

Wings



FIRST UNITY CHURCH – Serving the spiritual needs of the St. Louis community for over ninety years.

The Newsletter of
First Unity Church
Of Saint Louis

June 2015

- ❖ *Inspiration*
- ❖ *Information*
- ❖ *Illumination*

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God Is the Answer
Dana Gatlin

Every Experience Is our Teacher

By Martha Smock

Every one of us has had experiences to meet that at first seemed difficult but proved to be times of growth and gain. Through these experiences, we discovered new strengths in ourselves, we unfolded new powers and capabilities, we experienced a closer unity with God, and we relied on God with a faith greater than we knew we possessed.

Every experience is our teacher; we learn from the persons, the events, the circumstances that surround us. Most of the time we are not aware that we are learning because we are more aware of the struggle we are making. Like the child struggling to get to her feet, to learn to walk, we do not see that our efforts are teaching us and freeing us.

We are being molded and shaped, not by outer circumstances or by other persons but from within, by our reactions, our thoughts, our feelings, our attitudes. And yet, unless we have experiences to meet that make us seek deeper for understanding, reach higher for light, we do not develop our spiritual nature. To realize this truth is to give thanks for experiences, even the hurtful ones; it is to give thanks for every person, even the hateful ones; it is to see everyone and everything as somehow a part of us; it is to be taught by all.

Sometimes it seems that we choose the hard way of learning. Like the prodigal son, we may seem to be taking the pleasant, easy path, but like him we find ourselves in a far country, feeding on husks, lost and unhappy. How many times has every one of us, like the prodigal son, decided not to stay down or

depressed, not to remain in poverty of mind, body, or soul. We too have arisen and gone to God. And out of a sad or bitter time we have found ourselves; we have entered the circle of God's love; we have realized that always we have been one with God, with our good.

The unhappiness is behind us; we are stronger, wiser than before; we know now who we are and where we belong.

If all things and all persons are our teachers, why is it that we do not always learn the lesson that is there for us? Why is it that we seem to go through the same experiences again and again?

--Continued on page six

What
ARE...You
Thankful?
for?



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Minister

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Jan Mourning, LUT

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Deb Fry
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Wings

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Board member, Cathy Zehner, requested that she step down from the board for personal reasons. We welcome Carol Ellerman who has agreed to fill out her term, and extend heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Cathy for her generous service.



June Birthdays and Pot Luck Lunch: Join us after the service on the 21st to enjoy a pot luck lunch and celebrate all those who have a birthday this month.

This month the **Ladies' Night Out Group** will be at McGurk's Irish Pub and Garden, 1200 Russell Blvd. at 5:30 on June 15th. For more information call Mary Tumminello - Home: 314-843-1807 Cell: 314-814-4530.



For those who prefer not to drive at night we are having a **Ladies' Lunch Out** on June 26th at 11:30 at Outback, 5240 South Lindbergh. Call Judie Henley at 314-487-3938 so she can make a reservation.

June 9: The Book Thief by Markus Zusak.

July 14: Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline

August 11: Boston Girl by Anita Diamant

September 8: Finding Peter by William Peter Blatty

October 13: To Kill a Mocking Bird by Harper Lee

Laughter Yoga with Jodi

Simple stretching, breathing and guided meditation! Join in for a positive spiritual experience on Thursdays, 4:00 - 5:00 PM, in Fellowship Hall.



Feed my people

Donations are often down for all food pantries during the summer months, and with children home from school, there are more mouths to feed, so your gifts of food are especially appreciated at this time of year. There is a table for donations provided in the bookstore.



www.feed-my-people.org



Our **bell choir** is looking for two new members. If you or someone you know loves music and knows how to read music, let them know about our bell choir auditions coming up on Saturday, August 1st. Auditions will be held from 9:30am - 11:30am. Any musician high school age and older can try out. Rehearsals during the year are on Saturday mornings at 10:30am from mid-August through May.

Route 66 Jazz Orchestra

will perform in concert on June 10 at 7:30 p.m. with soloists Valerie Tichacek, Ron Wilkenson, Dean Christopher and Chuck Seger. Tickets at the door: adults \$10/children \$5.



Our **Youth Education** department is growing.

We sure could use extra hands and hugs. If you could help just one Sunday a month, it would make a big difference for our church and our children.



Our **Lending Library** has been given a new makeover and is now open for business at its new location near the elevator. Stop by and check out an inspirational title from among a wide selection of books written by some of Unity's greatest authors and teachers.



LENDING LIBRARY

There are also many other favorites for you to enjoy, written by other New Thought and spiritual thinkers.

June Affirmations



Inner Peace: I am peace within, and I choose peace without.

Guidance: I turn to God for guidance and understanding.

Healing: I am healthy in mind, body, and spirit.

Prosperity: I prosper by seeing and claiming the good.

World Peace: I open to peace and send love to the world.

The Origin of Fathers' Day



One Sunday in 1909, Sonora Smart Dodd listened to a sermon honoring mothers. Her mother had died some years before, so her father had raised her by himself. Dodd wondered why there wasn't a day to honor fathers, so she arranged a tribute to her father at a church in Spokane, Washington. The date was June 19, 1910. Many people believe this was the beginning of Father's Day.

Another account holds that a West Virginia church held a tribute service for fathers in 1908, following a mine explosion that killed 360 men. Regardless of which story is correct, President Calvin Coolidge was the first president to designate a special day to honor fathers. In 1924, he proclaimed the third Sunday in June as Father's Day.

Priorities

My father used to play with my brother and me in the yard. Mother would come out and say, "You're tearing up the grass."

"We're not raising grass," Dad would reply. "We're raising boys."
—Harmon Killebrew

Awash in Sunlight

St. Francis of Assisi — perhaps best remembered for his love of animals and his belief that God cares about them in special ways too — was said to have lived with an exuberant "attitude of gratitude." He wrote, "Such love does the sky now pour, that whenever I stand in a field, I have to wring the light out when I go home."

As summertime begins, what natural wonders amaze you and make you grateful: sweet-smelling grass? warm, gentle rain? blooming flowers everywhere? pristine, blue skies? Just for fun, write an exclamation like that of St. Francis, glorifying God for his creation.

A Blessing – One Way or Another

The marriage ceremony was over and the pastor raised his hand to pronounce the benediction. The bride, however, must have thought he was offering her a "high five." She raised her hand and slapped the pastor's hand. The congregation laughed. Not wanting to leave the groom out, the minister gave him a high five as well. Then the pastor finally offered the benediction.

His People

"I was born to a woman I never knew and was raised by another who took in orphans," said author James Michener. "I do not know my background, my lineage, my biological or cultural heritage. But when I meet someone new, I treat them with respect; for after all, they could be my people."

Infinite God

Augustine, while puzzling over the doctrine of the Trinity, was walking along the beach one day when he observed a young boy with a bucket, running back and forth to pour water into a little hole.

Augustine asked, "What are you doing?"

The boy replied, "I'm trying to put the ocean into this hole."

Augustine then realized that he had been trying to put an infinite God into his finite mind.

—Homiletics



God's Precious Earth

In 1854, as Chief Seattle transferred Indian lands to the federal government, he said: "This we know. The earth does not belong to the humans, humans belong to the earth. Whatever befalls the earth befalls children of the earth. The humans did not weave the web of life; they are merely strands in it. Whatever they do to the web, they do to themselves. ... This earth is precious to God, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its creator."

"Quotable Quotes"

The greatest gift I ever had came from God; I call him Dad!
—Anonymous

The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother.
—Theodore M. Hesburgh

Many an excellent man is tempted to forget that the best offering he can make his children is himself.
—Henry Neumann

Tears of joy are like the summer raindrops pierced by sunbeams.
—Hosea Ballou

How we walk with the broken speaks louder than how we sit with the great.
—Zig Ziglar

There is not a thing that God expects of a person but that God will give him or her the power to do.
—A.B. Simpson

A baby is God's opinion that the world should go on.
—Carl Sandburg

Faith doesn't get you around trouble; it gets you through it.
—Anonymous

When we are true to our conscience ... God's kingdom comes to us just where we are, living quite ordinarily, carrying on patiently.
—Karl Rahner

The miracle is this — the more we share, the more we have.
—Leonard Nimoy

We must all work to make the world worthy of its children.
—Pablo Casals

I live in the nourishment of food and the sun and the warmth of the people who love me.
—Anne Lamott

God Is the Answer

By Dana Gatlin

Chapter IX

Out of the Rut

Are you in a rut? Mentally, physically, or by force of material circumstances, do you feel that you are and wish that some lucky event or benevolent person would come along and pull you out? But these things don't seem to happen to you. Do you wish you could pull yourself out, up to greater efficiency, happiness, and success, but don't see how? Well, you can. There's a way you can pull yourself out of any kind of rut that exists in this workaday world.

You may think that your limited surroundings or certain conditions are at fault. But no outer condition need have any influence on your happiness and achievement. Within yourself you have the capacity to be stronger, bigger, surer than you have ever been before. The day I made this startling, invigorating discovery the transformation of my life began. I can now feel only gratitude for the seeming afflictions that turned me despairingly to God, for all my life theretofore I had felt dependent on outer props and circumstances for my help.

One day I was feeling tired and discouraged and wishing that things might turn out more happily for a while. I had been thinking of my problems, of the changes I should like to bring about, of the duties and tasks for which I had no liking or strength, and gradually I began to think of God, to whom I had so vainly prayed. Just who and what was God; just what would He do to start setting things right for Himself, were He here right now in my human place?

These inner experiences are hard to describe. But while I sat envisaging God, so to speak, taking charge of my personal situation as if

it were His situation, a flash of illumination penetrated my jaded, inert mind. Would God be sick, despondent, and weak with vain wishing? No! God would be strong, confident, competent. God would think, would act, would do.

I felt as if something inside me had been under the manipulation of an expert masseur. It must have been a direct renewal of my spirit; for eagerly, conscious of no effect, I began to plan courses of action that would lift me up from my mental rut. I could hardly wait to get at some of those tasks, which a short while previously had seemed arduous, tedious, disagreeable-and some of them intimidating. For this is often the reason hidden back of our sluggishness and failure to act: fear. Oh, the surface of our mind puts forth all kinds of excuses, but the recesses of it have shrunk down into their ruts, because they are afraid to rouse themselves and try for something better. Instinctively we are afraid to try again-because we are afraid we'll just fail again and get hurt again!

But now as I envisaged God sitting in my human place, as it were, something inside me was jolted from its lethargy, galvanizing it into new resolution. It was as if someone spoke: "Act as if you were a child of God. Let God act in you. Can God fail?"

Remember God is living energy to quicken, increase, and guide our own energy. Spirit is a living elixir to lift up, sustain, and establish our own spirit.

We can get in a rut even when we pray. We ask God to work miracles for us while we sit not very hopeful or stew in our own juice impatient or resigned. In our daily efforts we drudge too much in the drab mood of duty or repining. It takes all the life and spirit out of us even though we are inclined to be a bit proud of duties painfully performed, a bit proud of being martyrs. But that's not God's way of doing things. God doesn't love a martyr, not a weak,

timid, cringing, complaining soul. God doesn't love joy killers, joy evaders. Of course this statement isn't strictly true, for God impartially loves everybody. But God cannot infuse Himself as life, power, and joy into the man who denies Him and cuts Him off. We can never benefit fully from God's love and wisdom unless we feel and act as if we are a part of Him. God is able to give us every good gift, to enrich our life and to aid us in every earthly enterprise. When we won't recognize and take the gift, then we must do without it.

Often we are held back by our doubts and often we make too much of an effort to trust God. We seem unable to take God-good-for granted simply, to take Him spontaneously and naturally, as we take our heartbeats and the air we breathe. It seems difficult to accept Him with certitude and unquestioning, native joy. If you were positive that some great good was about to come into your life, what would be your inner feeling, your mood? This inner attitude or state of feeling is analogous to that greater, transcendent mood of absolute assurance and joy that colors your entire being when you feel yourself to be a part, a living expression, of God, of all good.

Do you want to be more successful? Are you in the rut of nonsuccess, and do you want to lift yourself out? There is a way.

Suppose you were out of a job and God should go forth to seek the job in your stead. Would He be able to get it? Would He show the same qualifications that you are showing? If not, how would they be altered? Suppose God were sick: could He make Himself well? Suppose God had to perform a difficult or a distasteful task, or were set down in the midst of inharmonious surroundings. In any situation you can imagine, you can imagine God there and how He would act. And remember He is waiting to act through you. Do you imagine that God would not be able to control His

temper, or that He would slack up and show poor, demeaned abilities, or that He would get frightened and scurry away from a spectacle of human distress, or that He would complain bitterly about a seeming injustice, or feel sorry for Himself, or lament, "I don't see what on earth I am going to do"?

No! That is not how any of us envisage God. Nor it is how we should envisage ourselves as the children, each of us a living expression, of God. In our daily habits and enterprises we don't live sufficiently in the expectancy and mood of God, of good. Even if we were positive that some great good was about to come into our life, we do not seem certain that we should be in the mood for it.

Out of the rut! Cease believing in what isn't good, in what is weak, inadequate, futile, in what doesn't measure up to God. Out of the rut of sickness, difficulty, inharmony, insufficiency, failure! Our mind, which thinks so ceaselessly and insistently, is the most marvelous instrument imaginable, but it is up to us to control it and to choose the kind of thoughts we think, to train ourselves into courage, real efficiency, and stability. Even more difficult to control are our moods, emotions, and attitudes, which are so intangible and indefinable but which are such potent factors in determining our experience of life. Yet we can reduce these to simplicity. When a child is going on a picnic, he acts happy. because he feels happy. He feels happy because he is facing a definite, pleasurable experience. This is the way we should feel within, innately and bubblingly and spontaneously, at every moment and in every undertaking of our life, because we are facing God, good.

God, good, in me, with me, for me-in, with, for everybody, everything. Everything I think, do, see, or feel is simply a part of God, of good. Why should I feel hopeless or unhappy? God isn't hopeless or

unhappy, is He? Why should I or anybody else be sick? Almighty Spirit is not sick. Why should I be angry, impatient, short-tempered? For this is a state where my feelings are concerned, and I can't be any of these ugly, undesirable things if I am engrossed with the glorious sensation of being a part of God. Why should I be suspicious, hesitant, doubtful, shrinking in my hidden, innermost nature? Why, I can't be if I am intimately interwoven with the very nature of immanent, omnipotent good; if my moods and feelings are of the very same stuff and substance that constitutes God. Why should I feel anxious, uneasy, or inadequate, or fear that I might fail? Does God fear for the success of His enterprise? Does He shrink, tremble, grow paralyzed, or faint? No!

Fearlessly let go of them: all the little bothers, the irritations, the jealousies, the dislikes. Do not give them any room in your mind. Let go of your disappointments, your sense of inadequacy, of discouragement, of failure. It does you no good to harbor such feelings. You only weaken yourself more and more. You will be astonished at what an invigorating effect it will have on you to let them go. The actual griefs, the bitter sorrows, the tragedies, the irreparable sense of human loss: let these go too. It does you no good to cling to these and brood over them; it does nobody any good. Let them go and let God help you build something happy and worthwhile into your life.

In any situation try to contemplate God's relationship to you and His attitude toward the situation. Then, boldly take over this same attitude as much as you can; definitely become a part of God, good. Do this in your difficulties and you will find them strangely melting out of your consciousness. You are no longer disturbed by them; they have lost their power over you. Presently you will find that they have disappeared or have taken on an improved form in your outer experience. Within your own hidden,

vital nature God is renewing and rebuilding you, equipping you with the wisdom and strength to master every emergency. This is the way to live Truth. When Truth is lived, demonstrations take care of themselves.

I can freely and effectively bless my body or any case of sickness in another by quickening my realization of God as free-flowing life and all good. I can feel about my body just as God would feel about His materialized body and just as if my body were His own-which it really is. I can feel this same way about anything with which I am in any way concerned. I can feel just as God would feel under these same circumstances-just as He does feel-in and through my uplifted consciousness when I lift myself up to Him and let Him. His mighty presence becomes a part of my self. He fills me with His life, His power, His perfection of good.

The warp and woof of our daily experience is woven of our thoughts, beliefs, and feelings toward ourselves and toward our world. We are humanly hampered by our sense of present limitations and by the ghosts of old doubts and fears. Our human instincts are often so deeply buried in us that it is difficult to rout them out into the open, to take control of them, and definitely to banish them if they need banishing. But it can be done.

Release your problem when you turn to God. Dare to say to yourself, "I have no troubles." Dare to feel that way. Remember God, good: "I have no troubles!" If you are tired, seemingly handicapped, or discouraged, He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world. I AM! "Lo, I am with you always." A tingling new impulse from within will enliven you into new activity. It will stir you, engross you, and make you forget your sense of trouble.

This new impetus is distinctly a thing of the mind, the spirit. It is not so much a matter of mere determination as of uplifted mood,

changed in color and feeling, carrying its own sense of inevitable follow-through. By its sheer intangible strength this changed mood carries you over the previous mental impasse, over the physical obstacles, which for the moment you forget. The fresh, new, glad slant in your mind buoys you up, revivifies you. You give yourself over to it, your new mood of happy conviction activates you: *"God in the midst of me is mighty! I cannot fail!"*

It is the same situation perhaps, but there are new life, new purpose, new opportunities, new slants, new outlooks! a new spirit of optimism and purpose, practiced faithfully but never mechanically-livingly.

Every day lift yourself up in your own mind, mood, imagination, sheer inner conviction. Every day do something with a sense of freedom and spontaneity, something you've wanted to do or felt you should do, but have shirked because of inertia or fear. Start right now. Make a program for yourself. Every day try to do something to make life pleasanter for others, not from a sense of duty or in hope of a reward, but because of the sheer pleasure of being able to do it. Then behold how these active, happy inner states increase and grow, to bless you and transform you, to transform and bless your world.

The all-wise, all-loving, all-adjusting power of Christ is now lifted up in me, filling me with enduring health and strength. I trust in God and am not afraid.



From Page One

A person, for instance, may have a most disagreeable and unpleasant neighbor. Nothing seems to help the situation; the neighbor only seems to grow more hateful. So the person moves to get away from the neighbor. In the different locality, with different neighbors, he often finds it to be the same old story. A new neighbor appears on the scene, as hateful as, if not worse than, the one before.

Until we meet a situation from within, learn from it, grow through it, we shall find it facing us again and again—in a different shape and form perhaps, but essentially the same problem.

We do not need to meet the same problems again and again. We have great capacities for spiritual growth within us. The more we are aware of ourselves as spiritual beings, the more we realize that we are one with the Mind of God, the more we shall grow and unfold and come into the possession and use of our full powers.

There are splendid potentialities in us all; we are meant for greatness and goodness. We have a larger work to do than we can envision. Just as true education is not a cramming into the mind of knowledge from without but a drawing forth of the innate wisdom that is within, so our powers are developed as we let go of outer striving and work inwardly.

Prayer is a way of calling into expression all the God-powers and God-potentialities that are within us. True prayer is a lifting of our thoughts and feelings, a lifting of our whole being to God. True prayer is the realization of oneness with God, the realization in which the little self drops away and we stand tall in the

What ARE You Thankful for?

divine Presence, we know ourselves as children of light.

It is prayer that quickens our awareness, that inspires us to use Truth in our thinking, that releases the force of love in us and through us.

When we are aware of the powers within us, when we gauge our attitudes and reactions by the Christ standard of love and understanding, of wisdom and forgiveness, we learn and grow every day of our lives. We are not only shaped and molded as before by experiences, but now as possessors of spiritual power we shape and mold our world. We are not at the mercy of conditions. We see the power of God at work, no matter what the appearances; and we call the transforming power into activity through our faith and through our words of Truth.

If we find ourselves in the midst of some situation that seems difficult or hard to bear, if we are having trouble getting along with some person, if for any reason we are troubled or unhappy, let us look at these situations, these persons, these conditions, and say: "You are my teachers. I have something to learn from you." To face life in this way is to find ourselves, to discover that the power of God is with us. We will no longer wish that we were in some place other than where we are now. We will see that we do indeed stand on holy ground.

Martha Smock (1913–1984) served as editor of Unity's *Daily Word* magazine for 35 years. This article is an excerpt from her book, *Meet It with Faith*.

June 2015

the power For thine is the
kingdom, and the kingdom, and the

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 <i>AA Men's Group</i> 10 AM <i>CA 7PM</i>	4 <i>Yoga Class</i> 4-5 PM <i>Ukulele Practice</i> 7 PM	5	6 <i>Choir Rehearsal</i> 9AM
7 <i>Sunday Services</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM <i>Bell Choir</i> 12PM	8	9 <i>Book Club</i> <i>The Book Thief</i> <i>by Markus Zusak</i> <i>@ Bread Co,</i> 2 PM	10 <i>AA Men's Group</i> 10 AM <i>CA 7PM</i> <i>Route 66 Jazz</i> <i>Orchestra</i> <i>Concert, 7:30pm</i>	11 <i>Yoga Class</i> 4-5 PM	12	13 <i>Choir Rehearsal</i> 9AM
14 <i>Sunday Services</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM <i>Bell Choir</i> 12PM	15 <i>Ladies' Night</i> <i>Out, 5:30 pm at</i> <i>McGurk's Irish</i> <i>Pub and Garden</i> 1200 Russell Blvd	16	17 <i>AA Men's Group</i> 10 AM <i>CA 7PM</i>	18 <i>Yoga Class</i> 4-5 PM <i>Ukulele Practice</i> 7 PM	19	20 <i>Choir Rehearsal</i> 9AM
21 <i>Father's Day</i> <i>Sunday Services</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM <i>Bell Choir</i> 12PM <i>Birthday Potluck</i>	22	23	24 <i>AA Men's Group</i> 10 AM <i>CA 7PM</i>	25 <i>Yoga Class</i> 4-5 PM	26 <i>Ladies' Lunch</i> <i>Out, 11:30am at</i> <i>Outback</i> 5240 S Lindbergh	27 <i>Choir Rehearsal</i> 9AM
28 <i>Sunday Services</i> 10:30 AM <i>Youth Ed</i> 10:30 AM <i>Bell Choir</i> 12PM	29	30				

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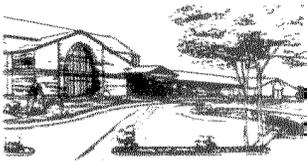
THE JUNE 2015 NEWSLETTER OF
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The light side -- A little holy humor

Zen Sarcasm

It's always darkest before dawn. So if you're going to steal your neighbor's newspaper, that's the time to do it.

Don't be irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.

Always remember that you're unique. Just like everyone else.

Never test the depth of the water with both feet.

If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments.

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.

If you lent someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.

Some days you're the bug; some days you're the windshield.

A closed mouth gathers no foot.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it back in your pocket.

Duct tape is like "The Force". It has a light side and a dark side, and it holds the universe together.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

Generally speaking, you aren't learning much when your lips are moving.

And never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.