

UNITY NORTHERN LIGHT – MAY 2009 NEWSLETTER

FRONT PAGE

Dear Friends,

For many years now, I have been saying to anyone who would listen that Spirit does not cause bad things to happen; not that in New Thought anyone actually says “God made this happen.” I hear it more subtly referenced in the phrases “This had to happen so I would. . .” or “It was just meant to be.” *Who* meant it to be? I also object to the “All of these things had to happen. It was the only way these people would. . .” The *only* way?

I’ve been reading *The Shack* by Wm. Paul Young. In the story, a father (Mack) has lost his 6 _-year-old daughter. She was kidnapped and killed by a serial killer. Through some magical turns of events, Mack has a conversation with God (“Papa”), who is a loving, ample black woman.

“Obviously you know about my daughter’s fascination with waterfalls and especially the legend of the Multnomah Princess.” Papa nodded. “Is that what this is about? Did she have to die so you could change me?”

“Whoa there, Mack.” Papa leaned forward. ‘That’s not how I do things.’

“But she loved that story so much.’

“Of course she did. That’s how she came to appreciate what Jesus did for her and the whole human race. Stories about a person willing to exchange their life for another are a golden thread in your world, revealing both your need and my heart.’

“But if she hadn’t died, I wouldn’t be here now. . .’

“Mack, just because I work incredible good out of unspeakable tragedies doesn’t mean I orchestrate the tragedies. Don’t ever assume that my using something means I caused it or that I need it to accomplish my purposes. That will only lead you to false notions about me. Grace doesn’t depend on suffering to exist, but where there is suffering you will find grace in many facets and colors.’

“Actually, that’s a relief. I couldn’t bear to think that my pain might have cut short her life.’

“She was not your sacrifice, Mack. She is and will always be your joy. That’s enough purpose for her.”

And a few pages later, we read. . .

“So you use pain to force people back to you?” It was obvious Mack didn’t approve.

“Papa leaned forward and gently touched Mack’s hand.

“Honey, I also forgave you for even thinking I could be that way. I understand how difficult it is for you, so lost in your perceptions of reality and yet so sure of your own judgments, to even begin to perceive, let alone imagine, *who* real love and goodness are. True love never forces.’ She squeezed his hand and sat back. . .

“But – ‘ Mack started.

“Also,’ she interrupted, ‘don’t forget that in the midst of all your pain and heartache, you are surrounded by beauty, the wonder of Creation, art, your music and culture, the sounds of laughter and love, of whispered hopes and celebrations, of new life and transformation, of reconciliation and forgiveness. These also are the results of your choices and every choice matters, even the hidden ones. So whose choices should we countermand, Mackenzie? Perhaps I should never have created? Perhaps Adam should have been stopped before he chose independence? What about your choice to have another daughter, or your father’s choice to beat his son? You demand your independence, but then complain that I actually love you enough to give it to you.”

It is said that we grow into the God we believe in. My choice is to be like Papa.

Blessings,

Carol

BOARD MINUTES

Greetings,

We are really thriving as a community; there has been so much going in the last month. Good for You Day was a success as always. We earned just over \$4000. This gives us the necessary funding to proceed with the repairs and resurfacing of our parking lot. We have purchased the new sound equipment and are waiting for a few odds and ends to arrive. This will get us a great start on getting our services and special events recorded and presented on the website. The Garden Committee and the Green Team have come up with a great opportunity for the whole congregation. We will be purchasing a large lot of organic lawn and garden fertilizer and will be getting a great price on the stuff. For more information on how you can purchase some for your own yards and gardens, contact John Ice or Jennifer Flynn. The Green Team gave us a report on the information they have been gathering and the progress we are making to reduce our church’s carbon presence. In the near future, they will be sharing information on what they learned and how we as individuals can take this into our own homes.

Our Outreach Committee has provided their first Family Table meal. Many things were learned from that, and we expect to learn more as we continue. The biggest thing we learned is that we need some more help with that. 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 share your experience with Unity. It is also a great way to help our community and the community at large.

Treasurer’s Report:

Cash flow report:

	February		March
Inflow:	\$24,451.84	Inflow:	\$21,935.01
Outflow:	<u>\$11,169.15</u>	Outflow:	<u>\$14,389.01</u>
Net:	\$13,282.69	Net:	\$7,546.00

As you can see by the numbers, we have been very prosperous with over \$7000 total income from Good for You Day and several workshops and classes. The general tithing portion is right in the ballpark of where we need to be as well. The work we do here touches many people, and it just keeps growing. Thank you all for that. Staying true to our promise, we made our tithes as a church. We have contributed in the following ways:

- Feed My Hungry Children \$1250
 Special project in Zimbabwe – it's amazing how many meals we provide for so little.
- Local Food Shelf and CEAP \$1050
 Because so many are in need right now.
- CSA Farms shares \$600
 5 shares of fresh, organically raised food to donate to the food shelf
- Our own Y.O.U. \$450
 Cover expenses of the sponsors needed for them to attend the Rally
- Association of Unity Churches \$800
 So they may continue to provide us with the support and resources we need.

Have a great month,

Mark Haapoja
Board of Trustees

OUTREACH NEWS

Outreach is sponsoring a book drive for the Anoka County Head Start. We are collecting \$7 for books to give to the graduates of the Head Start program. The \$7 buys about four books for four kids. Donations are due by May 24. See Donna Snyder or Kathleen Bailey for more information.

We want to say a huge "Thank You" to everyone for your hard work for our first dinner. It was a huge success. Our second Family Table Dinner will be Thursday, May 28, from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. We still need volunteers for setup, cleanup and servers. Come join the fun and feel the personal reward of helping our local community fight hunger.

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

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

We are well on our journey into Wonderland. You may have noted how “pleasing” the fellowship hall has become. “Pleasing” was a term used by one of our 1st graders.

Here is a summary on the main truths from our curriculum:

1. **WE ARE ALL HEROES!** We are all powerful Children of God. In order to know the hero within us, the choices we make need to be courageous, determined and disciplined!
2. **ALL THINGS PROCEED FROM WITHIN!** Inside everyone is a place of sanctuary, Wonderland, the place Jesus called “The Kingdom of Heaven.” It is in our inner wonderland, or sanctuary, that we can retreat to experience our oneness with Spirit.
3. **ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!** The key to the inner sanctuary is the knowledge that nothing is impossible through the Christ within. If we can perceive it, we can achieve it!

Summer is fast approaching. Our teachers take a break in June, July and August. These dates need to be filled by our other teachers in the church—you! Yes, we are all students and teachers. So, the time is at hand again to stretch out and share one Sunday this summer with our children. Find a partner and sign up at the table in the narthex. Share a movie, snack, craft or interest. See Brenda Erickson if you want or need more ideas and more structure. Thank you for giving of yourselves.

Brenda Erickson

Children's Church Director

**FILL YOUR HEART WITH JOY—AND PERHAPS LEAVE YOUR “COMFORT ZONE”.
SHARE ONE SUNDAY THIS SUMMER WITH OUR CHILDREN WHILE THE
TEACHERS ARE ON BREAK.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UNITY YARD AND GARDEN CLUB

Cleanup Day!

We'll have our first meeting/activity on Sunday, May 3, at 12:30. Agenda: Clean up front flower beds, litter, parking lot, and early shrub trimming. Contact person: Jennifer Flynn.

Spiritual Cinema

Friday May 8th 7:00 Suggested Love Offering \$5.00

ILLUSION

Starring Kirk Douglas

Directed by Michael Goorjian *

Director Michael A. Goorjian's *Illusion* tells the tale of a dying film director who finds out late in life what it truly means to live and be loved. Mr. Baines (Kirk Douglas) is a Hollywood icon who now nears death. His one regret in life is that he never got to know the son he abandoned nearly 30 years ago. After failing in all attempts to track him down, he turns to a mystic who offers him three visions of his son's life under the guise of parts of a movie. But when these visions take a dark turn, Baines learns the surprising truth about himself, his son and the visions he is being shown. After living a lifetime of missed opportunities, the man who thought he had it all will now attempt to summon the dying might for one last opportunity to let his son know what it truly means to love, and be loved in return.

*We have enjoyed director Michael A. Goorjian's other movies at Spiritual Cinema...

You Can Heal Your Life with Louise Hay and *Ambition to Meaning* with Dr. Wayne Dyer.

UNITY NORTH BOOK CLUB

7:00 p.m.

May 14, *The Moses Code* by James Twyman

REMINDER (FROM Y.O.U.)

YOUers are collecting bikes for their Cheyenne River Project. If you have any used bikes in good condition or are skilled at repairing bikes, they could use your help.

CALENDAR

May 3, Yard & Garden Club Cleanup Day, 12:30 PM

May 8, Spiritual Cinema, 7 PM

May 12, Articles due for May newsletter

May 14, Book Club, 7 PM

May 28, "Family Table" Meal, 5-6:30 PM

May 31, Family Church Service

ONGOING

Church Services, Sundays, 8:45 and 11 AM

Nursery and Sunday School, Sundays, 11 AM

Y.O.U., Sundays, 10 AM

Y.O.U., Wednesdays, 6 PM

Midweek Recharge, Wednesdays at 7 PM

CoDA, Thursdays at 6 PM