

UNITY NORTHERN LIGHT – JUNE/JULY 2009 NEWSLETTER

FRONT PAGE

Dear Friends,

This is one of my favorite passages from *What Are You?* by Imelda Shanklin.

“Each world has its inhabitants. In the real world there are God and His idea – you. There are living potentialities, vibrant, eager. There are the hosts of good, the as yet unrevealed splendors, the vision of which Paul found not lawful to be uttered. There is work, the accomplishment of perfections of which you now have not so much as a hint. There is endless progress, on and on toward the heart of God; on, until you awake with beholding His likeness.

“The fictitious world is inhabited by ghosts. Idle dreams drift through the areas of consciousness. Imaginations founded on ignorance walk with you. In that world you construct dragons, and then cower before them. Of the formless you assemble forms of terror which you permit to paralyze your mind.

“I became aware of the hypnotic influence of the fictitious world in an experience which I here relate for the purpose of showing you how you may be yielding to your own imaginations:

“We were three girls, in midteens. My companions asked me to tell them a ghost story. I had told them ghost stories on other occasions, but never before amid such favorable surroundings.

“We were in a lamp-lit room of a small, isolated house, the night was dark, windy. Tree boughs moaned, doors shook; at intervals the air sighed eerily about the house.

“With secret zest I acquiesced in their demand. I gave my imagination rein and spur. My companions began to respond; they shuddered, but still smiled. I saw that to give them the stimulation that they were expecting I should have to do better than I was doing. I did better. I heaped horror on horror. My companions ceased to smile: they cast fearful glances at open doorways to dark rooms; they clutched at each other, but eyed me expectantly.

“I was much encouraged by their appreciation. I broke all bounds; possibilities were spurned and impossibilities were transcended. Gruesome situations, gruesome objects, were depicted with mounting fervor. My audience was responding most satisfactorily.

“Then, all at once, without the slightest warning of the land of terrors into which my own fabrications had taken me, *I believed that story, myself*. I sat rigid, frozen by the creations of my own fantastically misdirected imagination. My companions shouted with laughter; they took hold of me and shook me to break the hideous nightmare that I had created for myself. I was dazed with relief when I realized my commonplace surroundings.

“After that most successful recital I never told those girls, or anyone else, a ghost story. I had lost my taste for being entertaining in that way.

“Later, I became aware that I was telling myself ghost stories of another sort. I saw that these ghost stories had an effect similar to, but not so swiftly apparent as, the effect of

the story that I had concocted that dark and windy night. I closely watched results, and I found that when I told myself that I was sick, the sense of sickness increased. I found that when I told myself that I was poor, my money did not go so far, and debts appeared. I found that whenever I chose my companions from the inhabitants of the fictitious world, my energies lagged to the time of their movements, and that a state of torpor ensued. Observing these things, I resolved to tell myself no ghost stories of any sort. In addition I resolved to tell myself the truth on all occasions.

“Truth is the character of things and of events that occur in the real world. Cleave to truth, though all evidence seems to support fiction. If you tell yourself the ghost story that represents yourself as incapable, you will find your mind congealing with the fear that you cannot do the thing that is for your good and for the good of others. You will have to be brought back to reality, even if your restoration must be accomplished by ridicule and figurative shakings. If you tell yourself that God’s capability is your capability at all times, you will feel the warm currents of returning confidence flowing through your being. Then you will accomplish what you should.

“If you tell yourself the Adam-old ghost story that you fail because of another, you will paralyze your powers of initiative, and will become an addict of the alibi. If you are large enough to acknowledge your mistake, accept the results, and then set about reforming conditions by conforming with the laws of the real world, you ultimately will find yourself a free soul.

“Every negative mental picture is a ghost story. Every recital of wrongs is a ghost story. Delineations of symptoms of illness are ghost stories. To relate a hard luck story is to relate another ghost story.

“When you say of anything that it is too good to be true, you tell yourself a ghost story. Everything that speaks of good is true - an incident of your life in the real world. All things begin in the mind. To claim the good of which you are able to think is but simplest honesty. The act of claiming gives the thing an impulse that starts it toward you. Make your claim on the grounds of your natal rights. You are a citizen of the real world, wherein exists for you all that you can claim of the enduring, and wherein there is infinitely more than you have thought of claiming. When you have so fully identified yourself with the real that you cannot be shaken or rendered doubtful by the pretenses of the fictitious, you never will say of anything that it is too good to be true. Of the best that you can hear, of the best that is hoped, of the best that is prophesied, of the best that is revealed, and of the best that stands beyond the pale of present revelation, you will say, ‘It is good enough to be true.’

“Identify yourself with the real; the fictitious will loose its hold on you. ‘I will arise, and go to my Father.’

“You are an alien in the world of the fictitious. You are heir apparent to the splendors of the real world.”

Blessings,

Carol

Y.O.U. NEWS

What a year it's been in Y.O.U.! Our youth group has attended two regional events and is planning now for the BIG RALLY at the end of June. We've had four lock-ins and lots of good times together.

We have given over 50 hours of service – everything from birthday bags for local food shelves, to leading Wednesday night meditations, to Earth Day service, to participating in the MN Walk for Animals. Most exciting has been partnering with CCF-USA to help a project in South Dakota on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation. The Y.O.U. sent over \$1,000 worth of craft supplies, puzzles and activity books. We also – with help from the congregation – delivered 36 bikes for the kids at Cherry Creek (one of three project locations on Cheyenne River).

We are continuing this project to provide bikes for them. So. . . if you have or can get good used bikes for kids six to twelve, let us know or listen for collection dates. We plan another trip out this summer.

As we prepare for June Rally, we are asking again this year if there are people who would be willing to be travel sponsors. A seat on the bus is likely to run \$100 plus. We aren't sure of the amount, and there are 14 of us going. So anyone who would be willing to help us pay for our travel expenses at any amount will be honored with a special dinner after church in July. (Date isn't set yet.) If you can help, we really appreciate you!

Thank you for all the support you give us. Graduating from Y.O.U. this year are Megan Erickson, Maggie Gilderhus, and Brian Koessler – but we are still pretending it's not happening!

The Y.O.U.

BOARD MINUTES

Greetings from the Board,

Month after month I am amazed at what we accomplish in this community. One of our tithe choices was to purchase a share from one of the local CSA farms to donate to the Food Shelf; however, we found out that the farm had already sold all the necessary shares. That left us with \$600 to reinvest in some other place. We received an opportunity to help out a young adult who is really working to turn their life around. This person needed a little help getting started in their own apartment and was looking for the opportunity to borrow about \$600 to make a deposit. With the money we had from that opportunity, we were able to offer a short-term loan and budget counseling.

Our Green Team has been working on an audit of how Green we operate at Unity, and the results were amazing. We have always been conscious of this, and it appears to be paying off very well. With a few areas we can improve on, we are well on our way to meeting the standards we set for the church based on the Thriving in Unity benchmarks. One area where we can improve is lawn care. As you have probably noticed, we have raised a bumper crop of dandelions this year. While many of us feel that this is not a problem, our neighbors don't feel quite the same. The Board has approved a one-time use of a service to try to get this part of our lawn under control. I know many of you will

not approve of this, but if we don't have more help to take care of this in the future, we may have to resort to this again. This is one thing that we need to do to be responsible neighbors. Please do not hold this against the Yard & Garden Committee, as they have done as much as they possibly can to this point, and much work remains. The Board has made the decision that we will do what we need to this time to get a handle on this particular part of our lawn care responsibilities.

One of the most exciting parts of this month's meeting was the fact that we have about \$7100 in our Parking Lot fund. We also received an estimate for just under that amount to repair and resurface our entire parking lot. We will be proceeding with that project in the next few weeks. The contractor told us that once they complete this job, the lot should easily last another 20 years. The first part of that project is to find and repair the problem with our parking lot lights. That should be done by the time you receive this. The repair work will start shortly after those repairs are made.

The most exciting item on our agenda was the Family Table update. The Family Table meal was a huge success. We had a good turnout with volunteers and served 89 people— "one of the best family table meals they have ever had". We had many good comments and learned a few things as well. We expect from the general comments to have about 20% more people attend next time. The Board is very proud of the volunteers for the time, effort and sense of community they provided. One thing we learned is that we could use some more help with that. This effort is something to really be proud of, and I hope that each and every one of you takes the opportunity to share in this experience. We will be doing this on a monthly basis (see related article under Outreach), so there will be plenty of opportunities coming up. See Mary Sorenson or Rhonda Steele to find out what you can do to help. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and to experience and share Unity in a new way.

Treasurer's Report

Cash flow report:

	March	April
Inflow:	\$21,935.01	\$11,934.67
Outflow:	<u>\$14,389.01</u>	<u>\$16,343.78</u>
Net	\$7,546.00	(\$4409.11)

Over the past two months, we have had some extra income from very generous donations and our extra activities. Due to the timing of our expenses from some of the projects that made that possible, the net income for this month does not look that good. When you look at our gross income, however, we are right where we need to be for this month. Again, I can't thank everyone enough for everything they do to make this community possible.

Have a great summer!

Mark Haapoja, President
Board of Trustees

OUTREACH NEWS

Thank you to everyone who volunteers for the Family Table Meal! They say it takes a village, and we have created that village for this monthly event.

We want to look for ways to streamline and simplify the organization process. One way is to streamline the donation process. We are asking people to become Sponsors of the Family Table Meal. In order to become a Sponsor, we are asking for a three- or six-month donation for purchasing the food. A donation of \$60 is a three-month sponsor; a donation of \$120 is a six-month sponsor. If you want to become a sponsor, talk to one of the Outreach members. We also want to open up the other volunteer positions for 3- 6-month commitments. If you have tried a position and like it, please help us by signing up for an extended time of three to six months. We appreciate whatever time or monetary contribution you can make. All is valuable and helps toward providing this meal for our community. Thank you again for all of your service. The next two Family Table meals are June 25 and July 23, 5-6:30 p.m.

In May we collected enough money to purchase books about starting Kindergarten for half the graduating Head Start class. Our goal is to collect enough money to provide these books for the whole class. We need \$50 more to accomplish this goal.

In June the Outreach Committee is collecting baby stuff – diapers, clothes, blankets, etc., for Everyday Miracles. Look for a poster in the narthex with all the details.

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK

The Board of Directors and the Outreach Committee have elected to participate in a program called Interfaith Hospitality Network. Some of you may recall that a representative from the main office came to visit our church, along with the person who runs this program in Hennepin County.

Interfaith Hospitality Network is the umbrella program. Families Moving Forward is the model being used in Hennepin County. Family Promise is a model used in some other states. We are in the process of getting a program similar to Families Moving Forward going in Anoka County. Anoka County is a fairly affluent area when compared with the poverty found in some inner-city areas. However, we do have a significant homeless population in Anoka County.

Here is the plan, so far: We would be 1 of about 13 churches in the Anoka County area, and we would host roughly 14 people for one week every quarter (four times per year). These families would have an evening meal with us and sleep in our building. In the morning, they would board the bus or van and be transported to a day center (site to be determined at a later date) where they could shower and look for a job, etc. At the end of the day, they would return to our building or the host church for that week.

Currently, we have several different church communities interested in getting this program going in Anoka County. We have met about four times, and we have branched out into four groups (communication, recruiting, fundraising and leadership). Rhonda Steele has joined the leadership team. We are always looking for more people to help in this effort. The next meeting is scheduled for June 1 at 7 p.m. If you are interested, please see Rhonda Steele. Look for updates on our website (www.unitynorthchurch.org) or speak with Rhonda.

As part of Unity North's Going Green initiative, we are not going to be using the Cub bags anymore for the Food Box donations. Instead you will find a grocery list in the pocket of the chairs. Items will still be highlighted, but on the back of the list is room for your own grocery list. Look for these soon, and Help us Go Green!

Outreach Committee:

Becky Haaf, Rhonda Steele, Kathleen Bailey, Mary Sorenson, Sue Bona, Donna Snyder and Althea Laska

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

We are completing both our school year and our journey in Wonderland on June 7. Please attempt to be at church with your children on that day so we can celebrate our journey together with croquet (the game played by the Queen) and sweet treats such as tarts, open-faced sandwiches and strawberries. Let your child show you around wonderland – in the fellowship hall – and introduce you to the characters, maybe share a lesson learned from one of them.

Thank you for your support this year and for sharing your children and your prayers with us. Check the summer list in the foyer and fill in any open slots with your name and the name of a friend or cohort. Spend the hour sharing your talents/interest with the children. See Brenda for ideas.

Also, please consider the position as teacher for yourself as you contemplate new and inventive ways to serve, grow and love in our community. Next year we will be studying the 12 powers recognized by Unity. These powers are “flown” in the fellowship hall, over the altar. This is an excellent way to learn more about Unity, yourself and deepen your relationship with God and others. Please see and discuss your interest and concerns with Brenda Erickson at 763-323-3246.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MUSIC UPDATE

You can find portions of the Sunday services at www.haddoxthomas.com . Go to "MUSIC" and find the "UNITY NORTH" album. You can stream or download for free. Not all portions were available from May 17, but the TALK and Amy & Adams specials are there. As I get the bugs out, I'm hoping the entire service will be available soon. By the way, the special music from Amy & Adams is a good indication of what's possible with our new recording system. It sounds phenomenal.

YARD COMMITTEE

Yard Committee will meet EVERY week after second service until September, weather permitting.

Yard committee sends a special "thank you" to the Green team (Wendy Erickson) for the new crabapple tree and compost bin! Contact person: Jennifer Flynn 763-242-3298.

SPIRITUAL CINEMA

Friday, June 12

7-9

A discussion circle follows the movie

LEAP

Is reality, as we know it, just an illusion?

Leap is a film that compels you to consider this ageless theory that **"the world is an illusion"**. This is the question at the heart of this film. It includes interviews with expert authors, scientists, spiritual teachers and visionaries. These include Joe Vitale, James Twyman, Dr Fred Alan, Gary Renard, Dan Millman, Peter Russell, Amber Terrell, Tom and Linda

Carpenter *and many more...*

- What is the purpose of life?
- Did I choose this before I was born?
- Who are we?
- How does the ego come into play?
- Why are we here, and what are we experiencing?

Those interviewed (called The Guides) offer opinions and facts on what they believe about the physical world we are all living in. Some explain it is created by us and is a reflection of what is going on inside our individual minds. Some compare it to living a real-life video game. Others claim it's really about remembering who we are and where we came from – one infinite energy ...

While some of the answers and statements shared will resonate with what you know to be true, this film promises that you will discover at least one new way of looking at life and its meaning by watching this film.

A Gathering of Women

A Circle Round the Fire

Saturday Evening, June 20... Outdoor location to be determined
We will meet at Unity at 6:30 p.m. and travel to the location.

Location will be announced on flyer in June OR show up and be surprised!
We will meet at Unity North at 6:30 and travel to the location at 6:45.

Bring

- Light finger food snack & your own beverage
- A lawn chair, blanket, cushion to sit on around the fire
- Drums, rattles
- Pieces of firewood to contribute to the fire
- A story to tell/A song to sing/A poem to read/A memory to share OR...??

We will close our evening by calling a sacred circle and passing the talking stick.

RECYCLING UPDATE

Thank you for your continued support of our ongoing aluminum can drive. Please note that we are only accepting empty aluminum pop and beer cans. Thank you for recycling all other materials and containers through your home recycling.

UPCOMING NEHEMIAH RETREATS AUG. 2 TO AUG. 8

Projects include: Removing and replacing stucco on retaining walls at Unity Institute, rebuilding stone walls near the swimming pool, and interior and exterior painting.

This is an incredible opportunity to go to Unity Village and share your time and talents. Room and board are provided! John Lippert and Jerry Bestland went for the last retreat the beginning of April. Contact John or Jerry for more information.

This is a very special opportunity to experience the Village and give your gifts.

For more information or to register, call 1-866-34-UNITY (1-866-348-6489) or e-mail at retreats@spiritpathonline.org.

CALENDAR

June 12, Spiritual Cinema, 7 PM
June 20, Gathering of Women, 6:30 PM
June 21, Healing Services, 8:45 and 11:00 AM
June 25, "Family Table" Meal, 5-6:30 PM

July 14, Articles Due for August Newsletter
July 23, "Family Table" Meal, 5-6:30 PM
Every Sunday in June & July, Yard Committee, 12:15 PM

ONGOING

Church Services, Sundays, 8:45 and 11 AM
Nursery and Sunday School, Sundays, 11 AM
Y.O.U., Sundays, 10 AM
Midweek Recharge, Wednesdays at 7 PM
CoDA, Thursdays at 6 PM