



commUNITY

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UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

January 2006



Concerts with a Cause...

by Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries

Concerts with a Cause is a new initiative that presents top-flight musicians in performance while also supporting outreach into our surrounding neighborhoods. It has always been clear to me that Unity Church is a community that finds and appreciates great expression through the arts. As I have observed and experienced the care of individuals in our community, seen the energy of commitment in so many of our outreach programs, and felt the excitement surrounding our recent Centennial Celebration, it seems a natural partnership to combine our passions for culture and community. To share the joy of music in its various expressions and to translate that experience into support for our community offers double enrichment.

This year's proceeds go to support scholarships for talented neighborhood children to take lessons at the Walker West Music Academy on Selby Avenue. Walker West is a nonprofit music school known for its artistic excellence in all styles of music ranging from classical to its particular specialties of gospel and jazz. It was conceived from the life experiences of its founders, Rev. Carl Walker and Grant West, and born as the expression of their hope for the future. The Academy stands as a bridge in the community bonding the present with a rich blend of the founders' pasts, and the community's future. It is a school dedicated to instruction and performance inspired by and reflected in the African-American experience and language of music. Walker West is committed to the recognition and celebration of diverse cultures through the study of their unique expression and contributions to the language of music.

Concerts with a Cause will be made up of several three-part series, each series offering a different focus. This Winter/Spring begins with a series of classical chamber music, both instrumental and vocal. Concerts will be followed by a candlelight reception offering opportunity to visit with the musicians.

Look for the following new three-part series to be added beginning Fall 2006:

Cabaret, Coffee, and a Cause
Choirs, Carols, and a Cause
Community, Culture, and a Cause

All musicians are donating their time to these open-to-the-public concerts. Tickets are on a 'plus generosity' system — the suggested amounts are \$10 per adult; \$5 per child age 6 through 12; \$20 per family unit — though larger donations for our 'cause' are always welcome. Child care is provided with one week's notice to the Church Office.

Please share these concerts with friends and family, and invite those you know who enjoy and care about music. If you are interested in being involved in publicity efforts; or creative input and assistance for the receptions following each concert; or helping to welcome all those that will be visiting our church for the first time as they come to listen and participate, contact me at the church. I would love to hear from you.

*Our first three-part series
Winter 2006*

Chamber, Candlelight, and a Cause

Sundays at 4:00 p.m.

February 5: Sewell-Hunter Trio

Fred Sewell, violin; Laura Sewell, cello;
Thelma Hunter, piano

March 5: Violin/Piano Recital

Taichi Chen, violin; Ruth Palmer, piano

April 2: Night at the Theatre

Voice and Piano, Songs and Arias

Shirley Leiphon, soprano;
KrisAnne Weiss, mezzo-soprano;
Ruth Palmer, piano

◆ February 5 ◆

Chamber, Candlelight, and a Cause

The Sewell-Hunter Trio

Father and daughter, Fred and Laura Sewell, together with long-time family friend, Thelma Hunter, have been performing with each other since the 1970s. All three are well known in the Twin Cities, performing with many outstanding Twin Cities musical organizations. On February 5, the Sewell-Hunter Trio will be performing works of Haydn, Schumann and Arvo Part, as well as the highly romantic, show-stopping trio by Anton Arensky.

Watch upcoming commUNITY newsletters for information on later Concerts with a Cause...

JUST WORDS / FOODSHELF / WHEEL OF LIFE

Just Words

We asked the Reverend Dr. James Forbes to come to St. Paul from his home in New York City where he serves as Senior Minister of the Riverside Church. We asked him to charge us on the occasion of the centennial of our church home.

And charge us he did! From the moment we met Jim at the airport I knew UUA President Bill Sinkford had directed us to the best possible person for the job. Janne and I found our time with Jim personally renewing and professionally inspiring. I felt myself ordained again.

Jim told many wonderful stories during his time here at Unity. Among them one stands out for me. Time was, he said, when a small group of friends that included Cornell West met regularly for lunch at the Riverside Church. One day Cornell announced that he had been offered a Distinguished Professorship at Harvard. He wanted to know whether his friends thought he should accept the invitation. One of the guests scoffed and said, "Cornell, if you keep changing jobs all the time, folks will think you're unstable." West replied, "I'm not concerned about that. What I care about is my project. The project is all that really matters."

The story caught my attention. It's not that I've been offered a new job. (I'm not looking. I love it here and plan to stay a while.) What captured me was the notion that a person might well have a "project." A project, as I understand it, is a binding purpose which frames and guides one's life. I began to ask myself the nature of my project.

So here goes... My project is strengthening the liberal church so it can be a more effective partner in what James Baldwin called "the realization of our Nation." My work is at the intersection of social justice and spiritual development. It has to do with clarifying governance, patterns of accountability, and forthright communication. And it has to do with confronting disparities of race and class both within and beyond our congregations.

That's what I'm in the world to do. That work provides a binding purpose which frames and guides my life. It informs and shapes the choices I make. No matter how often the work has broken my heart. No matter how many times I've turned away disappointed. No matter how hard I've tried to avoid it. The project keeps calling me home. I think the church is called as well. The signs are everywhere.

The turning of the year seems a perfect time to ask ourselves: "What is my project?" Your answer may not be the same as mine. It may not even be close. But I think the question is well worth asking. When our lives are aligned with our projects, we are blessed with true vocation. It's a rare and a wonderful thing. Thank you for helping me to find and sustain it. This year and every year I wish the same for you.

Rob



Evergreen Foodshelf Corner

The next Food Drive Sunday will be January 15 when the foodshelf items are spaghetti (canned or dry), canned stews, pancake mix, and syrup. Remember that any item, including non-perishable items not listed, can be donated at any time: monthly items are simply suggestions for what can be brought each month. Please deposit items in the Portland or Holly Avenue decorated foodshelf bins. Your donations help those who are in need in Saint Paul.

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Graydon Phillip Bandt

born December 8, 2005

son of Laura Bandt and
Caralie Coombe-Bandt

In Remembrance

Dr. William Krivit

father of Dan Krivit
father-in-law of Susan Schmidt
grandfather of Jenna and Joe Krivit

Bob English

brother of Marion Watson

ANNOUNCEMENTS / MINISTERIAL INTERN

Pastoral Care Needs

Robin Scott is organizing meals for the Vanek family during January and February as they explore treatment options for the recurrence of their son Aaron's cancer. If you are willing to provide a meal during this time, please contact Robin at 612/729-4219 to make arrangements.

If you are someone who has pastoral care needs, please leave a message on the Pastoral Care Hotline at 651/228-1456 x501. The line is checked daily by a Pastoral Care Team member. Information left on the hotline is kept confidential.

"Sacred Place"

Sacred Place, a picture book commemorating 100 years since the building of the church sanctuary and bell tower on Portland Avenue, will be available at the church as part of the centennial celebration in early December. Produced by Pauline Eichten and Ellen Green, this hard-cover volume with dust jacket tells the story of the Unity Church buildings, rebuildings, expansions, and furnishings from the church's beginnings in the mid-1800s.

InterweaveWorld

As part of our Interweave chapter membership, Unity Church receives the *InterweaveWorld* newsletter. Copies of the newsletter are available at the Welcome Table in the Parish Hall.

Praising Performance Art

by Katie Lawson, Hallman Ministerial Intern

I have always been a huge fan of the arts, particularly the visual arts, but I have to admit a limitation when it comes performance art – or should I say a FORMER limitation. Since college, I have associated the phrase “performance art” with visions of a woman sitting in a chair for five hours covered in spaghetti and similar enterprises and have been reluctant to investigate the genre further. So when Dottie Mathews, my fellow intern, suggested we take ourselves out for a night of performance art — a piece called “i voted for gummi bears,” no less — I balked inwardly. However, I know that it is good for me to occasionally stretch myself out of my comfort zone and do something I wouldn't have thought of doing on my own. This is, after all, one of the great advantages of new friends.

Off we went into the cold night to, of all places, the University of Minnesota Law School. Not known for its *avant-garde* arts scene, you may think the Law School an unlikely setting for a performance art piece. I certainly did. However, as it turns out, the setting couldn't have been more apt. The content of the piece, which featured the artist interacting with video, focused on the laws that disproportionately and systematically disenfranchise people of color from voting. From the moment he began, the artist, Ochen K., completely engaged me in this issue. I not only learned, I began to care. ...A lot.

Let me share some of what I learned:

- ◆ The United States is the only democracy that permanently disenfranchises people from their right to vote.
- ◆ Five million people in this country cannot vote due to having been convicted of a felony.
- ◆ 13% of the African American male population is disenfranchised due to felony convictions even though they may be, depending on the state, on probation, parole or completely done serving their sentences.
- ◆ Providing that disenfranchised people would vote at the same rate as the rest of the country, they represent 2½ percent of the vote in the last presidential election, and seven states had presidential electoral contests that were determined with 2½ percent.

Further, the laws that work to disenfranchise voters in many states are the grandchildren of Jim Crow Laws that emerged out of the Civil War era.

I am deeply troubled by how ignorant I am allowed to be about issues like this one. There are so many ways in which institutional racism hides beneath layers of policy, law, and custom, and, as a white person, it is easy for me to forget about it. However, it is a part of my religious commitment to be alert to and mindful of the ways in which I am separated from other beings. Religion, for me, is about staying awake and walking a path toward a more connected life.

I am grateful to the work this religious community is undertaking to become an anti-racist institution. A part of this hard work is uncovering all that has been systematically hidden and buried in tacit approval or silence, and drawing it into the open so that we can be alert to what keeps us from being true to the interdependent web of existence and living in love. Art can help us with this. I cannot do justice to the well-researched and clear presentation offered by Ochen K., so I strongly encourage you to see “i voted for gummi bears” for yourself if you have the opportunity. I, for one, am glad to call myself a new fan of performance art.

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting the Neighbors We Have Never Known

by Pauline Eichten, Board of Trustees

Having more broadly defined our moral owners to include those beyond the church walls, the Board of Trustees asked, "How do we meet the neighbors we have never known?" And having met them, how do we start to build relationships that will lead to Unity Church becoming a more effective community partner in the future?

We began that journey of encounter and building community on the evening of December 2. A small group of community clergy and leaders gathered with board and Executive Team members for dinner and conversation, graced by the presence of Dr. James Forbes, present for our centennial celebration.

In his quiet, conversational address to the group, Dr. Forbes had a compelling message: Before we can talk about working together, we need to focus on the individual. Begin with yourself. Then figure out how to do, together, more effectively than you are able to do, alone. As Rob metioned in *Just Words*, Dr. Forbes told us that each person has a defining motif — a "project" — something with purpose and meaning that they are compelled to do even if they don't get paid. People without a project are project-critiquers. "Find your project," he said. Beyond having a project, said Forbes, each of us has a song, and if we don't let that song out it is perilous to our health. You are not fully yourself until your song is set free. In fact, everything has a song, and when they are all given voice, they create a marvelous symphony.

At each table of four to six people, the conversations were equally compelling. This article is an attempt to share some snippets of those conversations.

Deacon Phil Smith, from the Cathedral of St. Paul, and Rev Carl Walker, Morning Star Missionary Church, talked about the work their churches do in the community, their frustration with how much needs to be done, and the need for churches to be vocal. Deacon Smith receives many calls

a day for rent assistance, which he can't provide; he is only able to help someone who is homeless for a night or two, but can't do anything long-term. They cautioned that we would get weary, see no results, and become disheartened. They've seen others start with enthusiasm and eventually give up. They told us not to give up.

Barbara Hubbard discovered an unexpected connection: her aunt was a former congregant and a big fan of Rev. Gloria Roach-Thomas, Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church. Rev. Roach-Thomas and Rev. James Thomas, Mount Olivet Baptist Church, talked about the upcoming New Year's Eve service at Mount Olivet, held jointly with Camphor Methodist and Morning Star. They shared some history of New Year's Eve church services in the African American tradition, which dates back to the days of slavery. Based on an end-of-year tally, slave owners would decide if they needed to sell one or more of their slaves to pay their debts. Thus, African-Americans gathered on New Year's Eve to be together, take stock of their blessings, and pray for the continued safety and closeness of their families. Rev. James Thomas extended an invitation to attend this year's service.

Rev. Ron Smith, Unity Baptist Church, said handouts are all well and good, but he really wanted to see long-term investment of time and connection to better the community right next door to us. His challenge to us was to be authentically involved with our neighbors, mentioning Webster School in particular.

Noting the absence of Rev. Daniel Yang of the Hmong Community United Methodist Church, Rev. Grant Abbott, who heads the St. Paul Area Council of Churches, talked about the high expectation for Hmong ministers' involvement in every aspect of their congregants' lives. How do they manage to have a personal life, he wondered. Dr. Forbes shared the changes in demographics at his church: when he started at Riverside Church, the

congregation was 60% white and 40% black. Seventeen years later, membership has become 70% black and 30% white. He talked about the social dynamic that pushes for homogeneity — we are more comfortable when we are with those who seem to be like us — and the spiritual need to be open to encounter and be changed by those who are not like us.

Board members came away from the evening with an awareness of how much we still have to learn about our neighbors. After being mostly absent from community involvement in the past, we are joining individuals and communities who have been actively working on racial and economic justice issues for many years. That carries a responsibility to be accountable.

We felt blessed and honored to be part of such a remarkable evening and were grateful to our guests for taking time from their families and other commitments to share the evening with us. Other guests were Gloria Perez-Jordan, who runs the Jeremiah Program, a transitional program for single mothers; Rev. Paul Tidemann, St. Paul Reformation Lutheran Church; and Soyini Guyton, head of the Summit-University Living at Home Nurse program, which has its office at Unity Church.



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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Religious Education News

The Return of Jello Jamboree!

Unity cherishes fondly the memories of Jello Jamborees past. One might recall such shining moments as the annual Jello Fling, the year of the highly creative and horrifying whole canned tomatoes in Jello entry or perhaps the one-of-a-kind Buddhist-inspired Jello Mandala. On February 3, Unity Church will once more open its doors and its heart to the zany intergenerational fun that is the Jello Jamboree.

As in the past, the events will include exhibition and judging of Jello creations, recipe contests and Jello-inspired games. Jello enthusiasts of all ages are invited. The Jamboree will take place from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. with nursery care available for children under 3. Games will happen in the basement (wear clothes you don't cherish and consider "raingear"); Jello Judging happens in the Parish Hall.

We invite you to consider the following classes and categories when planning your Jello creation:

Judging Classes:

- ♦ "Kids Class" — 12 and under, unaided by an adult, except with the boiling water part
- ♦ "Buddy Class" — kids of any age in collaboration with an adult
- ♦ "Big Time Class" — any individual or group of ages 12 and older

Prize Categories:

- ♦ Most Creative Jello Creation
- ♦ Most Unitarian Jello Creation
- ♦ Best Engineering of Jello Creation
- ♦ Sheer Mass of Jello Creation
- ♦ Tastiest Jello Recipe
- ♦ Grossest (While Remaining Edible) Jello Recipe
- ♦ Best in Show

Adult volunteers are invited to help host and judge on the evening of the event. Please contact Ginny Allen at 651/645-7176 or Nolan Filter at 651/699-4582. See you there!

Coming of Age Parent and Mentor Meeting

A reminder to our Grade 9 parents and all COA mentors that our informational orientation takes place on Thursday, January 5, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Foote Room. Youth are not required to attend this event.

Coming of Age Overnight

The Grade 9 youth in our COA program will enjoy an overnight retreat here at Unity on the night of Friday, January 2. Extra copies of the permission form and youth agreement can be found at the OWL/COA page on the Unity website.

Job Openings in Religious Education at Unity Church

Unity Church is seeking qualified candidates for two positions in Religious Education. Complete job descriptions are available at www.unityunitarian.org. Interested parties can print an application from the Unity website and submit the completed form with a letter of interest and resume to Kerri Meyer, Director of Religious Education, 732 Holly Ave. St. Paul, MN 55104.

Coordinator of Young Children's Ministries

Part-Time, 10 hours

Responsibilities include overseeing nursery care for children ages 6 months to 3 years during worship and church-sponsored events, as well as coordinating Celebrations of New Lives.

Qualified candidates will have experience caring for infants and toddlers and be able to manage multiple tasks. Must be available to work Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.

Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Part-Time, 20 hours

Responsibilities include planning and implementing programming for members of the Unity community in junior high, high school and college. Coordinator will recruit, train and support lay leadership in Unity's *Our Whole Lives* and Coming of Age program, as well as Tower Club, the Young Adult group, and the UU Macalaster group. Web-based communication and outreach will be central to these ministries.

Qualified candidates will have experience working with youth and/or young adults as well as a working knowledge of web design and electronic communication. Must be available to work evenings and Sunday mornings.

Celebration of New Lives

Unity's next Celebration of New Lives will take place on February 12, during the 11:00 a.m. service. If your family would like to be involved in this dedication ceremony for new babies, please contact Kerri at the Church Office no later than Wednesday, February 8.

Nursery Worker Training

There will be an orientation session with Nancy Moe on January 12 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Nursery downstairs. If you are interested in becoming a youth nursery worker or if you have only recently joined the team, please plan on attending this training. Contact Kerri in the Church Office with questions.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH NEWS

FROM THE CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE TEAM:

Shining the Light on the Darkest Corners

A survivor of Hitler's Germany reflects on modern-day injustice and torture
by Sigrid Bachmann, Unity Church member

We have entered the special season of the year, one of short days and long, dark nights. It is not only a time for reflection on peace and generosity, but also for redemption.

Forgive me for using this sacred time to shine the light in one of our world's darkest corners. However, as we share this holy time with loved ones, we cannot forget those who are isolated and suffering at the hands of cruel and corrupt regimes. Prisoners are being abused and tortured in secret detention centers around the world. As religious people, we have an obligation to intervene.

Lately, I wake up in the middle of the night. I hear screams and I imagine what is being done to those detainees. Sleep does not come again.

You see, I grew up under the dictatorship of Hitler. I was six years old when he became the leader of Germany. By age ten I was a member of the Hitler Youth. We were raised on stories about the German heroes, the greatness of our country, and its destination to lead the world as a superior race. I remember the patriotism, the flag waving, the parades and Hitler's shouting speeches.

Later, I saw the violence of *Kristallnacht* (the Night of Broken Glass), the destruction of Jewish homes and businesses, and the increasing anti-Semitism fueled by propaganda and lies. Jews had to wear a yellow star on their clothes. They looked anxious and soon disappeared. My parents and teachers told me that they were kept in camps for the duration of the war. At this point, everyone who was related, married or friendly with Jews was considered an enemy of the state and was persecuted unless the relationship was denounced. Many people left the country.

The war lasted for almost 6 years. When it was over, Germany was completely destroyed. The big cities were fields of craters and ruins. There was no food, no heat or light. Families were torn apart. 30 million people had died. We were refugees in our own country, now occupied by foreign troops.

It was from these foreign troops that I learned about the killing of millions of Jews, Gypsies and others by my own country. I saw photos of the Holocaust survivors and was horrified. The war and these crimes strongly influenced my decision to become a physician and a human rights activist. Presently, I work with Amnesty International and the Center for Victims of Torture to advocate for a just world.

Certain aspects of politics in our world today have all too much in common with the abusive, fascist regime of my youth. I am asking you, pleading to you, to inform yourselves about the widespread use of torture by the CIA and by other interrogators. Find out what this has done to the standing of our country in the world. And find out what we can do to save innocent lives from being scarred by the ineffective, sadistic use of torture.

As informed citizens and members of this church, we have a responsibility to denounce torture and to help our country embody peace and diplomacy as a member of the international community.

FROM THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE TEAM:

Behind Bars: A Conference on Prison Ministry

Through the work of Pat Haff and the Restorative Justice Team, Unity Church has received a grant of over \$15,000 from the UUA to sponsor a conference for UU chaplains working in prison ministry and other UUs who work or have interest in this area.

The conference, entitled Behind Bars will be held at Unity Church on the weekend of April 21-23. The team is already in full swing in the planning process, and very excited about the opportunity to extend its ministry to the larger church.

FROM THE PARTNER CHURCH TEAM:

Thanksgiving Offering

The special offering on November 20 benefiting the Partner Church team and its work collected \$5,526.95. Thank you to all who made a donation.

FROM THE MANO A MANO AND PARTNER CHURCH TEAMS:

Global Connections Benefit Concert

Mark your 2006 calendar for Saturday, March 25, at 7:00 p.m. for the Global Connections Benefit Concert at Unity Church. Proceeds from this evening will help support the Bolivian and Transylvanian outreach efforts of Unity's Mano a Mano and Partner Church Ministry Teams.

The stellar group of performers include Laura Sewell, Ruth MacKenzie, Mila, Unity Choir, and Leo and Kathy Lara. Watch for further information and ticket sales beginning in January.

Are You a Peace Corps Volunteer?

Are you a former Peace Corps Volunteer? A number of people in the Unity Church community have served in the Peace Corps at some time in their lives. Gather for a potluck supper with others from this community who carry with them their experiences in the Peace Corps! For more information, contact Phyllis Ostergren at 651/484-7947.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD / WELCOMING TEAM / NEW MEMBERS

From the Welcoming Congregation Team...

The Welcoming Congregation Team, working to increase knowledge about Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning concerns in the Unity community, has scheduled workshops at Wellspring Wednesdays in January, February and March. The workshops use curriculum for welcoming congregations from the Unitarian Universalist Association. The first series of workshops will happen on January 11, 18, and 25. The team invites you to attend all three workshops if possible, but will be glad to see you at any one or two of the gatherings.

The team is also planning a panel on Wednesday, March 1: *It's More than Just Marriage*. Outfront Minnesota will assist us in learning more about the proposed Minnesota constitutional amendment to prohibit marriage and civil unions. See below for more information.

Did you know? Most UU churches and fellowships in the Twin Cities area participated in these workshops and voted to become Welcoming Congregations 7 to 10 years ago!

"It's more than just marriage"

The anti-marriage amendments that have been passed in other states and are being proposed in Minnesota and beyond have far-reaching ramifications impacting legal rights, health insurance, adoption, and more.

Join the Welcoming Congregation Ministry Team at Wellspring Wednesday on March 1 as they present a panel including a professor from the University of Minnesota, a legislator, and a representative from OutFront MN to discuss the history of marriage, the current political landscape and the climate in Minnesota and how it affects all of us.

Welcome New Members of Unity Church!

The following people have recently joined Unity Church as new members. If you see them on a Sunday morning around church or another time during the week, be sure to say hello. For more information about joining Unity Church, contact Membership Coordinator Laura Schlatter at the Church Office.

Kendra Garrett

We downsized and moved to St. Paul a little over a year ago from Plymouth. Craig and I have three grown children. I have been a UU since 1972. My "UU CV" includes membership on the children's worship and ministerial search committees and the board of trustees. I have chaired the Sunday service, the social action, and the welcoming congregation committees. I am on the social work faculty at the University of St. Thomas. My professional interests are in school social work and group work. I like to travel, read, knit, play bridge, and walk Jake the dog.

Anna Przybylski

I grew up in Stillwater and attended Macalester College. I love traveling, but after spending half a year in Senegal and last year in France, I realized how much I love Minnesota and I call St. Paul my home. I now work at a French immersion elementary school and will likely begin a Masters of Education program this spring. I love traveling, speaking French, swing dancing, rock climbing, music, playing the violin and doing crossword puzzles. Becoming a member of Unity comes with my decision to make Minnesota my home. I look forward to forming relationships and putting down roots in my new spiritual community.

News from the neighborhood...

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast

Celebrate the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday with your neighbors at the Summit–University Community Breakfast. The keynote speaker, broadcast from the Minneapolis Convention Center, will be Rep. John Lewis, Congressman from Georgia and civil rights advocate.

The breakfast will be held at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Avenue, on Monday, January 16, at 7:00 a.m. with a program from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Reservations are required. The deadline for reservations is January 10. For more information or to reserve your place, contact the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches at spacc.org or 651/646-8805, x55.

Louise Knight book reading at Neighborhood House

On Thursday, January 26, Louise Knight will read from her new book, *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy* at Neighborhood House, 179 Robie Street East in St. Paul. Jane Addams, first American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, founded Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago. Neighborhood House is a 100+ year settlement house, with 100+ year old ties to Unity Church. The reading will take place in the new home of Neighborhood House — the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Center for Community Building, which opens to the public in January. After the reading, you are invited to tour the facility. The reading will begin at 7:00 p.m. For more information about *Citizen*, Jane Addams, or the author, visit louiseknight.com. For more information about Neighborhood House, visit neighb.org.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAYS / R.E. THANKS / BLOOD DRIVE

Wellspring Wednesdays Resume January 11!

A gathering for the entire church community every Wednesday evening

Dinner: 6:00 p.m. ♦ Worship: 6:45 p.m.
Classes and Workshops: 7:10 p.m.

Take a peek at this Sneak Preview for January 11...

Menu:

Burrito Bar with Chicken Filling, Black Beans and Rice
Salsa, Cheese, Lettuce, Peppers, Onions and Sour Cream
Corn Chips
Chocolate Cake

Classes and Workshops:

Poetry and Prayer

There is such transformative power to be found in the struggle to speak of the things that matter most. At each of these five sessions in January and February, Rob Eller-Isaacs will sketch the life of a poet with an emphasis on that poet's spiritual life. Poems will be shared and those gathered will be invited into their own struggle for words that point toward the experience of the holy. January 11 will begin with Walt Whitman. Others poets will follow.

Standing Before Us

Can you name your spiritual foremothers? These are the Universalist and Unitarian women who precede us. Join Rev. Sarah Barber-Braun, an ordained UU minister in this two-session exploration of their lives. They are woven into the social and political fabric of America's history. You are invited to introduce us to your own actual ancestors.

Anti-Racism Conversations

In May 2005, the Anti-Racism Team delivered the results of their history audit of Unity Church. As we all read and grapple with this material and what it means for us, we want to invite any who wish to come together to discuss and to share. Pick up a copy of the history audit for yourself at the Anti-Racism table in the Parish Hall and come to any or all of the conversations, scheduled for January 11, February 4, and March 4. Bring your thoughts, feelings, questions, ideas, hopes and dreams.

Kundalini Yoga

Kundalini yoga presents ancient techniques to unite body, mind and spirit as taught by Yogi Bhajan. Kundalini yoga includes active exercises as well as flexibility, postures, mantras, and meditation. Classes may also include information about chakras, conscious breathing and deep relaxation. No previous experience required. Bring a mat, blanket and/or pillow for more comfort. *There is a small registration fee for this class. For more information contact Joyce Paxton at 651/353-1428.*

What if God Was One of Us?

The *Joan of Arcadia* discussion group continues through the winter. Everyone in the family can join us as we explore and wrestle with these tough questions along with the character of Joan Girardi from this Emmy award winning television show. Each session will begin by watching an episode of the show, followed by a facilitated discussion using the provided study guide. Attend all, one, or as many as you like.

Watch for a new Winter Wellspring Wednesday brochure featuring all of the offerings for January through March coming to your mailbox soon!

A Big R.E. Thank You

Unity Church would like to thank these loving adults for their time and talents, given in ministry to our children and youth in the first half of the church year:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Paul Adams | Kris Kulevsky |
| Alain Baudry | Tara LaFerla |
| Clayton Bennett | Jim Leuthner |
| Janet Bisbee | Bob Lies |
| Curt Boehm | Terry Linskey |
| Anne Braatas | Phil Lowry |
| Lisa Brosseau | Dotty Magnuson |
| Estelle Brouwer | Peter Mitchell |
| Anne Caswell | Nancy Moe |
| Charlie Caswell | Barb Nelson |
| Kim Chase-Kozak | Angela Newhouse |
| Gary DeCramer | Dave Nourse |
| Deb DeLuca | Kris Nourse |
| Helene Douville | Patricia Ohmans |
| Eric Dott | Gretchen Olson |
| Risa Eckardt | Lee Olson |
| Jonah Eller-Isaacs | Don Peterson |
| Tom Esch | Bonnie Reiland |
| Rob Fulton | Lisa Renard-Paule |
| Mary Gallagher | Patrick Rivard |
| Michael Garry | Karin Roof |
| Allen Giles | Jean Seabury-Kolod |
| Alison Green | Linn Siems |
| Carly Hemmelgarn | Linda Smidzik |
| Susan Henry | John Steiner-Manning |
| Lee Hesselroth | Teresa Thomas-Carroll |
| Susan Hinze | Emily Traynor |
| Amy Horning | Laurie Wagner |
| Beth Janke | Karen Wahmanholm |
| Sarah Jannusch | Jen Vanek |

Unity Church and the Neighborhood Blood Drive...

Give a gift from your heart on Valentine's Day, Tuesday, February 14. This Unity Church blood drive will be held in the church basement from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. The Red Cross has an urgent need of blood during this time of year. Your donation can make a real difference. Blood is an important gift to give. If you are interested in helping out or simply want to get involved, contact John Blackstone at 651/455-2455.

MORGAN FORUMS / UNITY ARCHIVES

A SAMUEL MORGAN FORUM

Speaking in Tongues

"Speaking in Tongues" will perform at the third annual Unity Church Samuel Morgan Winter Musical Event on Sunday, February 19, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. This stunning group features musicians from four countries with four native tongues for an unprecedented combination of Chinese pipa, African and Middle Eastern percussion and Latin bass. Sowah Mensah, a multi-instrumentalist and composer from Ghana; Enrique Toussaint, a bassist from Mexico City; Marc Anderson, a Minnesota percussionist; and Gao Hong, a pipa player from China combine their diverse musical traditions into a refreshing and distinctive language of sound and emotion.

At a recent "Speaking in Tongues" concert, an audience member exclaimed, "This wasn't just a concert. It was an experience! A whole world in one evening. Speaking in Tongues is connected with a fundamental universal force that is within all peoples of the world." This concert is free of charge and open to the public. Be sure to invite your friends to this unique and astonishing afternoon of music.

From Deep in Unity's Archives...

by Linda Snyder, Unity Church Archive Team

As I collect, sort, catalog, file (and read!) all the interesting and valuable documents we have that help define us as a congregation and church, I also each Sunday watch from the Sanctuary and read from the Order of Worship, This Week at Unity, and the monthly commUNITY about history in the making.

The phrase "history in the making" was pointed out to me several years ago when I volunteered to archive old materials that had gathered in corners around our church building. The idea then was that we should, at least once a year, put out a call for materials to be archived about all our events, programs, ministries, etc that happened during the year.

Well, I haven't done that until now! What prompts me to this morning is thinking about the important Ministry Teams that have been forming, such as the CVT, Anti-Racism and Welcoming Ministry Teams. How fascinating and wonderful future generations of our church would find these ministries, as they read all the details about how they began and evolved! I know how interesting it is to read about our past, and how difficult it is sometimes to research that past to find out who we were so that we can better define who we want to be in the future.

As we celebrate our first 100 years at Portland and Grotto, if we start our "research" now, think how fun it will be for the next, next, and next archivists to research and read all about us — their ancestors from the 21st century!

So, if you have any materials to be archived, whether they are from 1905 or 2005, please put them in the mailbox (photos with name, date, and event please!) or see Laura or me on Sundays.

A SAMUEL MORGAN FORUM

So, How Was Your Trip? Telling the Truth About Life in the Developing World (Without Bumming Everybody Out)

Lecture and interactive workshop led by Jim Schultz
Director of The Democracy Center
And author of the *Democracy Owner's Manual* and
Bechtel Corporation Vs. Bolivia's Poor

Saturday, February 4 • 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Free • All Welcome • Refreshments

Traveler's tales aren't always just about gorgeous scenery and fabulous food. Many of us return from travels to the developing countries like Bolivia, Malawi or Romania—with a first-hand understanding of the challenges faced by the poor. We'd like to share that understanding with family members and friends who stayed home. But how do we tell stories of poverty and hardship without making our listeners feel guilty or overwhelmed?

How can we hone our answers to the inevitable question—"so, how was your trip?"—with a gripping tale that describes what we've witnessed, and offers a perspective that goes beyond where to find the cheapest eats and the nicest beaches?

In this engaging lecture and interactive storytelling workshop, master trainer Jim Shultz will first demonstrate the art of "activist storytelling," and then help participants develop their own stories about their travels. Jim's work proves that by telling the stories of the dispossessed around the world, we can go from disengaged tourism to active involvement in the lives and futures of our global neighbors.

About Jim Shultz:

Educated at Berkeley and Harvard, Jim has been a leader in public policy and advocacy work for more than 25 years. At the California Legislature, Common Cause and the Consumers Union, Jim developed and led a variety of progressive policy and budget initiatives. As executive director of The Democracy Center, which he established in 1992, he has worked to develop a worldwide network of citizen activists.

His articles on democracy and public affairs regularly appear in newspapers across the United States, Canada and Great Britain. Jim lives in Cochabamba, Bolivia, where he has also served as President of an 80-child orphanage.

ART EXHIBIT / FINDING YOURSELF AT UNITY

January Art

The following are excerpts from the artist statements of Ilene Krug Mojsilov and Kate Christopher, January's artists. Their full statements can be found on Sundays in the Parish Hall.

The artists will be available in the Parish Hall to meet members and answer questions about their work on Sunday, January 8, between services.

Kate Christopher

My figurative sculptures attempt to express particular emotions such as awe, grace, alienation, hope and longing; emotions that can be seen in people during the silences when they think no one is looking. I capture those moments and the daily manifestations of the spirit that the viewer recognizes from their own experience of life. Some of these moments are lonely or painful and some are transformative.

Although I primarily work in clay, occasionally I will have a ceramic piece recreated in metal if I feel it will be enhanced by the elegance of bronze. I find the joy of working in clay and the limitless variety of forms and techniques intriguing. I am currently exploring low fire salt fuming. I work on the surface of the figures by buffing the clay to varying degrees and using different terrasilatas or glaze washes to cover parts of the surface. The experimental firing process truly transforms the pieces. They appear aged and weathered, as if from life experiences. The firing technique is risky because it is collaboration between the fire and me that I cannot fully control. It is this balance between control and creative accident that happens in the studio every day that fascinates me and brings me back to the work again and again.

Additional work of Kate Christopher can be seen at Café Latte in St. Paul and Premier Gallery in Minneapolis

Finding Yourself at Unity

This introductory workshop to Unity Church gives a sample experience of being a member of this religious community through theological and group reflection, small group discussions, and hymn singing. Meet people who have chosen Unity Church as their spiritual community and others who have decided to explore a deeper connection here. There will be an invitation to become a member of Unity Church at the conclusion of this workshop.

The next session of Finding Yourself at Unity is scheduled for Saturday, January 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with a potluck lunch. For more information about Finding Yourself at Unity or becoming a member, contact Laura Schlatter at the Church Office.

Ilene Krug Mojsilov: "Settling Views"

This suite of pastel drawings comes from my seven month stay in Provence, France. In 1996, I was invited to teach painting to American college students at the Lacoste School of Art. During this residency, I kept a visual journal comprised of pastel drawings. This simple practice was my way to process the tradition of direct observation or working "en plein air."

These drawings started with an intuitive interest in color and light. I set out mostly in the afternoon and only stopped for a specific angle made of light on buildings or a combination of colors in the landscape. I distinguish these drawings from snapshots, because they were done while stationed in one location for an extended period of time. ...The act of drawing was a mindful construction of each composition. A quiet village or landscape brought me into conversation with myself. I pared down the visual information in front of me, distilling the moment of found equilibrium.

Why exhibit this work today? I think the mood of these drawings contrasts with the complexity of the world facing us at this time. Putting the location of these works aside, they emit a calm that seems critical to remember right now. Let us observe the view in front of us and extract some loveliness.



"Behind Bars"

A conference for Unitarian Universalists involved in prison ministry.

April 21-23, 2006

Unity Church—Unitarian ♦ St. Paul, Minnesota

"Behind Bars" is a conference for UU prison chaplains, seminarians and other advocates, lay supporters and volunteers, who work or volunteer in the field of criminal justice and prison ministry.

- ♦ create, build and maintain connections
 - ♦ share experiences, best practices, and offer support to others
 - ♦ hear how other liberal religious people bring their values and beliefs into criminal justice settings
 - ♦ become more acquainted with the Unitarian Universalist mission and vision for this ministry
 - ♦ develop future avenues for networking and communication
- Scholarships are available.

For information or to register, contact Patricia Haff at 651/228-1456 or pat@unityunitarian.org or see <http://unityunitarian.org/behindbars/>

This conference is funded in part by the Fund for Unitarian Universalism and the Fund for Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS AND OTHER GATHERINGS

Children's Musical 2006

Turn a nursery rhyme upside down, twist the characters, add a song and a joke or two and you have a glimpse of this year's musical "Once Upon a Something or Other" written by Elee Wood and Sandy Waterman. In this fractured nursery rhyme, spook Jack B. Nimble, The Rhyminator, Mother Goose and many others make unexpected appearances to give us a new perspective on familiar stories.

Auditions will be held on Tuesday, January 10, and Wednesday, January 11, from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. Interested fifth and sixth graders need to attend one night. All actors will receive a part — everyone can participate. Rehearsals will run Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. and Sundays from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. from mid-January through the performances March 2–4.

Michael Lee will join the Children's Musical team as artistic director along with music director Sandy Waterman, and choreographer Joyce Paxton. For more information call Michael at 612/803-0101 or Joyce at 651/353-1428.

Community-Building for Singles

Finding smaller communities within our larger church is an important part of Unity Church. If you are an adult single over age 35, the Unity Singles Group may be a way to meet other interesting people of our congregation through monthly events that are open to anyone in the group. In the past these events have included potluck suppers, folk dancing, concerts, dining, plays, movies, hikes, and snow-shoeing.

If you are interested in learning more about the Unity Singles Group or would like to be aware of future events, please contact Joan Shrum at jashrum@ties2.net or Laura Schlatter at the Church Office.

Unity Young Adult Group

Meeting Times for January:

January 10, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Feminism Today — with Janne Eller-Isaacs
Be sure to bring a dish for the monthly potluck!

January 24, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Watch upcoming This Week at Unity inserts and the UYAG email list for more details about this gathering!

THIS MONTH'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP MEETINGS

All are invited to attend the following groups. For more information, contact the Church Office or the persons listed with each group.

A New Look at the Bible

First Thursday of each month, 7:00 p.m.
Contact: Joan Lovrien at 651/739-6958

Conscientious Objector Group

Contact: Lee Olsen at 651/227-1130

Afterthoughts

Every Sunday after the first service
Contact: Paul Gade at 651/487-7806

Mother-Daughter Book Club (grades 3–6)

Held monthly at members' homes on the first Sunday of every month.
For times and locations, contact Gretchen Olson at 651/647-9591.

Unitots!

A group for families with kids through preschool age
Every Friday at 9:30 a.m. Contact: Ryan Shriver at 651/365-1156.

Grandparent Unitots!

A group for grandparents and their grandkids
Every Monday at 9:30 a.m. Contact: Sue Conner at 651/646-6667

Unity Bridge Club

Second Friday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at members' homes. For location and directions contact Bernice Hansen at 651/633-3276.

Interweave

...for LGBT people and their friends and allies
Contact Laura at the Church Office.

Evergreen Quilt Group

Second Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m.
Contact: Kathie Simon Frank at 612/379-4253

U-Knitarians — for those who enjoy knitting and crocheting

Contact Laura at the Church Office for more information.

Men's Retirement Group

Monday, January 9 and 23, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Contact: Phil Morton at 952/934-3578

Many Voices Political Discussion Group

Contact for dates and topics: Vince Grundman at 651/488-0778

Unity Divorce/Transitions Group

Contact Laura at the Church Office.

Unity Singles Group

Contact Laura at the Church Office.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

Sunday services are held on Sundays at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted. Worship leaders are assisted on Sundays by Worship Associates and Sunday Welcome Teams.

January 8 (9:30 & 11:00)

"Tolling of Bells" — Rob & Janne Eller-Isaacs

We begin each new year with a memorial service for those who have died in the previous year. Rob and Janne will each eulogize men and women whose lives have shaped the world of art or politics, literature or science. Everyone will have an opportunity to acknowledge those they've loved and lost. In grief and gratitude and gladness we turn to welcome the new year.

January 15 (9:30 & 11:00)

"Soul Force" — Rob Eller-Isaacs

The Sanskrit word that Ghandi used is "satyagraha." We will honor the memory of Martin Luther King Jr. by considering the lineage of non-violence from Thoreau to Ghandi, from King to "all who yearn for the Beloved Community." What has non-violent action to do with interfaith dialog? How might Unity Church become a positive partner with others engaged in "broad-based community organizing?" Rob and Janne will share the pulpit

January 22 (9:30 & 11:00)

"Finding Home" — Katie Lawson

Roughly 80% of Unitarian Universalists come to our faith having grown up in other traditions. What does it mean for our congregations that so many of us have found Unitarian Universalism as a home away from home? Hallman Ministerial Intern Katie Lawson and Worship Associate Drew Danielson explore this aspect of our religious life using models of spiritual development.

January 29 (9:30 & 11:00)

"Middle Passage"— Janne Eller-Isaacs

What are the lessons for the development of our spiritual life in the middle of life? As we leave the period of identity formation of young adulthood, there are particular challenges that comfort us. Janne and Worship Associate Sonya Hazard will tackle this challenging topic.

February 5 (9:30 and 11:00)

"Cosmic Consciousness" — Rob Eller-Isaacs

In 1902, Canadian psychologist Richard Bucke published *Cosmic Consciousness*. Inspired by his relationship with Walt Whitman, Bucke wanted to describe a state of being he believed has been shared by all true prophets from time immemorial. The state which he describes transcends all cultural particularities. One might call it a sustained experience of the holy. Is it possible? Can it be? Rob and Worship Associate Katy Gray will help us to ponder the possibilities.

Church Office Hours

The Church Office will be closed Monday, January 2, for the New Years holidays. The Church Office will also be closed on Monday, January 16, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr Day.



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