agreement in mind and heart, we receive the anointing of Spirit.

(cont'd)

The word Christ is from the Greek and it means anointed. The anointing comes as we open our hearts to love and feel loved by God. It is not limited to one person, this anointing. It is the real reason for our very existence. It is the gift that Spirit lavishes upon anyone courageous and perhaps outrageous enough to make themselves available to God.

The second part of this mission is to bring this contact into the world that we inhabit so that we are literally channels through which the Divine Presence finds expression. Simple enough. Not easy. What is required to accomplish this mission is nothing less than a revolution in consciousness.

How do we begin? What does this look like? What must we do? It starts with a decision. We decide that this is what we are going to do. Then step-by-step we do the necessary work on ourselves.

- We pray, we meditate, we act from the center of our being where joy is natural.
- We stop reacting to the world around us and move when directed by Spirit to do so. We become Spirit reliant.
- We prepare ourselves so that as our good shows up on the screen of time and space we are ready and able to welcome it into our lives.
- We stop judging ourselves and others.
- We resist telling our stories of failure and disappointment and begin a new chapter in our experience where all the seeming disappointments of the past have become stepping stones on the path of our liberation from the bondage of appearance. The truth has set

us free.

- We persist in the direction of our dreams knowing that each dream is a seed planted by Spirit to give us a glimpse of the beauty, the glory of God. We recognize that our dreams are God's dreams for us.
- We move from giving to live to living to give. We live to give our gifts of time, tithe and talent so that the will of God can be made manifest in our lives, our bodies and all of our affairs. We are prospered.
- We cease seeing the other, and recognize the God Presence in and through all.
- We acknowledge that "I am not my brother's keeper, I am my brother."
- We are loving. becomes for us a celebration of the good that lives in the hearts of all mankind.

"Looks like I can feel the breaking of day, oh what joy breaketh forth in my soul...feel the joy, it's coming at you...let it change your mind, change your body, let it change you. Here comes The Joy! Loving God,"

Reverend Dr. Vici Derrick

Ask Rev. Vici.

Send your questions to:

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We EnJoy Hearing From You

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A Joyful Noise

Is it really any wonder that music of the Joy Ensemble is so integral to the experience that is the Joy Cathedral? Not when you consider we wouldn't have it any other way! And not when you consider that what the Joy Ensemble does is emblematic of that experience that is the Joy Cathedral.

For those privileged to sing and play music it really is about the joy.

Outside of recording, making music seems the most ephemeral of pursuits. The song is played and then vanishes even as it appears. What could make anyone passionately pursue the ability to make canvases of invisible ink, lemon juice notes on paper, finger paintings on steamy windows?

It is the joy--the joy of truly creating out of seeming nothingness, out of silence the melodies and harmonies are born. It is called playing music. And as such it has much in common with childhood's intrinsic inclination to play. But to play music is to choose to hold the world at bay, to consciously create an alternate reality of song instead of silence.

When we do it, and in particular, when we do it from the place in ourselves that honors the gift of talent and the triumph of will required to join that creative circle—that's when we are privileged to enter a realm in which the

joy not only reigns but where the joy is all that is.

To experience that moment on stage, in which any number of players and singers unite their talents, their spirit, their intention, their will, toward the creation of a real physical-and-yet-not-physical experience that moments ago was not present in the silence, which now is fully present and universe-filling. To experience that moment is to know true communion. Communion of spirit, of talent, of souls each and together finding the God-like center of creativity in themselves and sharing it, shaping it into something of genuine and visceral beauty.

But it goes so much deeper. For each individual spirit, each surrendered player, each lifted voice, for each there is the reward of all rewards: communion with the joy itself. There may not be words for this. It is the oneness. It is complete commitment to the present. It is aware of all possibilities and selective of just one. And the selection is always true when there is a direct connection between the performance and the spirit. That direct connection happens when nothing else matters but the song, the note, the music. To be totally consumed by the act of creation, to be totally surrendered to the gift is for us, heaven on earth. More correctly it is earth transformed into heaven, precisely the transformation we are here to enact.

Billy Mac, Music Director

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Flirting with Forgiveness

Do you remember when flirting was easy and came naturally? Maybe you don't actually have to "remember" because you are actively practicing it right now within your life. You recall the energy of it? How it feels a little naughty because it isn't always accepted; and when it's returned the connection is exhilarating. When flirting, there is a lightness of being and a revealing of who you are. It is fun, mysterious, and joyful. Forgiveness, my friends, is all of this intensified and more.

Yes, forgiveness may feel naughty because it goes against the norm of our culture. It is congruent with who we are as microcosms of God. Yet the human condition would have us believe at times we are making a mistake by letting go. Don't fall prey to other's belief systems! Trust your inner God guidance system. Not only are you Whole, so too is everyone else -- although all of us at times may forget and think we are wounded. Forgiveness allows you to let go of this definition of yourself and to reclaim your Wholeness and the Wholeness of those around you.

Allow yourself to flirt with the idea of forgiving this year and then don't stop there -- DO IT! Engage in its energy, give it away often, write poetry about it, allow it to get all over you as you call it forth from within you and be contagious. Be a forgiveness Being! Kornfield, Buddhist teacher and author, says that letting go and love may be the same thing. What an incredible realization. As I forgive, I am increasing my capacity to love! Love on, my friends.

This past year of 2004 began The National Forgiveness Tour where I stepped out to remind us of the power of forgiving and to teach "how to" if we forgot or never really knew. This spiritual practice is worthy of my life energy and investment. There is

juice in this ministry and everyone wins!

Let me define forgiveness here. We can spend the month contemplating it and then next month I will share with you the Grace in Being Offended.

I use three different yet interconnected definitions of forgiveness. The first is the dictionary definition which is "to let go of resentment." Resentment is then defined as "perpetual ill will." When we forgive, we are letting go of on going, harbored, ill will. Wow! Guess where that lives? Inside of us. The second definition is from Aramaic translation of The Lord's Prayer.

Neil Douglas Klotz translates the line about for-giving our debts as we forgive our debtors with the following: Loose the cords of mistakes binding us, as we release the strands we hold of other people's guilt. There we go. It's about emotional bondage. We bind ourselves and others when we don't forgive. When we forgive we're losing these binds. Then lastly, I use the metaphysical definition which is literal and it means to "give forth." The other night on TV I heard Wayne Dyer say, "When you squeeze an orange, you get orange juice. The question for us then is when we are squeezed, what do we give forth? God, or something else?"

As you can see from these definitions, forgiveness is for and about ourselves, and only ourselves. By its definition, it doesn't even include another person. When we forgive, let go, cleanse, purify, it is inside of us! God.

My prayer for The Joy Cathedral this year is that we recognize we are the cathedral and we allow our Joy to be amplified!

Rev. Bonnie Barnard,
Associate Minister & founder of
The National Forgiveness Tour.

On-line class www.theforgivnesstour.com

JANUARY AFFIRMATION CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						I open the door for my good.
2 I cooperate with the Universe in all things.	3 I express the Divine Presence within and all is well.	4 Everything is in Divine Order.	5 I move in the direction of greater understanding.	6 I love my life!	7 I believe in Infinite Possibility.	8 I am a spiritual powerhouse!
9 I let go of appearances and focus on the Truth.	10 I begin today with a passion for success	11 I am inspired!	12 I joyously go to meet my good.	13 The Universe is organized for my success	14 I am transformed by changing my mind.	15 I am loved by God.
16 I am Fabulous!	17 I let go and I let God.	18 I am willing and God is able.	19 God's abundance is reflected in my life.	20 I am free.	21 I am a finely tuned instrument of God	22 God works through me.
23 F.A.I.T.H. Fear Ain't In The Hologram.	24 I am fun!	25 I am healthy.	26 I view the world through loving eyes.	27 I expect miracles!	28 I remember to play every day.	29 I am Responsible for my good.
30 I emanate peace.	31 I am Love and I am Loved.					

The President's Corner

Namaskar - and greetings from your Board President!

The inauguration of this newsletter marks another milestone in the realization of our vision to demonstrate the joyful message of the Gospel of Christ to a dynamically growing audience. I want to be clear about what I mean by the "Gospel of Christ." The word *gospel* simply means *truth*. What Jesus demonstrated through his brief ministry on this earth was *divine truth* in the form of a human being. In and through the person of Jesus, God was manifest, and those who knew him had the experience of witnessing God in action. The message that Jesus preached and the principles that He demonstrated are the message and the principles we seek to understand, to share, and to demonstrate through this ministry.

The reason *The Joy* was chosen as the name for this church is that *joy* is inevitably what any person feels in their heart when they experience the realization of the good news that Jesus preached. He taught that the kingdom of heaven is ours to experience, here and now, in our own hearts. He taught that we are not condemned by our sins (our errors), but that God's grace and love for us is unconditional. (Recall the story of the prodigal son). He taught that we should love one another as we love ourselves. He taught forgiveness, above all, as the doorway to God's grace. He proclaimed, "I have come, that your joy may be complete," a fantastic message!

Jesus emphasized in His teachings and by His example that there was nothing exclusive about inclusion in God's family.

It was the Samaritan who demonstrated love for his neighbor, not the members of the religious elite, who left the man who'd

been robbed and beaten by the side of the road. It was the woman at the well with whom Jesus spoke and revealed the nature of His connection with God. The principles of truth, of real righteousness, and the message that our purpose in life is to manifest God's presence through our being, are universal. There are no cultural or religious boundaries to the truths that Jesus taught and demonstrated. That's one of the reasons we have chosen not to identify this ministry with any particular denomination. Faith transcends religion, and the truth we seek to discover and share is for everyone, regardless of culture, gender, race, or heritage of belief. God's love and grace are universal, and His family is all-inclusive. That's the Good News, and that's what this ministry is all about.

I hope you will be inspired to join us as a partner in this ministry, as we seek to bring the message of a positive, practical Christianity into being. I hope you will be inspired to study with us, to pray with us, to worship with us, to vision with us, to serve with us, to prosper with us, to sing praises, celebrate the Good News, and join us in our *Joy*!

Dr. Lou Saeger,
President of the Board of Directors



JOY

- I define joy as a state of being.
- It is the consciousness that maintains itself at all times because it is the consciousness of the Presence of God throughout Creation.
- It is the conviction of The Good Omnipotence.
- It is the love of God that bubbles in the soul and insists upon manifestation.
- It is our spiritual inheritance.

Every person who is involved with 'The Joy' endeavors to bring this consciousness to the level of everyday living. It is expressed through our musicians and the staff. It is expressed by our Board President whose idea (the Vici Derrick Ministries) this was. It is my deepest commitment to Love and Loving.

The Vici Derrick Ministries was born as a result of the call and response of Spirit. The call of Spirit was to manifest a ministry where the simple principles of truth would inspire, encourage, enlighten and empower. The response is The Joy Cathedral. vgd

Commitment

A friend of mine brought me a copy of some words that were in a frame on the wall of an old hotel up north. This is what it said:

"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have

occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt could come his way."

W.H. Murray,
Scottish Himalayan Expedition

"Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."
Goethe

These words remind me of a quote from an early teacher of mine, "True intention is demonstrated through attainment." As Rev. Vici says, "If you want your ship to come in, you'd better send one out!"

What a wonderful time we had at the last gathering of The Joy Cathedral! The Joy Ensemble rocked the house! Dr. Lou sang to our hearts with his beautiful voice in guided meditation. Rev. Vici was an instrument of inspiration and rocked the house as well!

We've sown some wonderful seeds and now it's time to fertilize, nourish and grow them. We all need to be committed together for this to happen. Let's each make a commitment to bring 1, 2 or 10 people to every service. We will fill the house in no time!

I am excited about feeling the energy of The Joy Cathedral filled to capacity and experiencing the "genius, power and magic" with kindred spirits who are committed to abundant joyful living!

Dance across the Earth
Be an artist of Life
Live to Love with all your might!

Enjoy!
Andrea von Botefuhr,
Assistant to Rev. Vici

A Thread of Magic

God is Life.

From minute to vast...God is Life.
Life is that single thread of magic
that gives vibration to gross matter and all
that you perceive.

Life is an innate intelligence that sustains,
animates and gives order to all that exists.

It is the God/Life that makes all the
molecules in a table hang together and
appear as a table instead of just being a big
heap of
molecular mush.

Divine order.

Life may appear dulled or hidden from us by
our perception of dis-ease or abuse yet it is
ever present.

Just as the Sun is ever present yet
sometimes hidden by clouds or the darkness
of night.

When you devote yourself to Life,
you enhance Life's energy within you.

With that devotion, all discrimination,
judgment and condemnation
naturally disappear.
Things that may have once seemed
"bad" or "ugly"
become beautiful life forms.

Divine order in action.

Instead of merely judging, one begins to
recognize Life's beautiful energy within all
people, things and circumstances.

To acknowledge beauty, instead of relating to
those superficial characteristics which detract
from that which is constant and eternal, is to
begin to know the true essence of each
expression of Life.

Life is the core of all things.

By simply acknowledging this fact
you automatically nurture your Life.
You feed that which you give attention to.

You might as well feed Life.
Devote yourself to Life.
Live Life!
Love Life!

The more consciously you live and love Life,
the more spontaneous you will become.
The illusion of false securities will disappear.
Life is fluid, moving, ever
changing....ABSOLUTELY INSECURE!

So many of us strive for "security".
Yet worldly security is an anti-life premise.
The most secure place you can be is
"six feet under".

"They" can't take away your children, your
lover, your home, your stuff, your job or your
car. You can't starve to death because you're
already dead.

The only real security is certainty of self.

Certainty of your ever changing, growing,
constant self.
That only comes with knowing whom and
who's you are.

Life is motion.
Life is change.

I would like to suggest that to become
comfortable with change and the continuous
ebb and flow of the tides of Life could be a
huge contributory factor to our personal joy.

And why not choose joy?

"Fun" is so much more fun than "no fun"!

Replace the strong longing for security with a
strong longing for Life.
Life is perpetual Magic in motion!

Now, close your eyes for a moment,
breathe deeply,
allow the love of Life to fill you and thrill you.
Then open your eyes, let go and let Life.
Let go and let God!

YOU'RE IN FOR THE RIDE OF YOUR LIFE!
Enjoy!
Andrea

Church of the Wildflowers

In my heart of hearts, I know myself to be a Wildflower, a follower of the teachings of a Universe intent on blooming, for the joy of blooming surpasses all other joys. We live in order that we may bloom, that the divine idea that lives in us will be manifested in creation. The entire Universe is church.

You've met humans in bloom. They have an unmistakable radiance, presence, and *consequence to their Being*. When you ask them how they have achieved such a state, they all say the same thing, "Let go." is the beginning of a long, dangerous and interesting journey, the day we take those words in and promise to live by them. Everything changes.

What do we let go of?

Six years ago I was called to the country to embrace the life of a Wildflower. Before that, I dreamed of being a Wildflower someday: more than anything else, I dreamed of being free. And then suddenly, one day, the thing I called my life was blown apart and I found myself in a world I was willing to entrust my soul to, a world full of fierce and unspeakable beauty, the member of a church with one doctrine, love grows, one commandment: Love.

I don't want to make it sound easy being a Wildflower because it isn't. Obviously, I am a human being, too. And we all know what that means – we are susceptible to fear – creating in us voices that are ignorant, clever, and controlling. I am reminded of the childhood song, "I'm a lonely little petunia in an onion patch," the voice of dissent, comparison, complaint, and longing. But even this voice is purposeful. It wants to

interfere with the divine order the way weeds compete for earth, water, wind and sunshine in a garden and thus, improve the beauty of the garden by raising the consciousness of the gardener. What I am saying is that it's possible to love weeds and fear on equal terms when you recognize the service they provide. Resistance is a force of creation, gravity a fact of time and space, and we can feel resistance and gravity as the impersonal forces they are. Resistance is not always fear. Yet, suffering is not possible at the depths of our being, where there is no mind to talk about it. Ergo, if we are suffering, we are not yet in communion with our depths, and to make matters worse, we can't stop talking about it. Being a Wildflower includes being friends with the truth of deep silence.

I don't recall signing on to be a Wildflower, but I'm sure I must have. And it might have sounded something like this. "God, if I am to be a flower in your creation, I want to be a wildflower. I don't want to be a beautiful rose in a manicured garden. Keep me out in the wild, and let my connection with you be direct, One-on-One, intimate, meaningful and purposeful. May my presence glorify You and Your creation.

Sandra Leicester

