



FIRST UNITY' CHURCH - Serving the spiritual needs of the St. Louis community for over seventy-five years.

The Newsletter of
First Unity Church
Of Saint Louis

December 2008

Each of us a Mary?

By Jim Rosemergy

*t> Inspiration

*** Information

t Illumination

"Joy to the world" is the cry of the season, but as it was in Mary's day, all is not joy at Christmas. At first, Mary had her doubts and fears. The Kings of the East came bearing gifts, but King Herod sought to destroy Jesus.

Let us remember that Christmas is more than songs and lights; it is a time of birth, and with any birth, there is travail. This season, many of us will try to push aside our doubts and fears. The result will be depression rather than joy and spiritual birth. It doesn't have to be this way.

Let us not try to experience the joy of the season; let us experience the fullness of what is happening within us. No mother giving birth tries to push aside the travail, for she knows it is the herald of the joy that is to be. Dear friend, if this is a season of challenge for you, may you allow it to become a time of preparation for the birth of the Christ in the manger of your soul.

The Christmas story is a story of giving of oneself to Spirit, for Mary said, "Let it be v/ini mc sccru-ing to your wcru ^i_/jC. i^Joy. It is a time of faith-filled action, for Mary, Joseph, and Jesus left their home and traveled to Egypt because of a dream. This is a call for courage-the courage to face our humanity so our divinity can take its rightful place as the power in our life.

I encourage you to prepare for the birth by facing your past hurts, by forgiving yourself and others, and by being still. I wonder if Mary did these things hi the years prior to Jesus' birth.

I can only imagine the purity of her soul. I wonder what she did to prepare herself. She must have let go of attachments and humbled herself to be the mother of the Master. Her relationship with God was undoubtedly special. In Truth, she first had to give birth to her indwelling Christ before she could give birth to Jesus.

Each of us is to be a Mary, for each of us is destined to give birth to the spirit of God that lies within. A boundless joy and peace passing understanding come

naturally when we awaken spiritually, but there will also be travail. The joy and peace we will always remember, but as it is with any mother giving birth to a child, the travail will be forgotten.

Many people have asked me how to "deal with" the feelings of this season-sadness that seems like an endless sea, anger that threatens to destroy another relationship. ~~griw#that at 3ns_pwofv. rrrw^h: vE1 ifi>>. \4xv>rvlv~~ is that the first step is not to "deal with" the feelings, but to experience them.

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Mates

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On Sunday, Nov. 23rd, Fred
Tilley became a member of
First Unity! Fred, we
welcome you with open
arms to our church family!



Check out our new website
at
<http://www.firstunitychurchstlouis.org/>
Special thanks to Carol Ellerman, Rev.
Sharon, and Anne Hartupee for all their
hard work. Please note also that email
addresses have changed.

Opportunity to give:

Thanks to Frank Vielhaber for a generous
gift of Busch stock, our church now has a
stock brokerage account and can accept
stock contributions. Thank you, Frank!

Help make friends for First Unity!

We have an opportunity to raise some
money for our church and distribute Unity
literature this month. Volunteers will be
wrapping gifts at Borders Book Store,
Sunset Hills on Thursday Dec. 4th, and
Thursday, Dec. 11th from 6 to 10. Contact
Linda Harr for information 636-677-1072.

Christmas Poinsettias

In keeping with our
First Unity tradition,
poinsettias will be
available for purchase
and dedication again
this Christmas. The plants are \$8.50.



Ladies' Night Out will have a
Christmas party on Monday
December 15th at the home of
Mary Tumminello at 5:30 in
the
evening. Bring a \$5 gift to exchange.
Mary's address is 5111 Kennerly Pines
Court. For more information, call Mary at
314-843-1307.



Feed My People

In this Christmas season your
donations to Feed My People
are especially appreciated.
www.feed-my-people.org



.December 5th and 6th
QO 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$20
Leon's Swinging
Holiday "
ncert

Join us for our
annual Candle
Lighting Service on
Sunday, Dec. 21st.

This year we will
combine our two
services and Youth
Ed. so we can all celebrate the Christ's
birth together. Our combined service will
be held at 10:30 a.m. The First Unity
choir with Anne Hartupee, Dean Wiegert,
and the hand bell choir will be
participating in our Christmas service.
Bring a dish to share and stay for a
Christmas Pot Luck Party immediately
following the Candle Lighting Service.



Christmas Eve Service



We will celebrate Christ's
birth with a special service at
7 p.m. on Christmas Eve.
Please V join us!

Prepare for the New Year right at our
annual Unit} Burning Bowl Service
on Sunday, January 4* at both
services.



Silent Unity Affirmations for December

Inner Peace:
My soul is the cradle of Christ
Love. My heart is serene.

Guidance: The Christ Light of
understanding shines through my every
word and action.

Healing: Through the healing power
of the Christ Presence, I am strong and
whole.

Prosperity: My life is blessed as I
give and receive from the abundance of
Spirit.

World Peace: In this season of love,
we share our gifts of peace with the world.



From Page One

When we try to push aside our feelings we delay our spiritual birth. By standing our ground and facing our fears, we realize that they are not as powerful as they appear. Our resistance makes them strong. Our willingness to experience them helps us realize our strength.

Dear friend, now is the time of preparation. Join me and countless others who are praying: "Willingly I enter the travail of spiritual birth. In the silence, I invite my hidden self to enter the light of this sacred moment. I offer no resistance to the emotions and thoughts that surface in my soul. To God I say, "Let it be to me according to your word' " (Lk. 1:38).

A Christmas Blessing

May you have the Spirit of
Christmas, which is Peace,
The Gladness of Christmas, which
is Hope, The Heart of
Christmas, which is
Love, The Gift of Christmas,
which is
Christ.

-Ada Hendricks

Finding God's Glory

One of
America's most
gifted preachers
in the last
century was

Theodore Parker
Ferris, pastor of Boston's Trinity
Church (Episcopal). In his book
The Image of God, Ferris asked,
"Where can you expect to see the
glory of the Lord today?" He
answered the query with the
following words:

"In the heavens above? Yes,
of course. 'The heavens declare the
glory of God.' In the courts of



Justice? Yes, of course. In the
wonders of science as they unfold
the mysteries of God's universe?
Of course, yes. In the move toward
peace? Yes! But most of all in that
one Life, that one incredible Life,
in whom the glory was once and
for all revealed to all who have
eyes to see it, and in every other
life that reflects that glory."

Christmas in us

Though Christ a thousand times In
Bethlehem be born, If he's not
born *in* thee Thy soul is still
forlorn.

The cross on Golgotha Will
never save thy soul; The cross
in thine own heart Alone can
make thee whole. -Angelus
Silesius

Call on Christ

Early in the 20th century, Howard
Bliss, a missionary to Syria, wrote
an article about what Christ can
mean to anyone who would take
him seriously. Consider these
insights:

Does Christ save you from
your sin? Call him Savior!

Does Christ free you from the
slavery of your passions? Call him
Redeemer!

Does Christ teach you as no
one else has taught you? Call
him Teacher!

Does Christ mold and
master your life? Call him
Master!

Does Christ shine upon
the pathway that is dark to
you? Call him Guide!

Does Christ reveal God
to you? Call him the Son of God!

Does Christ reveal ideal
manhood to you? Call him the Son
of Man!

In following him, are your lips
silent in your incapacity to define
him and his influence upon you?
Call him by no name, but follow
him!

From Great Truth Teachers:

As we gain a deeper understanding
of the spiritual power of Jesus we
see that His birth and life is the
greatest event in the evolution of
man; and as the years go on we
shall more and more appreciate
and celebrate Christmas.

-Charles Fillmore

There is nothing in the world to
take joy from you. Rise to the
realization that Christ in you is a
sun of joy that sheds upon your
world warm and glorious radiation
of happiness and good cheer. -
Frank B. Whitney

May Christmas this year light your
path to the indwelling city of God
in your own soul.

-Dr. Ernest Holmes

There is no difficulty that enough
love will not conquer, no disease
that enough love will not heal; no
door that enough love will not
open; no gulf that enough love will
not bridge; no wall that enough
love will not throw down; no sin
that enough love will not
redeem...it makes no difference
how deeply seated may be the
trouble; how hopeless the outlook;
how muddled the tangle; how great
the mistake. A sufficient realization
of love will dissolve it all. If only
you could love enough you would
be the happiest and most powerful
being in the world. -Dr. Emmet Fox

Peace on earth will
come to stay, when
we live Christmas
every day.

-Helen
Steiner
Rice



You can tell a lot about a person by
the way he or she handles these
three things: a rainy day, lost
luggage and tangled Christmas tree
lights.

-Maya Angelou

The Evolution of the God-Idea

By James Dillet Freeman

What is God? We use many terms when we speak of Him.

God is Principle, we say. Or, God is Father. We speak of the Christ. Or we say that God is incarnate in Jesus Christ. We speak of Divine Mind as God. Or we say that His name is Jehovah. He is the One; yet we speak of the Trinity of God.

God does not change. God is eternally the same. But the God-idea changes. The God-idea changes as men change. Your God-idea changes as you change.

God is that which rules the world. What do you believe rules your world? What do you trust in? What do you depend on for your help?

You probably cannot give a simple answer. At different times you have thought of God in different ways, and all these different thoughts are mixed together in your mind.

The truth about God is the highest kind of truth we can know. It is a many-faceted truth, like a diamond. Solid geometry does not make the truths of plane geometry less true. It just adds another dimension to the truth. So it is with God. New concepts of Him do not mean that older concepts are no longer true. They are still true-only they are not enough.

The earliest notion of what rules the world must have been not so much a sense of God as a sense of impersonal force, the presence of power, a pervading influence.

Certainly the first human beings lived in a world ruled by force. The seasons rolled over them; winds blew; rain and sun beat down; storms raged; beasts

and men attacked one another.

In such a world people needed courage; they sensed God's presence most clearly in the hero. To set force in motion, force is needed; so prayer became a magic rite or spell. The magician did not ask the gods for favors; he sought to compel the power that rules the world.

To many of us, God is still force, largely. We depend on force to achieve our ends. "Might is right," we say. If we do not say it, we act as if it were true.

And force is good, force is necessary. Without it nothing gets done.

But force is not enough.

For one thing, we cannot set a force in motion without setting an equal force in motion in the opposite direction. This is Newton's Third Law of Motion. On it we have sent rockets to the moon. But it is as true in our lives as in regard to rockets. It is as true in regard to minds as things. The ancients called it the Law of the Opposites. When we live on the level of force, we are always setting into motion forces that are opposite to what we want. For force is not good or evil. The fire gives warmth, but also it burns; it works to create and destroy.

To believe that the world is ruled by force is the most primitive of all beliefs. It is the belief of brutes. And human beings are not brutes. The belief in force is not enough for human beings.

God may be thought of as force, but God is a force that acts like a person. It was not long before we began to personify the divine force.

God never puts Himself out of reach. He is a force to those who need to rely on force. He is a person to those who need to depend on Him as a person.

And probably all of us have times when we long to know God as a person. Because we are persons.

You are a person. Around you are persons. You understand them. You feel that they understand you. You know how to communicate with them. When you call, they will hear and may respond.

It is hard not to imagine God like ourselves. We want to make a statue or paint a picture of Him. We say, "He is," not, "It is." We say, "Our Father," and immediately the mysterious reality we are yearning to identify ourselves with seems close and real.

When God is thought of as a person, He becomes the King and ruler of heaven and earth, to whom we owe absolute obedience. He may incarnate as an avatar or personal savior. Prayer becomes supplication; for, if a personal God desires, He may set aside the rules by which His world is run; at least, we can plead with Him to do this for us.

But his most religions based on the idea that God is a person, He usually has become not only a loving Father, but a stern judge. The world turns at His will - He made it and He may

sacrifices, even of life, and He may punish disobedience to His will with harsh and everlasting judgments.

To think of God as a person is good when it makes us feel that we understand Him. It is a step toward God. But it is not enough.

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image. We are made in His image. Between these two views there stretches an infinity. Our aim must be ultimately not to see God as a person but to see ourselves in our godlikeness.

God may be thought of as a person, but God is a person that acts like law.

Today most educated people believe that the world is ruled by law. This is the age of science; as scientific knowledge increases, we see that what we once thought was ruled by force and chance is really ruled by law.

Apollo, the willful and beautiful god, is metamorphosed into a glowing, incandescent globe 92,000,000 miles away; we put its energies to work for us. Rain and drought are not the whim of Jupiter or Thor, but the result of natural laws at work in the atmosphere; we can predict the weather and one day will control it. The tides are not obedient to Neptune, but to the pull of gravity; we make our plans to harness them. Even the behavior of living creatures and of human beings, we come to see more and more, is subject to laws. These laws, too, we can learn and use.

Religions that conceive of God as law often think of themselves as a science more than as a religion. God becomes impersonal Principle and life is governed by the law of cause and effect, of sowing and reaping. Ignorance is at the root of human suffering; knowledge will be humanity's salvation. Prayer becomes affirmation -not to change the divine Principle but to change thinking so that the Truth of God may be demonstrated. Such are the teachings of the new metaphysical movements, and they grow in iHj.iu6n.ce as peopic come to feel that life is based on law.

The oracles of this new age are the sage and the scientist.

The miracles are the miracles of law. And what miracles law works - so many

we no longer call them miracles! We just accept the working of the law.

We touch a button and our house is instantly flooded with warmth and light. We touch another button and there before our eyes is an event taking place 1000 miles away. We fly through the air and rocket across heaven. We bring the dead to life and keep the live from dying; in a generation we have doubled the life span. And we are only at the beginning of the Age of Law.

We have hardly begun to explore the laws of mind-action.

When the science of mind is as advanced as the material sciences, we shall see works beside which the achievements of today - the rockets, the atomic power, the discoveries in medicine - will seem insignificant.

For the power in the atom is insignificant beside the power in the mind. We cannot even envision what we shall achieve as we learn how to focus and direct the powers of the mind. Here we stand only on the shore. A few men have landed and come back and reported. "There is an unknown world here!" they exclaim, and bring back to us more Hailing tales of treasures and marvels to be found within us than ever Columbus or Ponce de Leon or Cortes brought back to the rulers of Spain.

Yet even law is not enough. A world governed by law, a world where we can always determine results if we know causes, is not a free world. To be a micromechanism in the macromechanism of the world, to be a pawn - even of God - is not enough. To have meaning, we have to be free.

Those who think that the world is ruled by law have won great triumphs - they have

changed the life of all of us - and they will win greater triumphs yet. But law is incomplete. Though it illumine the mind, it does not fire the heart. To live we need more than light, we need warmth.

For God may be thought of as law, but God is a law that acts like love.

When we look at the world it is hard for most of us to believe that love made it. But the time will come when it will be as natural for us to think that love made the world as it is now for us to think that force and chance made it, if we are atheists, or that a super person made it, if we are fundamentalists, or that law made it, if we are scientists.

We have emerged from the time when God seems most like force. We are emerging from the time when God seems most like a person. We have entered the time when God seems most like law. The time when God seems most like love is still to come.

But it is coming. Here and there, now and then, some human beings appear who have outstripped the rest of us. They are, as it were, mutations on the tree of life. They show us what the human race is moving toward.

The God-idea as force produces the hero. The God-idea as a person produces the savior. The God-idea as law produces the sage. The God-idea as love produces the Christ, the innate divinity in everyone.

Only a few human beings have tried to live as if God were love. But even though we cannot yet live this way ourselves, we sense that this is the way human beings are intended to live.

Most of us have moments when we live by love. For a moment we put off selfishness.

For a moment we are not concerned with getting, but with giving. For a moment our thought is all for others. Such moments may be moments of pain - sometimes it takes pain to push us beyond ourselves. We may be reluctant; we may be frightened. Yet we sense that somehow at such moments we have lived more deeply, more intensely, more meaningfully than at any other time in our life.

For a moment we have entered into a new dimension of life, living not as we live most of the time, bounded by the horizons of self, but as we are intended to live in a world where the horizons are of love.

Most of us manage to love one or two - our wife, our son, our father, our sister, a friend - and this little love makes the difference between bare existence and life for us. If loving one or two makes the difference between emptiness and purposeful life, what would life be like if we could love a hundred - or a thousand - or ten thousand - or the whole human race!

We see what such a life is like when we look toward the Master Jesus whose life, whose death, and whose life-after-death is the work of love. This is the God of love, who loves us so much that He takes on our humanness to help us put on His godliness. He suffers our faults so that we may enjoy His perfection. He lets Himself endure the appearance of death so that we may know the reality of life.

When we come to Him hungry for food, He breaks the bread and fishes and feeds our body. When we come to Him hungry for God, He breaks the bread of Himself and feeds our spirit. When we bring Him our sick and dead, He gives them

life. When we bring Him our sinners, He writes in the sands of life: "Your sins are forgiven you. Go and sin no more."

He is the embodiment of divine force - and in Him we see that the force of God is the power of love that heals and frees and supplies our needs. He is God as a person, and in Him we see that the face and voice of God are the face and the voice of love. We have only to touch the hem of His garment and we are healed. He is the fulfilling of the law, and in Him we see that the law is fulfilled by love.

When we believe that God is love, we love. That is all.

When we love, we give - ourselves and all we have.

We love those we love out of the joy of giving, with no thought of return. We do not love them because they love us. We do not love them because they are good. We do not love them because it is pleasant and easy to love.

We stand by them in their pain. We stand by them in their shame. We stand by them when they make deep and hard demands on us.

And we are transformed!

We see the world with the eyes of love, and how different life looks! We do not make demands for ourselves, but upon ourselves. Love demands that we rise to our highest potential; as we do, we live to our highest potential. We may not find an easy life, but we find a great life. As we give to our utmost, we live to our utmost.

Why am I afraid of love? .
Where need I seek shelter who have found love? May I not trust in love to feed me and clothe me? Will love not keep my going out and my coming in? May I not lay my head in the heart of love and sleep?

This is the way Jesus lived.

This is the way the Christ in us bids us to live. To live by love is still too hard for most of us, but the central figure of our faith is this God-man who is love. Today love is only the leaven. But tomorrow it will be the whole loaf.

God may be thought of as force, but God is a force that acts like a person.

God may be thought of as a person, but God is a person that acts like law.

God may be thought of as law, but God is a law that acts like love.

God may be thought of as love - and beyond love? Beyond love lies the infinite, range on range. But now even the peaks of love lie hidden in the mists.

For now it is enough to say, God is love.

The Gift of Christ

By Mary Rowe

In our eternal search for Truth, we find happiness at Christmas. A great tenderness within reaches out and enfolds everyone we meet and think about. We long to love more, give more, and forgive more. This wonderful feeling is our own spiritual nature stirring within us.

The baby Jesus is a living symbol of the Christ Spirit born to each of us. In the story of Jesus, we watch the Babe grow into a man of strength, love, and wisdom - One who was able to judge righteously, heal the sick, and love all people.

Jesus told us we can do all that He did. If we believe Him and listen to the small stirring within us, our spiritual nature will grow in strength, love, and power. We, too, will radiate the peace and goodwill that we associate with this wonderful time of year.

**THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER OF
FIRST UNITY CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS**

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A Little Christmas Humor

Hooray for snow: In a northern community, it snowed consistently for so long that the schools had to be closed for the better part of a week. When classes resumed, a teacher asked her students if they had used their free time constructively. One little girl said, "I did. I was enjoying my free time so much that I prayed for more snow."

Getting the name right: A Sunday school teacher was talking about some of God's creatures. She described a furry little animal who climbed trees, built nests in them, loved nuts and buried acorns. "What animal am I talking about?" she asked.

One little boy, very mindful of where he was, spoke up and said, "It sounds like a squirrel, but I know the right answer is Jesus."

Although very young, the boy had already figured out that "Jesus" is the right answer to many questions.

The same old song: Meeting a parishioner on the street, a pastor asked why he had not seen the fellow at worship very often. "Well," the man complained, "it seems like every time I go to church you sing the same old hymns."

"Oh," replied the preacher. "What hymns are those?"

"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" and "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

Wise Women: If there had been three wise women instead of three wise men, the story would've been a bit different.

The women would have asked for directions instead of trying to follow a light in the sky.

The three women would have arrived in time for the birth, assisted Mary and congratulated Joseph.

They would have cleaned the stable, found bedding for the manger, shopped for whatever was needed and prepared food and drink for all.