



# CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ  
December 15, 2010



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

## Contact Us

### **Cottage Grove United Church of Christ**

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



**Rev. Désirée H. Gold**  
Pastor  
[pastorgold@gmail.com](mailto:pastorgold@gmail.com)

**Gary Afdahl**  
Director of Music

**Becky Graff,**  
Administrative Assistant  
[cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net)

**Sheri Wohlers**  
Custodian  
[sherileewohlers@gmail.com](mailto:sherileewohlers@gmail.com)

**John Greenwell,**  
Church President



## Advent and Christmas Events

### **Sunday, December 19, Fourth Sunday of Advent**

9:00 a.m. *Sunday School*

10:15 a.m. *Worship with Sunday School  
Christmas Pageant*

### **Friday, December 24, Christmas Eve**

4:30 p.m. *Family Christmas Eve Service*

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



### **Sunday, December 26, First Sunday after Christmas**

*No Sunday School*

10:15 a.m. *Worship with Baptism and  
Troy Pribnow Preaching*

## Red Cross Blood Drive in January

CGUCC will be hosting our semi-annual American Red Cross Blood Drive on Wednesday, January 5, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars, and prepare to give the gift of life as you donate blood on that day. We need volunteers to work the day of the drive; if you are willing and able, please talk with Pastor Gold or call Becky in the church office.



## 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@gmail.com](mailto:pastorgold@gmail.com)



**PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!**

Nita Bertram; Don Biscoe; Joyce Biscoe; Emily and Lyle Biscoe; Rob Biscoe; Isabel Board; Ron Bonnevier; Donna Bothun; Beth Davies; Jim Gregory; Huber family; Arlean Kropelnicki; Dan Mathison; Joann Nelson; Sandy Rabe; Bob Radke; Mike Roberts; Pam Schmuki; Red and Lucy Spicer.

Julie Bombeck (friend of Brian and Carma Wilkinson); Christopherson family (Elaine Mitchell's friends); Don (Kathy Janke's friend); Brady Heschke; Donna Johnson (Gary Afdahl's mother-in-law); Eboné Jordan and family; Denise Heschke Krech (Marilyn Heschke's daughter); Richard Lara (in prison); Gary Lindemann; Marka (Yvonne Bonngard's cousin); Family of Fred Minzer (Doreen Barta's cousin died); Rev. Bryan & Emily Olson (expecting a baby in January); Tom Pechacek, Patty Most, Amy Jo Corson and families on their father's death; Duane Weitzel (brother of Marilyn Heschke, Carole Weitzel Biscoe, and Judy Lauber); Steve Welter (Brian Wilkinson's friend and co-worker); Midge Youngquist's grandmother

### An Offering of Gold

Rev. Désirée H. Gold



I love a good snowstorm, and I was as happy as could be during the blizzard of December 11th! I spent most of the day inside my warm house, looking out upon the winter wonderland, writing Christmas cards, sipping hot chocolate and enjoying my fireplace. I finally went out for a walk in the evening, and I was like a kid running through the deep snow. I'm not sure exactly why, but snow makes me really happy.

I was sorry that we had to cancel church on the Third Sunday of Advent, but I did enjoy having a second snow day. I watched the snow plows from my window, read stories about all the cancellations across the Twin Cities, drank some more hot chocolate, and went out for another walk. This time I got Ben to join me, and as we tromped through the snow drifts I was downright gleeful.

In the midst of my happiness, however, I began thinking about everyone for whom a big snowstorm is truly a problem. Sure, there are the many people who complain about it -- but continue to live here and go outside with their coats unzipped, without hat or gloves. There are the people who are inconvenienced by the snow. But then there are the people for whom a snowstorm like this is truly a problem, especially when it is followed by biting cold.

I thought of the homeless people in our communities, who struggle to find a bed in overcrowded shelters, or a fitful night's sleep on a friend's couch. Unlike Baltimore, where some homeless people stay outdoors year-round, that is not an option in Minnesota where the wind chill can dip far below zero.

I thought of the people who really *do* need to get out of the house -- people who are stuck at home with abusive spouses or parents; people who need to get to crucial medical appointments, like dialysis; people who have medical emergencies.

I thought of the people who cannot afford their heating bills and do not have sufficient winter clothing. The constant cold will lower their immune systems, which will lead to illness, which they will be unable to treat.

I thought of people who are severely claustrophobic but unable to shovel their way out of the piles of snow. I would have had a problem if I had been in that predicament on Saturday, because I'm not sure I could have shoveled an escape route for myself on my own.

I thought, too, of the people who were already away from home but got stuck in the snow or had accidents. I thought of those who were unable to return home when the public transportation system shut down on Saturday afternoon. One man planned to sleep in his car in Minneapolis -- not a good prospect when the weather is so snowy and cold. Either he leaves the car on and risks carbon monoxide poisoning, or he shuts it off and freezes. I thought of the people who were stranded in the skywalks overnight, after the buses that were supposed to take them home stopped running.

These are the people about whom Jesus cares the most -- people struggling to survive in a world that often seems to offer them little or no support, people aching with the burdens of the world on their shoulders. I realized, too, that Jesus himself was born into such a world. While Jesus and his family did not face the bitter cold and snow that we know here in Minnesota, his parents were stuck with a medical emergency (Mary's labor) while they were away from home. They were essentially homeless that night in Bethlehem, and Mary gave birth in a barn then placed her newborn son in a feeding trough, a manger. The night that Jesus was born, the Holy Family represented all of the cold, hungry people of the world, stuck between a rock and a hard place. Jesus continued, and continues, to represent the suffering people of the world because he himself has been there.

(continued on next page)

## CGUCC Concerns and Issues:

If you have a concern or issue about our church, please use the process we have in place for dealing with it. By doing so, you will get faster resolution and prevent rumors from starting and possibly from becoming distorted.

If it involves our pastor, please contact one of the members of the Pastoral Relations Team. It is almost certain that one or more will be in church every Sunday. They are: Bruce Fiedler (Chair), John Greenwell, Brian Wilkinson (as current past president of the council executive team, Brian will be leaving the team in January when the president elect will come on), Midge Youngquist and Ron Bonnevier.

If it involves anything else about the way the church is being run please contact one of the council executive team members. They are: John Greenwell, Brian Wilkinson (Brian will be also be leaving this team in January when the president elect comes on), Midge Youngquist and Ron Bonnevier.

While the people on the teams are largely the same, the meetings are run quite differently. The Pastoral Relations Team does not publish any notes due to the sensitivity of the discussions that are held. Resolutions will be distributed as determined by the team.

Thank you,

Ron Bonnevier, The Council Executive and Pastoral Relations Teams

## Homeless Memorial March and Service

Troy Pribnow will be participating in the 2010 Homeless Memorial March and Service on Thursday, December 16, and would like to invite others to participate with him. This event is a memorial service for people who have passed on because of, or while they were, homeless, sponsored by Simpson Housing Services [www.simpsonhousing.org](http://www.simpsonhousing.org). It takes place on Thursday, December 16. The schedule is as follows:

5:00 p.m. March at Hennepin County Government Center

*Buses will leave the K-Mart parking lot (Lake St. and 1st Ave.) at 4:20*

6:30 Memorial Service at Simpson UMC, 2740 1st Ave S, Minneapolis

7:30 Community Meal at the Simpson Shelter

All are welcome at any time throughout the evening.

## Troy Pribnow Preaching

I know the day after Christmas seems like a good day to sleep in, but I hope you will refrain from doing that and come to church on Sunday, Dec. 26th. Troy Pribnow is preparing a sermon which he and I will preach together that day. Come to worship the newborn Christ, praise God, and support Troy!

Peace, Pastor Gold

*(continued from previous page)*

As you celebrate the remainder of Advent and prepare for Christmas in this winter wonderland, remember those who are less fortunate than you -- particularly those for whom this winter weather is not just an annoyance or a playground, but a treacherous stumbling block on an already difficult journey. Remember that Jesus himself was born into such a world, to a homeless family that struggled to find shelter after a difficult journey, and then was forced to flee impending violence that followed their child much of his life. *This* is the Savior we worship. *This* is how God came into the world. May we never forget it.

May you know all the blessings of this holy season, in warmth and peace.

Grace and peace, Pastor Gold

## Coming Up in Worship

### Participating in Worship in December

Head Usher—Bob Janicek  
Altar Team—Jan Huber  
Communion Preparation—Midge Youngquist & Mike Roberts

### Participating in Worship in January

Head Usher—Gary Thyren  
Altar Team—  
Communion Preparation—Krisi and Jeff Jacobs

**We need someone who would like to decorate the altar for the month of January. If you are willing, please talk with Jan Huber. Thanks!**

## Cross Connection

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

Published on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>  
of every month  
Deadlines are the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>  
of every month

Edited by Becky Graff

**Back issues available on our  
Church web site at**  
[www.cgucc.org](http://www.cgucc.org)

Submit articles via e-mail at  
[cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net) or drop  
them off at the office.

Becky Graff, Editor

## **Cottage Grove United Church of Christ**

7008 Lamar Avenue South

Cottage Grove, MN. 55016-2397

Phone: 651-459-1501

Email: [cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net)

## **Future Planning Forum**

The Church Council and Shared Ministry Team leaders will be having a Future Planning Forum on Saturday February 5, 2011. Our outcome of this session is to set a timeline of goals and define action plans for the next 6, 12 and 18 months for our congregation, with focus on youth, evangelism and growth, and finances. We would like to extend the invitation to entire congregation to join us. If you are unable to attend, please share your thoughts with any representative on the council or email the church at [cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net). More details to follow in the next Cross Connections.

## **New eGift\* from ScripNow!**

Take care of last minute shopping with ease on [ShopwithScrip.com](http://ShopwithScrip.com)!

Avoid the crowds. Save on shipping. Give a gift that's always on time, even when you're shopping at the last minute! With eGift your favorite gift cards are delivered directly through email almost instantly.

- Add your personal touch by including a message to the recipient, and in some cases even selecting the look of your gift card.
- Gift and give back because a portion of every eGift purchased benefits a non-profit organization of your choice.

Shop any time, day or night, with ScripNow!

Sincerely, Diane Davies

## **Sock and Mitten Tree**

The Women's Fellowship has once again set up their Christmas tree to be decorated with socks, mittens, caps, scarves, and gloves for those in need of warm items this winter. Thanks for your donations!

## **Women's Fellowship Upcoming Fundraisers**

On Sunday, January 16, Women's Fellowship will be having a book sale after worship. Please start saving your books now.

On Sunday, February 13, Women's Fellowship will be having a Valentine's Day bake sale. Here is something sweet to look forward to in the depths of our Minnesota winter.

# Our Church Mortgage

## CURRENT MONTH

November 1st, 2010 - Balance		760,546.41
December 1st Payment		
Interest	4,379.40	
Principal	<u>2,221.00</u>	(2,221.00)
Total	6,600.40	
Additional Principal Reduction		(2,500.00)

December 1st, 2010 - Balance	<u><u>755,825.41</u></u>
------------------------------	--------------------------

## YEAR TO DATE

January 1, 2010 - Balance		790,687.87
December 1st Payment		
Interest	52,305.58	
Principal	<u>20,298.82</u>	(20,298.82)
Total	72,604.40	
Additional Principal Reduction		(14,563.64)

December 1st, 2010 - Balance	<u><u>755,825.41</u></u>
------------------------------	--------------------------

Additional Principal Reduction		
SCRIP		3,700.00
Trash Tot Treasure		4,207.64
Turkey Dinner Rafle		5,000.00
Private Donation		<u>1,656.00</u>
		<u><u>14,563.64</u></u>

## Pondering

What if everyone in our church were the same? What if everyone earned the same amount of money, and tithed the same amount to our church? If so, it would only cost each member \$303 a year to pay for our mortgage. But thank God, we are not all the same. Each one of us has different reasons why and how much we tithe to our church.

Maybe this will put the mortgage into a different perspective for you. We need a little help from everyone.

God bless,  
John Perkins for the Finance Team