

# Vaile Leonard chosen as 2020 New Thought Walden Awards Honoree

**LTC Center Founder Honored for Social and Environmental Activism**

**By Ursula V. Battle**

The Rev. Vaile Leonard's life is the one that read's like a story book. For years, she battled a heroin addiction. After decades of addiction, she overcame her habit to found what many consider one of the most successful recovery centers in the country –Light of Truth Center, Inc. (LTC). The residential therapeutic treatment program has been credited with helping dozens of women overcome drug addiction. Her story now includes another remarkable chapter. She is a 2020 New Thought Walden Awards Honoree.

The prestigious award honors those who use empowering spiritual ideas and philosophies to change lives and make the planet a better place. Nominations were received from the public, and each was considered carefully by a selection committee comprised of representatives from partner organizations.

Rev. Leonard was among 20 honorees chosen in six categories: New Thought Wisdom, Interfaith and Intercultural Understanding, Social and Environmental Activism, Creative Arts and Entertainment, Next Generation (under 40), and Mind/Body Connection and Healing. Rev. Leonard was selected for the Social and Environmental Activism category.

“My mind could not grasp how it happened,” said Rev. Leonard. “I thought someone was pulling my leg. It's just been an incredible experience. It's an honor, and I am really humbled by it.”

Each honoree is being profiled in the September/October 2020 issue of Unity Magazine and listed in the September 2020 issue of Science of Mind magazine. Honorees are also being featured in a podcast series on Unity Online Radio (unityonlineradio.org).

“The honorees include both well-known individuals and relatively unsung heroes alike, each of whom has made a valuable contribution to furthering the ideas at the core of New Thought,” says Unity Magazine® editor Katy Koontz, a member of the selection committee.



**The Rev. Vaile Leonard, Founder of Light of Truth Center, Inc. is a 2020 New Thought Walden Awards Honoree. Photo by Ursula V. Battle**

“Our goal with the Waldens is not only to honor these fine people and spotlight their notable accomplishments but also to inspire others to follow in their footsteps.”

The New Thought Walden Awards partner organizations include Unity, Centers for Spiritual Living, Association for Global New Thought, Agape International Spiritual Center, Divine Science Federation International, Universal Foundation for Better Living, and Affiliated New Thought Network.

Unity World Headquarters at Unity Village, Missouri, publishes *Unity*

offers support 24/7 (receiving nearly 1.4 million prayer requests annually). Unity was founded in 1889 and helps people of all faiths apply positive spiritual principles in their daily lives. Unity Worldwide Ministries supports Unity ministries, their leaders and congregants around the world.

Rev. Leonard said the Walden Award shines a national spotlight on LTC.

“Folk never hear about us,” said Leonard. “This awards gives us the opportunity to be exposed to a larger community. The hope is that someone will hear something that moves them to support the work that we do.”

LTC has recovery houses on Wheeler Avenue, Lafayette Avenue, N. Patterson Park Avenue, and Payson Street, and also operates a training center. Women living in the homes work on a self-improvement plan while living as a family unit to support their own and each other's recovery process.

The New Thought Walden Award is among a long list of honors Rev. Leonard has received. She is also a recipient of The Positive People Awards, an honor given to individuals who work to improve their quality of life and that of their community.

For more information about Rev. Leonard and The New Thought Walden Awards, visit <https://www.unity.org/walden>.

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