



## THE UNITY MESSENGER

Unity of Santa Rosa  
4857 Old Redwood Highway  
Santa Rosa, California 95403



### Walk More Lightly

An Interview with Harker Brautighan

By Cindy Jacobs

**Cindy Jacobs:** First, Harker, I want to thank you on behalf of Unity of Santa Rosa. Thank you for all you do as our office manager to help keep everything running so smoothly. We're blessed to have you, not only for your many talents, but for your consciousness. Thanks also for agreeing to this interview. To begin, would you tell us something about what life was like for you as a child? What stands out for you?

**Harker Brautighan:** The woods stand out for me. There was a creek behind our house with trees on either side. I spent a lot of time playing with friends in the woods. I still enjoy walking the trails in the woods. I lived with my mom and dad and two brothers. I've always been close to my brothers. As you know, I lost my mom two years ago. We were very close. Apparently, I didn't like her much as a teenager, she tells me, but I think that's a teenage thing. Now I'm trying to help my brother take care of my dad, but he's moved. I went up to help as the coronavirus was beginning here, and I want to go again.

**CJ:** How about your current family?

**HB:** I'm very blessed to be part of a family. I married my husband, Tim, almost nine years ago. He came with three children. The youngest, Ethan, was three at the time, and the oldest, Michael, was twenty-five. Michael is an artist. He lives in LA with his wife. Josh, our middle son, has moved back in with us. He's taking courses locally. I'm so comforted that he's here now, and not off by himself during the shelter-in-place. And Ethan is now twelve years old, though he's still a little boy to me.

**CJ:** We are lucky to have you, with all of your skills. What was your previous work experience?

**HB:** I coordinated content for the website of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. And before that I was the webmaster for the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. I worked with programmers and graphic designers. Mainly I managed the process of getting everything on the web.

**CJ:** You said in your article in the March newsletter that attending an Episcopal Church was part of the path that brought you to Unity. What else brought you here?

**HB:** It was basically people showing me their church. My dad took me to Grace Cathedral when I was thirty. When I moved to Sonoma County for the first time, my friend, Karen, brought me to the Center for Spiritual Living. I loved the philosophy and the New Thought part of it. When I moved to Seattle my friend, Tanya, said: "I know the perfect church for you." It was Unity, and it was a perfect fit. I brought my dad there. After-

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wards, he said: "Honey, this isn't the right church for me, but I can tell it's the right one for you." And then when I came back to Santa Rosa, I looked up Unity. I walked in and met James Hicks, and it sealed the deal.

**CJ:** Yes, James could do that. You are obviously a writer. When did you first begin to write?

**HB:** When I was ten, I started writing poetry and stories. I had a teacher who was kind enough to tell me that I was going to be a writer. In high school I had an English teacher who also encouraged me. I've published about twenty pieces in anthologies and in one ezine.

**CJ:** Who are some of your favorite writers?

**HB:** Richard Brautigan, of course. I named myself after him. I put an "H" in my name to be a little different. I also like John Steinbeck. My favorite author is Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. He wrote *The Gulag Archipelago*. I didn't manage to read all of it. It was too heartbreaking. *Cancer Ward* was my favorite book by him.

**CJ:** Who have been the greatest influences in your life?

**HB:** The high school teacher that I mentioned earlier. Her name was Barbara Silber. And my brothers, both of my brothers.

**CJ:** Is there a Unity principle that has particular meaning for you?

**HB:** It's the one I struggle with: living from a sacred place, walking the walk and talking the talk.

**CJ:** I think we all struggle with that one at times. What is your daily spiritual practice?

**HB:** I do affirmations daily, and I work on mindfulness. I try to make cooking and meals mindful experiences. I do believe that thoughts held in mind produce after their kind. It's hard to turn off my monkey mind. I need to find more time to meditate again. The more I pray and meditate, the more I see demonstrations in my life.

**CJ:** Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, Unity's co-founders, talked about discerning truth for ourselves, and demonstrating it by doing the work needed in the world. Do you have any thoughts on what is most needed now in these uncertain times?

**HB:** That's a big question. Not sure how qualified I am. I feel what's needed now is a big change. It's an opportunity for us to change how we treat the planet. The short answer is love is what is needed most. Maybe the pandemic is teaching us we have to walk more lightly on the Earth. And walk more lightly with each other, not just with people, but with animals and plants too. We need to expand our concept of love to include the entire planet.

**CJ:** Yes. Thank you, Harker, for taking the time to talk with me.