

UNTO YOU

JANUARY, 2011



“C-H- _ _ -C-H... What's Missing?”

By Charles Martindell

I recently saw the title of this Unto You article on a sign outside of a church. I've noticed this particular Church Sign slogan off and on for years. “What's missing?” The sign asks. And the letters left out are the U and the R. U.R. You are. Okay I get it already.

In our Internet age, there are available to us an enormous amount of examples of church sign slogans. Meant to be amusing, as well as both thought provoking, and hopefully meaningful, check out some of these that I found recently:

- THIS SIGN IS BROKEN.....MESSAGE INSIDE
- God answers Knee-Mails
- Stop, drop and roll doesn't work in Hell
- Can't sleep? Try counting your blessings
- Wal-Mart is not the only Saving Place
- Free Coffee, Everlasting Life... Yes Membership has its privileges
- PRAYER- Wireless access to God with No Roaming Fee

If you liked any of these, do a “google search” for church bulletin bloopers. Some of the ones I've seen really are priceless.

I was thinking about the “C-H- _ _ -C-H” sign recently as we have officially arrived at the Resolutions for the New Year season. To be honest about it, I don't think any of the church signs I've mentioned in this article are likely to be all that helpful when it comes to lives of faith. At best, they can sort of get a person's attention. And if they are amusing enough, maybe they will help some folks get past the stereotype view about churches hardly ever having much fun (Homer United Methodist could help people get past that inaccurate assumption about churches too!).

On the other hand, maybe there is a message for us when it comes to a new year and our hopes for life during the year ahead. The sign asks the question: “What's missing?” When it comes to our oftentimes over-filled lives, could there be anything that's *missing*?

Let me put it another way: When we think of resolutions for the new year, will we include any spiritual resolutions? Any at all? And if we do, what will that look like for us during 2011?

If we can't come up with much of an answer to questions like those, maybe we should refer back to the title of this article. Because everything we are about as a church family is meant to help with our connection to God and to one another as a community of faith. God's grace is available to all. Who would want to miss out?

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Sudan Mission Study Program By *Ruby Nofziger*

January 22 and 23 we in Homer will be treated to a Mission Study program about the Sudan. Sudan has been in the news for several years. A year ago in January I went to a United Methodist Women Mission Study on the Sudan in Kenai. Only five of us were in this study led by Annie Kendell from Nikiski. We are privileged to have Annie coming to Homer to spend some time with us Saturday morning, January 22, starting at 10:30 until 12:00 when we will have a light lunch. We will continue in the afternoon for another session from 12:30 - 2:30. Then, Sunday afternoon we will continue with the study after church on Sunday at 12:30.

The book that we will be using is called The Beauty of and Courage of Sudan: "Why a Dream of Peace is Possible". Sudan has been plagued by wars for many years. Also there have been famines and food shortages there. The history of the country began in Bible times. The study covers the ethnicities, religions and languages, the causes of war, the impact of war and the current challenges.

I hope that many of you will be able to take advantage of the opportunity offered through this excellent study. Even though it is a UMW Mission study men are invited to attend as well. Tell me if you would like to buy a book. They each cost \$10.00.

Notes to all:

My very best to Charles, his family, the choir and the entire UMC congregation in this holiday season and for the coming new year.

I look forward to seeing you all this coming March.

Norm Jason

To all at Homer United Methodist Church!

Thank you so very much for all the words of appreciation and encouragement, cards, and gifts. This is truly a very special place to work!! You all made my Christmas extra special. Thank you so much!!

Love in Christ, *Kathy Hedges, Secretary/Treasurer*

Dear Friends,

Thank you to everyone for cards, gifts and goodies that we received during the Christmas holiday! It is fun to celebrate the birth of Christ with this church family and we are grateful for all the ways you helped make our Christmas a warm and joyful one. *Charles and Karen*

Martindell

Final Push Update

The "Final Push" is what we are calling our efforts to bring the Building Project to full completion. What a joy that so much has happened in time for Christmas! The new Sanctuary Carpet looks wonderful, and the woodwork trim along the Altar rail will be completed in the near future. These "first," "last" steps to completing the items included in our Final Push program were made possible by the generous initial response to this capital fund program. Thank you to all who are helping the church bring this long time project to full completion. In the coming weeks, we'll be hearing about updated progress and the goals we are continuing to work toward.

Volunteer Teachers Needed for Children's Church

A new year has arrived along with new opportunities for service. Over the next few months, the children of our church will be learning the teachings and parables of Jesus during Sunday School. The lessons to be taught are easy to follow, along with reproducible "kid" pages of activities. The topics for January and February include:

- *The Two Houses (Jesus teaches us how to build a strong faith.)*
- *The Mustard Seed (Jesus teaches us that we can help God's kingdom grow.)*
- *The Unforgiving Servant (Jesus teaches us to forgive others.)*
- *The Lost Sheep (Jesus shows us God's love.)*
- *The Forgiving Father (Jesus teaches us about God's forgiveness.)*
- *The Lord's Prayer (Jesus teaches us how to talk to God.)*
- *Birds of the Air (Jesus teaches us that God will take care of us.)*
- *The Golden Rule (Jesus teaches us to treat others with kindness & love.)*
- *The Greatest Commandment (Jesus teaches us how to love God.)*

If you have never had the opportunity to spend time with the children of our church, this would be a great way to get to know them better (and grow in your own faith.) Prayerfully consider volunteering once in the next few months. If you decide you would like to help in this very important ministry, the sign-up sheet is on the door outside the Orange room. Children's Church is for children in grades K-5 and meets after the children's message (during worship.)

Community Free Meals

The meals will continue monthly on the 4th Thursdays, 5:30 to 7:00 under the sponsorship of the church Outreach committee. The next meal is planned for January 27th. Watch for a sign-up in the Church entry area on Sundays, so we can all help with the preparations and supplies for this ministry. Possibly the best way to help is to simply attend and help us meet and get to know those who attend the meal. We can also always use a hand in cleaning up and putting things away. The goals of this ministry are 3-fold: 1) To offer a good meal to those who could use one, 2) To help us get to know our neighbors better, and 3) To continue to put our excellent Kitchen and Fellowship Hall into services of ministry. Contact the church if you have any questions.

Funding Ministry in 2011

The Finance Committee wishes to thank the whole church for their generous contributions throughout December, as well as the many commitments for funding our ministry throughout 2011. We respond to God in many ways, and one of them is through the stewardship of our finances and possessions. Because of the generosity of members and friends of Homer United Methodist Church (near and far), we find ourselves in an excellent position for effectively funding ministry here in the new year. Along with the Church Council, the Finance Committee is hard at work putting together the budget for 2011, and a copy of the budget will be included in the February edition of Unto You.

