

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

November
2015

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

Inside this issue:

News and events

Truth Thoughts

Quotable Quotes

Calendar

Humor

God Is the Answer
Dana Gatlin

Child of God

By Mary-Alice and Richard Jafolla

The shrill whistle of the River Queen pierced the stillness as the majestic paddleboat rounded a bend in the Mississippi. A handful of fishermen along with a small boy waved from the levee in excitement and awe.

"Let me ride! Let me ride!" yelled the boy, waving wildly and jumping up and down as the boat was about to slip by. One of the fishermen tried to calm the child, explaining that the River Queen was a large and important boat and could not stop to give rides to little boys. Yet the boy persisted, and all the more animatedly waved and shouted, "Let me ride!"



Imagine the stares of disbelief when the great boat edged its way to the levee and a gangplank was lowered so that one small boy could scamper onto the large deck.

Then all at once the captain appeared, arms outstretched toward the child. "Daddy, Daddy!" called the boy, as he jumped into his father's loving arms.

YOUR REAL PARENT

Jesus explained that earthly fathers want to give their children everything they can, and

yet so much greater is God's desire to give us everything. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." God denies you nothing.

It's true that not every earthly father is a paragon of loving kindness who gives the very best he can give. (Who of us is always operating from that divinity within?) While

in general it is natural for fathers to want to protect and nurture their young, even the most perfect of earthly fathers, no matter how loving and well intentioned, is unable to know exactly what is best for his child or is capable of endlessly giving unlimited good to that child. Yet God is.

In a very real sense, God is the true parent of us all. We were created to be the vehicles through which God can best express. Surely this gives us some hint of the absolute love and care which are invested in each of us.

--Continued on Page Six



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**November 14
10:00 a.m.**

All church cleaning day
Please join us to help spruce up
our church if you can.

On Saturday, November 28th we will be decorating our church home for Christmas. Won't you join us at 10:00 and stay for pizza after our church is all decked out in its Christmas best?



This month the **Ladies' Night Out Group** will be at Kirkwood station restaurant, 105 E. Jefferson Ave. off Kirkwood road at 5:30. For more information call Mary Tumminello Home: 314-843-1807 Cell: 314-814-4530.



November 10: Myrtle Fillmore, Mother of Unity by Thomas Witherspoon. (There are 2 or 3 books in the lending library. I have also ordered four used books from Amazon at about \$5.00 a piece. Let me know who wants one. Not sure of the condition.)

December 8: Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown

(Anyone who wants to attend the meetings are welcome, male or female, whether they have read the book or not.)

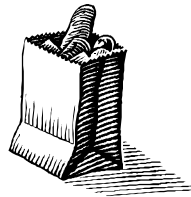
Laughter Yoga with Jodi will be in recess until further notice.



Feed My People ... for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

-Matthew 25:35

www.feed-my-people.org



We appreciate our volunteers! Most people's first impression of our church comes from the smiling faces and warm welcomes of our greeters and ushers. Let us know if you would like to be a part of this important ministry.



Dean Christopher and his band will present a Concert on November 21st at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets, available at church or at the door, are \$20. Join us for a fun, funny, and fabulous musical evening.

All Unity Thanksgiving Service, November 25th at 7:00 pm. at Unity Church of Light, St. Charles.

ALL-UNITY Thanksgiving Worship



Coming Soon:

December 2: Route 66 Jazz Band Concert & Chili Dinner

6:00 p.m. - Dinner

7:30 p.m. - Concert

December 20: Christmas Candle Lighting Ceremony, Pot Luck Dinner & Christmas Party

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, near the elevator, continues to grow. 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. There are also many other favorites for you to enjoy, written by other New Thought and spiritual thinkers.



November Affirmations

Inner Peace: I am calm, centered, and serene.

Guidance: Spirit guides me to my highest good.

Healing: Healing life renews my whole being.

Prosperity: God is my all. I am grateful and abundantly blessed.

World Peace: I live in harmony and envision a world at peace.

Wings

November, 2015
Page 2

grat-i-tude

[grat i tood]

noun
the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness

The Power of Gratitude

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns

denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.

—Melody Beattie

On God's Side

Ever been picked last for a team? Eugene Peterson recounts feeling like a “liability” when this happened to him. In *Run With the Horses* (IVP Books), he says God always wants us on his side — no matter our individual strengths or weaknesses:

“For a long time all Christians called each other ‘saints.’ They were all saints regardless of how well or badly they lived, of how experienced or inexperienced they were. The word *saint* did not refer to the quality or virtue of their acts, but to the kind of life to which they had been chosen, life on a battlefield. It was not a title given after a spectacular performance, but a mark of whose side they were on.”

Based on its Latin roots, *saint* is the noun form of the verb *consecrate*; in other words, Peterson adds, God gave us “spiritual shape” even before we had “biological shape” (see Jeremiah 1:5). Even before forming us, God set us apart, or consecrated us, as saints — and chose us to be on his side.

From Harm to Good

Squanto, the Native American who helped the Pilgrims, has a background remarkably similar to that of Joseph in Genesis.

Years before the Pilgrims arrived in America, English traders kidnapped Squanto and other Native Americans and sold them as slaves in

Spain. Incredibly, Squanto was bought by monks, who set him free and taught him about Jesus. Later Squanto sailed to England, hoping for passage to America. But he had to wait years, so he worked as a stable hand and learned English. Finally able to travel home, he was devastated to find his tribe wiped out by smallpox.

A couple of years later, the Pilgrims came ashore, tired, sick and having lost many shipmates on the way. Implausibly, they encountered an English-speaking Native American, who shared his friendship and knowledge. Like Joseph going from his homeland to Egypt and from slave to expert leader, Squanto experienced God's leading — even when the path was littered with misfortune.

Using Squanto, God saved a whole community. What some intended for harm, God turned into good (see Genesis 50:20).

Some Perspective

We can be thankful to a friend for a few acres, or a little money; and yet for the freedom and command of the whole earth, and for the great benefits of our being, our life, health and reason, we look upon ourselves as under no obligation.

—Seneca the Elder
(54 B.C.–39 A.D.)

In Sync

Need another reason to join the choir? Consider this: Neuroscientists in Sweden discovered that singers' heartbeats tend to synchronize, which leads to a sense of emotional calm and bonding.

“Joint action leads to joint perspectives,” write the researchers. “In other words, singers may change their egocentric perspective of the world to a ‘we-perspective,’ which causes them to perceive the world from the same point of view.”

So start singing — and enjoy the many benefits and blessings of being part of a choir!



“Quotable Quotes”

Were there no God, we would be in this glorious world with grateful hearts; and no one to thank.

—Christina Rossetti

Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.

—William Arthur Ward

Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.

—Aesop (6th century B.C.)

If the only prayer you said in your entire life was “thank you,” that would suffice.

—Meister Eckhardt

Fight truth decay; study the Bible daily.

—Anonymous

No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave.

—Calvin Coolidge

It is the heart that gives; the fingers just let go.

—Nigerian proverb

Grace is like “grits” at a Southern breakfast. It's there ... you don't ask for it; it's just given to you.

—Henry Barton

The charity that is a trifle to us can be precious to others.

—Homer

People who think they are too big to do little things are perhaps too little to be asked to do big things.

—Anonymous

When I give, I give myself.

—Walt Whitman

A coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous.

—Unknown

God Is the Answer

By Dana Gatlin

Chapter XIV

One Thing I Do

ARE YOU AFRAID OF SOMETHING? Afraid that you will not be able to find a job, or to hold the one you have? Afraid that you won't be able to pay the rent, to meet the note coming due at the bank, or even to buy food to eat tomorrow? Do you feel the grip of terror at your heart, knowing not which way to turn, knowing not what next to do? There is one thing to do. There is really just one important thing to do. Trust God.

Have you quarreled with a friend? Is there an inharmonious condition in your home? Is your heart rankling under a slight or an injustice? In your hurt and perturbation do you feel so confused, so much awry, and so unhappy that you are not certain just what to do? There is one thing to do that is all important. Remember God.

Are you ill, in physical pain? Has the doctor given you an alarming report? Have medicines failed to relieve you; have your symptoms increased; are you fearful about the outcome? — so fearful that you don't know what would be best for you to do? There is one thing you should do quickly. Do it as quickly as you can; do it over and over; try to live in a state of doing it. Do it from the bottom of your heart, with the full strength of your body and mind. Then it is time to turn wholeheartedly to God.

Are you in some minor quandary, beset by some major decision? It makes no difference what the trouble may be or what its nature. How big or how small. Remember quickly. Remember this and this alone. Know that it is the principal thing to know, the one vital thing, that it is true, and that it will somehow cover everything—that it will suffice. Remember this:

God is here. God understands.

God cares. God knows how to help. God can. *God will!*

Have you something to do, and you are not sure that you know how to do it? Has your confidence in yourself, in your strength or wisdom or ability, been somehow weakened, perhaps shattered? Has your courage ebbed, your energy dwindled, and is your enthusiasm low? Is your mind a tired, soggy blank and your heart a weight in your chest because there is something very important you must do and you have lost faith in your ability to do it? Then this is the time of times to have faith in God!

God *is* here. You can't see Him or touch Him, but He is here. God knows. God cares. God knows how to help. God can. *God will!*

Sometimes this basic thought is all that the perplexed or tormented soul can hold onto for a while. But it is enough—God. Just God. Illimitable, infallible, omnipotent. "Omnipotent"—think of what that really means. Think of what those other words mean: *infallible*, *illimitable*. Just what does God mean to you? Formulate the highest and most sweeping conception of God that you can, and try to draw yourself up to this conception. Just God.

One thing: God! acting His mightiest in you and for you. Recognize Him, trust Him; forgetting all else, just remember God.

Oh, the indescribable, blessed relief of remembering God. Of just throwing all else away. Not trying to bring distressing details to His attention just throwing them away. God knows. He can. He will know just what to do. He will tell you—me--what to do. God is in charge, and there is absolutely nothing to worry about or to fear. God Himself has taken charge. God cannot fail. Nothing can thwart God, nothing can stand against Him.

Just throwing everything else away and throwing yourself on God—oh, blessed relief! There is nothing else in the world like it, the blessed assuagement, the comfort, the balm. And the growing

assurance, which grows and pours in like a strong, mighty tide: "God will take care of it, He will help me. I am unified with God, and one with God is a majority. He will tell me what to do, the answer will come. All is well, for my trust is in God.

"With God all things are possible: It is not I, 'but the Father abiding in me doeth his works: God! God Himself, Lord of hosts! He who sets the stars in their courses, who feeds the sparrows, and holds the universe in the palm of His hand! God! who loves me, who knows, who cares, and who can. He leadeth me. He is my shepherd, and I shall not want. He guides my way. He brings me by paths I have not known. He makes darkness light before me and crooked places straight. God, loving, almighty Father, I place myself and all that pertains to me in Thy care,"

Yes, the answer will come. Do not doubt it. In the moment when you have thrown everything else away and simply thrown yourself on Him, you do not doubt it. Hold to this realization. Every time the old harrowing indecisions and torments start creeping back, remember quickly. Remember God. This is enough. At your first glint of remembrance your sense of trouble began dimming and falling away. You felt calmed and strengthened by just remembering the peace and strength of almighty God, by letting His peace and strength flow into and through you. You felt the dawn of a new personal strength and courage. Each time you turn to Him more strength and courage will come. The answer will come. As surely as the sun rises, God will help you when, forgetting all else, you remember Him and turn to Him and throw yourself on Him in faith, believing.

"One thing I do." As we turn to God more and more, and seek to know Him better, and seek to do as He tells us and to think His thoughts after Him, we find that this phrase is a sort of magic formula. Did you ever think to yourself how wonderful it would be if you were happy—just

happy?

Suppose some morning when you awake, you say to yourself:

"Today I am going to be happy. Today shall be a happy day for me. One thing I will do today. I will let this be God's day, I will consecrate it to Him, In it I will be happy."

Surely this is a meritorious resolve. Surely if life is worth living, if a single day of life is worth living, it should be filled with happiness. It is a glorious realization when we really grasp the fact that happiness does not depend on outer things, on external conditions, or on any trend of events. We are so accustomed to believing that happiness does depend on such things that it is difficult to shake off the belief, but if we can once free ourselves from it, we are gloriously free. Happiness—pure joy—is from within. It is a spiritual entity, a free, inalienable, untouchable gift of God. It doesn't depend on this or that. It doesn't have to be created. It is. As God is. It exists, together with peace, love, wisdom, and the other spiritual gifts, in that realm of eternal, boundless light and life that lies back of the sense world of limitation. It exists there, free and boundless, waiting to be recognized, claimed, called forth.

When you awake in the morning, what a thrill of gratitude comes from remembering this, realizing its truth. God's joy is prepared for you, awaiting you, to be accepted in your heart. Call to it, "Joy! Joy! Joy!" Know that it is there, contingent on nothing, on no outer happening whatever. It is there, full and free, boundless, just waiting to pour forth its beautiful, golden happiness within you—to pour itself forth as spontaneously as the glad hearted song of a bird. It is there, without any effort of your human contrivance to create it. It is there, happiness and joy, God's free gift to His children. Merely by remembering, by thinking of this wonderful spiritual essence within you, you can feel it stir, and can feel it begin to flow through your being like some marvelous elixir.

Happiness, joy! Dependent on no outer circumstance, it is God's own gift, now and forever, your very own, and nothing can ever take it away from you.

Later in the day human cares and problems may arise and the sense of that marvelous inflow may be dimmed, lost. But recall yourself quickly; remember; call it back. "One thing I do." This is God's day. He wants me to partake of His abounding joy. Today I will recognize and partake and be happy within—today this 'one thing I do.' "Over and over you may have to remind yourself, but if you are faithful, if you persevere, you will be amazed at the results. You will feel better. You will cease making demands on people and their behavior for your happiness. Contrary conditions will not have the power to upset you so much; you can always turn again to your invisible treasure. You will discover in a dozen pleasant ways that "the joy of Jehovah is your strength." And there will be many wonderful results in the outer to surprise you.

A woman whose health was broken, whose affairs were in disorder, and whose courage was spent, was led to play a kind of game with words. At first she used it as a game to occupy her time and mind. She took a thesaurus and wrote down all the synonyms of *courage* that she could find. These synonyms led her to other words with related but variant meanings. These led to still others, and the first thing she knew she had several pages filled with lists of words, words expressing different degrees and shades of meaning of strength, power, joy, light, kindness, resolve, health, harmony, beneficence, and peace. All the words were uplifting, helpful, and constructive, although many of them seemed far removed from the word with which she had originally started. But meanwhile something had happened. She had become so interested in her "game" that she never knew just when or how she

had re-found her own courage. But she had. She must have done so, for she found herself quickened and very eager to tackle her problems from a new, hopeful, and entirely optimistic angle. She found herself regaining her health and strength almost magically and, best of all, she found herself feeling actually lighthearted and happy even before her material problems had been straightened out, and these, too, soon became disentangled. "The joy of Jehovah is your strength." Courage!

"One thing I do." Choose a good thing, and begin to do it. First and foremost, above everything else, admonish yourself, "I will trust God." Trust Him. Rely on Him! Resolve to yourself, "I will be happy. I will be cheerful. I will be peaceful. I will be kind." Definitely pick out the line of your experiment, and set to. Give yourself over to it. If you forget, if you find yourself pulled away by the tugs of old mental habit, by undesirable kinks in your daily living, don't be disheartened. Simply return and begin again. Simply remember: "One thing I do." Be faithful. Practice being faithful to this one thing with every bit of your mind and with your whole heart.

You will be rewarded.

God knows how. God can. *God will!*

(This completes the book *God Is the Answer* by Dana Gatlin.)

From Page One

OUR FATHER

It is easy to say, "I am a child of God." Many of us learned to say it in Sunday school when we were small: "I am a child of God. I am a child of God." It trips off the tongue so glibly, yet how many of us know what we are saying? How many of us understand what those words imply? How many of us, when we say it, internalize it and feel the far-reaching impact of those words?

Jesus often referred to God as "Father." The prayer which He taught us began with "Our Father," and those two words alone contain just about everything we have to know about ourselves and our relationship to God and to each other. This one small phrase tells us we are all created by and loved by the Creator, which makes the entire human race brothers and sisters in the truest sense of the words. Each of us has an equal claim to all that the Father has.

ACCESS TO ALL THAT GOD IS

To be a child of God is the ultimate gift the universe can bestow. We are told, we are made in the image and likeness of God. Just as humanly we carry the genes of our parents, so we also bear the characteristics of our cosmic parent. The difference is that we may not carry all of the characteristics of our human parents. One parent's eyes may be brown and the other's blue. They may be short and we may be tall. Hair color may vary and personalities too. But in the case of our divine inheritance, we inherit everything. God is love, and so we, too, are love. God is wholeness, so also are we. God is absolute abundance, and that is our nature as well. Whatever God is we are part of, because we are part of God. Any attribute of God must



automatically reflect itself in each of us. How could it be otherwise?

Regrettably, we don't always realize who and what we are, and that leads to all kinds of unnecessary detours in the journey. In our frenzy to find what we already have, we search for something that was never lost.

Why is it that we often refuse to claim what is ours by divine inheritance? Seldom taking advantage of all that is ours, we too often settle for so much less.

Being a child of God means we have complete access to all that God is. That's stupendous! It means we lack nothing, that each of us is special and crucially important to the Creator. All that "the Father" has is ours. What an incredible endowment! It's as if we have a bank account that can never be depleted, no matter what.

WE BECOME WHAT WE THINK WE ARE

The ugly duckling could never be more than a duck until it realized that it was a graceful swan. A duck is all that it thought it was. What we believe about ourselves determines our lives.

When we know, really know, that we are children of God, we will begin acting as if that were true. Children of God! Offspring of the Creator of the universe! Inheritors of all that God has!

It is God's good pleasure to give us the riches of the kingdom. A feast has been prepared for us. If we haven't begun to claim this absolute good, it is not too late. It is never too late. No matter how far we might have drifted, that unlimited good is always waiting quietly in the wings for us to accept it. Everything is there for us: peace, joy, health, prosperity, love. Whatever the Father has is ours.

It is yours, today, because you are a child of God. Take your place at the banquet table.

Excerpted from *The Quest, A Journey of Spiritual Rediscovery*



I Am There

James Dillet Freeman

Do you need Me?

I am there.

You cannot see Me, yet I am the light you see by.

You cannot hear Me, yet I speak through your voice.

You cannot feel Me, yet I am the power at work in your hands.

I am at work, though you do not understand My ways.

I am at work, though you do not recognize My works.

I am not strange visions. I am not mysteries.

Only in absolute stillness, beyond self, can you know Me as I am, and then but as a feeling and a faith.

Yet I am there. Yet I hear. Yet I answer.

When you need Me, I am there.

Even if you deny Me, I am there.

Even when you feel most alone, I am there.

Even in your fears, I am there.

Even in your pain, I am there.

I am there when you pray and when you do not pray. Though your faith in Me is unsure, My faith in you never wavers, because I know you, because I love you.

Beloved, I am there.

Wings

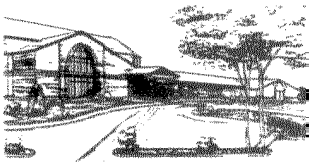
THE NOVEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER OF
FIRST UNITY CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS

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The light side -- A little holy humor

During a lesson on 1 Kings 18, a Sunday school teacher explained the confrontation between the prophet Elijah and the false prophets of Baal. He described how Elijah built the altar, placed wood on it, prepared the bull, laid it on the altar and instructed God's people to pour water over the altar.

"Now," the teacher asked, "can anyone tell me why they would've poured water over the animal?"

A girl eagerly raised her hand and answered, "To make the gravy!"

A pastor tells about a 2-year-old boy who heard the worship leader say: "The Lord is one"

Tugging at his mother's arm, the child whispered to her, "When will the Lord be two, like I am?"

After starting a new diet, I altered my drive to work to avoid passing my favorite bakery. I accidentally drove by the bakery this morning and there in the window was a host of goodies. I felt this was no accident, so I prayed, "Lord, it is up to you. If you want me to have any of those delicious baked goods, create a parking place for me directly in front of the bakery."

And sure enough, God answered my prayer! On the eighth time round the block, there it was!

"There will be a meeting of the Board immediately after the service," announced the pastor.

After the close of the service, the Church Board gathered at the back of

the auditorium for the announced meeting. But there was a stranger in their midst -- a visitor who had never attended their church before.

"My friend," said the pastor, "Didn't you understand that this is a meeting of the Board?"

"Yes," said the visitor, "and after today's sermon, I suppose I'm just about as bored as anyone else who came to this meeting."

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What happens when someone's conscience bothers them?"

A boy spoke up and said, "It makes you tell your mother what you did before your sister tells on you."