

The Unity spiritual movement began in the late 1800s based on prayer and the power of mind over body.

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, a Kansas City, Missouri, couple with three young boys, had suffered lifelong physical ailments and constantly sought healing. They heard a lecture by a metaphysician named E.B. Weeks, and Myrtle came away with a startling new idea: “I am a child of God, and therefore I do not inherit sickness.” In two years of prayer and meditation, she healed her body of tuberculosis. Charles also began to investigate spiritual principles and healed a leg that had been damaged in a childhood ice skating accident.

The Fillmores were devotees of Ralph Waldo Emerson and studied with the leading teachers of the day, including Mary Baker Eddy and Emma Curtis Hopkins. To share the exciting spiritual teachings they had learned, the Fillmores didn’t start a church but began to publish a magazine. The first issue of Modern Thought came out in 1889 and is now called Unity Magazine.  The next year, in 1890, Charles and Myrtle formed a prayer group that became known as Silent Unity, a 24/7 prayer ministry that responds to 2 million people a year through letters, telephone, and email.

Book publishing began with Lessons in Truth, still a Unity classic, and Unity Books is still active. A second magazine was initiated in 1924, Daily Word, which now circulates around the globe. Fillmore was a prolific writer of spiritual texts. Among his many books are: *The Twelve Powers of Man, Christian Healing, Atom-Smashing Power of Mind, Mysteries of Genesis, Prosperity, The Revealing Word, and the Metaphysical Bible Dictionary.* As a minister of the Unity Society of Practical Christianity and director of the Silent Unity Department, Myrtle Fillmore wrote many thoughtful, joy-filled letters to people throughout the world requesting prayer. Her letters became the source for the books Myrtle Fillmore’s Healing Letters and How to Let God Help You.

Classes taught by the Fillmores grew into a seminary, Unity Worldwide Spiritual Institute, with about 600 churches and study groups worldwide. The farm they initially established to grow produce for their vegetarian restaurant in downtown Kansas City is now Unity Village, Missouri, a 1,200-acre incorporated town and the world headquarters for the enduring Unity movement.

You can read more about the life of the Fillmores and the founding and growth of Unity Society of Practical Christianity in books such as *The Story of Unity,* by James Dillet Freeman, and *Torch-Bearer to Light the Way,* by Neal Vahle.