

UBM GoodNews

Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc.
Newsletter Spring 2023

NEW!
See page 2!

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A Gift of Warmth and the Promise of Spring

By Rev. Mary Colburn



To my utter surprise and complete amazement, a brightly colored bluebird was at the suet feeder yesterday. I have been in Connecticut for years and this is the first time I have seen one. And he hung around a bit!

I couldn't believe it! I went out and filled the mealworm feeder, thinking if I were a bluebird a tasty mealworm might be just the ticket.

What a remarkable gift to see a bluebird. He had no idea how his presence warmed my heart. I never knew how these birds that visit our back yard would become so important to me. Especially in the early spring, there is so much change.

The beauty of these creatures moves me profoundly.



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Overview

Weddings 101 offers a complete basic education in designing and conducting a wedding ceremony.



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UBM Founders
Rev. Drs. Jeni & Rick Prigmore

“The Lesson of Giving”

By Rev. Dr. Rick Prigmore
(Excerpt from The Joy of Living)

We are told in the scriptures and sacred writings of the ages that we manifest our destiny, that abundance is ours for the claiming, that all good things are ours by divine rights, aren't we?

How many of us really believe that? We read it, we preach it, we expound on it – but, when the chips are down, we opt for less. We feel we aren't “worthy” to have it all. We “don't deserve” it.

This lesson was brought home to us more forcefully when we were preparing to dis-

pose of most of our “worldly good” and take off in a motor home. This house was under contract and we needed to empty it.

We thought first of having a garage sale. That would be fun and profitable. But, then, we thought, if we really believe in abundance, why not give it away?

We invited about forty friends to a pot luck farewell dinner on Sunday. As each guest entered, he or she was given labels with their names on them. At dinner we explained we couldn't take much of what was in the house and we had no plans to ever settle down again.

So, after dessert, they were instructed to go through the house and put their labels on the items they would like to have. Then, take them home.

We noticed that one person gazed lovingly at an oil painting and said, “I've always wanted that painting...but, I'll take this vase.” We said, “No, take the painting.”

Another said, “I've always admired that tea cart ever since I've known you...but I'll just take this picture.” Again, we said, “no, take the tea cart.”

The scene was repeated time and again. People were willing to settle for less than they really wanted. They felt they should pay us something or “hold it for us” until we returned. It was difficult for them to accept the abundance of life.

What a great lesson – for us in releasing our attachment, but more important, for everyone to test their belief in promised abundance.

Whatever we desire is ours by divine right. We have but to ask.

SPRING makes us think of WEDDINGS!

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, famously wrote “In the Spring a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.”

Well, maybe not just the young (whatever *that* means!). Or... just the men. And...well, not just in Spring, for that matter.

But thinking of love *does* often lead to thinking of **WEDDINGS!**

If you are interested in beginning (or building) your practice as a wedding officiant, consider taking the self-directed **UBM Weddings 101** course, on sale now!

This comprehensive course covers everything from “where do people stand?” to inclusive language, to helping guests shut off their cell phones, to collecting your fee, and much more!

Email UBM Executive Director Robin Morini for more information via robin.ubm@gmail.com.

Start **TODAY** to earn your certification!





Optimism is The Only Game to Play

By Rev. Rosemary Cathcart

Hello there and welcome to sunny skies and pretty blossoms just about everywhere! Even though I may sneeze my way through it year after year with those pesky “seasonal allergies”, I would not have it any other way.

Springtime makes us feel alive and helps us all to feel hopeful and full of the promise of life to come. As someone who was born and raised in Buffalo, New York ~ any hint of snow leaving and flowers blooming is a balm to my very Soul/Spirit. It’s no wonder I ended up in WPB, Florida ~ just in time to meet Rick and Jeni Prigmore and to find UBM when I did.



I love birds most especially. And as a long time member of The National Wildlife Federation, The Arbor Day Foundation and The National Audubon Society, I do my best to support Mother Nature in her relentless quest to keep us, and the Planet alive. Perhaps you might consider doing that as well? The World Wildlife Fund is another favorite of mine.... hint, hint..... memberships also make great gift ideas, too.



Optimism is what I think of first and foremost when this time of year rolls around, perhaps you feel that way as well. I’d like to share something with all of you that came to me from my all-time favorite Unity Minister, the Rev. John McLean. Rev. John served Unity of Nashville for a number of years, first as Assistant Minister and then a bit later as the head honcho with the biggest heart, best singing voice and the brightest energy one could ever imagine. Rev. McLean inspired, served, invited and coaxed Nashvillians into a new way of thinking and honoring their lives. I for one always looked forward to getting an inspirational lift whenever I was fortunate enough to be in his presence.

****Always be on the lookout for those people who lift you up and encourage your growth just by their presence. Then strive to be that for others along your path. It’s called “mentorship”, and I think it’s the best way to learn and then to pass it on.**



Each year, usually on New Year’s Eve, Rev. John would share with all of us, “The Optimist’s Creed.” Written in 1912 by Christian Daa Larson, who was a new thought leader, teacher and a prolific writer. Many of his books are still in print today, more than 100 years after they were first published.

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If you agree with me that Spring time is the quintessential testament to optimism, then perhaps you'll also embrace these words as true concepts, words of encouragement and the perfect daily affirmations to help live a life of consequence and kindness. Your body/mind/spirit system will be the first beneficiary and you'll be Blessing the entire world as well.

THE OPTIMIST'S CREED

Christian Daa Larsen

Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel like there is something in them.

To look at the sunny side of everything and to make your optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and to press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and to give every living person you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, and too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

Isn't that wonderful? I resisted the urge, line by line to put certain words in "bold" only to realize I was reaffirming to myself the things I need to work on most especially. I am a total work in progress....still....always!

I may be a Minister and I may be a Spiritual Teacher with a long, and quite successful track record, but I am ever so HUMAN. I find that humanness getting tested more than ever these days, so **I must** strive for openness and kindness, remembering that a spark of the Divine God presence lives in each of us. If I cannot keep that spark that lives in me bright, hopeful, courageous, focused and love-filled, then I'm not doing my best job at my life.

Toward that end, I pray without ceasing as I walk about my day, saying sincere prayers of thanks that I am alive. That the Creator saw fit to let me wake up again today to give it all another shot at being my best me that I can be. I'm grateful for all that I know and all that I hope to keep on learning. I am grateful and optimistic about my life and my future. I am so grateful for every family member, loved one, friend and furry friend who has ever graced my life. I am grateful to have been a member of this esteemed and good-hearted



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organization, The Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc. for so many years, and incredibly grateful to each and every Minister (over 5,000) we've Ordained over the years. We have a world wide outreach, doing "better and better" good work every day of the year.

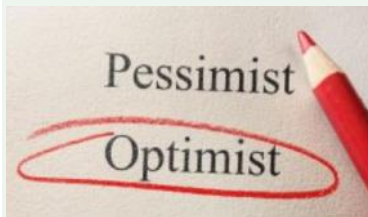


Please consider adding "The Optimist's Creed" to your daily affirmations and prayer treatments. We are, after all, working at spreading the Light of The World and there's only one place to start, and that's inside ones self.

On behalf of our Founders, Rick and Jeni Prigmore, Executive Director, Robin Morini, and your Board of Directors, thank you for all you do and for all you are. Here's to optimism, here's to loving kindness, here's to life.

You are the Light of the World and your optimism shines brightly indeed!

Rev. Rosemary Cathcart is a practicing Minister and the President of Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc. She resides in Nashville, Tennessee, and for more than 30 years, she has been conducting a healing practice based on traditional wisdom and ancient practices in combination with modern modalities. She serves her clients in varied roles that include intuitive counselor, wholistic healer, astrological and numerological consultant, spiritual guide and trainer. She is also a Traditional Reiki Master originally trained by Virginia W. Samdahl. Learn more at www.rosemarycathcart.life



El Credo del Optimista
Prométete:
Ser tan fuerte, que nada pueda perturbar tu paz espiritual.
Hablar de bienestar, felicidad y prosperidad a cada persona con quien te encuentres.
Hacer sentir a todos tus amigos que siempre ves algo positivo en ellos.
Ver siempre el lado favorable de las cosas y que tu optimismo sea una realidad positiva.
Pensar sólo en lo mejor, trabajar siempre por lo mejor y esperar siempre lo mejor.
Entusiasmarte del éxito de los demás como lo haces del tuyo.
Olvidar los errores del pasado y luchar para alcanzar verdaderos éxitos en el futuro.
Tener siempre un semblante sereno y brindar una sonrisa a todas las personas con quienes te comunicas.
Dedicar todo el tiempo necesario para mejorarte a ti mismo y así no tendrás tiempo para criticar a otros.
Superar la preocupación, ser noble y no enojarte fácilmente, ser tan fuerte como para no sentir temor, y lo suficientemente feliz para evitar que las dificultades te acobarden.



Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc.

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www.universalbrotherhood.org**

Information for Ministers Liability Insurance

In response to many phone calls regarding liability insurance, a UBM minister mentioned *Healing Touch Professional Association* and *Energy Medicine Professional Association*. The associations have partnered to offer liability insurance for energy healing therapies and spiritual counseling.

Learn more here:

[http://www.htprofessionalassociation.com/
liability-insurance](http://www.htprofessionalassociation.com/liability-insurance).

This information does not constitute insurance or investment advice, or an offer to sell, or the solicitation of any offer to buy any insurance or investment, and is provided for information only.



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NEW! Contact our UBM office for more information!

We have a limited supply of beautiful clear quartz cabochon pendants for sale. We are offering two unique designs:

- A. quartz cabochon wrapped with flowing spirals and
- B. quartz cabochon wrapped within a graceful scroll design (pictured).

***These beautiful pendants capture
the Light and are filled with UBM Love!***

The pendants measure approximately 1 1/4" - 2" from the top of the bail to the bottom of the pendant. Included is an 18" lobster clasp chain.

UBM Office: 954-974-1181 Email robin.ubm@gmail.com



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“Less Worse”

By Kelly Graham

So I was talking on the phone with a friend of mine, a teacher (self-described as a business + life coach / spiritual teacher / writer + producer / loving husband + puppy daddy) in Australia the other day. We were discussing lots of things, among them some brainstorming about new products for development into books / courses / podcasts / etc.

I described to him a call I had been dreading, and commented, “but y’know, like a lot of things, it turned out to be much less worse than I expected!”

“Less worse?” he said. “Less worse?? I have never heard that phrase in Australia!”

“Well,” I said, “I don’t think I’ve ever heard it either. Or ever said it. Let me think where that came from!”

So I walked through the possible etymology of the phrase with him:

- It’s not as bad as I thought (that works)
- It was less bad than I expected (um, no)
- It was far better (that works)
- It was less good (um, no)
- It was more bad (oh no)
- It was worse (that works)
- It was less bad (eh, ok-ish)
- It was far less bad (nope)
- and....“it was far less worse” is what popped out of my mouth.

What I meant was, “it could have been worse,” but I definitely delivered that thought in a wonky way.

My friend insists “less worse” will be making its way into some of his teachings, and I can’t wait to see how! But for our purposes here – what about “less worse?”

As humans, we tend to catastrophize things. That was part of the convo with my friend too. We talked about how cortisol kicks in and we react. I won’t say we “respond” because responding implies thought, and there is no thought in the way we veer toward either arguing or activity when cortisol hits. Note I did not say

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“action;” again, some thought is implied in that word. “Activity” is just I MUST DO SOMETHING ANYTHING RIGHT NOW SOMETHING ANYTHING ANYTHING RIGHT NOW RIGHT NOW NOW NOW. It’s just a reaction to the flood of cortisol that comes from – well, lots of things, but often stress exacerbates it.



My friend said that for him, taking a walk, shifting to do something for someone else for a minute, playing with the dogs – things that take him “out of” himself are what help with that argue/activity conundrum. And as the cortisol rush subsides he can actually sit with the situation, whatever it is, and think + meditate on it, rather than simply reacting.

He said he suspected fear had to be rife in my world, since I handle money, finance, and investing. And he’s right: “fear” is a very strong motivator in my field. It’s long been realized that fear and greed are major motivators for humans, and for most of us, behavioral science shows that *fear* is by far the stronger force.

You see, many of us might likely say we want to *make* money. But virtually all of us would say we do not want to *lose* money. And therein lies the reason fear often wins out. Basically, people who have some money want, more than anything else, to never lack money again.



Knowing this could help us make decisions concerning money / finance / investing. If we acknowledge that “fear” is going to pop up before anything else, we can be ready for the cortisol rush combined with the fear. And we can work through the cortisol in a different way – by walking barefoot in the grass, or hopping on an exercise bike, or helping someone else with a task or errand.

Getting past the fear could help you see that the money / finance / investing decision you are considering has many ways to be “less worse” than you thought. Maybe even “far better” than you could have dreamed! And if you would like a sounding board, or want to discuss a potential decision, do feel free to reach out.

UBM Vice President Kelly Graham has worked in the financial field for more than 30 years, and is a Senior Vice President—Investments with B. Riley Wealth Management. She is honored to have been ordained by both UBM President Rosemary Cathcart and UBM Founders Rick and Jeni Prigmore. She can be reached at kellygraham@brileywealth.com

UBM Administrative Office Phone Number

Please make sure you have updated the
UBM office phone number to
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ministers in their practices!



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details: robin.ubm@gmail.com

Kids In A Wedding?? Not *Always* Chaos...

By Rev. Robin Morini

The two snarling squeaky little voices bellowed throughout the church louder than any church bells could have.



“That’s not how to throw rose petals!”

“Yes it is! I know how to do it!”

“No, you don’t!”

“Shut up! Mind your own business!”



“You shut up!”

A loud pop! Was it the cute little flower girl, or was it the perturbed ring bearer, who threw the first punch?

We will never know!

The scuffle continued for another second or two before someone jumped from a pew and separated the two children. The bride and groom stood, frozen in disbelief, as the priest continued reading the ceremony script without missing a beat.

And yes, that little five-year-old flower girl was my best friend’s little sister, and my very own little five-year-old brother was the ring bearer.

(A few years later my little brother redeemed himself during my wedding ceremony as he sang “Here Comes the Bride” like an angel!)

I was in my early 20’s for this wedding episode. Everything was going great until a young boy (about 10 or 11 years old) caught the garter, and found out he was going to have to place it on the leg of the grown woman who had caught the bouquet. The boy was terrified, started screaming, “no! No! NO!” and ran out of the room...far, far away from the laughing crowd of grownups...

Don’t worry! I ran after the boy, comforted him, and we had a long talk. I let him know he did not have to place it on anyone’s leg, and he was super thrilled that he could still keep the garter to use as something similar to a slingshot to shoot into the sky. Surprisingly (or not), through-

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out the evening the boy shot the garter at all the adult wedding guests. Was he getting his revenge, or was he just bored?

Things Didn't Get Much Better

The more weddings I attended, I more I realized things didn't get much better for the kids with roles in the wedding ceremony or as guests.

Memories of weddings I attended as a child came drifting back to me:

- There were looonnnng lines with grownups waiting to shake hands with more grownups; very long, very tiring lines.
- Waiting in these long lines I would think of cake...at weddings there was cake, YAY for cake!... but first an unappetizing variety of strange unfamiliar food had to be eaten. And then only a sliver, a mere pittance of cake was served... and who knew how dry, or flavored with rum, the cake would be?
- The day was long, very long, way too long to keep up the pretense of good behavior!

I'm from the 55-and-over crew today so I have many, many "kids in weddings" and "kids at weddings" stories to share, but the biggest common denominator seems to be: **boredom**.

Before passing too much judgment, I decided to talk to a few children to get a feel for how things have changed at wedding receptions since I was a kid...hoping to give myself a fresh perspective.

So I interviewed children ranging from six years old to 12 years old, asking "**How do you feel about weddings?**"

Here are things kids say they disliked about weddings:

- "Boring. Weddings are boring."
- "I don't like weddings. All grown ups are there."
- "Grown ups were dancing disgusting. I didn't like that shaking their booties."
- "I was mad my uncle got married to someone!"
- "My grandpa had to take me home because I was crying and bored and tired."
- "I got in trouble because I was yelling and running around. What else can I do? I'm a kid!"

And here are things kids say they liked about weddings:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Hmmm. Okay... So the kids inspired me to come up with ideas for children as participants in the wedding ceremony, children as guests at a wedding, for couples or officiants planning a kid-

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friendly wedding, and for parents planning to bravely attempt bringing their child or children to a wedding.

Actually, I was so excited about happy kids on wedding days that my first thought was to start myself a new business ~ and it looked like this:



PROFESSIONAL ENTERTAINER
For Hire
Wedding Babysitter/Nanny
I will entertain your kids with
arts & crafts, indoor/outdoor games
and fascinating story time
while you enjoy the wedding and other events



Aaaaand upon considering the energy it would take for me to keep a bunch of children happily entertained for three to four hours, that thought soon became a passing fancy! (Franchises, however, are available. Let me know if you're interested!!!)



So my mind wandered back to ideas for couples, parents and wedding officiants. With the assistance of the internet and my own creative life experiences with kids, here are a few ideas that came to mind:

The Kids' Table

Cover the table with white craft paper and individual baskets or bags filled with crayons, stickers, colored pencils, coloring sheets, mini activity books, puzzles, tic-tac-toe pages, kaleidoscopes, and wedding themed placemats to color

Food

Pack special "wedding day" lunches or snacks in wedding-themed lunch bags or boxes. This could include fun finger sandwiches, mac and cheese balls, celery sticks stuffed with sunbutter or peanut butter, carrot sticks, mini cupcakes and/or muffins, individual snack bags of crackers, popcorn, chips, soft pretzels, lots of juice box varieties

Card + Poster Station

This could be in an area set up just for kids to create a greeting for the newlyweds. You can

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include blank cards, poster board, stickers, crayons, sparkle pens, and colored pencils

Dancing

Designating a certain time or specific area on the dance floor for “just the kids” to dance would bring some happy faces! Having the band or DJ play a few familiar kids songs would be inviting. Or if your child is the only child at a wedding reception, invite your child to dance with you for a special dance

Naptime Area

A quiet semi-enclosed area that is both away from the “action” but secure and easy for parents to access would be ideal for naps. If furniture is available, great; if not, perhaps some air mattresses, blankets, and pillows. The ability to control light and sound — maybe with lamps and a sound machine — would be helpful. The only potential problem might be adults who want to crash the naptime area for naps too!

Children’s Play Area

Perfect for an outdoor reception, but possible inside as well. Consider beanbag toss, Hula Hoops, a bubble station, outside Jenga, age-appropriate table games, relay races, and pickup sticks. I would shy away from balls or Frisbees...they don’t accent a wedding cake!

Here are some links with ideas and information:

- [15 Fun Things For Kids to do at Weddings](#)
- Kids’ wedding activity coloring place mat, available [here](#) for \$4
- Download free printables featuring coloring, tic-tac-toe, and word games [here](#), including instructions on putting together activity books
- Discover the fun that is orientaltrading.com; you will find wedding décor, themed party and craft supplies, giant outdoor games, and lots more
- Click [here](#) for outdoor toys for kids, including ring toss, potato sack race supplies, beanbag toss games, and more
- [27 Impossibly Fun Ways to Entertain Kids at Your Wedding](#)

It would be great fun discussing any of the ideas in this article, so please give me a call at the office if you have questions!

Rev. Robin Morini @ UBM, 954-974-1181

Oh! My little brother...the ring bearer at the beginning of this article ... he is now a fabulous wedding and party planner on the west coast ... so YES! There *was* a kid who loved weddings!



(not a picture of my brother, but nowadays he smiles like this at weddings!)



About Your Ministry: **NEED-TO-KNOW**

Remember that it is your responsibility to stay informed regarding all state, federal and local laws that govern your ministry. It is your ministry, and your responsibility.

If there is a lapse in your yearly licensing fees to Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc. (due during your ordination month), then you are no longer provided verification of your ordination or an updated UBM ID card, making any service as an ordained minister suspect.

Before Officiating A Wedding

As mentioned above, you are responsible for educating yourself and for following local laws and requirements in your area, for your particular practice.

Some cities and states require you to register as a minister to officiate a wedding. Check with local authorities to see what the requirements are for your area *before* you perform any ceremony as an ordained minister. In the US you should generally contact the local “Clerk of the Court” for this information, and also research what the laws are in your area. These requirements may change between counties within the same state.

As mentioned above, you are responsible for insuring that you are legally permitted to perform any ceremony before doing so. One good example of this is New York state, where if performing a ceremony in the five boroughs of New York City, you must register before officiating a marriage ceremony. To our knowledge, this is not currently required anywhere else in the state.

The marriage license (also called a marriage certificate, depending on local custom), is extremely important. When you officiate a wedding, you are responsible for having license/certificate signed by witnesses (if required) and/or signing it yourself as the officiant or minister. This must be done *on* the wedding day *after* the ceremony. You are responsible for sending the completed certificate back within the required time to the correct governmental body. Instructions regarding completing the certificate should be on the license or (better idea!) call the local governing body *before* the wedding to find out what is required of you as the officiant.

Please check local laws for the deadline to mail the signed certificate. Failure to adhere to this deadline could result in fines or even incarceration! For example, in North Carolina marriage licenses must be returned in ten days to the issuing authority. If you do not meet this deadline you are subject to a \$200 fine and shall also be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor (if convicted you will go to jail) [NC Statutes 51 — 7].

Learn more about the structure of a wedding practice in

UBM's new WEDDINGS 101

certification course. More info on pages 2 and 4 of this newsletter.

Before conducting a ceremony always remember to check the guidelines for the location where the ceremony will be conducted. It's easy to cross a city, county, and even state lines when traveling to a venue, so check on this (and then check again!).

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Also, before you agree to officiate a wedding ceremony, contact the local court clerk (or local office that governs weddings) and ask if you are required to register or to present a minister's verification letter. In some states you can be fined up to \$1,000 and up to a year imprisonment for failure to follow certain regulations.

If you have any questions, or would like a Minister's Verification Letter, please call the office at 954-974-1181. All states and localities have different requirements, so please check in advance.

General Information

If ordination is your pathway to opening a church, center, etc., you must let your clients know under what legal avenue they are working with you. For example, on your business cards, brochures or advertisements, you must:

- ⇒ Indicate you are an ordained minister. This can be done a number of ways: Rev. in front of your name, or Interfaith Minister under your name, or clergy or "Ordained through Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc." Simply provide a clear way of letting others know that this is how you are legally practicing your ministry.
- ⇒ Obtain appropriate business licenses and/or complete any filings that are necessary for the financial end (such as tax ID, etc.). This depends on how you are going to classify your business, *i.e.* nonprofit, not-for-profit, LLC, sole proprietorship, etc.
- ⇒ Obtain appropriate business and liability insurance for your ministry practice.
- ⇒ For guidance, seek counsel from your local library; contact your local or state government licensing agency; or consult an attorney or accountant. In the US, the Small Business Administration also may be able to provide guidance: sba.gov.

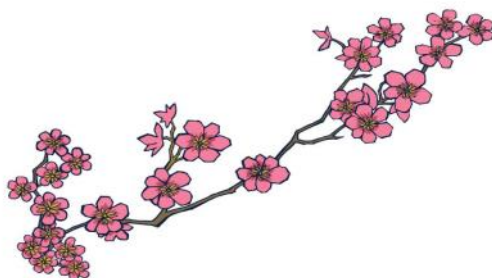
Remember, always, that you are a professional. Conduct yourself and your ministry accordingly. Most organizations provide a "Code of Ethics" which controls your moral and ethical standards; UBM requires adherence to our Character Policy, with annual updates. Other standards and policies may also apply.

Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc. honors your independent ministry. It is up to you to honor and protect the integrity of your ministry and Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc.

Some resources that may be available in your area to help you start your business:

- ⇒ Service Core of Retired Executives: score.org
- ⇒ Local economic development
- ⇒ Local universities or community colleges may have entrepreneurship resources or classes
- ⇒ UBM's own *Weddings 101* class can help with beginning a wedding practice (see page 2)

**Please feel free to contact our office at 954-974-1181
if you have any questions.**

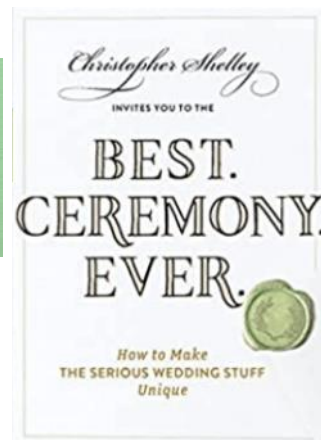


Best. Ceremony. Ever.

by Christopher Shelley

~part genuine guide, part professional proponent~

BOOK NOOK



When I began writing my book *Best. Ceremony. Ever.* back in 2017, it was just me on my computer fooling around with the idea of a wedding humor book, what was meant to be an encyclopedia of wedding buzzwords, defined in broad, realistic, comedic terms. But then I realized that I knew a whole lot about creating entire wedding ceremonies, and that perhaps the thousands of people who'd witnessed the ceremonies I perform were not merely being polite when they expressed their delight. Perhaps I knew something that could be valuable for other wedding professionals.

I was conflicted about writing a book that could be used to assist amateurs – friends, family members – when they were asked to officiate ceremonies. I've been involved in the effort to educate people about the value that trained officiants and Celebrants bring to weddings. For me, the friend-officiating-the-wedding is my personal nails-on-a-chalkboard. Anyone reading this has probably had to do some client-educating of their own, and you know how exhausting this can be.

Yet I also realized that I would never be able to entirely quell this trend country-wide. Clients from only a few states ever reach out to me. The trend will likely never go away. Budgeting concerns will always plague couples, and since our contribution is less tangible than photographs or videos, our efforts are likely to be valued less for all eternity. So my thinking became more self-serving and survivalist. Hey, why not do what I can to help people have better ceremonies, whether they are professionals or not? As I mention in the book, I'd love to officiate every wedding in every state, that's how much I love officiating, but this is obviously impossible.

Now the book is out, and it's only been since I saw the physical book in my hands that I realized

the sheer amount of information in this book could deter amateurs from going through with the exercise of performing a function for which they are wholly unqualified.

I can see the book helping people, for sure, but I can also see it opening peoples' eyes to the fact that officiating a wedding is a more complex task than it initially appears to be. I hope the book can help all of the good people who sought out legitimate, valuable ordination through this wonderful organization. And until I meet you in person – hey, have a good wedding today!

BIO: Chris has been officiating weddings since 2011. He has a BFA in Acting from Boston University and an MFA in Creative Writing from NYU. He's performed weddings in settings as diverse as the New York Public Library, The Park Plaza, The Roosevelt Hotel, The Brooks Atkinson Theater (Broadway!), Citifield (where the Mets try), Grand Central Station, all over Central Park, on dinner boats and rooftops, in wineries, re-purposed warehouses, breweries, mansions, country clubs, hotel suites and one old retired cop's living room in Brooklyn. He has appeared on The Rachael Ray Show several times. Chris writes and performs wedding ceremonies through his company Illuminating Ceremonies. He lives in New York and Cincinnati with his smart wife, King.

***Best. Ceremony. Ever.** is available via [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), [IndieBound](#), [Target](#), lots of places where books are sold.*



Comfortable and Confident

By Rev. Kelly Graham

A quick study of the websites where ministers and other wedding officiants offer their services shows most have one thing in common: each says the couple can feel “comfortable and confident” in choosing that officiant.

Over and over you see phrases like “I feel comfortable and confident officiating various kinds of weddings.” And in the testimonial section of many websites, you see comments from couples like “We felt comfortable when we met with her, and we were confident because she was so responsive via email.” More than anything, the couples you serve will want to feel comfortable and confident in making the choice of working with you.

But it’s important to remember that YOU will want to feel comfortable and confident as you provide guidance to each excited and nervous couple before, during and after the wedding ceremony. If YOU are comfortable and confident, that will be communicated to the couple in your words, in your facial expressions, in your body language, in your energy, and more.

It gets easier with time and experience in conducting weddings—but always, the key to your own comfort and confidence is *preparation*. Before the wedding date you may be involved with consultations, assisting in planning and possibly creating a customized ceremony, attending rehearsal, and making sure you are familiar with the directions and requirements regarding the marriage license.

On the day of the wedding you will want to feel confident as you perform the couples’ special ceremony, sign the license and enjoy the love that is present with friends and family of the bride and groom. Once the wedding day is over you want to be confident that you have legally met all requirements of each state and county and the newlyweds are legally married.

Read and re-read the license instructions. Read, re-read and practice out loud the ceremony. Visualize the ceremony going perfectly, and visualize the nervous and excited couple becoming happy and confident as the ceremony concludes.

One way to know you have prepared is to “check off” tasks as you complete them. On page 20 of this newsletter you will find a checklist created to help you move forward with grace and confidence as you begin the journey before each wedding ceremony. Please print it and use it if you like.

And if you would like to customize the list, please email UBPresidentRMC@gmail.com with CHECKLIST in the subject line, and you will receive the list in a Word document so you can customize it and make it your own.

And here’s one more idea: take advantage of the new **UBM Weddings 101** self-guided course; information is on pages 2 and 4 of this newsletter. The comments we’ve received on the class have been extremely positive. UBM Executive Director Robin Morini even said that the class covers “every question I have answered over the last 20 years for ministers conducting a wedding.” Now *that’s* high praise indeed, from someone who knows! The class is available at a special introductory price through Labor Day and is easily emailed to you as a pdf. Take a look!

UBM Wedding Officiant Checklist

Authorization to Perform Weddings

- ☐ Contact UBM Executive Director Robin Morini to be sure your membership shows "current" on the UBM books. Call 954-974-1181 or email robin.ubm@gmail.com (please be sure to put your name and OFFICIANT CREDENTIALS in the subject line)
- ☐ Do you have a current Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc. ID card?
- ☐ Do you need a verification letter from UBM for the state / county / city?
- ☐ Do you need to complete an application with the state / county / city in order to perform weddings? (check with all three)

Wedding License

- ☐ Contact the county official who oversees wedding regulations and go over the process for properly completing and returning the license. ASK all the details: time frame to return the license; whether or not a return envelope is provided; if witnesses are necessary, and if so, how many; etc.
- ☐ If no envelope is provided to mail the license, prepare your own envelope with the correct address
- ☐ Do you have: a pen to sign the license? Stamps to mail the license on the way home? A folder to hold the paperwork and instructions?
- ☐ BEFORE THE WEDDING: When the couple receive the license it will be accompanied by a list of instructions and directions for the officiant. Go over this list several times to be sure all three of you are clear about what is required
- ☐ AT THE WEDDING: Immediately upon arrival, locate whomever has the paperwork and place it in your folder
- ☐ AT THE WEDDING: As soon as you have the paperwork, find out who is designated to sign the license and tell them you will need them for five minutes immediately following the ceremony
- ☐ FOLLOWING THE WEDDING: drop the license in the mail on your way home

Ceremony / Local Custom

- ☐ Do you have a ceremony book to help you guide the couple?
- ☐ Have you investigated typical wedding services offered and prices charged in your area?
- ☐ Have you considered including a reminder to silence cell phones before the ceremony?
- ☐ Check with the couple to be sure you are pronouncing names correctly

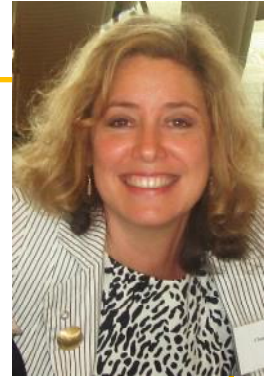
Personal Preparation

- ☐ If you have seasonal allergies, bringing your allergy medicine might be a good idea
- ☐ A notepad and pen (sounds simple, but so easy to forget!)
- ☐ Stamps to mail the license
- ☐ Reading glasses, if you need them
- ☐ Emergency preparation: a couple of Band-Aids, a small sewing kit, a safety pin or two, floss, breath mints, a protein bar and a bottle of water

Do the Blend!

~ a recipe for great ceremonies and happy clients

By Rev. Charlotte Eulette



Each time we UBM ministers co-create and officiate at or preside over a ceremony, there exists a great opportunity to make it the best it can be for our client honorees. The valuable service we provide as ceremony-makers resonates deeply with our client honorees...and they certainly appreciate it. As a result, our clients often consider us to be their “family minister” for many of their life-cycle ceremonies, and they keep coming back to us. As UBM ministers doing this great and needed work, we have the unique opportunity to become the “trusted keeper” of our client honoree’s history and legacy.

A tried and true way to make our client honorees even more satisfied is to blend their important and very own personal life aspects into the ceremony. While in the process of working together with them, we can actively find out the important things they wish to include in the ceremony and, just as important, what they don’t want mentioned in any way at all. In our work, let’s make note of both. It’s advisable to have our client honorees proof the final draft of their ceremony, get their edits (if any) and their thumbs-up before we go “live.”

A “blended” ceremony acknowledges and includes some or more of the following aspects of a person(s) life that they wish to focus on, pay attention to in some way — or pay tribute to in their ceremony:

Ancestors, Family, Relationships, Extended Family and Friends
Symbols — Heirlooms — Altars — Gifts
Culture — Language(s) — Ethnicity — Customs
History — Experiences — Special Stories
Personality — Likes and Dislikes
Philosophy of Life — Beliefs
Life’s Work — Talents
Protocol for LGBTQ+
Protocol for anyone with special needs or circumstances
Environmental Awareness
Language Usage Awareness

Continued....

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As UBM ministers we often work with people from all walks of life, and therefore we are stepping into their lives in a very personal way. From the start, when we meet with our clients and begin the intake/interview process to co-create their ceremony, we can discover (by using the info above) what is important for them to include in their ceremony, and what they don't want mentioned or in their ceremony. Once they reply, via the dialogue we have with them, we can then create the elements, moments and rituals of the ceremony that include the: people, stories and even languages (for instance, if it's a bilingual ceremony) that make their ceremony unique and meaningful.

Finally, let's talk about ceremonial language use. It is paramount that attention is paid to how to correctly verbally address the people in or mentioned in the ceremony. For instance, perhaps our client honoree(s) don't want to use gender-heavy terms to describe themselves or others, such as: "he or she" but instead prefer "them, they or we" or "the couple" or the use of first names that are approved in advance. It's the careful attention to what they share with us that makes the big difference. It's key for us to delve in, read and listen to what they say and find sensitive, personalized and creative ways to make their ceremony and our service to them truly great.

As UBM ministers we are a family of creative muses for sure, and homegrown-personalized rituals, people skills, professionalism, etiquette, ceremonial writing and officiating are second nature for many of us.

And always remember, we are blended people doing this great work as a complete reflection of the world we serve.

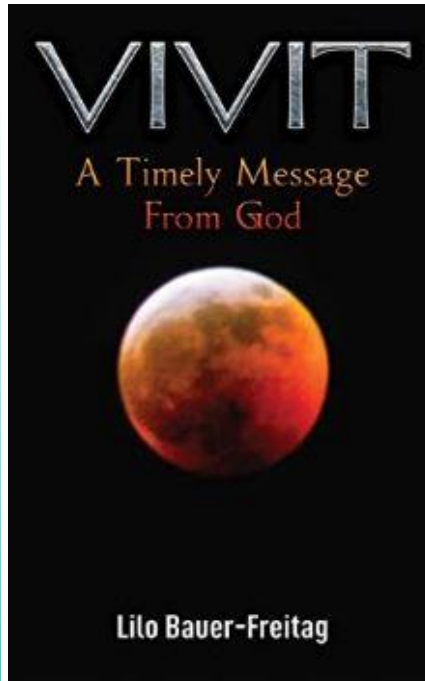


*Reprinted from the
UBM 2019 Wedding
Guide*





BOOK NOOK



VIVIT ~ A Timely Message From God

In presenting this book, Lilo Bauer-Freitag honestly and with heartfelt emotion urges the reader to reject the devastating materialism and consumerism that has pushed humanity to the brink of extinction. She shares with us the divine messages, dreams, and visions she experienced from a young age that resulted in her becoming an environmental activist, author and crusader dedicated to returning us to a healthy living environment. She wisely connects the dots between the chronic illnesses that plague our populations, aided by the chemically laden food, air and water we consume and the painfully obvious loss of connection to the Creator and to Nature. Through sharing her own story of awakening, she emphasizes the urgent need to forge a path back to our true spiritual selves.

Roberta Bolduc, Former Publisher, Upstate Natural Awakenings, Greenville, SC, USA.

Lilo Bauer-Freitag is an Author, Minister and Activist residing in South Carolina, USA. She knew at an early age that she was to go to America; a calling which became reality in 1982. She holds a B.A. degree in Psychology, a M.A. degree in Clinical Counseling and a B.A. degree in Divinity. Additionally, she has studied and practiced several holistic therapies since 1989. In 1995, she was ordained as a Minister and received a call from God that year to write HIS book. Instead, she first authored *Healing: The Emerging Holistic Paradigm* (1998), bridging intuitive insight and abilities with scientific and academic conventions, to help facilitate a much-needed paradigm shift in America's healthcare and way of life. She also worked as a conventional psychotherapist for 12 years. In 2013, Lilo added Life Coaching certification to her repertoire and left conventional therapies behind. In the meantime, she had also received many dictations, messages and visionary dreams for many years, with increasing urgency, until God's book could no longer be postponed. It is *VIVIT: A Timely Message from God* (2022).



Rev. Lilo Bauer-Freitag

Rev. Lilo Bauer-Freitag's book VIVIT is available from Amazon in [Kindle](#) or [Paperback](#) formats.



UBM Website Directory + UBM GoodNews Ads

Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc., is rebuilding the Minister Directory on our website, www.universalbrotherhood.org.

We have had a Directory in the past, but much of the information became corrupted, so we are starting fresh! Let's think of it as "spring cleaning" our Directory.

Whether you were listed at one time and would like to be again, or you want to be listed for the first time, please let us know.

The Minister Directory includes only ministers who have *requested* a listing in this public directory. Feel free to add skills or specialties, such as languages you speak, modalities where you have specific training, willingness to travel X number of miles to officiate a wedding, etc.

If you would like to be added, please know:

- You must be an active member and up-to-date with membership fees;
- You must include a link to your website, since we will not list phone numbers or email addresses; and
- You must have a Privacy Policy Certification on file with UBM

This form gives us specific permission to list you. For your convenience, the current updated Privacy Policy Certification is included in the email you received that contains this newsletter.

If you are interested, please email UBM Executive Director Robin Morini at rob-in.ubm@gmail.com with DIRECTORY in the subject line. Include in your email the completed Privacy Policy Certification either scanned or photographed and saved as a pdf.

Another good way to let people know about you and your practice is through the Business Card Ad program for UBM GoodNews. **See page 11** for examples, and consider both supporting your fellow UBM Ministers and placing your own ad!



Psssst....PASS IT ON: **UBM FACEBOOK**

[https://www.facebook.com/
UBMovement/](https://www.facebook.com/UBMovement/)

Please visit and “like” our page, share posts, and invite others to view our page! You will find thoughts for the day, holiday mentions, and timely information on UBM’s Facebook page.

At a recent UBM Board of Directors meeting President Rosemary Cathcart said, “We need goodness, and UBM distributes goodness wherever it goes.”

One of the ways to help distribute this goodness is to share our Facebook page. Let’s send it around the world!

ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Email your poetry, article, recipe, blessing/prayers, shared thoughts and ideas to

[**robin.ubm@gmail.com**](mailto:robin.ubm@gmail.com)

You can also mail your articles to our office:

**Universal Brotherhood
Movement, Inc.
P.O. Box 670278
Coral Springs, FL 33067**

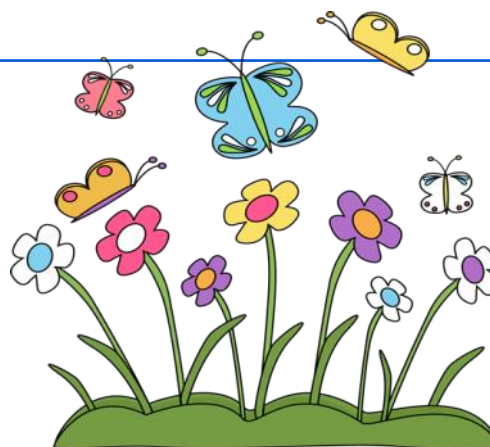
SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

Summer Issue: June 15

Autumn Issue: September 15

Winter Issue: November 15

**We would
LOVE to
hear from
you!**



**OUR LORD HAS WRITTEN
THE PROMISE OF THE
RESURRECTION, NOT IN
BOOKS ALONE, BUT IN
EVERY LEAF IN
SPRING-TIME.**

—MARTIN LUTHER

Specific State Marriage Laws

One resource for information on marriage license laws in the United States is www.usmarriagelaws.com.

Here you will find valuable information for ministers who are seeking the location and phone numbers of the county clerk or court clerk, along with information regarding whether or not you are required to register with one of these officials.

You will also find requirements for solemnizing a marriage in other cities and states. Listed also are the duties of the officiating minister, the required number of witness signatures (if any), and the required time frame for the marriage certificate/license to be sent back to the appropriate state agency that records marriage certificates.

You might use this website (and other sites) as your first research into local wedding laws, but afterwards, always check **DIRECTLY** with the city, county, or court officials where you will be officiating the wedding in order to ensure you have the most up-to-date information. Laws and rules are dynamic and can change, so check before *each* ceremony.



Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc.

For questions, minister's verification letters,
and any other paperwork required,
please contact
Executive Director Rev. Robin Morini
in the UBM office:

954-974-1181
robin.ubm@gmail.com
PO Box 670278
Coral Springs, FL 33067



I've Been Asked to Officiate a Wedding! YIKES!!

By Rev. Celia Milton



Now what? Maybe it didn't occur to you that anyone would ask and now you're freaking out! Take my hand. Come in off the ledge, it's going to be great! You might want to do it more than once!

Here, have a cuppa coffee. Weirdly enough (and THIS is relaxing!), the process doesn't start with you; it starts with your couple: the ideal non-mainstream-religious wedding is entirely couple-driven. Isn't that exciting? (The right answer is YES!!)



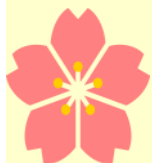
Repeat after me: they picked you for a reason. They picked you for a reason. They like you, or you worked with their dad; your new pink hair goes with their color scheme; you look friendly; they asked their cousin who said yes and then panicked and disappeared. It doesn't matter why they picked you; they did. And you'll be fabulous.

Here's what you do now that you're off that ledge and back in the building.

First, most importantly, find out if your ordination allows you to legally marry them. In some states, there are extra steps beyond your UB ordination. (In NYC for example, you'd need to be registered with the NYC clerk's office.) Make sure you are legal. I believe I mentioned that. Make sure. It's important.

Now that you're sure you are legal, contact the couple. Tell them you're delighted they thought to ask you. And outline the steps for them to take. Keep in mind that even if you have NO idea how to do this, you're still five minutes ahead of them. And you'll figure it out.

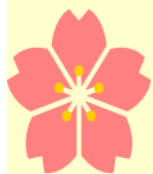
Hey, let's make a list!



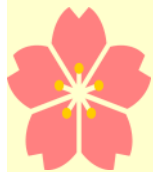
1. Reply. Do this as fast as you can. They're excited, they're nervous, they have no idea what to do next. If you have a website, send them the link. If you are going to reply via email, make it lighthearted and fun to look at.

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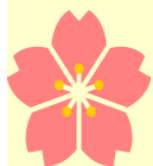
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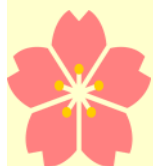
2. Schedule a call: telephone, FaceTime video, or Skype video. Make it happen at a time that's relaxed for you and them. After dinner, before the late evening news. Let them know you'll be speaking for about 45 minutes to an hour so they're prepared with questions and they know what to expect.



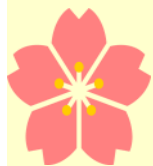
3. Start with the facts. Ask about their venue, bridal party, parents, dog. Ask if they want any religious content. Ask them if they have ethnic, cultural, heritage factors that they want to include. (Good examples; a glass breaking, a seven steps ritual, a Stefana crowning, a tea ceremony, a saké sharing...) Get them to talk. They love to talk about the wedding.



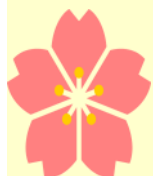
4. Walk through a ceremony with them. Include all the parts from "I will arrive an hour ahead of time" to "then you kiss." Know and point out which parts are legally required.



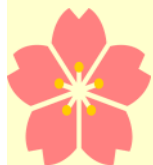
5. Put together a contract; yes, even if you're doing this for a friend, even if you're not asking to get paid. A contract is vital to confirm expectations for both parties: when you'll show up, when they'll show up, what you'll do, what you expect them to do.



6. Then send them a questionnaire (if you contact me, I can send you mine). The questionnaire will ask them the questions that will help you write the ceremony.



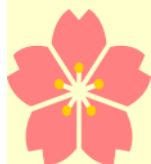
7. Write it. Include all the different parts you need (we'll talk about that next time!). Find fun, unusual readings. Practice multiple times. Highlight, use accent marks. Add stage directions. Put your script in a beautiful folder. Type up their vows for them, on something presentable for the photos.



8. Show up at least 45 minutes early; talk to your musicians, your photographers, the venue coordinators, parents, bridal party, and the couple. Practice with the microphone. Make sure any "props" are in place.

Continued...

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9. Relax. Do a fabulous job. As soon as the ceremony is complete, sign and send the license. Write the couple a thank you note and send them information about how to retrieve their “real” license from the issuing clerk. Write a thank you note to the venue and other vendors you met. And that’s it! You’ve got this!

Rev. Celia Milton is a wedding officiant based in New Jersey. Over the past 13 years, she's performed close to 3,000 weddings in back yards, in Yankee Stadium, and at the top of the Empire State Building. She says, “It's been quite the ride!”



Contact Info:

Celia Milton

Celia Milton Wedding Services

www.celiamilton.com

celia@celiamilton.com

201-563-5544



**A good marriage is one
where each partner
secretly suspects they
got the better deal.**

—Unknown



UBM Minister Business Card Ads

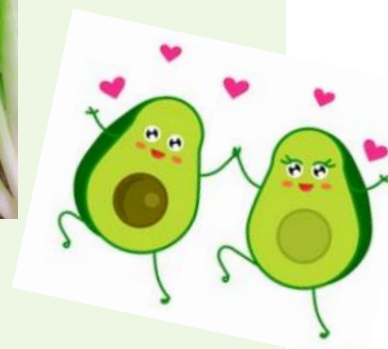
Would you like your own business card ad in
UBM GoodNews?

Examples are page 11; info on our directory is page 24

Kelly's Green Rice: GREEN FOR SPRINGTIME!!

Ingredients

3 cups cooked rice (chilled is fine)
1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian flat-leaf parsley
1/3 cup chopped scallions (green onion)
2 to 3 ripe avocados, chopped
Juice of one lime (or more, to taste)
Salt and pepper to taste



Note: because of the lime juice, use a glass or ceramic dish for this rather than metal

Directions

Coarsely chop the avocado and place in the serving dish you plan to use: a casserole dish, a glass pie pan, a serving bowl, etc.

Cut the lime in half and squeeze both halves over the avocado. Gently stir/toss the avocado so it is completely coated with lime juice; this helps keep the avocado from turning brown



Chop the parsley. For this, I hold a handful of parsley over a measuring cup and use a pair of kitchen scissors to chop it directly into the cup. When you reach 1/4 cup (or a little more, if you like parsley), add this to the avocado-and-lime mixture in the bowl

Chop the green onion – again, you can “chop” it with scissors directly into a measuring cup. For this dish, I discard about half of the root end (the white part) and use more of the green. When you reach 1/3 cup, add this to the avocado-lime-parsley mixture in the bowl and toss it all together



Add a little salt – about 1/2 teaspoon – and a couple of shakes of coarsely ground black pepper to the mixture, and toss a couple more times

Add the cooked rice to this mixture, and toss / fold / gently stir everything until it's all mixed together. Taste, and add salt/pepper/lime/onion if you like

Variations

Chopped bell peppers (green, yellow, orange, red, or purple) would add color, crunch, and sweet pepper flavor

Shredded carrots would add color, sweetness and crunch

Chopped jalapeno or chili pepper would add peppery heat

Chopped ripe mango along with the jalapeno or chili peppers would be sweet/hot (and good!). Chopped mango by itself would also be a good addition

Roasted or steamed chopped asparagus would go nicely with the lime and green onion, would add to the “green” theme, and would make this a great addition to a springtime meal

Adding chopped grilled or roasted protein (chicken, lamb, fish, etc.) would turn this into more of an entrée, and would be a great way to use up leftovers





Special Keepsake Ideas & Resources

By Rev. Robin Morini



Many times I have enjoyed conversations with ministers who have just officiated wedding ceremonies. My heart is always touched as these ministers share their experiences with me.

Below I've included a few of these shared ideas from the ministers who have gifted the newly married couple with a keepsake.

One creative and fun way to gift a keepsake for the couple is to create a personalized wedding certificate. This created wedding certificate is not a valid marriage license, but it will be a memento the couple can cherish for years to come.

If time is available, you could create a wedding certificate with clip art and your computer, or even scan in your own art creations. Below are resources for free printable wedding certificate graphics and templates, as well as Etsy and Amazon listings for wedding keepsakes available for purchase.

Other keepsakes UBM ministers have created include small soul portraits of the couple, a handmade booklet of poetry, a handmade book of the couple's wedding ceremony or specific parts of their ceremony, the wedding vows written in calligraphy and framed, and a candle carved with special symbols that relate to the couples.

These are only four of the many resource websites available:



https://www.etsy.com/market/printable_wedding_gift

[weddings.lovetoknow.com/wiki/
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Hugs

By Rev. Greg Goodson

Reprinted from 1996 UBM GoodNews Newsletter

I had the good fortune of being raised in a family that shared warm closeness and affection. Additionally, in my lifetime, I have encountered many persons who are blessed with unconditional love and openness towards others. I subscribe to the philosophies of Leo Buscaglia, and to those of the many philosophers, theologians, health practitioners, and others who espouse the therapeutic value of the simple hug.

To me, hugging comes naturally. My hugs are unconditional and indiscriminate. I have hugged men and women, children and senior citizens. Some of my most rewarding hugs have been shared with the elderly. Hugs have been shared with persons of different ethnic and racial origins, different lifestyles and different political and religious beliefs.

I have hugged ministers, judges, police officers, clerks in stores, waitresses in restaurants and attendants in campgrounds. Hugs have been shared with persons newly introduced, and, with complete strangers. Hugs have been given to animals, who are often quite responsive, and to trees in the forest. If you have never hugged a tree, try it sometime. On occasion, I even wrap my arms around and hug myself.

Hugs have been given in celebration, and, offered in consolation – sometimes just a silent way of showing that someone cares. Embraces are given in both greeting and farewell, and have been shared in love of parents, love of children and grandchildren, and love of lovers.

Hugs are commonly a physical process. However, in the absence of proximity, hugs can be verbal, visual, mental, spiritual, or can even be in writing. Even in the electronic phenomenon of e-mail there has developed a form of expressing hugs- {{{}}}. The more characters sent, the bigger the hug expressed.

Occasionally, one may encounter those who are resistant or adverse to hugging. The origin of their resistance may be a personal defense mechanism of some sort, may be psychological, or may be some form of a “macho” thing. Whatever the reason, if recognized, I try to respect their space. At the same time, however, one should pray that they may somehow open their lives to more caring, warmth and happiness.

Hugs can transcend political, religious and social beliefs. Genuine hugs—not just symbolic ones – could help foster peace among those in conflict. Hugs are therapeutic, healthy and they cost nothing but time.

Hugs have the capacity for bringing so much warmth and happiness to our lives. I go forth each day with unconditional hugs to offer. In the words of our Lord: Go and do thou likewise.

In loving memory of UBM Minister/Director and Reiki Master Greg Goodson

Let's Stay In Touch!

Staying in touch with our worldwide membership means we work every day at updating the contact information for all UBM ministers.

It's important that we have your current contact information, **especially your email address**. Much of our UBM communication is sent via email, so a current email address ensures you can stay informed.

Please print this page, complete it, and mail to:

UB Executive Director Robin Morini
Universal Brotherhood Movement, Inc.
PO Box 670278
Coral Springs, FL 33067

Or—even better!—scan or photograph the completed form and email it as a pdf to UBM Executive Director Robin Morini via robin.ubm@gmail.com.

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Anything else you would like to share? _____

Spring, already?!
stupid climate change

