

Working Together

The Newsletter of Monroe County United Ministries

January 2011

Happy New Year from MCUM!

Happy New Year from MCUM's staff and Board of Directors. We appreciate the many forms of community support we receive and we look forward to working with you during the coming year.

Help for Your New Year's Resolutions

This is a time when many people make - and break - their new year's resolutions. MCUM has many ways to help you keep your 2011 promises!

Want to spend more meaningful time with your family? Volunteer with your children in our Emergency Food Pantry.

Vow to have a more active lifestyle? Spend some time with preschoolers on our playgrounds.

Plan to reduce the clutter in your house? Donate gently used items to Opportunity House. As your children outgrow their toys and books, consider donating them to MCUM's Childcare Program.

Time to stop smoking? What better way to break old habits than to learn new ones in our non-smoking facility!

Organizing your finances? Make a tax deductible donation today and don't forget to include MCUM in your estate plan.

Searching for a new job? Volunteering is a great way to meet people and strengthen your resume.

Want to feel more connected to your community? Volunteer, learn more about local needs, or donate food and funds.

Planning a better diet? Volunteering in the Emergency Food Pantry, and learning more about local malnutrition/hunger might inspire you to keep your resolution.

Resolved to spend more time helping others? We can help with that!

What is in Your Mystery Stocking?

The Otters recently decorated mystery stockings. When asked what their stocking contained, they replied...

I think there is a mouse in my stocking. - Peyton

I think there is a soccer ball in my stocking.
- Sean

I think there is a dolphin toy in my stocking.
- Vanessa

I think there is a monster truck in my stocking.
- Mario

I think there is a book in my stocking. - Mazie

I think there is a football in my stocking.
- Elijah

I think there is a baby in my stocking. - Jordan

I think there are earrings in my stocking. - Kaylin

Childcare Needs

The children enrolled in the Childcare Program use many supplies, including:

- dry erase markers
- Crayola markers (regular sized, not thin)
- glue sticks
- plastic totes with lids (19-quart size)

Cleaning Closet Needs

Demand for these items, which can't be purchased with food stamps, is very high. Help restock our shelves with:

- diapers, especially size 4 & 5
- laundry soap
- household cleaners
- hair conditioner
- women's underwear, all sizes
- heavy socks for men and women

Food Pantry Needs

The pantry welcomes donations of all nonperishable foods, but we currently have a special need for the following items:

- canned vegetables: mixed veggies, potatoes, carrots, greens, etc.
- canned meats: tuna, chicken, salmon, etc.
- juice and other beverages
- crackers, especially saltines
- jelly and pancake syrup

We need your **paper grocery sacks** for the Emergency Food Pantry! Paper bags hold more than plastic and stand up nicely on our shelves. Please ask for paper when you shop.

Volunteer Opportunities

For more information about these or other positions, contact Cliff Edens at (812)339-3429 or mcumhelp@bloomington.in.us unless another name is provided below.

Featured Volunteer Position

Share your hobby! Our preschool children love to learn about new things. Are you willing to spend a few hours sharing your interests with young children? Contact Tina at 339-3429 or mcumeducate@bloomington.in.us.

Opportunity House Volunteers: Opp House is a resale shop at 907 W. 11th Street and is MCUM's important partner. Volunteers are especially needed to sort and price items and serve as cashiers. Contact Janet at 336-2443 for more information.

Pantry Assistants: Volunteers are always needed to sort food donations and bag groceries in the Emergency Food Pantry. Set your own schedule during office hours, once you are trained. Moderate lifting required.

Spring Luncheon Committee Members: Do you love to plan parties? Do you want to help raise funds for MCUM programs? Join the planning committee for the annual spring luncheon! Contact Rebecca at mcumfund@bloomington.in.us or 339-3429.

Maintenance Volunteers: Volunteers are needed to perform basic maintenance tasks to fit any skill level, from changing light bulbs to basic carpentry. Work is usually performed between 8-4, Monday-Friday. Contact Meri at mcum@bloomington.in.us or 339-3429.

Monroe County United Ministries

2011 Board of Directors

Tom Bunger, President
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John Rucker, Secretary

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Women United Representative
Phyllis Eads, Opportunity
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We would like to thank retiring board members Gloria Halser, Erika Edens, and Diana Smith for their service.

Help Ensure MCUM's Future: Gifting A Retirement Plan

When considering your estate planning options, a charitable gift of a portion or all of your retirement accounts may prove beneficial to you and your loved ones. Whether you have an IRA, 401(K), or other qualified retirement plan, you can make a significant gift and avoid taxes on your estate without impacting your current income.

Retirement plan gifts not only benefit MCUM, they provide you and your loved ones with significant financial savings as well. By leaving your residual to a charitable organization such as MCUM, you can avoid significant taxes. You can continue to take withdrawals from your plan during your lifetime and you are able to change your plan beneficiary if your circumstances change.

This giving option is easy to set up and requires little time and administrative expense. Simply designate MCUM as the beneficiary of your retirement plan and any residual amount left passes to MCUM tax-free. Your gift will help ensure basic needs assistance and quality childcare for low-income families continues for as long as they are needed.

Contact your attorney or financial planner to determine how best to structure your estate plan to benefit your loved ones and the community.

Thank you!

We would like to thank...

- Jeff and Artie Kingston for donating an air compressor for use by our programs.
- Anne Wulf for always thinking about MCUM.
- American Legion Post #18 for their ongoing support.
- Lara, Ben, Thomas & Sandra Tokarski and Joseph Reichwein for their generous donation of supplies to the Childcare Program.
- St. Thomas Lutheran Mission Committee for donating paints, crayons, legos, games and markers.
- the Highlander's Home Extension Club for donating playdoh.
- the Simpson Chapel United Methodist Church for organizing a hat and glove drive.
- Chris Meyer for his work in the Emergency Food Pantry.
- Kathleen and Brandon Robbins for donating a variety of items for the Childcare Program.
- Sylvia King for donating hats.
- The YMCA Service in Friendship group for donating winter wear.

Cell Phone Recycling

When you upgrade your cell phone, stop to consider how to dispose of your old one responsibly. Some “recycling” programs ship phones to developing countries where they put human lives and natural resources in danger. MCUM is paid per phone (\$0.50 - \$35) by a recycling/refurbishing company with zero landfill and no-export policies. In addition, your phone will raise money to fund our programs.

Phones can be donated at TIS Bookstore, Opportunity House, MCUM’s offices and anywhere MCUM items are collected.

Clip Labels and Box Tops

Looking for an easy way to help? Collect Labels for Education from Campbell’s products and Box Tops for Education from General Mills products. Just clip this:



or this:



from products you already buy and send them our way. These logos may be in unexpected places so keep your eyes open!

Family Literacy: Creating a Reading Nook

Making reading a normal part of everyday family life encourages child literacy and increased learning opportunities. According to the Educational Testing Service, the more types of reading materials there are in the home, the higher students score in reading proficiency. Introducing your children to a variety of magazines, books, and coloring pages with words not only helps them learn speech and vocabulary, but helps them understand different writing styles and ideas.

While it is important to make reading material available throughout the home, experts at the Reading is Fundamental Foundation recommend creating a reading nook for kids. This special place designated just for literary fun creates a sense of ownership for children and can help them focus. Reading nooks should be well-lit, cozy, and located away from distractions such as televisions or computers. A comfortable place to sit, such as a beanbag chair or floor pillows, helps children relax and settle in to read. If your child’s room doesn’t have a bookshelf or bookcase, use a box, basket, or other sturdy container. Plastic stacking cubes also work well. You can find quality, inexpensive books at thrift stores (such as Opportunity House), library sales, yard sales, and the local American Red Cross book sale held each fall.

Creating a reading nook can be a fun bonding experience for you and your child. Let him pick out decorations for the new space and select the books for his personal library. Helping him alphabetize his choices or group books by topic is another great way to reinforce literary skills!

“Spring Into Action!” for MCUM’s Annual Luncheon

MCUM’s annual “Spring Into Action!” Luncheon and Auction will be held on Sunday, April 3, 2011, in the Bloomington-Monroe County Convention Center. Contact Rebecca Stanze, Development Coordinator, at 812-339-3429 or mcumfund@bloomington.in.us for more information. Are you ready to “spring into action” on behalf of this event? Here are just a few ways you can help:

- Provide a corporate sponsorship to cover event expenses, such as food and printing.
- Sell tickets to the event within your congregation, club, or social circle.
- Donate an item to the auction. Desired items include art, interesting household pieces, services, certificates, and fun experiences.
- Join the organizing committee!

We Appreciate Our Holiday Helpers!

December is always a busy month at MCUM, thanks to the wide range of support we receive from the community at this time of year. In addition to the many donors who contributed funds to keep our programs operating and food to keep our pantry running, many people help with special holiday projects.

Food Baskets

Thank you to all those who donated holiday food baskets for our childcare and emergency services families. Of the record-setting 123 baskets received, 89 were donated by members of the Unitarian Universalist Church and seven by the employees of TIS Accounting. The American Legion Post 18, along with many other individuals and community groups, donated hams and turkeys to go with these baskets.



Santa Bags

Each year, a certain jolly old elf visits the children in the Childcare Program bearing gifts donated by generous community members. Thank you to everyone who contributed to Santa's gift bags this year: Pam & Jef Davidson, the Highlander's Home Extension Club, Rita Harrington and

the St. Paul United Methodist Church, Susan Barker, First United Church Circle of Women, Gloria and Laura Hasler, the Walsh Family, Frank and Kathy DeWester. We also thank the elves who helped with wrapping: Regan Fields, Sarah Oney, Luz Lopez, and Belaynesh Beyne.



Other Helpers

We appreciate the workplaces, groups, and families who "adopted" childcare families for Christmas. Every year we see some amazingly generous gifts, ranging from handmade wooden rocking horses to complete sets of sheets and towels. We also get to see what these donors do not, parents touched by the generosity of others and excited about the prospect of Christmas morning with their children.

Many groups and families made donations of supplies and equipment to our Childcare "Toy Box," including First United Church, Monroe County Chapter of the IU Alumni Association, St. Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church, and Ivy Tech Community College.

Remember MCUM When Writing Your Will or Trust

Making a bequest to MCUM is a simple way to show your long-term commitment to helping our neighbors in need.

Sample Bequest Language:
I hereby leave [specific dollar amount/specific property/specific percentage/rest and remainder, etc.] of my estate to Monroe County United Ministries, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation in Bloomington, Indiana, to be used for the benefit of the organization in such manner as the board of directors may elect.

Do you have a Marsh or O'Malia's Shopper Card?

You can earn points for the purchase of classroom supplies every time you use your Marsh or O'Malia's card. Just sign up to benefit MCUM when you shop. Just email the number from the back of your shopper card to Rebecca at mcumfund@bloomington.in.us. Points collected during the last school year earned MCUM glue, scissors, masks, a kickball set, pencils, construction paper, and various office supplies.

Childcare Classroom Calendars

Staff

Childcare Director: Traci Mehay
Educ. Coordinator: Tina Pender
Admin. Assist.: Jill Edie
Cook: Cynthia Powers
Assistant Cook: Derrick Mackie

Puffins: 2 - 2.5 year olds

Room currently closed.

Seahorses: 2.6 - 3 year olds

Teacher: Marycarole Matlock
Aide: Melissa Chambers

Penguins: 3 year olds

Teacher: Mary Ellen Pierce
Aide: Laura Baker

Otters: 4 year olds

Teacher: Jessica Smith
Aide: LaDawn Joyner

Dolphins: 5-6 year olds

Teacher: Kim Clay
Aide: Brock Singleton

Floater: Susan Williams

Puffins

The Puffin Room closed in August due to several funding losses. Thanks to careful planning, the closing was delayed long enough to graduate the Puffins into the Seahorse Room so none of our families lost care. However, MCUM's waiting list will continue to grow as families search for affordable care for their two year olds. We will re-assess our financial position soon to determine if the room can be re-opened in the near future.

Seahorses

January 3-7 - New Beginnings

This week the Seahorses will talk about the new year. What are some fun things we hope to do this year? We will explore our classroom rules and how we make friends. What do you like to do with your friends? How can we rearrange the room? Another year means growing a year older, getting bigger, and experiencing the different seasons again.

January 10-14 - Arctic Animals

This week the Seahorses will talk about arctic animals. Where would a penguin, besides down the hall, and a sea lion live? We will do the animal dance, make all kinds of masks and make a chart of our favorite animals. We will experiment with ice in our sensory table this week. We will build igloos out of our small cardboard blocks.

January 18-21 - Dinosaurs

Do you hear that sound? Can you guess what it might be? This week the Seahorses will study dinosaurs and talk about what is their favorite. We will read *There's a Dinosaur in My Backyard*, *How Dinosaurs Eat* and *Dinosaur Stomp!* We will have a dinosaur stomp and dig for fossils. Who has been to WonderLab and seen the dinosaur there?

January 24-28 - Ooey Gooey

This week the Seahorses will get into all kinds of fun and exciting messes. They will play in water with flour and cornstarch. We will make flubber, play dough and clean mud! We will explore soil and shaving cream at the sensory table as we make volcanoes with baking powder. What would the Seahorses like best? To share this all with you! Please feel free to come in and join us for the activities!

Announcements For Parents

Visitors Welcome:

Family members are welcome in our classrooms. Feel free to visit - and play - anytime. If you would like to stay for a meal, please let the staff know so we can help the kitchen plan.

Important Dates:

Monday, January 17 - MCUM will be closed in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Penguins

January 3-7 - Winter

We just finished celebrating the holidays and have already seen some snow, so now it is time to discuss the season in which these events take place. We will compare this season and the others, looking at what types of clothing we must wear, what happens to plant life and how animals survive at this time of year. The Penguins will also talk about all the different types of cold weather activities that we enjoy.

January 10-14 - Arctic Wild Life

January is the perfect time of year to learn about creatures that spend their entire lives living in a deep freeze. We will travel to the arctic regions to see just how penguins, polar bears and other cold-natured animals happily survive in subzero temperatures. Look for activity in the writing center as the Penguins choose their favorite arctic animal and write a story telling us how they would survive in this frozen world.

January 18-21 - Martin Luther King, Jr.

This week, as we celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the Penguins will discover just what this holiday means. We will discuss what great things he accomplished for humankind. The children will learn about freedom and what that means for each and every one of us. We will also learn the significance behind the idea of this holiday being viewed as "a day on, not a day off."

January 24-28 - Dinosaurs

Now the Penguins are going back to prehistoric times to hang out with the dinosaurs. We will learn all about the different types of dinosaurs, what they ate, how big they were, where they liked to play, etc. We also plan to go on dinosaur hunts, looking for tracks and fossils.

Otters

January 3-7 - My Body

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes...The Otters will spend this week talking about all that makes up our bodies. What connects our arm to our body? What is our skin made of? We will spend time learning the names of various body parts, examining our eye/hair color, and also share ways to keep our bodies healthy.



January 10-14 - Seasons

Winter, spring, summer, and fall...the Otters will spend time learning the names and happenings of each of the four seasons this week. What is your favorite season? When do leaves fall and flowers bloom? We will read books, hear stories, and discuss what makes each season so special.

January 18-21 - Martin Luther King, Jr.

After having Monday off for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the Otters will learn more about the man himself and his cause of peace. We will find out what peace means and share ways to make peace within ourselves, our classroom, our community, and our world.

January 24-28 - Pirates

Arrrgh, matey! The Otter Room will be transformed into a swashbuckling ship this week as we discuss pirates! What kind of birds do pirates like best? Eye patches will be made, sea shanties will be sung, and fun will be had by all!!

Dolphins

January 3-7 - 100th day of school

This week the Dolphins will reach their 100th day of school! We have been waiting and patiently counting up to this day. We will celebrate our milestone and discuss what we would like to do in the upcoming year. We will talk about why we have loved being Dolphins so far and what we want to do before the year ends.

January 10-14 - Martin Luther King

"I Have a Dream..." This week the Dolphins will celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 82nd birthday. We will talk about what his dream was and see if it came true. We will also listen as Dolphins tell us about their dreams.

January 18-21 - Transportation

This week the Dolphins will learn all about transportation vehicles. We will talk about planes, trains, cars, and of course, emergency vehicles. How do you get to school? What kind of transportation do you take on a trip? We will go on a vehicle hunt and take pictures of all the different types of transportation that we see around our school. Later in the week we will make a collage of our favorite vehicles.



January 24-28 - Music and Dance

As the cold weather settles in, the Dolphins will try out different ways of letting off steam inside the classroom. We will tumble on the mat, balance on the beam and dance. We will listen to different types of music and learn new dance moves.

Monroe County United Ministries

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Inside this issue:



**New Years
Resolutions**
Page 1

**Current
Needs**
Page 2

**2011 Board
of Directors**
Page 3

**Family
Literacy**
Page 4

**Holiday
Helpers**
Page 5

**Childcare
Calendar**
Pages 6-7

Return Service
Requested

Staff:

Executive Director: Meri Reinhold
Development Coordinator: Rebecca Stanze
Emergency Services Coordinator: Cliff Edens
Emerg. Services Caseworker: Justin Smith
Office Manager: Shannon Hampton
Childcare Director: Traci Mehay
Education Coordinator: Tina Pender
Administrative Assistant: Jill Edie

Hours of Operation:

Office and Emergency Services:	Monday - Friday 8:00am - noon 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Childcare:	Monday - Friday 6:30am - 5:30pm

Opportunity House, located at 907 W. 11th Street, is a resale shop that raises funds to support MCUM's programs by finding new homes for used items. Store hours are 9:00-2:00, Monday-Saturday, with donations accepted 8:30-3:00. Call 336-2443 for more information. "Like" Opp House on Facebook and get updates on sales, interesting items and volunteer opportunities!

Opportunity House Update

by Janet Donham, Opportunity House Board President

We want to thank the Bloomington community for all your wonderful donations throughout the years. Your support makes our resale store number one.

My elves are tired and need to enjoy a week of love and joy and being with family. For that to happen we will close December 24th and re-open Monday, January 3rd.

Please recycle this newsletter or share it with a friend.