

# Wings



**FIRST UNITY CHURCH** – *Serving the spiritual needs of the St. Louis community for over ninety years.*

The Newsletter of  
First Unity Church  
Of Saint Louis

May 2017

- ❖ *Inspiration*
- ❖ *Information*
- ❖ *Illumination*

## Inside this issue:

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## God's Voice

*By Betty Godby*

It was a perfect day, bathed in sunshine. I was at a retreat at a small Franciscan monastery nestled in a secluded area away from city noise. Reservations for these retreats were hard to get since accommodations were limited. I felt lucky to be here.

The rest of the women in my group were all attending meetings, but I was at odds with myself and the world, and I shunned classes to walk out of doors. I felt so lowly that I ignored the beautifully landscaped garden with its stone benches inviting me to sit and meditate. Instead, I opted for a dusty field away from the building. This suited my barren mood much better.

As I marched defiantly down a narrow path, my sandaled feet scuffed little stones out of the way, raising clouds of dust. A bunch of small birds in front of me would move ahead a short distance, scolding me because I was disturbing their pecking for insects. I chided myself for being at this retreat under false pretense. I had come here not for the classes, but because I selfishly wanted a three-day vacation from an unhappy marriage.

Suddenly the birds stopped chirping. In the complete silence, I heard a voice: "Stop running so I can talk to you."

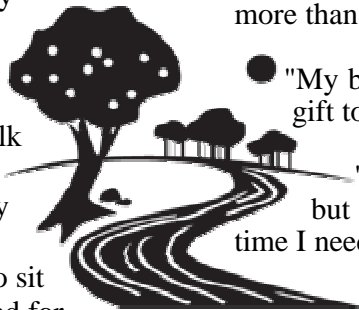
I looked around. No one was there. Was this God's voice or was it merely a knowing in my head? I humbly apologized for being at this retreat: "I feel as though I am taking someone's place who deserves it more than I do."

"My beloved child, this weekend is my gift to you. Accept it and enjoy it."

"Thank You. It's fine this time, but I can't come to this place every time I need You."

"Dear one, your mind is the only retreat you need. Just ask, and I will come to you."

Suddenly I felt free, both in mind and in body. I became aware of the birds chattering and pecking again. This whole "conversation" took no more than a millisecond, but it changed my life forever. I now know that God's good and abundance belong to me and to everyone. It is God's pleasure to give us many God moments.





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Julia Ward Howe

### First Unity Membership

For Unity membership, there are no requirements other than a desire to know God, to unfold spiritually, and to understand, love, and align with Spirit's Laws of Being. If you are feeling led to become a member of First Unity, just complete the "I Desire to Become a Member" form by the guest book in the lobby.

### Flocknotes Updates

First Unity has implemented our new Flocknote program to keep you posted on upcoming events via text or email. If you would like to receive regular updates, please call the church office or send an email to [firstunity@firstunitychurchstlouis.org](mailto:firstunity@firstunitychurchstlouis.org).



### Third Thursday Quilters

For information contact Jane Vondruska (636 226-4562) or Sandy Etheridge (314 309-8136).

### The Ladies' Night Out

Group will meet Monday, May 15, at 5:30 p.m. at Olive Garden, 5269 S. Lindbergh, 63128. For more information call Mary Tumminello Home: 314-843-1807 Cell: 314-814-4530.



**June 13: Have A Little Faith: A True Story by Mitch Albom**

**eScrip News** – Remember to use your eScrip card at Schnuck's. Go to [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com), or look for the link on the First Unity website to earn money for First Unity as you shop. Thank you!

### Youth Education



Calling all kids to join our incredible Sunday School Classes. Also we welcome extra adult hands. If you could help just one Sunday a month, it would make a huge difference.

Stop by Our **Lending Library** and check out an inspirational title from among a wide selection of books written by some of Unity's greatest authors.



**Ukulele Lessons** are available on Thursday evenings for adults. Lessons are also available for kids. Call Joan Mueller at 314 849-7205 for details.

### Women's Luncheon and Vendors' Show

Women of Unity, join us & bring friends on May 6 for a delicious lunch and shopping opportunity.

Tickets are \$15

11:00 a.m. Doors Open

11:30 a.m. Lunch

Shopping before, during, and after lunch  
Entertainment will be provided by Dean Christopher Wiegert.

### Save the Date

June 7: Jazz Concert and Spaghetti Dinner

Sept. 16: Trip to Grant's Farm

Oct. 22: Fall Luncheon after Sunday Service

Oct. 27: Trunk or Treat 4:00 - 6:30 p.m.

### Feed My People is

associated with a national group called Ample Harvest which encourages people to donate any excess produce their garden grows to a local food pantry. They are always thrilled to have fresh fruit and vegetables to give out to their clients and

[www.feed-my-people.org](http://www.feed-my-people.org)



### May Affirmations

**Inner Peace:** I am infused with the peace and strength of God.

**Guidance:** God is my constant guide on my fulfilling journey through life.

**Healing:** I am a radiating center of divine life and energy.

**Prosperity:** The abundance of the universe flows to me. I accept it with joy and gratitude.

**World Peace:** I hold a vision of peace and harmony for the world.



There are several words which describe the personality of Julia Ward Howe, yet they all fail in their individual capacity or even in their collective might to define the remarkable woman as she was. The world knows Ms Howe as a writer, poet, playwright, essayist, travel writer, reformist, feminist, club woman. She was all rolled in one and much more.

She was a doting mother, an affectionate wife and powerful orator too. But Julia Ward Howe will always be revered for her contributions in bestowing dignity to women and motherhood. She was the first woman who fought for the official celebration of Mother's Day in the US. In her various social capacities Julia tirelessly worked for justice throughout her life. She fought aggressively for the woman's right to vote and struggled to liberate women from the traditional confines of home. Apart from all this, she is renowned as the author of the famous song, 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic'.

### A sign of honor

Even he who died for us upon the cross, in the last hour, in the unutterable agony of death, was mindful of his mother, as if to teach us that this holy love should be our last worldly thought — the last point of earth from which the soul should take its flight to heaven.

—Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow

### Restoring the balance

In *Springs in the Valley* (Zondervan), pioneer missionary Lettie Cowman tells of a traveler making a trek through an African jungle. Native tribesmen who helped carry loads walked rapidly on day one, covering a great distance. Yet the next morning they refused to move. When the frustrated traveler asked the tribesmen why they were just sitting, they said they'd gone too fast on the first day and "were now waiting for their souls to catch up to

their bodies."

Cowman writes, "This whirling rushing life which so many of us live does for us what that march did for those tribesmen. The difference: They knew they needed to restore life's balance; too often we do not."

God promises rest for our soul *and* body, so don't overlook the importance of physical restoration. Only by taking time to recharge can you be an effective laborer in God's kingdom.

### Willing recipients

A young graduate longed for a certain sports car and knew his dad could afford it. So on the big day, he was infuriated to receive instead a leather-bound, embossed Bible. He threw it down and left for good.

Years later, after his father died, the son entered his father's study with sorrow and regret. Sorting through belongings, he found the gift and this highlighted verse: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:11, ESV). Suddenly something dropped from the back of the Bible: a key with a tag from the dealer of the car he'd wanted long ago. On the tag was his graduation date and the words "Paid in Full."

How often we miss out on God's generous gifts because they come "packaged" differently than we expect! At graduation — and throughout life — may we be open to every gift God bestows on us with a Father's deep love.

### A poem for Memorial Day

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave.  
Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;  
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.  
I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned.

—Edna St. Vincent Millay

## "Quotable Quotes"

Do not be afraid of tomorrow, for God is already there.

—Unknown

Faith is like Wi-Fi: It's invisible, but it has the power to connect you to what you need.

—Unknown

Your children will become what you are, so be what you want them to be.

—David Bly

If evolution really works, how come mothers only have two hands?

—Milton Berle

The heart of a mother is a deep abyss at the bottom of which you will always find forgiveness.

—Honoré de Balzac

In every conceivable manner, the family is the link to our past and the bridge to our future.

—Alex Haley

Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear, but around in awareness.

—James Thurber

Intense love does not measure, it just gives.

—Mother Teresa

The soul must long for God in order to be set aflame by God's love.

—Meister Eckhart

What is important is that one is capable of love. It is perhaps the only glimpse we are permitted of eternity.

—Helen Hayes



*Much*

*of our human suffering involves our attitude toward the past and the future. The answer may be so close, so near, that it could reach right out and bite us. Here's how to change your life through*

## **The Power of Now**

*By J. Douglas Bottorff*

Truth is simple, and will not be antique; is ever present and insists on being of this age and of this moment.  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

### ***Our Search for Magical Solutions***

Do you ever find yourself wishing you had special power to change things? Maybe something like a magic lamp or a wand that you could tap or wave and transform an unwanted condition into something desirable. It's an appealing thought, isn't it?

Actually, such a desire is not that unreasonable. Modern technology has opened many doors that are really nothing short of magic. Instead of beating drums or sending smoke signals, we can simply pick up a small electronic device, punch a few buttons, and talk to people anywhere in the world. If we want to travel to another country, we no longer plan on taking years or months, or even weeks or days to get there. We can board a jet and be most anywhere in the world in a matter of hours.

We live in fascinating times, times in which technology is allowing us to put many of our fantasies into concrete form. And yet, even in times like these, we find people are still suffering, still living under dominion of personal hardships and unfulfilled dreams. Alarming numbers of people are turning to drugs and other harmful things, hoping to tap a dimension that will put their fantasies within ready reach of their anxious fingers.

The desire is good but the means doesn't work. In fact, even the wonderful advances we've made in

technology address only a small part of what we are looking for in life. And what is it that we are looking for? What is this quest that keeps us forever searching here and there to find satisfaction?

### ***What Are We Looking For?***

I heard the saying once, "That which we are looking for is that which is doing the looking." Strange as it may sound, we are looking for ourselves. And yet, there's really nothing strange about it. The great thinkers of all ages have realized that self-knowledge is the basis upon which a healthy, successful life is constructed. The Greeks simply said, "Know thyself." Shakespeare wrote, "To thine own self be true." Kahlil Gibran said, in his poetically beautiful utterance on Self-Knowledge, "The hidden well-spring of your soul must needs rise and run murmuring to the sea; / And the treasure of your infinite depths would be revealed to your eyes." Most importantly, Jesus asked this question, "For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" (Lk 9:25) Unfortunately, most of us have had to learn the hard way just how little profit there is in it.

Where is this self we are looking for to be found? We have looked for it in relationships. We have looked for it in careers. We have looked for it in religious and philosophical teachings. And now, we look for it in technology. But these are mere echoes of who we are, shadows we often confuse for the real substance of the soul. "That which we are looking for is that which is doing the looking." And that which is doing the looking, is doing the looking here, in this now moment.

### ***Everything Is Happening Now***

Think about this for a moment. Everything that is happening in the world, everything that is happening in the universe, and everything that is

happening in the entire cosmos is happening at this very moment. All the words that evoke inspiration are being heard or read now. All the actions that determine the course of history are taking place in this moment. In this moment, humanity breathes its one crucial breath in unison. The heart of every man, woman, and child beats together in this singular instant. Everything that happens, happens in this now moment. Happenings do not occur in future moments. They do not occur in the past. They occur only in the present.

To grasp this idea, imagine dragging a long piece of thread over the sharp edge of a knife. The thread may be long, it may be very long, but there is only one small place where it actually touches the blade. One tiny, razor-sharp edge is where the thread makes its perpetually new contact with the knife.

Your life is this way. Though you anticipate a future and entertain memories of the past, you are only alive in this moment. And what you do, in and with this moment, determines what life is to you. Your life, as you are experiencing it now, is a choice that you are making now. In God, there is no anticipation of the future. In God, there is no memory of the past. The fullness of God is active now. Each new moment is a clean slate, an opportunity for new growth and limitless possibilities.

Remember when Jesus was transfigured before His disciples? At one point, Moses and Elijah appeared on either side of Him. Moses represents the past, the old law. Elijah, the prophet, represents a vision of the future. But the voice from the cloud did not say, "Listen to Moses" or "Listen to Elijah." It said, "This [Jesus] is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Mt. 17:5). Jesus was with them, not as a remnant of better days gone by or as a promise of better days ahead. He represents the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, the past and the future. He

represents the fullness of the now moment.

### ***This Moment Is Eternity***

Here lies the secret of eternal life. This moment is eternity. You can never step out of it. Learning to live in the now is learning to live in eternity. Knowing that you live in eternity allows you to discard the unnecessary weights of the future and the past.

You and I are eternal expressions of God. Our true being is radiating out of God at this very moment. Our true self was not created in the distant past. Nor will it finally be perfected in some future time. It is flowing forth out of God in its perfected fullness with each new moment. Were this process to cease, we would cease to exist. But it will not cease.

When we understand this, we understand that God retains absolutely no memory whatsoever of any of our past mistakes. We are the ones that retain it, and we are the ones that punish ourselves and others for the mistakes of the past. We are the ones who perceive a dismal future as the rightful punishment of our past mistakes. We cannot blame punishment on God. God had nothing to do with punishment.

We spend so many of our present moments trying to live in a nonexistent future or past that we lose ourselves. And this loss is the source of all our frustration, all our suffering, all our sense of powerlessness. We live a life that is out of control, a life that grasps for a few crumbs that fall from the table of a great feast that was prepared for us in the first place.

### ***Releasing Anxiety***

One of the most beautiful passages from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is found in the sixth chapter of Matthew. "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink,

nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Mt. 6:25-26)

Here Jesus speaks of an attitude, a way in which to approach life that frees us from the hardships of worrying about things we can do nothing about. In the seventh chapter of Matthew, He refers to this way as a *narrow gate*. "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (Mt. 7:13-14).

The gate that leads to life is narrow indeed. As narrow as the edge of the knife; as narrow as this now moment. Living in the present is not easy in a world that beckons us to grasp for a promising future while clinging to an empty past. It is not easy to lay down anxieties, the regrets that have been habitually accumulated through a lifetime of living away from our true home in the present.

And yet Jesus would not have taught in such beautiful and simple terms an unattainable abstract dream that was too far beyond our reach to grasp. He was speaking to the simple, common, everyday people who had children to raise, mortgages to pay, illnesses to heal, relationships to iron out. God has lovingly and wisely placed the magic lamp, the wand that has the power to make things right, right in the midst of us. So close, in fact, that we have spent much of our life looking for it in all the wrong places.

### ***Seeing the Past and the Future in a New Way***

So now we turn to the practical questions: How do we find the power of the moment? How do we use this knowledge that we can only truly live in the

now? And what about the past and the future? Do we pretend they do not exist? Do we release all memories and throw out all our plans for the future?

Let me begin by saying that we do not discard the future and the past; we simply begin to see them in a new way. It's not planning for the future that gets us in trouble. It is trying to live in the future, running ahead of ourselves trying to peek around each unknown bend in the road. And thinking about the past is not what causes us problems. It is trying to relive the past, wishing things would have been done in a different way than they were. This is what prevents us from living successfully in the present.

So we do not forget the past and the future; we look at them in a different way. We allow ourselves to think about them, but we avoid trying to live in them. This is the first practical step to take in using the power of the moment.

### ***Responsibility Is Only in This Moment***

The second thing to realize is this: You only have to be successful now, in this moment. You only have to be happy, peaceful, content, and loving right now. You only have to be appreciative of the beauty that surrounds you right now. Most of us make the mistake of thinking we have to attain happiness, peace of mind, and contentment for the rest of our lives, and boy are we ever disappointed!

Now is your life, and now is the only time you have to think about doing it right. That takes the pressure off, doesn't it? Jesus said, "My Father is working still, and I am working" (In.5:17). He understood this business of really living in the now and this is why He was successful in expressing His divinity. He worked in the now. He lived in the now. He



obviously thought about the future and the past, but He didn't try to live there. He cooperated with the will and the way of the living God. As He said, "He is not God of the dead, but of the living" (Mt. 22:32).

### ***Speak the Word of Truth***

A third thing you can do to tap into the power of the present is to remind yourself of your connection with God through the use of the spoken word. Affirm something like this:

*In this moment, I bubble forth out of God as a new creation. I am whole and ready to come alive with new life and new power! Thank You, God, for always being with me!"*

The only aspect of your life you can do anything about is that which you can deal with in this moment. Will you choose to miss this opportunity for a new life by wasting your power, your real power, trying to live somewhere other than here and now? Or will you seize each new moment and find in it the real peaceful habitation of your true self? The choice is yours. And the choice you make will go a long way in determining the overall quality of your experience. I encourage you to make the choice to keep yourself in the present, the only real place you can find yourself and God.

Remember the three suggestions that will help you do this. Think about your past and future if you wish, but live in the now. Second, know that you only have to be successful, happy, peaceful, and content in this moment, not for the rest of your entire life. And third, utilize the power of affirmations to make your relationship with God clear.

There is no need to wish for a magic lamp or a wand. You have the power and the ability you need to make your life an exciting and prosperous endeavor.

Awaken yourself to the power of this now moment and your life will take on a whole new and wonderful meaning.



### **Belief and Trying**

*By Reinhardt Brucker*

Filmmaker George Lucas was tediously editing American Graffiti with some of his crew one night. As it neared quitting time, he put away Reel 2-Dialogue 2 of the movie into the familiar can until he came back the next day. He labeled the outside of the can R2-D2. Hmm, he thought, that would make a great name for a robot if I ever do a sci-fi flick. So he jotted it down in his idea notebook. This was years before his Star Wars epic was even a thought.

A short while later, he was behind the wheel of his screaming sports car he liked to drive. Showing off its burst of speed, he proceeded to drive it in excess of 100 mph down a neighborhood street. He lost control, wrapped it around a tree, and ended up in a body cast from head to toe. He was not expected to live. Several times, he caught himself giving up the will to live. Yet something inside him said, "No!" His inner spirit, his higher self, or what he ultimately described as "The Force," brought him back.

It's my belief that this unlimited "Force" is at the core of everyone of us. Each of us is totally capable, totally loving, totally healthy and prosperous. But for many of us, belief in ourselves or the true picture we see of ourselves differs greatly from what we would like to be. So we *try* something new. Long before *Star Wars*, I found that I couldn't really *try* anything.

Someone would say, "I tried calling you." Well either they picked up the phone and got a busy signal or no answer or they didn't call at all. In the first two cases, the call was made, but the cycle was incomplete due to my unavailability. *Try* to pick up a pencil off the table. Go ahead ... *try!* You can't. You can either pick it up or you can let it lie. There is no in-between or *trying*.

We either make an effort toward something, or we procrastinate out of fear of the unknown. "Oh, I'll try this thing but if it doesn't work out, I can say

I knew it wouldn't work out anyway." We become walking information booths on statistics-heart disease, arthritis, and the like. We may even read in the paper about how bad off the world and the local economy is. We want justification on how bad things are so in case we're ever "poor"-be it financially, emotionally, or physically-we can pullout any news article at random and show why it happened to us. In other words, we spend our entire lives preparing to fail! Wow!

This brings me to a great dialogue between Luke Skywalker (the hero) and Yoda (the Jedi master) in *The Empire Strikes Back*. Yoda is going to teach Luke, through rigorous training, how to become a soldier of The Force. Upon completion, he was to become a full-fledged Jedi Knight. Since Yoda was the teacher of all Jedis for hundreds of years, it's not a surprise that Luke sought Yoda throughout the entire galaxy. Luke finally found him on this slimy jungle planet. Upon landing, Luke crashes his space fighter into a yucky swamp. During one of the training sessions, Yoda tells Luke to use The Force to levitate his spaceship out of the swamp and onto dry land. Luke replies that it's too big. Yoda implies that he knows it's possible and so the conversation goes:

Luke: "Okay, I'll give it a try."

Yoda: "Try not. *Do, do*. Or do not. There is no try."

As Luke begins to levitate the ship halfway out of the muck, Yoda's eyes grow wild with excitement that Luke may just pull it off! But alas, Luke drops it back in and, after much huffing and puffing, says, "I can't. It's too big."

After some angry words from Yoda, the teacher then raises his arm, closes his eyes, and harnessing the all powerful Force, gently raises the spacecraft and sets it gingerly on dry land. Luke, in amazement, then runs up to him and says:

"I don't believe it!"

"That ... is why you fail," Yoda replies.

# May 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i> <i>A.A. Men's Group,</i> <i>10AM</i>  <i>CA 7PM</i>	<i>4</i> <i>Ukulele</i> <i>Practice, 7PM</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i> <i>Choir Practice,</i> <i>9AM</i>  <i>Women's</i> <i>Luncheon &amp;</i> <i>Vendor Show,</i> <i>11AM</i>
<i>7</i> <i>Sunday Services,</i> <i>10:30AM</i> <i>Youth Ed,</i> <i>10:30AM</i>	<i>8</i> <i>Prayer Chaplain</i> <i>Meeting</i>	<i>9</i> <i>Book Club, <b>Love</b></i> <i><b>Anthony</b>, by Lisa</i> <i>Genova at Bread</i> <i>Co. at 2PM</i>	<i>10</i> <i>A.A. Men's Group,</i> <i>10AM</i>  <i>CA 7PM</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i> <i>Choir Practice,</i> <i>9AM</i>
<i>14</i> <i>Mother's Day</i>  <i>Sunday Services,</i> <i>10:30AM</i> <i>Youth Ed,</i> <i>10:30AM</i>	<i>15</i> <i>Ladies' Night Out,</i> <i>Olive Garden,</i> <i>5269 S. Lindbergh,</i> <i>63128 at 5:30PM</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i> <i>A.A. Men's Group,</i> <i>10AM</i>  <i>CA 7PM</i>  <i>Planning Mtg,</i> <i>6PM</i> <i>Board Mtg, 7PM</i>	<i>18</i> <i>Third Thursday</i> <i>Quilters, 10AM</i>  <i>Ukulele</i> <i>Practice, 7PM</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i> <i>Choir Practice,</i> <i>9AM</i>
<i>21</i> <i>Sunday Services,</i> <i>10:30AM</i> <i>Youth Ed,</i> <i>10:30AM</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i> <i>A.A. Men's Group,</i> <i>10AM</i>  <i>CA 7PM</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i> <i>Choir Practice,</i> <i>9AM</i>
<i>28</i> <i>Sunday Services,</i> <i>10:30AM</i> <i>Youth Ed,</i> <i>10:30AM</i>	<i>29</i> <i>Memorial Day</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i> <i>A.A. Men's Group,</i> <i>10AM</i>  <i>CA 7PM</i>			

## ***Wings***

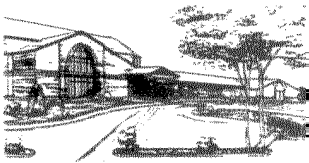
THE MAY, 2017 NEWSLETTER OF  
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# The light side -- A little holy humor

## **More sayings from Will Rogers about growing older:**

First ~ Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Second ~ The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

Third ~ Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me. I want people to know 'why' I look this way. I've traveled a long way, and some of the roads weren't paved.

Fourth ~ When you are dissatisfied and would like to go

back to your youth, think of algebra ...

Fifth ~ You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.

Sixth ~ I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

Seventh ~ One of the many things no one tells you about ageing is that it's such a nice change from being young.

Eighth ~ One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.

Ninth ~ Being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable and relaxed.

Tenth ~ Long ago, when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.

And, finally ~ If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you're old.