

## **A Visit from St. Peter**

by Steve Becker, Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Seattle, Washington  
(with apologies to C.C. Moore and Peter Morales)

'Twas the night before Christmas, it was just before eight,  
No covenant group stirring, they were all running late.

Topic handouts were slung by the couches with care  
In hopes that our covenant group soon would be there.

The members arrived, some were thinking ahead,  
While visions of Principles danced in their heads.

Our Facilitator in her kerchief while looking assured  
Had just settled down for the Opening Words.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I glanced up from my UU World to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I ran with no beacon  
Stopped reading the Intro to see who was freakin'.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave intimacy and ultimacy to the searches we know.

When, what to my liberal eyes should appear,  
But a Toyota Hybrid pulled by eight tiny reindeer.

With a little old driver with no doctrinal creed,  
I know in a moment it must be St. Pete.

More rapid than pledges his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;

"Now, Forrest! Now, Ginny! Now, Bob Hill and Glenn!  
This group needs new topics, and just a few men!

To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash, Mike Durall!"

As Unitarians before evangelicals fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;

So up to the house-top the Unitarians flew,  
With the sleigh full of topics, and St. Peter too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
Secular humanists gathering, just to find proof.

As I returned to my group and settled them down,  
Down the chimney St. Peter came with a bound.

He was dressed in faux fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished from his Phoenix mug shoot.

A bundle of topics he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a Facilitator wanting feedback.

His eyes—how they twinkled! His quotations how merry!  
His questions like roses, no matter the query!

Quotations he cited without the least care,  
And scarfing a cookie, he took the empty chair.

All our Principles he held tight in his teeth,  
Respect for the web encircled his head like a wreath,

He had a smart face, lots of inherent worth  
You could see his strong faith, despite his wide girth.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly UU,  
And I laughed when I saw him, and learned something new.

A wink of his eye, his service project was clear!  
World community would be ours by the end of the year!

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
Went through all the questions; then turned with a jerk,

With mystery and miracle seen as no bother,  
And giving a nod, we all accepted one another.

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a shrill,  
And away they all flew like a pledge unfulfilled.

But I heard him exclaim, Unison Affirmation in sight  
“Peace, liberty, justice for all! and to all a good night!”

-Taken from the Small Group Ministry Network Quarterly, Winter 2011