

## Notes from the Board

March 2010

### Blest be the Tithe that Binds

*There are three ways in which tithing functions in our spiritual communities. First, it makes a statement that acknowledges God as the ultimate owner of the universe. Second, it gives resources to support the mission of the church or center—that of building a sustainable world of spiritual consciousness. Third, it requires us to trust God for our personal needs. All three of these build our own consciousness as givers. We recognize that giving and receiving is not so much about an exchange, but it is about creating faithful and healthy communities locally and globally. In this, all who participate are blessed. In Unity, we recognize that we can only receive when we have an open heart, one that is opened by the act of giving itself.<sup>1</sup>*

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Trustees of Unity Christ Church sent forth the tithe from the proceeds of the sale of the former Youth Education Building. The house at 6214 Forsyth Boulevard, a generous gift from our former neighbors, served as a blessing for our community for almost 50 years. We were delighted to continue the practice of tithing that this church has taught since its inception. In doing so, we hope to promote an understanding of tithing for those in our spiritual community.

To tithe means to return one tenth of all that we receive to the institutions from which we receive spiritual food. Edwene Gaines describes spiritual food as “that which inspires us, teaches us, reminds us of the Truth, causes us to remember who we are.”<sup>2</sup> By tithing consistently on all that we receive, we acknowledge God as the source of all of our supply. Furthermore, “when giving is practiced as a part of Christian living, the soul expands and becomes Godlike in the grace of liberality and generosity.”<sup>3</sup> We don’t tithe to pay salaries and build buildings, although those things are important and tithe money may be used in those ways. The most important aspect of tithing is that it contributes to our soul’s growth.

The act of tithing is first recorded in the bible in the Book of Genesis. Perhaps the most complete explanation of tithing in the bible is found in the Book of Malachi, “Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts. Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.”  
Malachi 3:11-13

Many references to the promises of the spiritual and material blessings of tithing are found in the bible. I think that Jesus the Christ summarizes it best: “give, and it will be given to you; good

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<sup>1</sup> *Power of Prosperity* x12, November

<sup>2</sup> *Practice of Thriving: Board Workbook*, page 24

<sup>3</sup> *Prosperity*, Charles Fillmore, Chapter 9

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measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." Luke 6:38

“Since the building which makes these tithes possible was dedicated to education, we believe that the various education programs conducted by four major Unity institutions need to be specifically designated recipients, honoring Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, both great educators,”<sup>4</sup> our \$165,000 tithe was divided between the following institutions:

Urban Ministerial School in Detroit, Michigan (General fund and scholarship)  
Great Lakes Unity Region (General fund and Children’s Ministries’ Trainings)  
Association of Unity Churches International (AUCI) (General fund and scholarships)  
Unity School’s Institute (Scholarships)  
Silent Unity (General fund)

During its celebration of 120 years of service this year, Silent Unity is acknowledging the top 120 Unity churches that have supported their work. Unity Christ Church is among the top 20 to receive a personal visit! Together, the Board and ministers had the honor of giving a portion of our tithe directly to Rev. Lynne Brown, Director of Silent Unity and Vice President of Unity School, during her visit to St. Louis on February 14<sup>th</sup>.

In love and light,  
Judi Coleman, President  
Unity Christ Church Board of Trustees

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<sup>4</sup> Unity Christ Church Board of Trustees Memo, January 2010