

Welcome, Peaceful Praise!

A New Minister Takes the Pulpit at Unity of Sussex County

The Unity of Sussex County Board of Trustees is pleased to welcome Reverend Shea Maultsby, also known as Peaceful Praise, as a twice-monthly speaker for the 2021 calendar year, while other guest speakers will rotate.

With social distancing measures in place, the church holds in-person services every Sunday 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. and broadcasts live on Facebook.

Upon the May 2020 retirement of Reverend Janice Billera after 15 years as Unity's full-time minister, the congregation welcomed Reverend Michelle Wadleigh as their temporary spiritual leader before planning to have guest speakers grace the pulpit each Sunday until a more permanent decision is made regarding flock leadership.

In September 2020, Maultsby spoke at Unity of Sussex for the first time and was well received by the congregation. In November and December, she was invited back to teach a class called "Genesis, the Creative Pathway," which looked at the creation process and how to manifest desires. It was a success among attendees. For those who missed it, she is planning to repeat that class along with additional ones.

Maultsby also has in mind to offer a virtual coffee hour in order to become acquainted with community members who feel more comfortable remaining quarantined. "I'm excited to be part of the Unity of Sussex County community. It doesn't feel like this is just a Sunday place to be," she said.

Maultsby, a sports fan and avid reader, is a Jersey Girl, born and raised as the youngest of five. Single, Maultsby calls herself "the quintessential aunt." She comes from a Baptist background but began exploring other paths while she was in college. By the late 1990s, she started incorporating a meditation practice into her prayer life. "That was the beginning of my spiritual awakening," she said.

Maultsby is a Cornell University alumna who majored in mathematics and went on to a full-time career in actuarial science, working for Fortune 500 companies. She left corporate America in 2000, searching for a more balanced and harmonious life.

Maultsby immersed herself in broad reading about a variety of spiritual traditions while holding to her religious roots. In 2005, she became the youngest participant in a prayer group hosted by New Hope Baptist Church in Newark. For nearly five years, she would pray with and for other members of the group. "But I felt there was more to the principle of God. I felt like I had a relationship with God that wasn't quite what was being discussed in the traditional church," Maultsby admitted. So, she continued reading and learning.

In 2007, after nearly a decade of self-study, Maultsby discovered a Unity church in New York City. "I was just blown away," she said. In all her investigation, she hadn't before come

across the Unity teachings founded by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in 1889. She liked the message and found a church in Montclair, New Jersey, closer to her home.

Maultsby began with Montclair's meditation gatherings and acquainted herself with the minister there. Next, she ventured to a Sunday service, and "I felt like I was home," she said. She started taking class after class, absorbing all she could about Unity's five principles.

By 2008, Maultsby became an official Unity of Montclair member and in 2010 went through Unity's prayer chaplaincy training. Today, she's an officiant and celebrant who performs weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies. She is an end-of-life doula as well, assisting folks through the transition process. She is currently preparing for publication a book of original prayers.

All Truth seekers are welcome to Unity of Sussex County to hear Maultsby and others. Since 1998, the church has been located on 10 acres of land in Lafayette at 25 Mudcut Road, which runs parallel to Meadows Road between Routes 15 and 94.

With COVID protocols observed, the sanctuary doors are open every Sunday 11-12 for formal service with speakers and every Wednesday 10-2 for private prayer and meditation. The outdoor labyrinth is accessible 7 days during daylight hours, weather permitting.

Learn more about Unity of Sussex County by visiting their website www.UnityOfSussex.org and about Reverend Shea Maultsby at www.PeacefulPraise.com.

[News provided by Mary@MaryWanser.com]

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