

# Introduction



*Welcome to Essential Awakening 2024!*

This year marks Unity of Fairfax's eleventh year of their annual Unity Awakening series of Sunday talks and small groups that highlight Unity or New Thought teachings. Unity of Fairfax's Senior Minister, Rev Russell Heiland, invited ministers from several other congregations to participate in this dynamic program.

For seven weeks beginning Sunday, September 22, these churches are joining Unity of Fairfax in offering a series of Sunday talks based on the book *In the Flow of Life*, by Rev Eric Butterworth. Butterworth, regarded as one of the greatest ministers in the Unity movement, is one of my favorite Unity writers! All of his books are worth reading, and all of his lectures are worth listening to again and again. He successfully shared Truth ideas and made them approachable and practicable for anyone.

In addition to the Sunday talks, each church will also have study groups that will work with the questions and ideas found in this workbook, originally authored, and now generously shared, by Rev Heiland. Your participation in a study group adds to the vitality of the Unity community by fostering relationships within and across Unity congregations. Additionally, it provides an avenue for meaningful personal spiritual growth.

Although the original title for this series and group study is *Unity Awakening*. I am calling it *Essential Awakening*. There is much division, distrust, and an appearance of separation currently here on playground planet Earth. To overcome these divisions and the appearance of separation, it is essential that we wake up to the unlimited wellspring of life, substance, and intelligence within our consciousness.

By joyfully giving way to the flow of life, we can cocreate a prosperous spiritual community that blesses the world. I look forward to this journey of awakening as we step more fully into our calling to be the Christ-presence.

Yours in the awakening,

Rev Todd Humphrey

Crystal Coast Unity

# The “Flow” of Essential Awakening 2024



- Week 1 SEPTEMBER 22 Sunday message: Eachness of the Allness  
Read: Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1
- Week 2 SEPTEMBER 29 Sunday message:  
Read: Chapter 2
- Week 3 COTOBER 6 Sunday message:  
Read: Chapter 3
- Week 4 OCTOBER 13 Sunday message:  
Read: Chapters 4 and 5
- Week 5 OCTOBER 20 Sunday message:  
Read: Chapter 6
- Week 6 OCTOBER 27 Sunday message:  
Read: Chapters 7 and 8
- Week 7 NOVEMBER 3 Sunday message:  
Read: Chapter 9

NOTE: Throughout the text, there are references to pages from In *the Flow of Life*.  
This refers to:

Eric Butterworth, *In the Flow of Life*, Unity School of Christianity, 1982  
10<sup>th</sup> printing, 2011

# Getting Started!



Awaken is verb conveying a variety of meanings such as “to waken” or “to rouse.” It can also mean or “to stir up and excite.” It comes from the Old English verb *awæcnan* meaning “to spring into being” and, less often, “to wake up.”<sup>1</sup>

Describe a time in which you have experienced an awakening—a springing into being—of some sort in your life. Be prepared to share this experience with your group.

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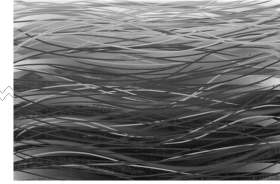
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<sup>1</sup> “awaken” and “waken.” *Dictionary.reference.com Dictionary.com - Free Online English Dictionary*. 2013, <<http://www.dictionary.reference.com>> (16 July 2013).

# Essential Awakening 2024

## Week 1 - SEPTEMBER 22



*In the Flow of Life, by Eric Butterworth*

*Reading for this week: Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1 - "Living Life from Within Out"*

Welcome to the first week of your seven-week small group study! In the first meeting, your facilitator will lead you in a conversation of group dynamics and practices including such things as opening and closing prayer, late arrival and absences, breaks, and overall facilitation. Your active participation in the discussion will enrich this experience for you and the other members of your group.

Group members will be at different levels of comfort with small group processing. Below you will find a listing of group agreements with space to add any others that your group creates. Following these agreements will foster a sense of trust that will add to the vitality of your group.

### Our Small Group Agreements

The intention for this Small Group Exploration is:

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We will start and end on time, meeting \_\_\_\_\_ (day) from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ for the next \_\_\_\_\_ weeks.

We agree to be a \_\_\_\_\_ (open/closed) group for the duration of this agreement. ("Open" means allowing new people to join the group at any time during the seven weeks.)

We agree to the following values (check those the group agrees on):

- Confidentiality:** I will keep anything that is said strictly confidential.
- Attendance:** I will give priority to the group meetings for the agreed number of weeks.
- Acceptance:** We accept each other unconditionally. We are not here to “fix” each other.
- Feelings:** We respect each other’s feelings.
- Okay to Pass:** No one is required to share.
- Okay to Disagree:** I accept that others may not hold the same view.
- Participation:** I speak for myself only, and I listen to others attentively.
- Balance:** We seek a balance in our sharing times. Everyone is welcome to share, and no one dominates.
- Prayer Support:** I am willing to pray for others.

Other agreement:

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Other agreement:

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With God as my guide, I, \_\_\_\_\_ intend to uphold the above agreement to the best of my ability.

## Group Members

This information is confidential. Please use it only for intra-group communication.

Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
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“It has been said that the starting point in spiritual realization is a right understanding of that One designated as the Almighty.” *In the Flow of Life*, page 9.

What is your present understanding of “that One designated as the Almighty?”

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“Let’s examine the prevailing attitudes about this thing called life. There are two basic views: (1) We come into the world as empty creatures who go forth in life to be filled. Life for us at any time is the sum of what has happened to us and what we have been able to accumulate in wisdom, experience, or things. (2) We come into the world as living souls of infinite potentiality to be discovered and released, for life is lived from within-out.” *In the Flow of Life*, page 11.

What is your present belief “about this thing called life?” Explain why you resonate more with the first or the second point.

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“Emerson could not understand why we make life such a problem by frustrating the flow of good. He said, ‘Our life might be much easier and simpler than we make it; the world might be a happier place than it is; there is no need of struggles, convulsions, and despairs, of the wringing of hands and gnashing of teeth. We miscreate our own evils. We interfere with nature.’” *In the Flow of Life*, pages 114-15

Why do you agree or disagree with Emerson’s statement?

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Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, “The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is within you.” *Luke 17:20-21 NRSV*

What does this Scripture verse mean to you?

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An historical note about the connection between Unity and psychology:

Charles Fillmore, co-founder of the Unity movement, along with his wife Myrtle Fillmore, was an ardent student of the newly emerging field of study called psychology. At its inception Unity, along with other New Thought teachings, focused on the power of the mind and its influence in bodily and worldly affairs. Early in Unity's history and in the history of psychology, the terms conscious mind, subconscious mind and superconscious mind began to be used with regularity in roughly the same way. The conscious mind referred to those things that we are conscious that we know, feel, remember, think, etc. The subconscious mind referred to the storehouse of all memories, feelings, experience. For the most part, an individual is not consciously aware of what is in the subconscious. The contents of the subconscious are revealed in dreams, instincts, psychological tests, hypnosis, neuroses and "slips of the tongue," to name a few. The superconscious mind, in Unity, is often referred to as Christ Consciousness—that highest and best expression of our true selves. Psychologically speaking, it is the spiritual or transcendent part of human consciousness.

"Life is mind over matter...if you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

~attributed to many individuals

"The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind."

~Khalil Gibran

This brief note is just that, a brief explanatory note. It is offered here as ancillary information to support Butterworth's discourse on consciousness in Chapter 1 of *In the Flow of Life*. Please note that different authors and teachers may have variations in their operating definitions of these three important terms. If you have questions about the usage of a term, be sure to ask for an explanation or check to see if the written material provides a glossary.

"...if we think health or abundance, we do not create these things. There is no way that

man can create these things. There is no way that man can create health. It is a flow or "flowering" of divine life. When the mind is stayed on the God-thought of wholeness, we are synchronized with the flow of life. When we think abundance, we are synchronized with the flow of abundance. We do not create it nor do we start or stop the flow. We simply accept it, giving our 'consent' to its natural flow. This is what the presence of God really is—the life of God present in us an inexorable flow."

*In the Flow of Life*, page 24

How does one give “consent” to the flow? Cite examples where you have given consent to this flow.

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“An affirmation of Truth is not intended to make something true. It is an effective means of synchronizing our consciousness with the flow of life.” *In the Flow of Life*, page 25



Essential Awakening 2024  
Week 2 - September 22



*In the Flow of Life, by Eric Butterworth*  
*Reading for this week: Chapter 2 - "The Healing Stream"*

Insights from last week's discussion. Describe your insights or "a-ha's" based on last week's meeting.

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On page 31 of *In the Flow of Life*, Butterworth presents the story of "casting the nets on the right side of the boat" (found in John 21) as a living parable.

Share how it might be considered a parable of hope.

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“The scientists have found that the healthiest people are those who have habitual attitudes that make them impervious to social situations and surroundings.” *In the Flow of Life*, page 33.

How do you interpret this scientific finding from personal experience?

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“All God’s blessings are for every child of the Father, and each individual should learn to receive direct from his indwelling source. Every individual has to live his own life and draw for himself upon the life, substance, health, and strength that are waiting to be brought forth. No one can eat another’s food for him, or breathe for him; neither can one person express the indwelling life and health for another. Each one of us must draw upon the source of these things for himself. Blessed are we when we recognize that this is the way of receiving, and do it.”<sup>2</sup>

Myrtle Fillmore, co-founder of the Unity movement with her husband Charles Fillmore, was no stranger to illness and disease. Both her mother and grandmother died around the age of 40 from tuberculosis. In 1886, Myrtle was struggling with the illness herself, but while attending New Thought classes taught by E.B. Weeks of the Illinois Metaphysical College, she heard the affirmation, “I am a child of God and therefore I do not inherit sickness.” It made all the difference. She set about praying, affirming and speaking loving and positive words to the life centers in her body and in two years she was healed. She went on to live vibrantly another 45 years.

Have you witnessed, or do you know of, a healing or healings in which conventional medical techniques were *not* involved? If so, how do you explain them?

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<sup>2</sup> Myrtle Fillmore, *Myrtle Fillmore’s Healing Letters*, Unity Books; Unity Classic Library edition, 2006, pp.25-26.