

Confessing

The life of a congregation is a rich community tapestry of people, programs, ministries, and worship. We lift up the patterns of this tapestry at Unity Church with the threads of monthly themes woven through our worship and programming. These themes deepen our understanding of our faith and strengthen our bonds with one another in religious community.

October's theme is not one that is typically found in Unitarian Universalist curriculum. Early in the development of Universalism and Unitarianism, our ancestors rejected such concepts as original sin, and developed a theology of inherent goodness. As a result of this theological shift, the liturgical traditions that acknowledge human capacity for sin and evil were removed from worship, from religious education and from a deeper engagement.

Many come to Unitarian Universalist churches to escape the heavy-handed dogma of a religious tradition that made them feel guilty or innately wrong. Instead, Unitarian Universalism feels like an ever-flowing stream of positive and hopeful potential. Unitarian minister James Freeman Clarke famously believed in "the progress of man [sic] kind, onward and upward forever." James Freeman Clarke was an optimist. And he was wrong.

As Unitarianism grappled with the evils of the First and Second World Wars; as we came to understand the horrors of the Holocaust and subsequent wars, Unitarians and Universalists moved farther away from the belief that humankind would progress in spiritual maturity "onward and upward forever." Instead, we grapple with the reality of evil and the culpability of the human heart for sin. Yet, even though we have no doctrine of sin — nor do

we have a liturgy to acknowledge this human reality, we are ever more aware of the need to confess our humanness, which includes the ability to cause harm — to ourselves, to one another — and to our planet.

Confession — as many former Catholics understand it — is a practice that no longer means much to them. Yet, confessing our confusion, our uncertainty, our mistakes, our vulnerabilities within the context of religious community is not about going to a priest for absolution. Instead it is a form of spiritual practice, most often done within the context of recovery communities, but available to us all. Confessing is an acknowledgement of our own brokenness; our own capacity for harm. It extends to the awareness that for those of us who believe ourselves to be white, we too have played a part in benefiting from and maintaining white supremacy culture, which, writ large, perpetuates harm. The hope for our month of "confessing" is not to engender feelings of guilt or shame, but rather, an opportunity to unburden oneself, through the embodied practice of our worship life. Only through confessing our weaknesses, can we then truly, as Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs wrote "forgive ourselves and each other and begin again in love."

Confessing then — is a verb. It's an act. This month Unity's outreach teams, chalice circles, and other

small group ministries will all encourage you to go deeper into what confessing means to you. It is our hope that this month provides you with a time of deep introspection and reflection.

*Written by Rev. Kathleen Rolenz
with contributions from
Rev. Lara Cowtan, Rev. KP Hong,
Rev. Tom Duke, Rev. Andrea Anastos,
and Nelson Moroukian*



Theme Resources

For further reflection on the theme of confession, please see this month's Spiritual Practice Packet, available online at unityunitarian.org/chalice-circles.html.

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IN THE MEANTIME



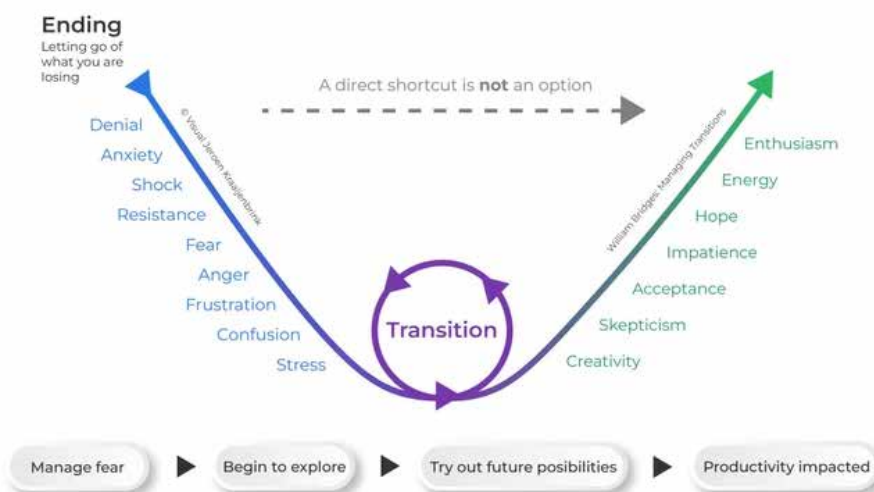
Reflections on Interim Ministry

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, Interim Senior Minister

I have a confession to make: I love interim ministry. That's not to say that I haven't loved being a settled minister as well, but interim ministry provides an opportunity to enter a church's system, meet an entire congregation of interesting, caring and dedicated members, their children and families, and help a congregation move through what's known as the "Emotional Roller Coaster of Change." Almost every church I've served has found itself on this roller coaster — and, I'm happy to report — all have also found themselves on the upswing of this change.

The Emotional Roller Coaster of Change

(and why there are no short cuts)



Where do you think Unity is right now? With church programs in full swing, people returning to in-person church, with the Ministerial Search Team already at work, with new staffing in place, I can tell you where I think Unity is! Last month, I encouraged all those who planned to “wait and see” what happened with the Search to recommit their time and talent to Unity Church so that the congregation continues to move past impatience to hope, energy and enthusiasm. I am also asking all of you — to pledge in October when we conduct our 2024 pledge drive. Unity Church has one of the finest staff I've ever had the pleasure of serving with, but part of this interim time has revealed that staff salaries do not meet the new recommended UUA compensation guidelines. It's imperative that Unity Church pay their staff fairly and equitably. This is not only the right thing to do, it's an important factor that experienced ministers will be looking at as they discern whether or not Unity Church is the right place for their ministry.

I believe that everyone can give *something*. No gift is too small (or too large!) It's my hope that Unity Church will report 100% of giving so that we can equitably pay our staff, support the many important programs, and keep building on the energy, enthusiasm and momentum for the future. A stalled roller coaster is no fun. Let's keep moving forward, together.

See you in church!

Kathleen

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

Iris Cornelius

May 17, 1937 – June 1, 2023

Jackie Lind

March 9, 1947 – August 29, 2023

Ken Ford

January 14, 1940 – September 8, 2023

Coffee Hour

Kitchen Hospitality

We are looking for a few people to keep the coffee flowing, run the dishwasher, and provide a warm welcome during coffee hours on Sundays. Training is provided during your first shift! Commit to one coffee hour per month, September through December. Sign up today: [bit.ly/coffeehosp!](https://bit.ly/coffeehosp) Questions? Email Heidi heidi@unityunitarian.org.

Donate Cloth Napkins

Is your sideboard overflowing with napkins? Bring them to church! We are looking for cotton (not polyester) napkins that are dark in color or patterned (to help hide stains) to increase our stock for Wellspring Wednesday dinner. This is a good thing — it means more of you are coming to dinner! Questions? Contact heidi@unityunitarian.org. Otherwise, drop off your napkins in the facilities office. Thank you!

Flowers for Worship

If you would like to provide flowers for a Sunday worship service, or if you would like to volunteer as the Sunday flower coordinator, please contact Martha Tilton at 651-228-1456 x105 or martha@unityunitarian.org.

OCTOBER SERVICES

Sunday Worship Services

Sunday services are held at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. The 9:00 a.m. service is offered via livestream. Religious Education programs for children and youth are held Sundays during our service times.

October 1: I Confess

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz | Peggy Lin, worship associate

Livestream at 9:00: youtube.com/watch?v=QPnNvdnl2QE

Unitarian Universalists long ago abandoned confession as part of their liturgical tradition, believing that such a practice was in direct opposition to our First Principle of “covenanting to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of all persons.” Rev. Rolenz will explore whether the ancient practice of confession is antithetical to our First Principle, or actually a vehicle for deeper self-reflection.

Stewardship Sunday, October 8

Let Hope Become Courage

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz | Betsy Hearn, worship associate

Livestream at 9:00: youtube.com/watch?v=SqIuulANJqU

The second Sunday in October is typically an opportunity for you to reflect on your financial support of the church for the year ahead. This year, our Executive Team will confess some hard and hopeful truths about the current state and future of the church as we prepare to enter the 2024 fiscal year.

October 15: Confess and Redress

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz | Merrill Aldrich, worship associate

Livestream at 9:00: youtube.com/watch?v=hjD-WYBBb3E

Reparations for systemic racism and attempted genocide is now part of our national conversation, yet confession, without making attempts to redress harm, is nothing more than virtue signaling. We'll explore the complex question of reparations through the lens of those most harmed, with a particular focus on indigenous justice.

October 22: Sorry. Not Sorry. The Subtle Art of Apology

Rev. Lara Cowtan | Sara Ford, worship associate

Livestream at 9:00: youtube.com/watch?v=n24PytxkozM

Because we're human, we hurt each other, we get hurt, and there's a way through that, but that way through depends on the ability to deliver and accept a powerfully meaningful apology. Healing and repair of broken relationships doesn't happen on its own.

October 29: The Future of Religion

Rev. Keith Kron | Ari Giles, worship associate

Livestream at 9:00: youtube.com/watch?v=9Eh4ZFSK9uk

What purpose does religion serve now? What purpose can it serve? With membership declining and ministerial shortages in every denomination, what will the future of religion and Unitarian Universalism be? What could it be? We'll explore these questions, and how we might learn from our past, those around us, and the moment we're in to consider a course for the future of religion. Rev. Kron is the Transitions Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Offering Recipients

Each week, seventy percent of our Sunday offering is given to a community non-profit and thirty percent supports the Community Outreach Ministry at Unity Church. Donations are gratefully accepted online at bit.ly/sundayoffering.

October 1: Mano a Mano

Unity's Mano a Mano Community Outreach Ministry Team supports Mano a Mano International by collecting, sorting, packing, and shipping medical, construction, and school supplies to Bolivia. They also organize community information forums encouraging people to become passionate advocates for Mano a Mano's many sustainable projects. This collection will support the ongoing outreach work of Mano a Mano. unityunitarian.org/mano-a-mano.html

October 8: Art from the Inside

Art from the Inside (AFTI) is an onsite program at the Stillwater Corrections Facility fostering healing, forgiveness, and personal transformation. The produced art work is a powerful window into the lives and dreams of incarcerated artists. Art from AFTI artists will be featured in the October Parish Hall gallery. This collection supports AFTI's outreach efforts to connect greater Minnesota with Minnesota's incarcerated community. artfromtheinsidemn.org

October 15: Makoce Ikikcupi

Makoce Ikikcupi (Land Recovery), is a project of reparative justice on Dakota land in Minnesota Makoce (Minnesota). The Makoce Ikikcupi project seeks to bring some Dakota people home, re-establish their spiritual and physical relationship with their homeland, and ensure the ongoing existence of Dakota People. Two villages of earth lodges are currently under construction in Mountain Lake and Granite Falls where Dakota people can live following traditional practices. More villages are planned as additional land is reacquired. makoceikikcupi.com

October 22: Padoc Area Scholars Society (PASS)

PASS, led by Dr. Ting Mayai (one of the original Lost Boys of Sudan who shared his story at Wellspring Wednesday in August), provides scholarships for impoverished South Sudanese high school graduates to attend university or technical school. \$1500 would cover the tuition for eleven students for one year of university study. Unity's Dayna Kennedy is a supporter of PASS. southsudanpass.org

October 29: Good Courage Farm

Good Courage Farm, under the executive leadership of Kerri Meyer, Unity's former director of religious education, is an agrarian ministry in west central Minnesota where people of all faiths gather to learn and work together for the healing of creation. Good Courage grows organic food while sharing practices of agricultural, social, and spiritual regeneration. This collection will help support two young adults as they participate in a six-week apprenticeship. goodcourage.farm

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / MINISTERIAL SEARCH TEAM

An October Update

September was a full month at Unity Church with Merging of Waters kicking off the church year, Wellspring Wednesdays returning to their weekly schedule, and our music, religious education, and community outreach ministries all now in full swing. Sundays in Parish Hall have been abuzz with people, and filled with wonderful art and an colorful assortment of tasty donuts!

We said goodbye to Rev. Karen Gustafson, our Interim Minister of Pastoral Care, and her departing sermon wisely invited us to celebrate change, so that we can hold more. We also welcome Rev. Lara Cowtan, our new Minister of Congregational Care, and we are grateful for her ministry and partnership in care.

And, of course, our Ministerial Search Team is thick in their work, planning, coordinating, listening, and communicating with the board and congregation about the search process. Cottage Meetings are being scheduled (there's a list on this page, and the first meeting in September had 25 participants!), and these opportunities to connect with the process of calling a senior minister invite us to reflect again on the charge to the congregation that was created by the board in collaboration with church members:

- As a congregant, I will be an informed participant in the search process.
- I will respect the covenantal nature of this process.
- I will respect the work and honor the service of the Ministerial Search Team, knowing that they cannot share everything with the congregation.
- I will offer thoughtful discernment about the current and future needs of the congregation.
- I will engage in best practices of transformative conflict but not engage in divisive behavior that causes harm.
- I will be mindful in my use of email and social media communications with respect to matters concerning the search and the search process.
- I will be present during candidating week, will learn about the candidate, make my decision carefully, and vote responsibly.

We look forward to see in you at church!

Yours in faithful service,
The Board of Trustees

**Annual Meeting of
The Congregation of Unity Church
Saturday, November 18, 10:00 a.m.
*All are welcome!***

Cottage Meetings

We want to hear from you!

Ministerial Search Team

Cottage meetings are opportunities to be in conversation with the Ministerial Search Team and other members of the congregation about who we are, what we hope to become, and the qualities we will look for in a called minister who will be our partner on the journey. Please attend a meeting! All are invited, no registration is required, and child care is available with one-week advance notice to katrina@unityunitarian.org. If you have questions for the MST, please stop by their table in Parish Hall after services on Sunday or send them a note to mst24@unityunitarian.org.

Wednesday, October 4 • 7:10-8:30 p.m. • Robbins Parlor Spiritual Leadership

What does spiritual leadership look like and how is it lived out in Unity's ministries? We'll explore the question of spiritual leadership as it relates to worship, music, children, faith formation, chalice circles and literary ministries. Everyone is welcome; groups that may be particularly interested in attending include worship associates, music ministries, religious education, teaching associates, history and archive teams, Beloved Community Staff Team, and Coming of Age and Tower Club youth.

Wednesday, October 11 • 7:10-8:30 p.m. • Robbins Parlor Community Engagement and Justice Work

We aspire to lead lives of integrity, service and joy. How do we live out the aspiration to be of service through our community outreach ministry and justice work? What do we expect of ourselves — and our ministers — as representatives of the liberal faith in the wider community? Everyone is welcome; groups that may be particularly interested in attending include all members of our community outreach ministry teams, and members who are also community partners including Circle of Peace, One Voice, Mila, and Border Crossing.

Wednesday, October 18 • 7:10-8:30 p.m. • Robbins Parlor Governance and Management

Unity Church's Executive Team is accountable to the ends of the congregation, that is, a set of value statements which guide and direct the ministries of the church. What are our hopes and expectations around our current governance system and ends? How will our senior leadership be asked to engage with this important part of church life?

Wednesday, October 25 • 7:10-8:30 p.m. • Robbins Parlor Congregational and Pastoral Care

What are the congregation's expectations around pastoral care? How is that different or the same as congregational care? What is the minister's role in creating a culture of care? Everyone is welcome, and groups that may be particularly interested in attending include the Congregational Care Team, representatives of our senior living communities, people involved in rites of passage.



Unity-UU Common Read / Pursuing Beloved Community Through Repentance and Repair

By Shelley Butler, Beloved Community Communications Team and Library-Bookstall Team

A UU Common Read can take us on a powerful journey into what it means to be human and accountable in a world filled with both pain and joy.

—Unitarian Universalist Association

A Unity friend told me recently that her husband was exhilarated by our congregation read book, *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World* by Danya Ruttenberg; that his copy was full of bookmarks and notes in the margin, and that he was planning to purchase the book for others in their family. This is not something you'd necessarily expect to hear about a book that teaches us in five steps to do the work of repentance personally and collectively, but we hope that his enthusiasm will inspire you and others to participate in the read and this work.

Dismantling white supremacy and making reparations for the shame of slavery or reparations for stolen land and genocide of Native Americans often feels overwhelming. Even figuring out how to right a wrong against just one person we have harmed can provoke anxiety. But, as is quoted in *On Repentance and Repair*, "If you believe that you can do damage, believe that you can fix it. If you believe that you can do harm, believe that you can heal." Let's not let the enormity of what we need to do cut us off at the knees. This book, the opportunity to delve more deeply into it in an Antiracism Literacy Partners group, and the "Repentance and Repair in Our Lives and Relationships" discussions coming up at Unity in November provide us with the guidance to continue the antiracism and right relations work we've already started at Unity, but also support those of us who may be just beginning this work, step by step.

In the book, Rabbi Ruttenberg outlines the path based on the work of 12th century-medieval Sephardic Jewish philosopher Moses ben Maimon, more

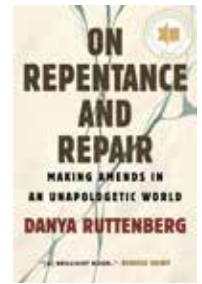
commonly known as Maimonides, and deftly applies these principles to today. The first step is "naming and owning harm," or confessing (our worship theme for October). Ruttenberg acknowledges the challenge, but also the tendency to minimize harm by making excuses and justifications. How often have we heard and even said, "But I didn't mean to"?

She writes, "Addressing harm is possible only when we bravely face the gap between the story we tell ourself — the one in which we're the hero, fighting the good fight, doing our best, behaving responsibly and appropriately in every context — and the reality of our actions." It may be true that our intentions are good and that we are doing our best, but that doesn't negate harm we've caused or inherited nor the responsibility to make amends. The steps beyond confession — both public and private — include change, restitution, consequences, apologies, and making better choices; or in other words, transformation that leads to healing and a more just world.

So many important questions are answered here: How do we handle harm when we see it around us? In an antiracism workshop at Unity, there was talk of weaponizing the traits of white supremacy culture listed by Tema Okum (bit.ly/wscultureokun). What is the difference between calling out harm when we see it and weaponizing a tool that helps us understand it?

What about the harm caused by the institutions, like Unity Church, or workplaces, schools, universities, or social groups; justice systems—policing, courts, prisons; and the nation? How do we hold ourselves and these larger arenas accountable, and what is our responsibility? Is national repentance, for example, possible; and can we learn from Germany and South Africa? Beyond accountability, how can we atone and make amends?

Even as I write this, the questions loom large, and on my own, I could never answer them. But in a community such as ours that values truth, honest storytelling, and healing, and with resources, workshops, and discussions like the Unity-UU Common Read, maybe together we can summon the bravery to begin and the willingness to continue the work, and the faith that "on the other side of transformation is another more whole, more full, more free way of being, one that we can't fully imagine from here." Sounds a lot like a walk towards beloved community, doesn't it? Won't you join us?



On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World by Danya Ruttenberg. Beacon Press, 2022. In the Unity Bookstall (paperback, \$18), and in the Anderson Library (202.2 R). bit.ly/andlibcat

Antiracism Literacy Partners (unityunitarian.org/antiracist-multiculturalism.html), October 4, 2023. Meet to learn about the program and sign up for a group to take a deeper dive into *On Repentance and Repair*. On Zoom, register here: bit.ly/ALPoc423

Unity-UU Common Read Events: Repentance and Repair in Our Lives and Relationships, Led by Rev. Kathleen Rolenz and Rev. Lara Cowtan (If you can't read the whole book, please read chapters 1, 2, 7, 8)

- Saturday, November 4, 9:00 a.m.-noon., Parts 1 and 2
In-person at Unity Church
- Tuesday, November 7 7:30–9:00 p.m., Part 1 only
Online via Zoom: bit.ly/CommonReadNov23

The Unity-UU Common Read is sponsored by Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, the Beloved Community Staff Team, and the Library-Bookstall Team.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS



Welcome Words

Laura Park
Director of Membership and Hospitality

If you're a newcomer to Unity Church, you might be a little overwhelmed at all the possibilities

available to you. Three suggestions:

- Take it at your own pace. Jump in with both feet and try out everything or hang back for a while until you get the lay of the land. There's no right way to begin at Unity Church.
- Come to one of the Ministerial Search Team Cottage Meetings. You might think those are only for established members of the church, but as a newcomer, you're our future. We want to hear your thoughts and ideas. Plus you'll learn a lot about the church!
- Come to worship as often as you can. The spiritual heart of the congregation beats there.

As you explore, let me know what questions I can answer about congregational life and the pathways you might explore to deepen your life of faith and antiracist multicultural practice. Contact me at laura@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110.

Pathway to Membership Classes

The offerings below invite you to explore a deeper connection to Unity Church and the commitments and opportunities of membership. If you have questions or would like one-on-one conversation about getting connected or about membership, please contact Laura Park, Acting Director of Membership and Hospitality, laura@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110.

Finding Yourself at Unity

For visitors and inquirers: Sundays 10:15 a.m. Gannett Room or on Zoom: bit.ly/fyuonline

Drop-ins welcome; childcare in the nursery.

Join the repeating eight-session cycle at any time. Attend the sessions in any order, which include Unitarian Universalist History; Faith Formation for Children, Youth, and Adults; Congregational and Pastoral Care; Q and A with a Minister; Worship and the Liturgical Year; Social Justice and Community Outreach; Membership 101 and Congregational Life, and a Building Tour.

This month's offerings:

October 1: Pastoral and Congregational Care

October 8: Q and A with the Minister

October 15: Worship and Liturgical Year

October 22: Community Outreach

October 29 Religious Education for Children, Youth, and Adults

Weekly church emails include the session topic, or find the session schedule at the Welcome Table in the main lobby or in Parish Hall, or email Laura Park to receive Saturday morning email reminders.

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Tuesday, October 3 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Develop personal practice to help you find and keep your balance.

Develop the skills of intimacy that let you go deep quickly with strangers.

Take the compassion that rises from doing the first two and use it to bless the world.

This is how Unity Church talks about its expectations of membership. Does the invitation into this ongoing work resonate with you? Are you ready to make the membership commitment? This session, for people ready to become members, explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can discover the places in your life where the world's need meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book and officially join the church. Let Laura Park know you're interested in participating or to ask questions. She can also arrange a private signing ceremony.

**UNITY CHURCH—
UNITARIAN**
integrity • service • joy

commUNITY is the monthly newsletter of Unity Church. Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Subscriptions are free to those who make pledges to Unity Church and are available to others for \$30/year.

Unity Church - UU Common Read

Read in September & October 2023

See page 5 for details!

Join the Ministers for discussion in November

In the Unity Bookstore & Anderson Library

ON REPENTANCE AND REPAIR
MAKING AMENDS IN AN UNAPOLOGETIC WORLD
DANYA RUTTENBERG

"A BRILLIANT BOOK." —REBECCA SOLMIT
Beacon Press • 2022

Unity's Staff Changes

For decades, Unity Church has benefited from the presence of a highly capable, collaborative and dedicated staff. Many staff members are long tenured and over the years, position descriptions have grown in response to growing programs, new initiatives, and in response to the pandemic. Over the past year, Unity's Executive Team conducted a thorough analysis of individual staff positions and created what we believe to be an effective and logical staffing structure for the future. We are entering our third year of interim ministry and expecting to call a new senior minister in the spring. Having a full complement of staff will continue to serve the congregation and enhance the opportunities for a smooth ministerial transition.

New staff hires in 2023 include Nelson Moroukian, Coordinator of Children and Family Ministries; Rev. Lara Cowtan, Minister of Congregational Care; Mo Todd, Facilities Specialist; and Carlos McAdory, Facilities Specialist. We have also hired Robert Baker who will join us in October as our Facilities Manager, allowing Teresa Connor to move toward retirement, and Heidi Birkholz to assume a new position as Events and Technology Coordinator. We will also be hiring a Financial Manager this fall to assume some of our Executive Director's current responsibilities. The board is beginning a process to hire a new Executive Director in 2024 as Barbara Hubbard prepares for retirement in the spring. We are also planning to hire a Community Outreach Coordinator and a Program Assistant in 2024.

These are important and exciting changes. Thank you for appreciating our current staff and for welcoming and supporting new staff members as they join us!

Creating a Right Relations Team at Unity Church

In 2022, Rev. Kathleen Rolenz began conversation with the ministers at White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church and First Universalist Minneapolis about creating teams (called by a variety of names: Healthy Congregations, Right Relations, etc.) to help our respective congregations learn constructive ways of dealing with conflict and to live into our best selves in community. The time has come to build a team here at Unity Church. This team will consist of five members who would be interested in learning about Right Relations Teams, participating in Right Relations Team training, and eventually meeting with teams from White Bear and First Universalist for collaborative learning. If you are interested, please fill out this brief application and submit no later than October 13: bit.ly/ucurrteam. For more information about Right Relations Teams visit uua.org/leaderlab/rr-teams.

Lectio Divina

Second Wednesday and Fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:10 p.m.

Online via Zoom: bit.ly/Lectio2023-24

Register once, at any time, to attend any or all sessions

Participate in a centuries-old monastic practice of listening, contemplating, and responding to sacred texts; modified with poetry for UU small group spiritual practice. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler. A different poem at each session.

On Wednesdays, you may join the Zoom from the Gannett Room at church. Questions? Contact Shelley at library@unityunitarian.org.



Gathering for those Impacted by Suicide

Saturday, November 18 • 9:00-11:00 a.m. • Robbins Parlor

Having a loved one die by suicide can be a unique grief experience. We plan to offer a time for people who have been impacted by the suicide of a family member or loved one to come together and offer each other support, understanding, and the opportunity to share what is perhaps difficult to share with those who haven't lived through this kind of grief. This gathering will be facilitated by Congregational Care Minister, Lara Cowtan, and Congregational Care Team member Angie Scott. Please email Angie at scot0232@umn.edu if you plan to attend.

Save the Date: Unity's Christmas Pageant

It's almost time to get ready for the 2023 Christmas Pageant, a rich and favored tradition for 100+ years here at Unity Church. In November, we will invite you to register your child to participate. Whether you are new to Unity Church or you have been around for many years, we hope that your family will want to participate.

Key dates:

- Registration: November 12-December 3, watch for a link
 - Costume fittings: A Sunday in December (TBD), between services
 - Rehearsal: December 23, 12:30-4:00 p.m.*
 - Pageant: December 24, 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. (3:00-6:30 p.m.*)
- *approximate times

Questions? Contact Kelley Loughrey at 763-607-7520 or kelleyloughrey@comcast.net.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday gathers a multigenerational church community to nourish right and holy relationship among us and deepen our life of faith, grounded in spiritual practice and antiracist multicultural work. Dinner begins at 5:45 p.m. in Parish Hall, a short chapel service begins at 6:40 p.m. in Ames Chapel, and programs begin at 7:10 p.m. (child care is available).

October 4

Dinner: grilled cheese tomato soup, pea slaw, lemon cookies

Art from the Inside

In-person, Parish Hall
Join Art from the Inside founder and former correctional officer Antonio Espinosa as he takes us on his journey to create an organization that empowers incarcerated artists to experience personal transformation and restoration. How might we as individuals be in relationship with our neighbors in prison? Art from the Inside is the October Parish Hall exhibit.

Ministerial Search Team Cottage Meeting on Spiritual Leadership

In-person, Robbins Parlor
What does spiritual leadership look like and how is it lived out in Unity's ministries? We'll explore the question of spiritual leadership as it relates to worship, music, children, faith formation, chalice circles and literary ministries. Everyone is welcome, and groups that may be particularly interested in attending include worship associates, music ministries, religious education, teaching associates, history and archive teams, Beloved Community Staff Team, and Coming of Age and Tower Club youth.

Antiracism Literacy Partners

Online via Zoom: bit.ly/ALPoct423
This program highlights useful books, podcasts, and videos in our ongoing practice of learning about systemic racism and the work of dismantling it. Participants report that their understanding of a resource increases exponentially when explored with a partner or a group. Choose a resource, sign up for a buddy or small group and make plans for your discussions. Resource/discussion guides provided.

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person, Choir Room
Beginning violin lessons appropriate for all ages. Learn basic violin posture, note reading, and more!

October 11

Dinner: black bean enchiladas, corn salad, cinnamon sugar bars

Passage • Before dinner 5:00 to 6:00

In-person, Center Room
Join OnStage for an exploration and experience of the play *Passage*, playing through October 15 at the Pillsbury House Theater. A fantasia inspired by E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, *Passage* is set in the fictional Country X, which is a neocolonial client of Country Y. B, a local doctor, and F, an expat teacher, begin to forge a friendship that is challenged after a fateful trip to a local attraction. Can an authentic friendship occur between colonizer/colonized, between oppressor/oppressed or between people who disagree over fundamental values? Participants will also receive a ticket discount to see the play at Pillsbury House Theatre.

Doctrine of Discovery

Unity Church and online via Zoom: bit.ly/dodzooom
Sponsored by Unity's Indigenous Justice Community Outreach Ministry Team
Come view and discuss the powerful landmark documentary, *The Doctrine of Discovery: Unmasking the Domination Code*. The film tells the true story of how religious doctrine led to the destruction and dehumanization of the many First Nation peoples of Great Turtle Island (now North, Central, and South America). It is a story of history, spirituality, and resistance told from an Indigenous perspective.

Filmmaker and director Sheldon Wolfchild (Dakota) and Co-Producer Steven Newcomb (Shawnee, Lenape) collaborated to bring this story to the screen and Wolfchild will be on hand following the showing to answer questions.

Want to watch the movie in advance? Rent it at vimeo.com/ondemand/dominationcodeB. Antiracism Literacy Partners (see October 4) is offering the documentary as one of its resources this month for those who wish to engage in deeper conversation about this topic.

Ministerial Search Team Cottage Meeting

Topic: Community Engagement and Justice Work

In-person, Robbins Parlor
We aspire to lead lives of integrity, service and joy. How do we live out the aspiration to be of service through our community outreach ministry and justice work? What do we expect of ourselves — and our ministers — as representatives of the liberal faith in the wider community? Everyone is welcome; groups that may be particularly interested in attending include all members of our Community Outreach Ministry Teams, and members who are also community partners including Circle of Peace, One Voice, Mila, and Border Crossing.

Lectio Divina

Online via Zoom: bit.ly/Lectio2023-24
Register once, at any time, to attend any or all sessions
Participate in a centuries-old monastic practice of listening, contemplating, and responding to sacred texts; modified with poetry for UU small group spiritual practice. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler. On Wednesdays, you may join the Zoom from the Gannett Room at church. Questions? Contact Shelley at library@unityunitarian.org.

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person, Choir Room

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

October 18

Dinner: breakfast sweet and savory casseroles, salad, fruit

Dying for Beginners Part 1: Thinking About Death

In-person, Parish Hall

In this first session, each of us will take on the uncomfortable task of contemplating the end of our own lives. Reverend Lara Cowtan, our new Minister of Congregational Care, will place contemporary trends in end-of-life in a context of historical and religious approaches to death and dying. Paired conversations, simple exercises and time for reflection will make this an enriching experience.

The Natural Guitar

In-person, Foote Room

Retired guitar professor, classical guitarist and studio guitarist Nick Rath will share his thoughts on the most natural and efficient way of playing the guitar. If you've found it difficult to get from one chord to the next, one note to the next, that pesky bar chord, that you're picking is uneven and your strumming doesn't feel quite right, that your left hand gets tired, this class could be the answer. Playing the guitar can be a joy and not a struggle. Bring your guitar and find out.

Ministerial Search Team Cottage Meeting

Topic: Governance and Management

In Person Robbins Parlor

Unity Church's Executive Team is accountable to the Ends of the congregation, that is, a set of value statements which guide and direct the ministries of the church. What are our hopes and expectations around our current governance system and ends? How will our senior leadership be asked to engage with this important part of church life?

Board Game Night

In-person, Anderson Library

Open to everyone; kids are welcome with their adult(s)! We'll have a variety of board games available that are easy to learn, or bring a favorite board game.

Textile Arts

In-person, DeCramer Room

All ages and levels of experience are welcome! Join Textile Arts for creation and conversation — bring your knitting, crocheting, tatting, embroidery, needlepoint, and cross stitch!

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person, Choir Room

October 25

Dinner: spaghetti and meatballs, big chopped salad, Italian wedding cookies

Talking about Food Waste: An Evening with Lydia Campbell

Parish Hall and online via Zoom: bit.ly/foodwaste1025

Ms. Campbell recently led an informative series for the City of Saint Paul highlighting ways we can reduce food waste, protecting our pocketbooks and the environment at the same time. You are sure to leave this evening with practical tips to try at home!

Dying for Beginners Part 2: Experiencing Dying

In-person, Anderson Library

What does it feel like to die? Every death is different, but all deaths share similar processes as the body shuts down. A health care provider with decades of experience will enhance our understanding of the dying process. There will be plenty of time for questions about pain management, palliative care, and hospice.

Ministerial Search Team Cottage Meeting

Topic: Congregational and Pastoral Care

In-person, Robbins Parlor

What are the congregation's expectations around pastoral care? How is that different or the same as congregational care? What is the minister's role in creating a culture of care? Everyone is welcome, and groups that may be particularly interested in attending include the Congregational Care Team, representatives of our senior living communities, people involved in rites of passage.

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person, Choir Room

Come Share a Meal

Wellspring Wednesday Dinner

Dinner prepared and served by our Food Ministry Team. If you would like to help prepare a meal (there's plenty of support!), please email laura@unityunitarian.org.

Weekly menus are posted with the programming for each week. The cost for dinner is \$8/adults, \$4/child (ages 5-12), \$2/child (ages 2-4), and \$20/family. If you need financial assistance to help cover the cost of dinner, or if you plan to join us and need a special dietary preparation, please email Laura Park at laura@unityunitarian.org. Vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, dairy free options available.



All this month at Wellspring Wednesdays!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Act for the Earth Team

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at Wellspring Wednesday Meal Preparation

Anna Newton, Act for the Earth Team

When something appears to flow seamlessly, it is easy to take for granted. You have no doubt enjoyed socializing during Wellspring Wednesday meals, but have you considered how that delicious food arrives on your plate?

— Anna Newton



Start with a menu. Madeline Sommers pulled together a whole year's worth of carefully tested menus to feed 100 people. What a gift! Madeline always provided an alternative out of respect for those who avoid meat, dairy or gluten.

Mondays are shopping days and bulk purchasing reduces cost and excess packaging. Financial and environmental costs factor into the decision to minimize the amount of meat prepared. Vegetables might be sourced from the St. Paul Farmers' Market, so we can support local farmers, too.

Volunteers! Tuesdays are prep days for our food ministry team so the final meal prep is more manageable on Wednesday. They also prepared food over the summer and froze it for future use. This is a great way to cook seasonally!

Avoiding waste: What would you do if a large quantity of lemon juice and butter was left over from breakfast? Why, make lemon curd of course, and put it in the freezer for a special desert later. Commercial composting allows our cooks to keep food scraps, including bones and fats, out of the waste stream.

As we enjoy our Wellspring Wednesday meals and gatherings, let us pause to express gratitude for our amazing food ministry team, those who cook with such joy and care, and for all the hands that have brought food to our plate. Let us remember that food production is dependent upon pollinators, healthy soil and adequate clean water, all of which are increasingly in jeopardy as our climate warms. Let us vow not to waste this gift of food, but to honor it as it nourishes us. Because we all engage with food, and agriculture's footprint on the earth is massive, Unity's Act for the Earth Team is sponsoring a series of food conversations throughout this church year focusing on our connections with food. We hope you will join us!

October Food Conversation Theme: Food Waste

Pizza and a Movie: *Just Eat it: A Food Waste Story*

Friday, October 20 • 6:00-8:30 p.m. • In-person, Robbins Parlor
Follow the adventures of a young couple who set out to go a year without purchasing food. This film draws attention to the international problem of food waste and its implications, with plenty of surprises along the way. Pizza and salad will be served at 6:00 (donations gratefully accepted), discussion to follow the movie at 7:30. Hosted in partnership with the City of Saint Paul. Please register (so we can order enough pizza): bit.ly/foodwastemoviepizza

Talking about Food Waste: An Evening with Lydia Campbell

Wednesday October 25 • 7:10 p.m. • In-person, Parish Hall and online via Zoom:
bit.ly/foodwaste1025

Ms. Campbell recently led an informative series for the City of Saint Paul highlighting ways we can reduce food waste, protecting our pocketbooks and the environment at the same time. You are sure to leave this evening with practical tips to try at home!

Gun Sense Team

Join us in September!

*Uneasy, uneasy, uneasy — why?
Because when opportunity gives
you the obligation to create, you are
content to meet the demands of the
moment, from one day to the next.*

— Dag Hammarskjöld

The Gun Sense Team is uneasy, and we have a sense of obligation to create, with education and conversation, a community safe for all. What does that look like to you, and how do we get there?

Come add your voice. We meet the second Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is Thursday, October 12, at 3:30 p.m., in person at Unity Church and online via Zoom.

For more information and/or to be added to our email list, please contact us at unityunitarian.org/gun-sense.html.

Evergreen Quilters

Food Shelf

Fall is definitely in the air. In August we donated 374 pounds of food and school supplies to



Hallie Q. Brown. Thank you for your generous contributions and a big thanks to our Children's Garden children and volunteers. Fresh produce is a wonderful donation. For October, suggested items include corn bread mix, canned corn, canned green beans, cake mix, frosting, cranberry sauce, pumpkin filling, general Thanksgiving food items.

To donate money for perishable food items visit hallieqbrown.org.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Affordable Housing Team

Emerson Village Breaks Ground

Dayna Kennedy, Affordable Housing Team

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, a very active partner of our team, is thrilled to announce that they broke ground on September 21 on Emerson Village in North Minneapolis. They reached their funding goal and soon 40 families will have a deeply affordable place to call home. "Deeply affordable" means families spend only 30% of their income on rent. Moreover, Beacon locations provide wrap around services such as mental health and recovery, employment, parenting support and more. It is our giving and strong advocacy that make this a reality... one building at a time.



Rendering of Emerson Village in Minneapolis

Hands On Help Needed at Project Home

Project Home is looking for volunteers to serve meals as part of their weekend meal service. Chef Omar takes care of meal preparation! Lunch and dinner serving shifts are available on Saturdays and Sundays at Provincial House in Saint Paul. Sign up to volunteer or create a team of 3-6 people. Supervised older children are welcome to sign up. tinyurl.com/PHMealTeams2023

Help is also needed with on-demand building, monthly birthday celebrations, and maintenance. Questions? Contact Shelter Manager, Donna Franklin, at DFranklin@interfaithaction.org or Unity member Janice Gestner at janicemgg@comcast.net.

Check Out Our Team

Are you curious about what we're up to on the Affordable Housing Team? Please come and check us out. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month from 4:30-5:30 p.m. on Zoom. Contact Judy Miller at jmkmam@comcast.net for more information and to request a Zoom link to join our next meeting.

J. J. Hill / Obama School Team

J. J. Hill Welcomes Unity Volunteers

The enthusiasm was contagious as several Unity Church volunteers entered J. J. Hill Montessori Magnet School early one evening in September. We were invited to attend the annual Garden Party, an open house to welcome J. J. Hill families to school. Children were greeting their friends and hugging their former teachers. New families were welcomed as they explored the school and classrooms. Parent Teacher Organization [PTO] representatives were on hand to welcome families with information, face painting, and other activities. And there was ice cream!

School staff are looking forward to having us as volunteers in the classrooms, library, and at special events. Opportunities can be regular and ongoing or sporadic. If you'd like more information, contact Nancy Heege at nancyheege672@gmail.com and we'll send an overview. An orientation to the Montessori methodology will be offered later in the fall.

Each Sunday we promise to support "those whose primary spiritual practice is caring for children." Getting involved at J. J. Hill will provide us with new ways of practicing this promise. We invite you to join us.



Connecting Unitarian Universalists and allies to help shape a just and loving world. muusja.org



ACTIVE HOPE / DYING FOR BEGINNERS

Active Hope in Our Challenging World

Sherri Knuth, Active Hope Discussion Group Participant

"We begin with gratitude."

We came together in the middle of a hot, dry summer, with grief and a longing for something better for our troubled world. We left six weeks later with active hope; hope not in the sense of wishful thinking but as travelers on a collective journey in which we focus on our intentions and work actively toward making them real.

"We" are members of Unity Church and the wider community who took six weeks to read *Active Hope*, by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone. We met weekly to discuss the book, do exercises, and listen to one another.

Macy, a Buddhist scholar and an activist worldwide, describes three stories of our time happening simultaneously: the Great Unraveling of our world and the systems on which it depends, socially and ecologically; Business as Usual, which assumes no need to change the way we live; and the Great Turning, "an epochal transition from the industrial growth society to a life-sustaining society."

The Great Turning is already happening, and many of us are involved in it (although the result is uncertain). For instance, we may have stopped buying products that damage the environment, supported renewable forms of energy, or planted trees and pollinator plants. We may be rethinking our place in the world, seeing ourselves not as consumers of natural resources but as part of the planetary web of life.

To take part in the Great Turning, Macy guides us through a spiral of "Work that Reconnects." This empowerment process moves through four successive stages: coming from gratitude, honoring our pain for the world, seeing with new eyes, and "going forth." Again and again, we can renew ourselves through this spiral.

Most of us found that the spiral was transformative. Honoring our pain for the world is a normal, healthy response to a world in trauma. "I learned that the grief I feel is an indication that I care," one participant said. Recognizing our emotions in the company of others, we felt relief and renewed energy.

With that energy, Macy encourages us to see self-interest with new eyes, as wider and deeper than our individual selves. Instead, our self-interest lies in our *collective* well-being, which includes everything and every being on Earth. When we see ourselves this way, we see our self-interest as nurturing our world and dismantling systems (such as dependence on fossil fuels) that have a harmful impact.

With renewed energy and a greater sense of community, participants in our book group expressed plans to "go forth" with actions to heal our world, from things we do in our own homes to things we do in community. We do so with active hope.

In the words of one participant, "My heart is opened wider. My body is more aligned with my heart messages and communicates those messages more quickly. And my heart is smiling big time."

We plan to offer another book group at Unity Church. Watch for the opportunity, and then please join us.



Dying for Beginners: A Seven-Part Series

Join our series on living with a deliberate awareness of dying!

You're especially invited if:

- You have children who are wondering about death;
- You have aging parents who need your help with end-of-life decisions;
- You are thinking about end of life choices you want to make for yourself.

These 90-minute presentations and guided discussions offer an opportunity to make what can often be an awkward "talk about death" more comfortable and informed.

Through several sessions, experienced speakers and professionals will help us support one another as we explore important issues and tasks that face us at the end of life. The sessions are also designed to help develop a Unitarian constituency for legislation to expand end-of-life options (EOLO), including medical aid in dying.

The series begins on October 18 with the topic, "Thinking about Death." Other sessions in October and November will focus on experiencing dying, dealing with the body, documenting your wishes, and communicating your wishes.

The final two sessions (January 10 and 17) focus on how to support EOLO legislation in the 2024 Minnesota legislative session. This call to action comes from a 1988 Unitarian Universalist Association resolution to "inform and petition legislators to support legislation that will create legal protection for the right to die with dignity, in accordance with one's own choice."

See page 9 for details about joining us for Wellspring Wednesday dinner and chapel before the sessions.

Questions? Contact Marty Rossmann at rossm001@umn.edu.

PARISH HALL EXHIBIT / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

October Parish Hall Artists

Art from the Inside

All human beings need to be visible and seen and I think that this is the biggest benefit of this program.

— Paige Berg, Clinical Program Therapist
Stillwater Correctional Facility

The thirteen members of the non-profit Art from the Inside (AFTI) work with artists at the Stillwater Correctional Facility and the Shakopee Correctional Facility for Women. AFTI was started by Antonio Espinosa, a retired correctional officer at Stillwater, and Jessica Espinosa, who both see art as a way to "...empower incarcerated artists to experience personal transformation and restoration. We believe art provides the space to imagine new ways of being and to recognize our personal powers to change."

The upcoming exhibit at Unity Church is an exciting opportunity for the congregation to appreciate the talent of these artists as well as their personal journeys, and become familiar with the inspiring AFTI program. It is a unique exhibit that matches the values, mission and ends of Unity Church.

On Wednesday, October 4, AFTI leaders will be featured during the Wellspring Wednesday program (see page 8). They will share the details of their work with time for questions and discussion.



"Youth" by J. Ives



"Family Ties" by Christopher Larson



"More than an Inmate" by Elsa Segura



"Untitled" by Amanda Peltier

Fellowship Groups

Visit unityunitarian.org/fellowship-groups.html or contact Laura Park at laura@unityunitarian.org.

Afterthoughts offers time following the 9:00 service to discuss the service.

Caregivers Group meets on the third Thursday of the month.

Evergreen Quilters: This quilting group meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month.

Families Living with Mental Health Challenges meets the first Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Kung Fu meets Saturday mornings, 9:00-10:00 a.m., online via Zoom. Email barney.kujawski@gmail.com to receive the link.

Living With Grief Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month.

Men's Coffee Group meets every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. for light-hearted conversation.

Men's Conversation Group meets on Zoom Monday, October 2, 16, and 30, from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Men's Retirement Circle: Monday, October 9 and 23, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

New Look at the Bible meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Recovery from White Conditioning meets Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Textile Arts Group meets on the first Wednesday 1:00-2:30 p.m., and third Wednesday 7:10-8:00 p.m. of each month. Bring your knitting, embroidery, etc.

Unity Book Club meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-8:30 p.m. October 10: *The Other Einstein* by Marie Benedict

Women in Retirement meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, from 1:00-3:00 p.m., in the Center Room. Social hour at noon!

Young Adult Group (ages 18-35) — all are welcome. Email kp@unityunitarian.org

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH



I Must Confess

Drew Danielson
Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries

I am guilty. Or, I have a guilty conscience. I am nervous when I walk through store scanners, or pass through airport security. When someone says, "I need to talk to you," I am certain I've been busted. Unexpected phone calls are most likely law enforcement. So when I hear that our monthly theme is confessing, I'm thrown into a tither, wondering which of my many sins and secrets will I be pushed to admit, to my great shame, as everyone will now know the truth, I am the worst.

Okay clearly I was raised, like many of us, with a lot of shame-based parenting. Confessing, admitting my failings and sins seems like something I should always be doing, and though I'm glad I've never experienced the Roman Catholic practice of going to confessional, that imagery resonates with me. But it also makes me feel bad, which I'm going to say isn't the intent of our living with this theme through October. Parents, I don't imagine setting up confessional booths for the Tower Club youth. I'm not going to say, "shame on you," during chapel service.

But there is something really significant and even positive in another way of looking at confessing with a different meaning and intent. When we say "I must confess" or when we hear that said, it's usually prelude to an admission or recognition of something true, of an acknowledgement and an awareness. Like, I must confess I'm in need of help here, or, I'm sure someone in this newsletter issue is describing all this better than I am because I've struggled to take on thinking and writing about guilt. When I think about it this way it's almost the opposite of wallowing in guilt; it's really about being honest, aware, and opening myself to being in honest relation.

That I can get behind, and even say I hope to do a whole lot of that with Tower Club, and in Coming of Age, and in Our Whole Lives, and maybe even in coffee hour.

Starting a new year in the circle of our high school Tower Club group, we invite in the 10th graders, hoping they will consider being part of the group for the next three years. A typical Tower Club Sunday finds us "checking in" around how we are all doing, as individuals, and also as Unitarian Universalists, interacting with values and principles we know from being Unity kids. (I must confess, I think of myself as a Unity kid.) I don't know if that sounds all that fun, but it actually is! But I get that the new group is probably daunted when they hear the juniors and seniors sharing attitudes and feelings and doubts and struggles. Being vulnerable, and sometimes passionately confident. "What is this? Group confession?!"

At its best it is, but in this way — "I must confess I need all of you. I must admit your compassion, your understanding, even your willingness to set me straight, is something I need right now. Or always." We don't assign Hail Mary's or acts of contrition, but we do ask you to keep coming back, stay in it. There will be tater tots.

Religious Education

Religious Education programming offers the opportunity for children and youth of all ages to come together to share in exploration of our liberal religious heritage, our common values, and our individual journeys toward truth. Our goal is to cultivate and sustain in our young people a love of the spiritual life, a foundation for a personal theology and a confidence in their ability to be stewards of their own souls.

Are you a new or visiting family interested in learning more about Unity Church's religious education programs for children and youth? Religious Education New Family Orientation is offered on the first Wednesday of every month at 7:15 p.m. RSVP one week ahead of time to Nelson Moroukian at nelson@unityunitarian.org.

Child Care for Church Events

Unity Church offers childcare for church-wide events, free of charge. Nursery care is consistently provided for every Sunday service and Wellspring Wednesday program — no reservation is needed.

Outside of the above times, reservations for childcare are required. Please request childcare one week ahead of time by completing the online form: unityunitarian.org/childcare-request-form.html. Katrina Nichols, Unity's Nursery Coordinator, will contact you to confirm the reservation.

Tower Club

Tower Club is a gathering place for 10th-12th graders to enjoy community and share life at the intersection between the world and faith. Tower Club typically meets on Sundays from 12:45-2:45 p.m. Questions? Please contact Drew Danielson at drew@unityunitarian.org.

MUSIC MINISTRY



Music Notes

Ahmed Anzaldúa
Director of Music Ministries

In line with this month's worship theme, I will use this space to confess that I created fake facts. I have contributed to fake news. I am a source of misinformation and have made the world slightly dumber.

In 2010 I taught an "Introduction to Research" class at a college in Mexico. I wanted to talk to my students about the strengths and shortcomings of Wikipedia. I also wanted them to learn to question sources of authority, to understand regional and cultural biases in academia, and to understand academic dishonesty. I also thought it would be a fun thing to do.

I created a concept out of thin air and created a page for it on Wikipedia using dense academic language. Superficially, the page seems innocuous, but reading it carefully reveals that it doesn't mean anything. I created references and citations to give it an air of legitimacy, connecting it to existing and non-existent people, conferences, and events. I deliberately did this in an area of history that is not centered on Europe or North America, to illustrate to my students how Wikipedia is heavily centered on white culture and history.

Every few months, I go back and check Wikipedia, amused to find my page still there. At some point, algorithms and automated bots found my page and cross-referenced it to other Wikipedia articles, meaning that it started to appear in citations and references across other pages on the website. A couple of years ago I searched for my non-existent concept on search engines for scholarly articles and books, such as Google Scholar and JSTOR and was horrified to find that my concept, a concept that I created out of thin air and that means absolutely nothing, is now referred to in several scholarly articles and in one book! This thing is now a part of academic discourse in its discipline.

My Wikipedia page is still there and, as far as I know, nobody has caught it yet.

One of the things I love most about music is that it is intangible, in many ways it cannot be explained or conceptualized. Talking about it in concrete terms can, in some ways, rob it of its essence; it is a huge, sparkly, multicolored thing that becomes small, dull, and gray whenever we try too hard to categorize it and explain it. It is the most wonderful fiction and, if there is something to learn from my fake Wikipedia page, perhaps it is that facts are overrated.

Sing with a Unity Church Choir

Email ahmed@unityunitarian.org to get connected.

Unity Choir • Rehearsal

Thursdays, 7:30-9:15 p.m., Parish Hall

Unity Choir is a large choral ensemble (typically between 60 and 80 voices) and is the strong component on which Unity's choral program is built; a vital and energetic presence in our community. New members interested in applying will have a brief interview with the director and will be asked to sing a few warm-up sequences and short tonal memory exercises.

Women's Ensemble

Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:15-10:50 a.m., Foote Room

Women's Ensemble is a continually growing and evolving group (typically between 40 and 60 voices) that emerged organically at a Women's retreat at Unity Church. While this group emerged and continues to function as a space that supports and empowers women, all soprano and alto singers are encouraged to apply for Unity's Women's Ensemble, including transfeminine, transmasculine, and non-binary as well as cis male sopranos and altos. New members interested in applying will have a brief interview with the director and will be asked to sing a few warm-up sequences and short tonal memory exercises.

Unity Singers

Rehearsals: Tuesdays, 7:30-9:15 p.m., Foote Room

Unity Singers is Unity's auditioned, chamber choral ensemble (typically between 20 and 28 voices.) Each singer's involvement is built on a passion for singing and for ministry through music. This ensemble has an outstanding trajectory of representing Unitarian Universalist music locally and nationally. Due to the requirement for independent learning and the pace of rehearsal and performance, membership in Unity Singers requires a yearly audition, scheduled individually with the director.

Children's Choir

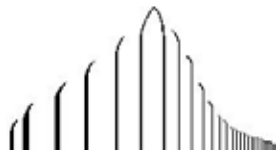
Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:20 - 11:15 a.m., Choir Room

Unity Children's choir is a vibrant group of singers comprised of children from grades one through five. Rehearsal activities are focused on hands-on music making. In addition to singing the children experience music through movement, games, playing instruments, reading music and learning about the elements of music. Contact Kathleen Radspinner, Children's Choir Director, at kathleenr395@gmail.com.

Youth Choir

Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:15-10:55 a.m., Ames Chapel

Calling all singers, grades six and up! Come meet Shekela Wanyama, our new director for Youth Choir, share your ideas for Youth Choir, and sing! Bring a friend or five!



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director
Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, Interim Senior Minister
Louise Livesay-Al, Chair, Board of Trustees

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**TIME SENSITIVE
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Let Hope Become Courage 2024 Unity Church Pledge Drive



We are in our third year of interim ministry and anticipating calling a new senior minister in 2024. This is a hopeful, exciting time in the life of Unity Church. What does this moment in time mean to you? Are you “all in,” or “cautiously hopeful?” How does this covenantal faith community inspire you to let hope become courage?

October marks the beginning of Unity’s annual pledge drive when we ask each other to declare our financial support for the church’s worship and programs in 2024. Soon you will receive a mailing that includes a personalized pledge card and information about why and how to pledge. Your generous support is more important than ever as we launch a multi-year effort to fairly and equitably pay our dedicated staff in response to the new UUA compensation guidelines. Your annual pledges will make that possible.



In The Justice Database: *Repair the World*

A national service movement, mobilizing partners and tens of thousands of Jewish young adults and their communities to take action to pursue a just world. Grounded in Jewish concepts, our values guide our work with the frame of repairing the world, *tikkun olam* leading to the pursuit of justice, *tzedek*. bit.ly/JusticeData

