

UNITY NORTHERN LIGHT DECEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

FRONT PAGE:

Dear Friends,

In a Unity publication from Christmas of 2009, I found the following:

"Your Built-In God Gauge

"Scrooge, the protagonist of Dickens' classic tale *A Christmas Carol*, was an unloving, mean-spirited, unfeeling, cruel, utterly distasteful man who was completely unloved and, ostensibly, unlovable. He lived a miser's life. He hoarded everything, not giving of himself, his feelings or his possessions.

"However, when he finally was forced to recognize his greater self, he made a complete turnaround. He began loving everyone and found such joy in giving to and helping others that his life took on new significance. Although his love was not immediately reciprocated, he was so caught up in releasing the love that he had, that it didn't matter if anyone loved him in return. It didn't stop him, nor did it discourage him from loving.

"Scrooge felt good, not because he felt loved – people were too suspicious of his motives to love him. He felt good simply because he loved. Suddenly, Scrooge loved loving! The very act of loving others was satisfaction enough for him.

"In this wonderful novel and through this extraordinary character, Dickens has communicated the great lesson of love: Love is not a commodity that we can acquire and hoard. Love can only be released. ...

"Love Is What God Is

"One would think that of all the places to find a definition of God, the *Bible* would be the first place to look. Yet John was the only writer in the *Bible* to define God, and he used only three words to define the Undefinable: 'God is love' (1 Jn. 4:8). How simple. How succinct. How complete. How utterly perfect! God is love.

"Love, then, is not a toy of human caprice – something we can trot out and use and then take back and put away when we are finished with someone. Love is a divine activity. It is a cosmic force, a spiritual gift. It is a part of our life just as the ocean is part of the fish. As long as the fish swims in the ocean, the ocean sustains it and nurtures it and renews it because the fish is taking in ocean for life and renewal. The fish is part of the ocean, and the ocean is part of the fish.

"Love is God's ocean, and we live and move and have our being in that ocean. Love is God's energy, and when we let love direct us, we let God direct us and we become part of the divine energy of God."

Wonderful thoughts! I would add, though, that we do not "become part of the divine energy." In fact, we *are* the divine energy and are in various stages of recognizing that – not so different from Scrooge.

So, from all of this we can take renewal and make a decision to more deeply live what we are during the Holidays. Remember, it is what we are, not what we have, that counts.

Many holiday blessings!

Carol

BOARD MINUTES

Greetings to one and all,

After a grand adventure for the last three years, I'm stepping down from the Board, so this will be the last time I have this forum to address you.

It's been quite an educational time for me. Having been involved for many years, I thought I knew more about what was going on. This period on the Board showed me just how little I had known in reality and has taught me a greater respect for those who make things happen around here.

I would love to make a list here of the people who have really helped shape things the last few years, but as the list would get too long and I would probably end up forgetting to mention somebody, I'm just going to give a huge THANK YOU to all who help make our community run as smoothly as it does.

Besides me, Mary Sorenson and Kathleen Bailey will also be stepping down from Board service. They've done a lot over the last three years and have had a significant impact on this place. Give 'em a big "thank you" hug when you see them.

Our new Board members will be Don Seck, Martha Burkhardt, and Rick Bona. Our Y.O.U. representatives are Anna Cofrin and Shelby Breidenbach. I think the community will be in good hands with these additions to the team.

At the annual meeting on November 13, we hashed over some of what's been happening and what's going to be happening. Look forward to some exciting newness in the year ahead.

Here are some highlights from the Treasurer's Report:

Net income for the fiscal year of \$7,875

Tithe income of \$129,357 met budget of \$129,000

Adult Education & Workshop net income brought in \$3,956

Total Fundraising income \$9,646

 \$6,765 for Good For You Day

 \$1,512 for Garage Sale

 \$1,369 for Concerts

As you see, we've done pretty well this year. We had some major expenses throughout the year, including the ongoing project of repairing the roof, and yet we still came out in the black. This is a great sign of the health of our community.

Once again, I wish to convey my appreciation for this community, for what it means in my life, and for this opportunity to serve it I have had these years. I am consistently amazed by some of the things that happen around here and am just tickled that I can sometimes be a part of them.

Bless you all, and thank you.

Steve

OUTREACH NEWS

Adopt a Family for Christmas – We have six families. Pick up an ornament off the Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall. Use this ornament as a gift tag for the item you bought. All gifts must be returned to Unity North by December 11.

Save the date! Friday, January 6. If you helped with Family Table Meals in 2011, you are invited to a party on this date. More to come!

The stuffed animals from October went to the Alexandra House for Christmas gifts. The Alexandra House is a women's shelter in the Coon Rapids/Blaine area. Mothers staying there over the holidays can pick out gifts for their children.

Outreach committee volunteers include Sue and Rick Bona, Donna Snyder, Mary Sorenson, Kathleen Bailey, Barb Green and Becky Haaf (chair).

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Starting December 4, we will be learning about and celebrating the different traditions and practices of others here and around the world. What they all have in common is the element of light.

On December 4 we will be celebrating Kwanza. The children can decorate with symbols, and using a non-cook recipe, we will make and paint gold currency in the shape of animals. On December 11, we will examine and practice some of the Mexican rituals. We will make Mary and Joseph figurines, and we will go from classroom to classroom singing hymns. We will also carry battery candles. On December 18, we will honor Hanukkah, which begins this year on the 21st. We will make menorahs using air-dry clay and birthday candles.

The Children's Christmas Service is on December 24 at 5:30 p.m. The children will be in the rooms until 5:20 when they will go sit with their parents in the sanctuary. During the service they will sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear". Sunday, the 25th of December, is a healing Sunday. Any children that attend that day will have a birthday party for Jesus and decorate cupcakes.

On January 22, we will celebrate the Chinese New Year (which begins on Monday, January 23) with the ceremony of the lights. We will make good luck dragons, and we will make paper lanterns and add battery candles that the children will bring home.

A blessed holiday to everyone,

Brenda Erickson
Director of Children's Church
763-438-6790

Y.O.U. NEWS

We have begun saving for our Cherry Creek project – a playground for the kids there. If you would like to save your change to support our project, we have a few boxes left. Please check at home and see if you still have a little white box that says "Change for Change." The big bowl will be out to receive the change each Sunday. Thank You!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEEPER, STRONGER CHRISTMAS

We usually do a Metaphysics of Christmas class in December. We do look deeper into the meaning by looking at the story in its cultural and historical context, as well as the metaphysical meaning. This year we will spend more time in contemplation and meditation on the elements of this enduring and highly symbolic story.

This year, prepare for Christmas the way you never have before – from the inside out!!

Classes on Wednesday evening following the Meditation Service, December 7, 14 and 21.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

December 24, 5:30 p.m., Family Service

December 24, 7 p.m., Candlelight Service

PEACE IS POSSIBLE NOW

Our "Peace is Possible Now" World Healing Meditation will be at 6:00 a.m. (yes, in the morning) on Saturday, December 31. There are many people nervous about the year 2012. Please join us on the last day of 2011 to pray peace and love into our group consciousness. Please plan to be present and help us shift into a positive, peaceful and wonderful New Year. Candlelight breakfast to follow.

---The Y.O.U.

NEW YEAR'S EVE GAME NIGHT!!

Back by popular demand!!

Come join us at 6 p.m. or later to socialize in a safe, fun environment. Soup will be provided. Bring a game (if you wish) and a snack or beverage to share.

OTHER

PROFILING – DRUM ROLL HERE – THERESE SCHUTTE!!

This is the first article of a new feature. For each newsletter, I intend to profile someone within our church community. Today I hope you enjoy learning a little more about one of our in-house musicians who is also our choir director.

Question: What is something about you that few people know? *I teach Electronics and am a hopeless romantic!*

Question: If you had \$30,000 to donate to our church community, for what would you earmark it? *1. Family Table, 2. Music Program, 3. Y.O.U.*

Question: What led you to Unity North? *I was already attending a Unity church in another state when I moved here. I checked out a couple of other Unity churches in the area as well as the website. The Music Program was small and community was small. I guess I'm attracted to the smallness.*

Question: What are some of your accomplishments that make you most proud? *Being able to call myself a musician and successful survival of a brain injury.*

Question: What is your favorite childhood memory?

One of my favorite memories is of Christmas one year. I got a phonograph, and with it, I got a little record of "Silent Night".

Question: Name all the states in which you've lived.

Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Vermont. I was born in the little town of Harvard, Illinois.

Question: If you weren't living in this time and age, in what period would you like to experience living? *2047*

Question: If you had a do-over, what would you change? *Nothing*

Question: What one word would you use to describe yourself? *Pollyanna*

Question: What teacher had the greatest impact on you?

I had an Electronics instructor who had a down-to-earth teaching style that I admired. He made me feel that he cared about what I was doing.

Question: Do you have any pets? *Sadie Mae, my cat.*

Question: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? *Well, I wanted to be a nun, then that changed to a nurse, and then that changed to a teacher.*

Question: Who were your favorite singers during your youth? *Joan Baez. Bob Dylan. Queen. Led Zeppelin. Kris Kristofferson*

Question: If you were to change careers, what would you be? *A tour guide in the boundary waters.*

If you want to schedule a class, workshop or event at the church, please contact:
Ann Mongeau, 763-300-9811, or amongeau@mm.com.

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Nov 23, Thanksgiving Service, 7 PM
Nov 24, Thanksgiving Day Potluck, 1 PM
Nov 27, Pick Up Pre-Ordered Christmas Wreaths
Nov 27, Y.O.U. Bake Sale

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Dec 7, 14, 21, Deeper, Stronger Christmas, 7:40 PM
Dec 11, Gifts for Adopt a Family Due
Dec 24, Family Service, 5:30 PM; Candlelight Service, 7 PM
Dec 25, Healing Services, 8:45 and 11 AM
Dec 31, Peace Is Possible Now World Healing Meditation, 6 AM
Dec 31, New Year's Eve Game Night—Begins at 6 PM

ONGOING

Church Services, Sundays, 8:45 and 11 AM
Nursery and Sunday School, Sundays, 11 AM
Y.O.U., Sundays, 10 AM
Wed, Healing 5:30-7 PM
Wed, Meditation, 7-7:30 PM
Wed, Y.O.U., 7 PM
Thurs, CoDA, 6 PM