



CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ
Published Semi-Monthly
December 1, 2009



150 Years and Going Strong



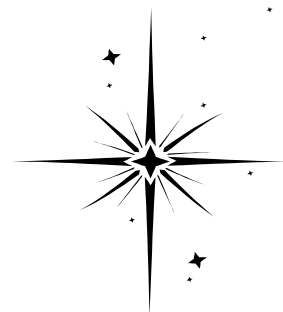
*No matter who you are
or where you are
on life's journey,
you'll find a home here!*

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Cottage Grove
United Church of Christ
7008 Lamar Avenue South
Cottage Grove, MN. 55016-2397
Tel: 651-459-1501
Email: cgucc@usfamily.net
Web: www.cgucc.org

Advent Events



Thursday, December 3

*7:00 p.m. Ecumenical Christmas Service at
Newport Lutheran Church*

Sunday, December 6, Second Sunday of Advent

*9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship
11:30 a.m. Take Home Lunch Sale*

Thursday, December 10

*5:30 p.m. Toys for Tots
6:30 p.m. Women's Fellowship Christmas Party*

Sunday, December 13, Third Sunday of Advent

*9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship
Women's Fellowship Bake Sale*

Monday, December 14

7:00 p.m. Annual Congregation Meeting

Thursday, December 17

5:30 p.m. Toys for Tots

Friday, December 18

*6:30 p.m. Confirmation Class Gift Wrapping
6:30 p.m. Y.A.H.O.O. Christmas Party*

Saturday, December 19

*9:30 a.m. Practice for Christmas Pageant
12:15 p.m. Sunday School Children's Bowling Party*

Sunday, December 20, Fourth Sunday of Advent

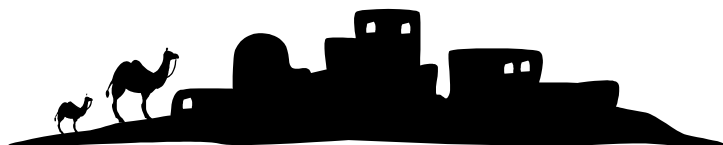
*9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship with Sunday School Christmas Pageant
11:30 Take Home Lunch Sale*

Thursday, December 24, Christmas Eve

*4:30 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service
10:00 p.m. Candles and Communion Christmas Eve Service*

Sunday, December 27, First Sunday after Christmas

*No Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship*



Rev. Désirée H. Gold, Pastor

Office Hours
Tuesday—Thursday
10:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Office Phone:
(651) 459-1501

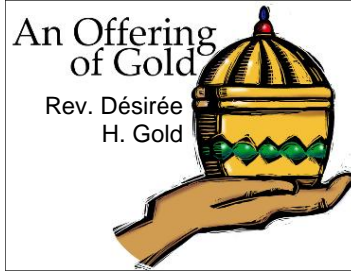
Rev. Gold's e-mail:
pastorgold@inbox.com



PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

Nita Bertram; Daniel Bies; Eric Bies; Joyce & Jerry Biscoe (death of Joyce's mother); Bill & Isabel Board; Ron Bonnevier; Bill Bothun; Beth Davies; Don Hanson; Gayle Korth; Chris Miller; Sandy Rabe; Jamie & Adam Roberts; Lucy Spicer; families facing unemployment issues; all those who have the flu.

Angie Barta (Doreen Barta's mother-in-law); Howard Biscoe (Rob Biscoe's brother); Dorothy Brown (Ashley & Luke Longmair's great-aunt); Abi Christopherson (Elaine Mitchell's friend); Cheryl (Joyce Fries' daughter); Diane (friend of Carole Weitzel Biscoe); Jim Gregory; Kandy & David Hartson (Pastor Gold's parents); Donna Johnson (Gary Afdahl's mother-in-law); Ken & Nora Krahn (missionaries); Denise Heschke Krech (Marilyn's Heschke's daughter); Richard Lara (in prison); Margie Mattison and family (Farmers' Market vendor); Fred Minster (Stan Barta's cousin); Allison Rathlisberger (Doris Fiedler's great-granddaughter); Mary Schmidt (Karen Schmidt's mother-in-law); Stordalen family; Gene Sauve; Midge Youngquist's grandmother and mother.



An Offering of Gold

Rev. Désirée H. Gold

As we look ahead to the four weeks of Advent -- the beginning of the Church Year, the four weeks of preparation before Christmas—I would like to share with you an article by one of my greatest teachers and favorite writers: my father, Dr. David Hartson. He recently resigned as pastor of Congregational United Church of Christ in Argusville, ND, and this is the article he wrote for their December 2007 newsletter. It is printed with his permission, and I have updated certain parts to reflect the realities of 2009.

Advent begins on November 29* and includes the four Sundays preceding Christmas. It is the liturgical season when we prepare for the celebration of the truth Jesus brought to the world about God and the Empire of God.

We have much that keeps us from this recognition of the joy and peace that the Messiah brings:

- The secular world prepares for Christmas by decorating and shopping
- The cold and sometimes bitter winter can make life a struggle, especially for those with problems of health, depression, mobility, and money
- The war in the Middle East rages on and on...
- We worry about the economy, terrorism, global warming, health care...and we are left with fear in our hearts and concern on our minds.*

Let us remember that we are a people of the Good News. We are a people whose destiny it is to observe the splendor of God amongst all the chaos. We are the people whose mission it is to bring the light of the birth of Jesus into the world and let it shine in all the darkness. We are the people whose character it is to have gratitude for the past, service to the present and responsibility to the future.

The Empire of God does not burst forth into this world to take away the struggle. Jesus comes to teach us justice for the oppressed, love for all our brothers and sisters throughout the entire world, and a humble and quiet attitude of worship. To do what Jesus asks of us is the greatest struggle and the greatest joy on earth.

Let us go into the darkness of this winter season looking for burning bushes to keep us warm, seeking people that need our care, and rebuilding this dark and wintry world so that it is filled with the light and love of Jesus.

David Hartson

Yes, as we live into this season of contradictions—fear and hope, darkness and light, sadness and celebration—let us prepare ourselves, once again, for the new world Christ brings. Have a blessed Advent.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Désirée Hartson Gold

**Edited from the original*

Pastor Gone

Pastor Gold will be out of the office on Tuesday, December 1 while her mother has surgery at Abbott Northwestern. Pastor Gold will be unavailable for evening meetings November 29—December 5. She plans to be at work during the day on December 2 and 3, and will remain available for pastoral emergencies throughout the week of November 29—December 5.



Sunday School Pageant

The Sunday School children will present their annual Christmas pageant during the worship service on Sunday, December 20. Rehearsals will take place every Sunday in December during Sunday School time. The final dress rehearsal will be Saturday, December 19th from 9:30-11:30 a.m. A pizza party will follow rehearsal. At approximately 12:15 p.m. we will be leaving church to take the kids to the local bowling alley for a bowling party. Please plan to help your children attend for kid-sized fellowship and fun.



There will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board to get an approximate count on who will be participating in bowling. The cost to bowl one game and shoe rental is about \$6.95. We will also need volunteers to transport the kids to the alley.

Brenda Herrmann for the Sunday School

Confirmation

The Confirmation Class along with their mentors continues to meet regularly. Their upcoming meeting is on Saturday, December 5, at 9:30 a.m. Their previously scheduled meeting on Saturday, December 19, has been cancelled.



Service Learning Trip Fundraiser

Lisa Wohlers is a 3rd year graduate student at St. Catherine University working toward her doctorate in physical therapy. As part of the educational experience she is going on a service learning trip to Mississippi. The service learning objective is to provide students with opportunities to assist underserved communities while analyzing issues of race, class, and social justice. Examples of past services students have provided include running youth programs, working in food shelf cafeterias, and providing pro bono medical services at free clinics.



Lisa will be selling soup, bread, and pie on December 6th and 20th as a fundraiser for the trip to Mississippi. This to-go meal is perfect for Sunday lunch or dinner! On December 6th potato soup will be available, and on the 20th turkey wild rice will be on the menu. See Lisa in the Gathering Room after services on those Sundays to pick up these delicious home cooked favorites!

Gratitude Group Christmas Party

On Monday, December 7, Gratitude Group is having their annual Christmas party. They will begin by wrapping gifts for the family they have adopted for Christmas, followed by a pot luck lunch.



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A Periodical Newsletter of
**Cottage Grove United Church
of Christ**

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of every month

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**Back issues available on our
Church web site at
www.cgucc.org**

Submit articles via e-mail at
cgucc@usfamily.net or drop
them off at the office.

Becky Graff, Editor

Contact Us

**Cottage Grove United
Church of Christ**

7008 Lamar Avenue South
Cottage Grove MN 55016
(651)459-1501 www.cgucc.org

Rev. Désirée H. Gold, Pastor
pastorgold@inbox.com

Gary Afdahl, Director of Music

Becky Graff,
Administrative Assistant
cgucc@usfamily.net

**Deb Hanson, Brenda
Herrmann, BobbiJo Janicek**,
Sunday School Team

Sheri Wohlers, Custodian
sherileewohlers@msn.com

*Office Hours: Monday-Friday
9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon*

*An Invitation to All the Ladies of
Cottage Grove UCC
Women's Fellowship Annual Christmas Party
Thursday, December 10th at 6:30 PM
CGUCC Gathering Room*

*Holiday Dinner Catered by Betty Dilla
\$15.00 per Person Includes:*

*Christmas Punch and Nibbles
Tossed Salad with Strawberries, Cranberries with Orange Dressing
Choice of Entrée: Stuffed Boneless Pork Chops, Baked Salmon, or
Chicken Breast with Bacon, Chives and Cheese
Loaded Mashed Potatoes, Green Vegetable, Dinner Rolls
Dessert and Beverages*

Reservations a must!

*Sign up on the Bulletin Board by Sunday, December 6th
Bring a Small Gift for Our Annual Gift Exchange
Questions, contact Elaine Mitchell 651-459-6298 after 6 pm*



Women's Fellowship Mitten Tree

Women's Fellowship will again be sponsoring the Sock and Mitten Tree. It should be in the Gathering Room on Sunday, November 29. All donations (socks, mittens, scarves, caps) will be appreciated by those that need them.

Chris Miller, Women's Fellowship Chairperson



Women's Fellowship Bake Sale

On Sunday, December 13, Women's Fellowship will be having their annual Bake Sale. The Bake Sale will be open before and after church. Proceeds will go toward Women's Fellowship projects. Donations would be appreciated.



Toys for Tots

Jerry Biscoe has set up December 10th and 17th from 5:30 to 8:30 PM for CGUCC members and friends to help at the Toys for Tots warehouse. We will be sorting and boxing toys as they are received at the warehouse. Everyone and their friends are welcome to come and help, as it is always a fun time for all.

We will meet at the church parking lot and leave at 5:00 PM to go to the warehouse, located at 2360 Pilot Knob Road, Mendota Heights. The plan is to be back to the church parking lot by 9:00 PM.



Share the Joy

The 8th/9th grade Confirmation students are helping the Friends in Need Food Shelf this Christmas. The students have decided to adopt a family through Share the Joy 2009. This local family has four children, ages 8 to 15 years of age, and are in need of our help to brighten their holiday season.

Gift tags are available in the Gathering Room with items to purchase for this family. Please take a card, purchase the item, and return (unwrapped) to the church office by Sunday, December 13th. The Confirmation students will gather to wrap all the gifts and deliver to the Cottage Grove Armory on December 19th at 6:30 p.m. The Y.A.H.O.O.'s Christmas Party will follow the wrapping. All youth are invited to attend.



Thanks for all your support!
8th/9th grade students

Major Retailers Want To Give Our Church Money!

Dear Members of CGUCC:

We're pleased to share some exciting news about a new fundraising program for our church. It's called "scrip", and it's the fundraising program that works while you shop.



Scrip is simply a word that means "substitute money" – in other words, scrip is gift certificates from national and local retailers. They're the same gift certificates that you buy at the store. Many popular retailers participate in our scrip program including JCPenney, Kohls, The Gap, Cub Foods, Sam's Club, SuperAmerica, Holiday, Wal-Mart, Pizza Hut, Red Lobster and many, many others.

You're probably asking yourself how these stores help us raise money. It's simple -- scrip participating retailers agree to sell gift certificates to our organization at a discount. Member families like yours buy the certificates for full face value, they redeem them for full face value, and our church keeps the difference as revenue. And scrip is exciting, because everybody wins:

The retailer gets cash up front and repeat business...

You get a powerful fundraising alternative that involves no selling...

Our church gets a regular source of revenue.

The beauty of scrip is that you put your regular household shopping dollars to work. You earn money for our church without spending a single additional penny. Just spend your regular shopping dollars with scrip at the stores that participate in the scrip program! And scrip can be used for just about any household purchase including food, clothing, entertainment, gasoline and even dining out.

To get started, simply log on to www.shopwithscrip.com. You will need to use our Cottage Grove United Church of Christ enrollment code which is B79185A723386. The site will help you through the enrollment process. You must pay for your purchase either online with Great Lakes Scrip Presto Pay, which again the site will help you enroll or a personal check to Cottage Grove United Church of Christ with Scrip on the memo line. I must have your payment before I can place your order. I will place the order every Monday before 1:00 p.m. and deliver your cards the following Sunday in church. For those of you who do not wish to use the computer, order forms will be available in our gathering space. Simply fill it out, attach your check for payment and place it in the tray provided again in the gathering space. A full list of participating retailers will also be available in the same area or online. If you have any questions, please contact me using the information listed below.

Thanks! Happy Shopping!

Diane Davies, Scrip Coordinator for CGUCC

651-436-7234 or Dianedavies@live.com

Check Out Our Web Site

The Communications/Marketing Team is seeking evaluations of our church web site. The next time you have a few minutes, check out www.cgucc.org and let us know what you think! What's good about the web site? What could be changed? Have you seen things on other church web sites that looked really cool...or didn't? Whether you are tech-savvy or not, you can help us make improvements and better determine the direction we should take. Contact Chris Miller with your comments and suggestions.



Red Cross Blood Drive Meeting

On Wednesday, December 2, at 1:00 p.m. representatives from the American Red Cross will be here to help us finalize plans for a blood drive here at the church on January 6, from 3:00-7:00 p.m. All who are interested in helping the blood drive happen are invited to attend. We need callers, greeters, canteen hosts, set-up and clean-up crews, and folks to bring treats for donors.





Birthdays

December

- 1 - Joyce Fries
- 2 - Lyle Kohls
Chris McCoy
Dave Utsch
- 3 - John Anderson
Yvonne Bonngard
Corry Vink
- 4 - Donna Bothun
- 5 - Kylie Hanson
- 6 - Bill Bothun
Bobbi Jo Janicek
- 7 - Dale Marty
- 8 - Brittany Marty
- 9 - Melissa Hanson
- 10 - Jessica Anderson
Sandra Dahlke
James Morgan
- 11 - Daniel Schmidt
- 13 - Bradley Bender
- 14 - Andrew Bloomquist
- 15 - Allyson Youngquist
- 16 - Theresa Fritze-Nelson
Kasandra Westerberg
- 19 - Rob Howard
- 21 - Gary Eddy
- 22 - Christy Eddy
- 23 - Gordon Siedschlag
Emily Spicer
Chase Wilkinson
- 24 - Gloria Mathison
Kathy Weber
- 25 - Candice Harvieux
Roxanne White
- 26 - Nina Kottke
Kate McCoy
- 27 - Kathryn Biscoe
Jessica Longtine
Jim Stoker
- 28 - Kyle Kropelnicki
- 29 - Bonnie Vink
- 30 - Warren Spicer



All Women Are Invited Women's Annual Christmas Ecumenical Service

Thursday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.

Newport Lutheran Church

900 15th Street, Newport (651) 459-2447



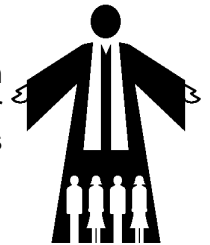
*Women's Ecumenical
Christmas Service*

Please join us in Christmas fellowship to celebrate the true meaning and richness of this beautiful season.

Refreshments will be served immediately following the service.

Congratulations Community UCC

Community United Church of Christ in St. Paul Park voted on November 22 to call the Rev. Obadiah (Oby) Ballinger as their new pastor. Let us keep the church, Rev. Ballinger, and his family in our prayers during this period of transition.



World AIDS Day 2009

Candlelight Service of Story and Hope

7:00pm, Tuesday, December 1, 2009

Falcon Heights United Church of Christ

1795 Holton Street at Garden Avenue, Falcon Heights, MN 55113



Joyous Jazz Concert

December 6, 2009, 3:00 p.m.

Minnehaha UCC and Spirit of the Lakes UCC announce Joyous Jazz and Scrumptious Singing Christmas Concert. Enjoy joyous jazz sounds of the season played by The Bryan Nichols Trio and scrumptious singing of the Minnehaha-Spirit of the Lakes Combined Choir, directed by Music Minister David Lohman.



Join us at the Joyous Jazz and Scrumptious Singing Christmas Concert December 6, 2009, 3:00 pm Minnehaha UCC, 4001 38th Ave S, Minneapolis

Tickets: \$15 for adults, \$8 for kids under 12 available at the door. Canned food donations to the Minnehaha Food Shelf are welcome.

Special Thank You

Heifer International gratefully recognizes Cottage Grove UCC for your gift of a water buffalo. Your contribution of healthy animals and training is a gift of love and life.

Heifer International



Quilt Dedication

This signature quilt commemorates the 150th Anniversary of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ.

This quilt was "commissioned" in August 2008, when Rev. Bryan Olson asked me if I could help make a quilt celebrating this special occasion. Thanks to all that helped piece the blocks and especially to Bev Gross for collecting signatures.



Quilt Dedicated
November 22, 2009
Susan Weiby

Farmers' Market Calendars

Many, many thanks go to Becky Graff and Troy Pribnow for the work done on our 2010 Farmers' Market calendar. The photographic work was done by Becky on the last day of the market. This calendar was brain-stormed by Becky. Troy chimed in and said he would design it. What a beautiful job, Troy!



Several helpers from the Farmers' Market Team helped put the calendars together. Our new color printer came just in time. You can still get your 2010 calendar at church for \$7.00, or call the office to reserve yours. As many of us know, we are not all leaders, we are followers. Thanks, Becky, for leading us into this project.

Bud and Bev Gross

Carole's Cookies

Celebrating 13 years of Holiday Baking for your holiday entertaining or for a special gift. I offer cookies and candies by the dozen, also breads and fruitcake. I also do special trays of cookies and candies. If you would like to receive my holiday flyer, please call me at (651) 459-1518, or see me in church. Thank you, and a very happy blessed holiday season to all.

Carole Weitzel Biscoe



Policies and Procedures Manual

The Policies and Procedures Team has reached the point where they have copies of the manual for anyone from the congregation to check out, read, and comment on. The Team plans to have all editing done and have the final copy ready for approval at the Annual Congregational Meeting on December 14. Please contact the office if you would like to read a copy.



Coming Up in Worship

Sunday, December 6 Second Sunday of Advent

Meals-to-Go Sale
9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship
11:30 a.m. Fellowship

Sunday, December 13 Third Sunday of Advent

WF Bake Sale
9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship
11:30 a.m. Fellowship

Sunday, December 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Meals-to-Go Sale
Christmas Fund Offering
9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship with
Children's Pageant
11:30 a.m. Fellowship

Sunday, December 27 First Sunday after Christ- mas

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship
11:30 a.m. Fellowship

Participating in Worship in December

Head Usher—Jerry Biscoe
Altar Team—Jan Huber
Communion Preparation—
Midge Youngquist and
Mike Roberts

Participating in Worship in January

Head Usher—Ron
Bonnevier
Altar Team—
Communion Preparation—
Krisi and Jeff Jacobs

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STOP!!
If you would rather not receive this news
letter, please call or send an e-mail, and we
will take you off our mailing list. Thanks!



Call to Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ will be held on Monday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m. Items on the agenda include approving the new Policies and Procedures Manual, approving the budget for 2010, and voting on the slate of officers for 2010. Each member has a vote. You are encouraged to attend and exercise your right to vote on the important issues of the congregation for the coming year.

2009 UCC Christmas Fund

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through our witness and gifts, both to loved ones and to distant neighbors.

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund, one of four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ (UCC), is an important way of sharing our joy at God's renewing and life-giving grace. The Offering, which is administered by the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance of the Pension Boards on behalf of the UCC, is an expression of joy and gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees and Christmas Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants.

When the United Church of Christ celebrated 50 years of ministry in 2007, the Christmas Fund celebrated 105 years of continuous ministry.

Facts taken from a 1953 publication indicate that: "In 1902, a little money was collected and special Christmas gifts were sent to ten older ministers." The same article also reports that \$121,054 was received for the Christmas Fund in 1952.

A little more than 50 years later, in 2008 the Christmas Fund received \$1,600,000 and nearly 1,500 families were assisted. Our goal is to be able to provide at least \$1,650,000 in assistance from the 2009 appeal.

Amidst the depressed economic climate which continues to drag on, your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. The requests for Ministerial Assistance provided by the Christmas Fund are greater than at any point in recent history.

This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care. Please give generously to the annual appeal for The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund.

CGUCC's Christmas Fund Offering will be received on Sunday, December 20, 2009. You may send a check to the church at any time and mark it Christmas Fund.

