



# THE MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION OF NIWOT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JANUARY 2009

WE ARE CALLED TO HAVE OPEN MINDS, OPEN HEARTS AND OPEN DOORS

At Christmas our attention is turned to Jesus and we celebrate as we realize once again that our Creator loves us so much that God sent the gift of Jesus to us in our "lostness" in a special way. God came to us to show us who we are, beloved sons and daughters; to give us new life; to tell us what it means to be a real person.

The story of the Magi/Wise Men is probably the most modern of Christmas stories because of what they were looking for. They were searching for answers to the mystery of life. They had searched ancient books of wisdom. They had studied the stars. They were trying to "get it all together." When the wandering star led them to Jesus, the Anointed One, they discovered the secret of who they were and the search was over. They were no longer lost.

When the Magi returned home, the Gospel of Matthew says they went a different way. I believe they went home as followers of Jesus. So finding Jesus made a real difference in their lives.

We can go on the same spiritual journey as the Magi. Many of us have made this journey and found the deep truth within us. That we are created in the image of God which enables us to reconnect with the Divine Love in us. I invite each of you that during this time of the New Year to consider where you are in your spiritual journey.

Grace and Peace,  
*Merlene*

## Lectionary Readings January 2009

*Sunday, January 4th*

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14 (UMH 795)

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

*Sunday, January 11th*

Genesis 1:1-5

Psalms 29 (UMH 761)

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

*Sunday, January 18th*

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18 (UMH 854)

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

*Sunday, January 25th*

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalms 62:5-12 (UMH 787)

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

### Mission activity in Sunday School classes!

The Live B.I.G. class helped pack fifteen Thanksgiving baskets that went to people in need through Sister Carmen's organization. The middle school class started their mission project that takes place on the first Sunday of each month. As we receive Communion for ourselves, the class asks you to bring a can of food to enable others to receive the bounty of God. We collected 52 pounds of food for OUR Center on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Can we do better for EFAA on January 4<sup>th</sup>? We will alternate which organization receives our offerings each month.

### Christian Education

The adult Sunday school class is currently studying *Longing for Enough in a Culture of More* through the end of January. Liz Smith and Christine Heidebrecht are leading our discussions. Come and join us at 10:45 Sunday mornings to explore the issue of what constitutes "enough" in today's world.

### Upcoming Opportunities:

*Financial Freedom*, Mon.s 7pm, Jan. 12 – March 2. Imagine feeling free from financial worry, free from debt, free from the never-ending pressures of juggling all those financial demands. Imagine...feeling *in control* of your finances. Doesn't this sound like a great feeling, especially in today's economic times? Come join us as Kris Green shows us how to do God's math, based on spiritual principles found in the Bible, and live free from financial worries!

### *Serving From the Heart Workshop*

Come join us in late February for a workshop as Susan Warren leads us through assessing our spiritual gifts, talents and abilities, resources, individual style, dreams and experiences...all adding up to an enhanced capacity to serve God and neighbor.

### *World Religions*, February 1 – May 17

The adult Sunday school class will explore the beliefs and practices of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Baha'i B'rith. We will look at beliefs of each faith tradition about sin, forgiveness, salvation, future after death, ethics, and more, comparing them to our own Christian beliefs. For each faith tradition, we will learn the basics about that faith on one Sunday; the next Sunday we will hear from a guest of that faith.

### Wish List Items

The Trustees have a list of items that are "*things we wish the church had.*" The current list is not complete and we would like to know of any additional items that should be on the list. Some items may be candidates for Memorials, while others are more general. Before donating one of the items, please talk to a trustee in order to make sure no one else has already signed up to provide one. This list will be published from time to time.

Elevator (there is an elevator fund)

Projector

A computer/video projector with at least the following specifications:

2500 or more lumens

1280 x 800 or better resolution preferable

Portable

Cost of replacement bulbs should be taken into consideration

Paging system for the nursery

Relatively quiet vibration (intended for use during worship service)

Need 3-5 units in the initial system

Expandable

New playground equipment

Laptop for Sunday School (with WiFi)

Wireless, over-the-ear microphone (specific model TBD)

Oil candles for the candelabras

Thanks to Frank Landis for the CD player.

### **Donations of items not on the wish list**

Please talk to a Trustee or Rev. Merlene prior to making a donation in order to make sure it is something we can use.

### Sunday Potluck Jan. 4th

Following Sunday School there will be a potluck. A part of the fellowship gathering will be to take down the tree, wreaths, etc., pack them and to put them in storage. Please join us for this time of work and fun.

### UMW

We will be meeting January 8th 9:30 am. See you then!

### Game Night

Families:- Please reserve Friday Jan. 23rd for a night of games, snacks, and appropriate movie for all ages. Come in your PJ's and join in the fun!

### Remembering Martin Luther King, Jr.

We have assembled here from every section of this great nation and from other parts of the world to give thanks to God that he gave to America, at this moment in history, Martin Luther King, Jr. ... Truly God is no respecter of person. How strange! God called the grandson of a slave on his father's side, and said to him, "Martin Luther, speak to America about war and peace, about social justice and racial discrimination, about its obligations to the poor, and about nonviolence as a way of perfecting social change in a world of brutality and war...

Benjamin Mays, eulogy at King's funeral, 9 April 1968

### Human Relations Day

January 20, 2008: Human Relations Day is one of the opportunities for United Methodist Churches to celebrate our connective work. This day of social action and raising awareness aims to heal social ills at the national level. It supports Community Developers, United Methodist Voluntary Service (UMVS), and the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program. The first two programs are administered through the General Board of Global Ministries.

### Outreach

In November, Gayle Weiss organized the collection and packing of 15 Thanksgiving Baskets. With the help of the Sunday School teachers, the young children helped sort and pack the food boxes.

Once again, the church showed its amazing generosity by purchasing and wrapping numerous gifts for our 'Family to Family' recipients. We thank Lois Zoller for her hard work on this yearly outreach project!

Several members of NUMC have had the opportunity to serve dinner at the Boulder Homeless Shelter. In November, Shana Williams was introduced to the Shelter, and Kevin Schoonover will help serve in January. It is such a rewarding experience! The Niwot UMW also collected hats, gloves, and mittens which were delivered to the Shelter the next day.

The Outreach Committee would like to thank the families of the Church, and friends in the community for donating toys and books for the Share-a-Gift Program for 2008. The drive this year was a huge success, it may be the most the Church has ever been able to give to the Program. The times we are now in make it more difficult for many during the holiday season. It is in these times that those who are able to help others reach out more than ever to help those in need, whether with gifts, time or monetary gifts. We would like to send a heart felt thanks all who were able to help, in any way, with the Share-a-Gift Program, helping brighten the holiday season for those less fortunate. Again the Niwot UMC has given "the Love that came down at Christmas" to others.

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Confirmation for youth in Grades 6-12 will begin on Sunday 25 January during the Sunday School time. Jennifer Hayes and Alice Haverstock will be working with Rev. Merlene on integrating the topics they will cover in Confirmation and their class studies. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Merlene mbarner@niwotumc.org or 303-530-0241.

### NUMC Book Club

Monday evening, Jan. 12th at 6:30 PM.

NUMC Bookclub is reading and will be discussing *Change of Heart*, by Jodi Picoult. Everyone is welcome!

Wow! THANK YOU to all who participated in the Boulder County Social Services Family to Family Program. Through your generosity we filled three large black plastic bags with gifts and also gave over \$300 in grocery certificates.

Our two families certainly had a Merry Christmas. Outreach Committee

### Do You Know?

You can use your King Sooper gift card at King Sooper gas pumps just like a credit card? Now you can buy groceries and gas and help support NUMC.

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Donna Darland and Fern Jones thank all the women who attended the UMW Christmas luncheon for the awesome birthday celebration. What a wonderful surprise. Thanks to Liz Smith for hosting, and also to all the women who brought such delicious food.  
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### January Birthdays & Anniversaries

- |    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 1  | Ethel Schwartz                           |   |
| 3  | Diana Anderson                           |   |
| 6  | Virgil Tucker                            |   |
| 7  | Kay Schrag                               |  |
| 11 | Greg Anderson                            |   |
| 13 | Olive Baucom, Dick Jenke                 |   |
| 18 | Carol Anderson                           |   |
| 19 | Joe Guy                                  |   |
| 23 | Clark Anderson, Erica Bridgestock        |   |
| 24 | Dan Perry                                |   |
| 27 | Bea Weiss, Jessica Green                 |   |
| 28 | Gary Gates, Frank Landis, Sharon Jamison |   |
| 29 | Dick Piland                              |   |
| 1  | Mike & Gayle Weiss, Brian & JoAnn Burton |   |
| 9  | Ray & Karen Simpson                      |   |

