

## When Hope and History Rhyme

from Rob Eller-Isaacs, Co-Minister

There is work we do that we know won't be accomplished in just one generation. We do it anyway because we know it's right. The moral owners of Unity Church are all those who yearn for the Beloved Community and see Unity Church as an instrument to its realization. Good strong words, visionary words, but how do we align ourselves with the vision? How do we get from here to there?

Here are a few ways we're working to make the vision real. It's by no means an exhaustive list. We're well aware that the efforts of the church itself are meager when compared to those of its people.

The **Anti-Racism Leadership Team** was created to help the Board and the Executive Team evaluate church life through an anti-racist, anti-oppression lens and help church leaders consider new initiatives. The Team meets monthly with staff liaisons, Rob Eller-Isaacs and Jacqueline Duhart. Team members also meet regularly with Trustees.

The **Racial Justice Outreach Ministry Team** is a newly gathered group, which will help Unity to be a more effective partner is working for racial justice in the larger community.

The **Interfaith Racial Justice Coalition** is another fledgling effort. The Saint Paul Foundation as part of its "Facing Race" Initiative has asked Unity to organize 5-7 white majority congregations, which are working to become effective, anti-racist institutions. Under the leadership of Rob Eller-Isaacs and Unity Church member Laura Park, we're reaching out to some of Saint Paul's most influential congregations to create a "learning table" and a network of support and accountability.

An **Anti-Racist Covenant Group** was first convened two years ago. Both ministers and Jacqueline Duhart meet with other neighborhood clergy for scripture study and mutual support.

**New Orleans Pilgrimages** are opportunities for hands-on service and deep reflection. The next trip is planned for March 8-15 (contact Pat Haff for more information). In April the amazing New Orleans interfaith gospel choir "Shades of Praise" is coming to the Twin Cities. Unity is serving as fiscal agent and helping to organize their visit.

The **Unitarian Universalist Association Diversity in Ministry Initiative** is a denominational effort to find healthy, powerful opportunities for ministers-of-color who want to serve Unitarian Universalist congregations. We have been asked to consider joining this vital new program.

We do have a vision. And we also have real, concrete ways to move forward in making that vision real. Chief among our collective resolutions this New Year is to renew and redouble our efforts to make that vision real.

Everything now, we must assume, is in our hands;

*We have no right to assume otherwise.*

If we, the relatively conscious ones, who must, like lovers,  
Insist on and create the consciousness of others-

*Do not falter in our duty now, we may be able  
Handful that we are...*

To end the racial, homophobic nightmare, and achieve our country

*And change the history of the world.*

— James Baldwin, Adapted from *The Fire Next Time*

### For more information about the...

Racial Justice Outreach Ministry, see page 7

New Orleans Pilgrimage, see page 7

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast, see page 10

Civil Rights Bus Tour, see page 11

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# JUST WORDS / WHEEL OF LIFE

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## Just Words

Though I always think of the New Year beginning in the fall rather than in the midst of winter's chill, I do take time to count my blessings and reflect on the previous year on New Year's Day. With this in mind, I would like to offer those people and things I consider to have been my many blessings during the year.

In addition to the family I adore, I feel incredibly blessed to be able to serve Unity Church-Unitarian of St. Paul, Minnesota. Unity is a congregation that inspires me, challenges me and that I learn from every day. I can't think of a place I would rather be even in the dead of winter with temperatures cold enough to keep my nose frozen throughout my walk! It is a blessing to work with such remarkable people as the members and friends here are. The ministries you provide ripple out into the community far beyond our walls and touch more people than you can imagine.

I have never ever worked with a staff that I enjoyed more. The staff at Unity laughs together, schemes together, works collaboratively to create services of quality and depth and holds the vision of the possibilities of this religious community. They work hard, often going beyond the call of duty to serve the community well. They stay late, they arrive early. They go the extra mile and they do so mindful of the ministry they are involved in. They care for the people of this congregation deeply and do their very best to serve them well. They live out the mission of this church in all that they do. They work to ensure that a warm welcome is communicated as clearly and as often as possible.

I am blessed by the interns of last year, Teresa Schwartz and Justin Schroeder who took over the reigns of ministry here with such skill and dedication. Having confidence in their ability to serve you all well made our sabbatical that much more relaxing and restorative. They provided quality ministry and led the church with love and care. What a blessing to have Justin be able to remain on staff here for the next year and a half.

We were blessed by your understanding the professional sabbaticals are an essential aspect of our work. We never took the privilege for granted, knowing that every experience we had on our sabbatical was a gift from the community here.

We were blessed with time to reflect, to discuss every thing under the sun. We were blessed with hospitality, with hospitality that provided space for grace in our lives. We were blessed with a bounty of gifts that as I write I realize mean that my cup has just completely run over this year. Thank you for the blessings of all that you are to this community and to me.

— *Janne*

Unity Church-Unitarian is a vibrant intergenerational congregation grounded in the history and heritage of liberal religion. Our shared ministry enlists the whole church family in living out the values we proclaim. At home, at church, and in the world, we strive to usher in the reign of mutual respect.

The mission of Unity Church is to engage people in a free and inclusive religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service and joy.

***You are welcome here!***

## Church Office Schedule

The Church Office will be closed Monday, January 14 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

## *The Wheel of Life*

### In Memoriam

**Mary Katherine Gardner**

July 1, 1923 —  
November 28, 2007

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# SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

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Sunday services are held at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 4:30 p.m. except where noted. Worship leaders are assisted on Sundays by Worship Associates and Sunday Welcome Teams. Sermon podcasts and archives are available on line at [www.unityunitarian.org](http://www.unityunitarian.org)

## January Sunday Worship Calendar

### January 6

#### **"Tolling of Bells" — Rob Eller-Isaacs and Janne Eller-Isaacs**

We begin each New Year with a service to honor those who have died in the previous year. The ministers will eulogize a number of "world shapers" artists, musicians, writers and leaders. Then the congregation will be invited to light a candle and speak the names of those they have lost this year.

*Beginning on January 13, "Work Worth Doing" is a six Sunday series through which we take a look at dimensions of how and why we work. True vocation is a priceless gift. Some feel called to it. Some leave home and hearth to seek it out. Others discover it by staying right where they are and learning to see with new eyes.*

### January 13

#### **"A New Covenant: the Promises We Make to Our Children" — Janne Eller-Isaacs**

The first service dedicated to the theme of "Work Worth Doing" will explore the important work of raising and mentoring our children and youth. Janne and Worship Associate Mary Baremore will turn their attention to this topic of vital importance.

### January 20 - The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday

#### **"Collage of the Beloved Community"**

— Janne Eller-Isaacs and Jacqueline Duhart

Come celebrate the life and acknowledge the loss to the world of one of our 20th century African descent, leaders, ministers and prophets, The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This worship service will invoke the voice of Rev. King and explore how he spoke hard truth to power and offer insights from his sermons on fear, evil, nonviolence and more. Come worship with Janne, Jacqueline and Worship Associate Sarah Pradt and be spiritually fed through the transformative words of Rev. King. In recognition of Association Sunday the offering is devoted to the good work of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

### January 27

#### **"This Work Will Break Your Heart" — Rob Eller-Isaacs**

Every great tradition points to the fact that compassion can take root in a heart that's been broken. There is work we do that we know won't be accomplished in just one generation. We do it anyway because we know it's right. Rob and Worship Associate Estelle Brouwer will speak of their own heartbreak and of why good work is sometimes worth the risk.

## January Offering Recipients

Generosity: a willingness to respond to the dictates of the heart. The dictates of the heart invite us to embrace the better angels of ourselves, to work toward the well-being of others. Wrap these "better angels" in the context of our faith community and they will hear that radical call to action: that call to step into lives of integrity, service and joy.

Here it is: from January 1, 2007 through December 9, 2007 we at Unity Church have placed \$68,241.87 into the hands of organizations working for the larger well-being of others. Our challenge, individually and collectively, is to support Unity Church at the level required to that we can continue this radical gesture of integrity and service. Below are the recipients of the Sunday plate in January 2008.

**January 6: Clare Housing** provides complete and compassionate care for people living with HIV/AIDS. For people living with HIV/AIDS, stable housing improves health outcomes and reduces behavior that spreads HIV. There are 5,556 people living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota and 90% are living in the metro area. AIDS is escalating among the chronically homeless, mentally ill and chemically dependent. Many people affected by AIDS have multiple medical diagnoses. The period of disability has grown from months to years. Affordable and appropriate housing is the most pressing need for many of these people. Unity Church member, Dick Buggs, was associated with annual AIDS Treks that raised money for this housing.

**January 13: New Orleans Pilgrimage Scholarship Fund** provides scholarships to Unity Church members to help meet the travel costs of a March trip to assist in rebuilding homes in the New Orleans area.

**January 20: Association Sunday in support of the Unitarian Universalist Association** which represents 117,000 Unitarian Universalists in 560 congregations. Funds raised this year will be used for outreach for UU ministers of color and the congregations they serve and for grants to congregations for growth outreach projects.

**January 27: The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT)** exists to heal the wounds of government-sponsored torture on individuals, their families and their communities, and to stop its practice. CVT works in many ways: through direct service to clients, research, professional training, public education, and advocacy. For the past four years, Unity Church has had a Community Outreach Ministry Team that supports the work of CVT. For the past two years, Unity church has hosted a weekly art therapy session for CVT clients in the Religious Education art space. The January Parish Hall art show will feature art done by CVT clients who participated in the therapy. The wish of the Unity Church CVT Ministry Team is to honor these victims of torture by having an offering dedicated to CVT on this Sunday.

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## Beginning the Year with the Ends in Mind

from Zack Steven, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Greetings from the Board of Trustees! It's been a busy fall at Unity Church-Unitarian and the Board has been no exception. I'd like to take this opportunity to provide an update on some of the specific items on the Board agenda in recent months, and to let you know where we are headed for the balance of the year.

Louise Wolfram's decision to resign from her position as Director of Resource Development resulted in a special focus on the Executive Team (ET) this fall. The Board spent time in conversation with the ET as a group, with each member of the ET individually, and with Trustees only. Our conversations were rich with wisdom from the past, appreciation for the present and excitement about the future.

Unity's executive structure is different from most organizations which are led by a single executive rather than a team. Our team structure encourages transparency, provides the Board with direct reports in key areas of church life, and supports the individual members of the ET. The team model is working well at Unity and we are fortunate to have strong, healthy relationships between and within the ET and Board. The Board has considered and affirmed the merits of the ET structure and approved an interim plan for the ET for the next 18 months.

Effective January 1, 2008 Barbara Hubbard, Director of Administration, will assume the responsibilities of the Director of Resource Development and will report to the Board on the areas of finance, operations, and development. Barbara has worked closely with Louise and the Development Ministry Team in recent years. Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs, Co-ministers, will continue their focus on the programmatic and worship life of the church. Justin Schroeder, Membership Coordinator, will serve as the fourth member of the ET in acknowledgment of the vital role that member development plays in

sustaining and growing the church. We will evaluate this interim arrangement quarterly as we continue to assess what will best serve the congregation after these 18 months.

Consultants Susan Nienaber and Nancy Biehle have concluded their research into the issues that arose when Unity's former minister Roy Phillips was invited back to the pulpit in the fall of 2006. Given the sensitive and complex nature of the situation the Board is giving careful consideration to the appropriate next steps, including reporting information to the UUA. We are reviewing our operating policies in light of the consultants' feedback and further information will be shared with the congregation in the months ahead.

One of the primary initiatives of the Board this spring will be to engage the congregation and other moral owners of Unity Church in a conversation about Unity's Ends statements. The Ends statements reflect our collective vision of who we want to be in the world. They are the guidelines by which the Executive Team and Board prioritize resources, and they are a principal benchmark against which organizational performance is measured. The details of the process are still being determined, but we hope that you will spend some time reflecting on the current Ends statements in the interim, and participate when opportunities are made available.

Also this spring we will nominate new Trustees. Perhaps you made a resolution to get more involved in the service life of Unity Church; it's not too soon to start thinking about joining the Board. The work of the Board is building the capacity of the church to fulfill its mission and ends. Our efforts are focused around the strategic areas of diversity, community enhancement, fiscal responsibility, raising Unity's profile (in the community and beyond), and the engagement and growth of members and staff. We write policies, link with and listen to our moral owners, and monitor the performance of the ET and church as a whole. Serving on the

Board is a great way to deepen your relationship with, and appreciation for, this vital and vibrant community.

This is your church! Your comments or questions about the Board and its work are welcome. I can be reached at 612-869-9794 or [zack.steven@buythechange.com](mailto:zack.steven@buythechange.com).

### 2007-2008 Board of Trustees



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**Bob Utke, Secretary**



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# FROM OUR INTERNS

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## Rethinking our Principles and Purposes

from Matt Alspaugh, Hallman Ministerial Intern



Unity Church is part of the Unitarian Universalist Association, an association of independent congregations. There is no hierarchy of bishops or presbyters who assign ministers or decide which churches to open or close. Individual congregations govern themselves; they decide how to raise and spend their money, and who will be their ministers. The Unitarian Universalist Association's role is not to govern, but to support the congregations, help start new ones, and to speak for them all as a denominational voice.

Because we consist of independent congregations, the struggle to articulate our common beliefs is difficult. Yet, we feel we need an answer to the question, "what do UUs believe, anyway?"

More than a century ago, William Channing Gannett responded to this question, with his essay, "Things Commonly Believed Among Us." His words helped settle a growing disagreement over beliefs between the more conservative Unitarians of the east and the liberals, the so-called Unity movement, in this part of the country. Gannett had been a minister at Unity Church (we have a room upstairs named after him). Thus Unity Church has a long history of connection in the formulation of denominational statements of belief.

Our Unitarian history is the history of heresy, which simply means 'choosing'. As people who choose, we distrust creeds, because so many others have used creeds to exclude us. So, while we may want a statement of common beliefs, we don't want to use it as a test for membership. In fact, we have written into our denominational bylaws a "Freedom of Belief" clause forbidding such 'creedal tests'. Further, we've come to call our statement of beliefs by the less threatening phrase "Principles and Purposes."

Well aware of the ancient Christian creeds that no longer serve us, we worry that our Principles and Purposes could become fixed into a sacrosanct statement, more symbolic than meaningful. Consequently, the bylaws require that the Principles and Purposes be reexamined every fifteen years. A reexamination is overdue, and the UUA's Commission on Appraisal is undertaking this process.

Our congregation has an opportunity to offer our thoughts on how the Principles and Purposes might be improved. If you are interested, please join me at a workshop on January 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. If you can't make the meeting, I welcome other conversations. We'll then forward our suggestions to the Commission on Appraisal by their January 15 deadline.

I realize that we at Unity Church do not emphasize the Principles and Purposes as much as some other churches do. They aren't posted in our Parish Hall, and we don't recite them in worship. I suspect this is because Unity Church has its own long and rich history, with a good sense of identity as a church community. Nevertheless, I hope we will engage with the larger UU movement, for we have much to offer. I look forward to hearing your explorations and suggestions, and offering our contribution to this effort.

## Welcome

from Jacqueline Duhart, Community Ministerial Intern



Unity Church's December 2007 sermon series focused on 'Hospitality'. In collaboration with my current supervisor, Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs, our worship service explored what it could mean to welcome the stranger. As I prayed and pondered over a topic for this article; it dawned on me that some of you may be curious as to whether or not I feel welcomed here at Unity Church-Unitarian and how I am fairing in my internship after five months.

As your first community intern and first intern of African descent I can say unequivocally, "YES," I was welcomed and continue to feel welcome here.

Welcome is a curious word. In the English language it can be used as an interjection, a verb, an adjective and as a noun. Here are examples of each of these just in case someone is scratching their head:

- Interjection (greeting) Welcome!
- Verb (to accept someone willingly/gladly)...You are welcome here.
- Adjective (ones arrival is a cause of joy)...You are a welcomed presence on this team.
- Noun (the act of greeting someone's arrival)...Welcome to Unity Church-Unitarian.

With integrity and joy I can say that many of you have employed one or more of these usages of the word in relation to me. I am especially grateful for those who shared their comments with me following my first sermon, 'Sins of Privilege'. I anxiously stood in the receiving line with Sarah Pradt, the worship associate, while person after person extended their hands, heart, and eyes to me in sincere gestures of WELCOME. You expressed your gratitude for the worship service and for my BEING here. My fear that you would turn your faces away from me was an irrational fear. You affirmed my BEING with a handshake and blessed me by looking into my eyes. Some baptized me into the fellowship of this congregation with their tears and some touched my soul with loving and generous smiles.

How am I fairing after five months? So much has happened; I extend a hearty invitation to each of you to approach me with inquiring minds and ask me about the juicy fruits of my internship journey. In this very moment, I am both weary and excited as I return home from a fascinating Unity Church board meeting. With respect for each other and with patience and care, I witnessed the board grapple with tough issues. I honestly feel that Unity's Board holds the congregation's concerns at the center of their decision making.

As a seminary intern my internship must address six major areas: spiritual praxis and growth, pastoral care, practical arts (the nuts and bolts of everyday congregational and institutional life), prophetic outreach, teaching and worship. I am thrilled to report that my internship, which is part time at Unity Church and part time with Amicus, covers all of these areas and **Oh Soooooo**

continued on page 15

# PARTNER CHURCH

## An Evening in the Court of King Sigismund and Queen Isabella

Join us for a fun-filled evening, a delicious Hungarian dinner, music, dance and theatre. Lend your support to our fellow Unitarians in HomorodSzentPeter, a lovely village in Transylvania — Unitarian for hundreds of years, struggling to maintain its way of life while responding to the demands and opportunities presented by Romania's entry into the European Union. And learn more about the Unitarian history that we share.

**January 19, 2008, 6:30 p.m.**

**Unity Church**

**\$35 per person**

Tickets on sale at the Partner Church table in the Parish Hall after each service until all the tickets are sold.

This dinner is sponsored by the Partner Church Team. We welcome any questions you may have about our Partner Church, our Team, or the Partnership. The dinner will present a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the fun of fellowship, and to talk to many who have traveled to the village about our love for the people and place.

**Our next trip to Romania is scheduled for early May, 2008**, so the dinner will provide a great chance to learn more about the trip and meet some of the people who are planning to go. It's not too late to sign up to travel with us to celebrate the village's traditional Pentecost. We will live in village homes, help the village prepare for the holiday, share in the celebration, participate in a community work project, and enter into discussion with villagers and friends from a church in the Netherlands that is also in partnership with "our" village. The topic of the "Triangle Meeting" will be about what it means to be a good neighbor, in our community and in the world.

If you have questions about the dinner, the Partner Church Team, or the May trip, stop by the Partner Church Table in the Parish Hall, or contact Sally Foster at 651-227-1105 or Pat Haff, at the Church Office.



Laurel Lein and Karen Abraham on Partner Church Sunday.

### "Triangle Meeting"

### Travel to Transylvania, May 2008 – Plan Now!

A group is forming to travel from Unity to Transylvania to visit our partner church in HomorodSzentPeter from May 9 through 18. Travelers will have the opportunity to help our neighbors prepare for the Pentecost celebration and participate in a community work project. Also we will join our hosts and members of the Bilthoven congregation from the Netherlands, the village's other partner church, for a "Triangle Meeting," a conversation about what it means to be a neighbor in our community and in our world.

Watch This Week at Unity for information about a trip planning meeting. Costs for the trip are estimated to be about \$450 - \$500 for food and lodging in the village, and group transportation by van to and from Bucharest. Travelers will be responsible for their own transportation to and from Bucharest, and any nights spent there. The group will travel from Bucharest to the village on May 9 and return to Bucharest on May 18.

More information is available at the Partner Church Table in the Parish Hall, and at the Evening in the Court of King Sigismund and Queen Isabella on January 19.



**commUNITY**

*commUNITY* is the church newsletter of Unity Church–Unitarian. It is published monthly, except the month of July. Deadlines are the 14th of each month. Subscriptions are free to those who make pledges to Unity Church and are available to others for \$30 per year

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# COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY PROGRAM

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FROM THE GREEN SANCTUARY MINISTRY TEAM

## THE 2% SOLUTION

Join the Green Sanctuary Team the evening of January 30, 2008, in a live, interactive, nationwide webcast, THE 2% SOLUTION.

Participants throughout the entire country, at thousands of sites, will participate in this serious discussion of global warming solutions and economic opportunities.

Produced with the support of the National Wildlife Federation, and hosted on Earth Day TV, THE 2% SOLUTION will be webcast live from the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Join other Americans who understand that global warming is real, and here now. Come ready to participate in this serious discussion of how to address this critically important issue and, at the same time, revitalize our communities and our economy.

We will join the live THE 2% SOLUTION webcast at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 30—a special Wellspring Wednesday event presented by the Green Sanctuary Team. If you cannot attend in person, plan to participate at home by going online to the Focus the Nation website at [www.focusthenation.org](http://www.focusthenation.org).

The name of THE 2% SOLUTION comes from this fact: To hold global warming to the low end of 3-4 degrees F will require cuts in global warming pollution in developed countries by more than 80% below current levels by 2050. Put another way, we need to cut roughly 2% a year for the next forty years. The webcast will revolve around the questions: Can we as a nation get on to this path and cut global warming pollution 2% a year for the next decade? If so, what would it take?

## New Orleans Pilgrimage

Unity Church will sponsor a second pilgrimage to help in the rebuilding of New Orleans from Saturday, March 8 through Saturday, March 15, 2008. The Unity Church Affordable Housing Ministry Team sponsored a first trip to New Orleans for twenty pilgrims in March of 2007. The 2008 trip will be coordinated in conjunction with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee staff located in New Orleans. For those interested in exploring this meaningful outreach possibility, an information session will take place on Sunday, January 6 at 12:30 p.m. in the Center Room. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, please contact Pat Haff or Janne Eller Isaacs at the Church Office.

## Literacy/Education Outreach Ministry

All are invited to the next meeting of the newly forming community outreach ministry team focused on literacy and education on January 15 from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. This new team will focus on issues of literacy for children and adults in our community. For more information, please contact Pat Haff at the Church Office.

## Webster Magnet Elementary School Seeks Mentor/Tutors for Students

In January 2008, Unity Church will be joining an interfaith church project to provide volunteer mentors and tutors for sixth grade children at Webster Magnet Elementary School that is located across the street from our church on Holly Avenue. This new project is in collaboration with other faith communities in supporting struggling students in our nearby St. Paul community schools. This is a unique and concrete opportunity to work with members of neighboring churches who also care about the future of all our children. In this project, an adult volunteer/friend can make a significant connection with a student, promote reading, provide tutoring support and celebrate their accomplishments. For more information about this project, a volunteer job description, time commitment and training, please contact Pat Haff at the church office or [pat@unityunitarian.org](mailto:pat@unityunitarian.org).

## Racial Justice Outreach Ministry Team

The next meeting of the newly forming Racial Justice Outreach Ministry Team will be on January 22 from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. All are welcome to join in this new outreach ministry. For more information contact Pat Haff at the Church Office.

### January 2008

#### Evergreen Foodshelf Items



January Evergreen Foodshelf items are: canned or dry spaghetti, canned stew, pancake mix, and syrup. Remember that these items are only suggestions and any nonperishable item can be donated any month. Donations may be left at the barrels at the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances at any time.



FROM THE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE MINISTRY TEAM

### January Whole Farm Orders

Buy meat, cheese, produce and much more from local, sustainable farms and pick it up right at Unity Church from Whole Farm Cooperative. For this month's pickup, place an order with Whole Farm at [wholefarmcoop.com](http://wholefarmcoop.com) or 320-732-3023 by Friday, January 11.

Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, January 16. Invoices are enclosed with your order. Pay by sending a check for the invoice amount directly to Whole Farm.

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# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

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## Elizabeth and Mike Thomas

Elizabeth Thomas is both a full time stay at home mom and small business owner of an on-line wedding advice website. Born and raised as a Unitarian Universalist (parents are recent new members Bill and Leah Doherty) she has an insatiable curiosity for everything this world has to offer. Call her a down to earth intellectual who loves museums and fancy restaurants to bowling and bad mainstream movies. She joins her husband, Mike Thomas, along with their two children William, age 2, and Livia, born in March.



Mike Thomas is a marriage and family therapy student in the process of a career change from technology consulting. Beyond his career(s), Mike cultivates a wide range of interests, from home improvement to Roman history to world religions. He joins Unity with his wife, Elizabeth, and his children, William (age 2) and Livia (born in March).

## Allison Thrash

joined Unity church on December 2, after attending on and off for a number of years. She first visited Unity Church in the late 1990's with her aunt, long time member Marilyn Ulrich. She then attended occasionally after moving to the Selby-Dale neighborhood about six years ago. Ultimately, it was Allison and her husband's decision to adopt a child from China that reinforced her desire to join a liberal, and diversity-affirming church. Allison has a Master's degree in public health, and currently works as a communications coordinator at the Minnesota Department of Health. Her hobbies include practicing yoga, reading and textile arts, like knitting and sewing. She lives on Cathedral Hill with her husband Zan and their cat Red.



## Terri Burnor

Greetings! I've been visiting Unity for the past year and have witnessed a community that is stimulating, musical, giving, and open.

I'm a crazy Minnesotan. I grew up near Proctor (outside of Duluth) and moved to the Cities for college at Augsburg. My husband and I live in a teeny house in St. Paul where my two pups conspire to keep me from my freelance writing business. When I'm not running Wild Blue Writing, I enjoy creating artsy/crafty goodies, flying small airplanes (I'm a private pilot), and exploring locally and around the world. I write regularly on my blog: <http://blueskyshining.wordpress.com>.

Finding Unity Church filled a void in my life. I'm excited about my spiritual growth and how I can contribute to this community and the communities Unity Church serves.



## Linda Tuma and Woody Olson

*from Linda:*

Growing up, my family attended a Lutheran church, but when I became an adult, I realized this wasn't the "right" fit for me. My boyfriend, Woody, and I have been attending Unity for the last two years and we feel grateful to have this open and respectful church to which to belong. Currently, I am employed as a Web Producer at Capella University and enjoy working on freelance web/graphic design projects with individuals and small businesses. To balance out my work life, I am taking a ceramics class this winter and I have been a member of a monthly book group for four+ years. Woody and I live in northeast Minneapolis.

*from Woody:* I have never pictured myself as being a regular church goer, much less joining one. But I'm glad that I joined Unity Church. It helps me with positive thoughts and spirituality.



## Priscilla ("Prill") McAfee

For me, Unity Church is a homecoming, merging spiritual questing, social justice consciousness, intellectual stimulation, inspired music making, reverence for wisdom and nature, and gratitude for a wonderful community. I am thrilled to be a member of the UNITY Choir. Blessings are my grown son, my daughter, son-in-law, and their baby girl, (due in March!). My careers have been as a professional French hornist, (20 years SPCO), teacher, and technologist. Hobbies of mine include jewelry making, writing, photography, singing, walking lakes, my chocolate Labrador, and finding ways to be with my family whenever I can. SmartMusic technology is a passion of mine, and I want to share how it helps enrich and enhance every person's experience with music.



## Dan Zigmund

became a member of Unity Church on December 8, after attending Unity with his wife, Nancy, and their triplet 5-year-olds beginning a year ago. Dan grew up in the Unitarian Fellowship in Plattsburgh, NY and later, as teenager, attended Birmingham Unitarian Church in Birmingham, MI. As an adult, Dan attended the occasional Unitarian service when visiting family in Michigan but was largely inactive. He always expected, however, to circle back to a Unitarian community when children came along. Even so, Dan was surprised how good it was when the family began attending Unity last December, and Dan and Nancy took the Finding Yourself at Unity class last winter. Dan has an MBA from the University of Michigan and an MS in Chinese Area Studies from Washington University in St. Louis. For the last 10 years, Dan and Nancy have lived on St. Paul's West Side. They are both software developers and in their spare time enjoy their log cabin in Wisconsin and raising their three children.



# PATHWAYS TO MEMBERSHIP



## Pathway to Membership at Unity Church

from Justin Schroeder,  
Membership Coordinator

If you've been worshipping with us for a while and are interested in learning more about who we are and what we believe, you're invited to take our **Welcome to Unity** class. This eighty-minute class is a basic overview of Unitarian Universalism and the various opportunities for involvement at Unity Church.

**Welcome to Unity** is the prerequisite to **Exploring Unity/Finding Yourself at Unity**, which is offered in two formats: as a full day class and as a three-week series. This class deepens the exploration of Unitarian Universalist history, as well as the particular history of Unity Church. Participants meet the ministers and staff of Unity Church and have the chance to share and reflect on their own religious journeys and the intersection of spiritual growth and social justice in their lives. Finally, participants learn about the expectations of membership as well as various opportunities for deeper involvement at Unity.

For those who are ready for the commitment of membership, we offer a third and final class, **Committing to Unity**. This class explores meaning of membership and invites participants to reflect on the gifts and talents they hope to share with this faith community. This class ends with a celebration as participants make the significant decision to sign our membership book.

If you have questions about this process or about membership in general, please contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office.

### Welcome to Unity

**Welcome to Unity** is offered the following Wednesdays from 7:10 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.: January 9, February 6, March 5, April 2, and May 7.

### Finding Yourself at Unity

**Welcome to Unity** is a prerequisite.  
Saturday, January 12 • 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Includes a potluck lunch.

### Committing to Unity

Saturday, January 26 • 9:30 a.m. - noon  
Saturday, May 10 • 9:30 a.m. - noon

## Getting-to-Know-You Dinners

Is it difficult to connect with people at coffee hour? Would you like to know more people by name and learn how they came to Unity? Are you hoping to deepen the number of meaningful connections you have at Unity?

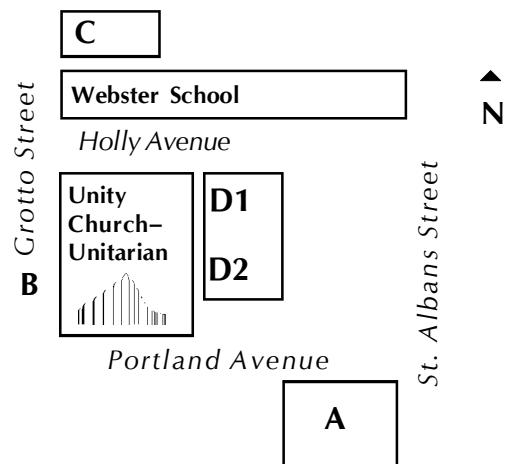
For several years now, the New Member Connections Team participants have invited new Unity members and a few longer-term members to "bring-a-dish gatherings" in their homes. The small, casual dinners or brunches allow new and old members to talk about personal histories, common interests, Unitarian-Universalism, jobs—whatever topics of conversation arise over a shared meal among the assembled group. We've found it great fun to learn more about the fascinating members of Unity as we make new friends to connect with during coffee hour and beyond. The one-time gatherings have amazing ripple effects, and we're eager for more Unity members to be so enriched.

Therefore, beginning in February, the New Members Connections Team will have sign-up sheets available during coffee hours. Interested people can sign up as hosts or guests at times determined by the hosts. Look for us there! We want to get to know you!

## Parking at Unity Church

Below is a map that will help you find parking when you come to Unity Church. As a courtesy to our neighbors (especially during winter) when parking on the street, please do not block walkways.

- A** - Church lot at the corner of Portland Avenue and St. Albans Street
- B** - First-time visitors on Grotto Street between Holly and Portland Avenues
- C** - Webster school lot - **Sundays and evenings only!** Enter on Grotto just north of Holly Avenue
- D1** - Accessible parking. Enter on Holly Avenue
- D2** - Accessible entrance to Unity Church



# FELLOWSHIP AND LEARNING

## Help Rewrite the UU Principles and Purposes!

**Saturday, January 5  
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

The Principles and Purposes of the UUA are almost a creed for many UUs. They are recited in worship in many of our churches, they are in the front of the hymnal, they are on wallet cards and websites, they become guidelines for decision making. Our UUA bylaws require that they be reexamined every fifteen years, in part so they don't become fixed into a creed. The UUA's Commission on Appraisal is seeking input from churches and we will use the commission's process to provide our feedback. Come join us at a workshop on January 5, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. We will also explore what Unity Church's deeper involvement in the denomination might look like. Contact Matt Alspaugh at the Church Office for more information.

## Elder Group Gathering: Staying Centered

**Thursday January 10 • 1:00 p.m.**

For many of us, January is the hardest month, often a lonely time and a letdown that follows the holiday season. How do we cope? What 'spiritual practices' help us get through? From acts as simple as making the bed, or a ritual cup of tea, to daily meditation, we share what helps us stay centered as the winter progresses. Contact Matt Alspaugh at the Church Office for more information or to RSVP.

## Pancakes, Pancakes, Pancake Breakfast!

Our next pancake breakfast is Saturday, January 12, from 8:30 until 10:00 a.m. Can't make it? Pancake breakfasts are scheduled for the following Saturdays from 8:30-10:00 a.m. Mark your calendar for: February 9, March 1, April 12, May 10, and June 14



Are you, or a church group you're a part of interested in serving pancakes and hosting a breakfast? Please contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office.

## UU Christmas Reclamation Project

**Saturday, January 12 • 1:00-3:00 p.m.**

Last month, about fifty people met with Bill Doherty in a workshop that explored how we might 'reclaim Christmas', that is, how might we make the holiday and the season a time of balance, spiritual depth, and genuine connection with others. We generated many great ideas for making the holiday season more meaningful in our families and as a church institution. Out of the discussion, the need for an ongoing group to explore ideas for next year emerged. Our group will meet every two weeks or so over the course of 2008. Phil Lund (a Unity Church member who works as Lifespan Program Director for the Prairie Star District) will convene this group. Contact Phil Lund (plund@psduua.org) or Matt Alspaugh at the Church Office for more information.

## Vegetarian Fellowship Potluck Dinner

**Saturday, January 26 • 6:00 p.m.**

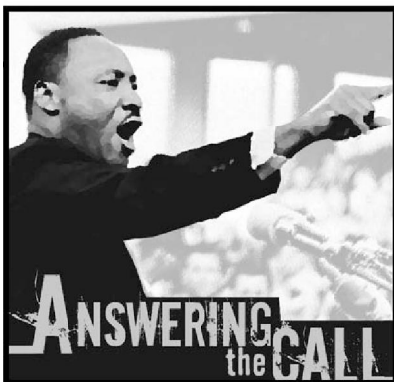
British researchers contend that children with high IQs are more likely to shun meat as they grow older. So, with this knowledge, come to the Vegetarian Fellowship potluck dinner and not only will you have a good meal and good company, you may appear smarter!

Please contact Michelle West at 651-488-2817 for more information about what you can bring to the table.

## Men's Retreat

**February 22-23, 2008**

Save the date! Come join with other men for time of spiritual and practical exploration! We'll meet Friday evening and all day Saturday at Camp St. Croix, just 30 minutes from Unity Church. The rustic accommodations of Camp St. Croix will help us keep the retreat affordable. We plan a variety of workshops, on areas as broad as personal finance, spiritual practice, and coping with setbacks, and there will be time for hikes, skiing or other activities (depending on weather). Contact Matt Alspaugh at the Church Office for more information.



**SUMMIT UNIVERSITY**

## Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. - Community Breakfast

**Monday, January 21, 2008 • 7:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.**

**House of Hope Church • 797 Summit Avenue, St. Paul**

- Free Event including a hot breakfast
- Live local program and big screen broadcast of Keynote address by Tavis Smiley, Public Television talk show host and author
- Register on-line at [www.SPACC.org](http://www.SPACC.org) or call 651-789-3877. Space is limited.

*This breakfast is a cooperative effort of General Mills, United Negro College Fund, Twin Cities Public Television and the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches.*

# WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY / THE UU COMMUNITY

Wellspring Wednesday returns on January 9. Please see the Wellspring Wednesday brochure for details on all offerings.



## January 9, 2008

*Dinner: Jerk chicken or tofu, rice and beans, lime cilantro coleslaw, pineapple upside down cake*

- Transgender 101: Interweave Sponsored Panel — Kris Maul, Director of Trans Youth Support Network
- Kundalini Yoga — ongoing, preregistration required
- Introduction to the Enneagram — Katy Taylor — ongoing, preregistration required
- Sacred Space & Place: Encountering the Feminine Part I — Julia McFadden
- Welcome to Unity: A Basic Overview of Who We Are and What We Believe — Justin Schroeder

## January 16

*Dinner: Pizza Night*

- Linda Cullen of the 50 Lanterns Project
- Kundalini Yoga — Joyce Paxton — ongoing, preregistration required
- Introduction to the Enneagram — Katy Taylor — ongoing, preregistration required
- Sacred Space & Place: Encountering the Feminine Part II — Julia McFadden
- Parents of Teens Discussion Group: Technology Management — Laura Park
- Singing Our Lives Together, Songcircle — Don Brunnquell and Michael Keyes
- Unity Men's Group

## January 23

*Dinner: Dal with papadam, cauliflower and peas curry, spinach rice kofta, rice, yogurt panna cotta*

- Georgia Ray, author of *Grace Flandrau: Voice Interrupted*
- U-Knitarrians
- Screening of the documentary *Ghost of Abu Ghraib*
- Voluntary Simplicity Group
- Mother/Daughter Book Club

## January 30

*Dinner: Potluck!*

- Honey Bees, Beekeeping and Research — Gary S. Reuter
- Video: *Heritage of Heresy: Bisbee and Tuttle on the Universalist Frontier*
- Green Sanctuary Team: THE 2% SOLUTION
- Voluntary Simplicity Group
- Parents of Teens Discussion Group: Why do we sound like our parents? Explore different parenting styles. — Julie Marckel

## The 7th National Conference for Large Congregations in the UUA

*From Perspiration to Inspiration: Spiritually Grounded Leadership for Large Congregations*

March 13-16, 2008 • Louisville, KY



Large churches face unique challenges in realizing their potential for growth, health, and spiritual vitality. In pursuing "From Perspiration to Inspiration," we will discover the ways that authentic leadership calls us to the effective, ethical, and spiritual use of power in our congregations.

The triennial Conference for Large Congregations provides an inspiring context for shared learning grounded in the accomplishments and real experiences of the largest Unitarian Universalist congregations in North America. It is also an opportunity for initiating and building strong lateral relationships among those congregations and their leaders — both lay and professional.

Unity Church is hoping to send a team of three or four people to this Large Church Conference. If you are interested in attending, please contact Rob Eller-Isaacs at the Church Office.

## Civil Rights Bus Tour

March 22 - 30, 2008

Offered by Meadville Lombard Theological School, a Unitarian Universalist seminary in Chicago.

Join Rev. Dr. Gordon and Judy Gibson as they take you on a tour of significant sites of the Southern Civil Rights Movement, offering a journey of experiential learning where you will encounter the sites, sounds, and especially the people who worked to create change during this revolutionary time in our country's history. The course is offered for credit for seminary students, but nonstudents are encouraged to audit the course, too. This course was offered in 2006 and was a life and ministry-changing experience for all of the participants.

Enrollment to take the course for credit will be limited to 15. An additional 15 seats on the tour will be available to the general public. Registration is on a first-come basis and is due no later than January 18, 2008. Please note that this year the course runs across Easter weekend. Participation for the entire eight days is required for those seeking academic credit and strongly encouraged for all others. See the link on the Meadville Lombard home page for more information about this course: [www.meadville.edu](http://www.meadville.edu).

# UNITY CHURCH LIBRARIES / BOOK CLUBS

## What's New at Unity Church Libraries?

### *The Libraries Come to the Parish Hall!*

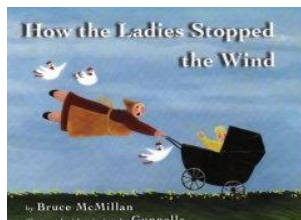
**book·mo·bile** (bōōk'mō-bēl')

n. A mobile (capable of moving or being moved readily) lending library.

Libraries have been bringing books to where their people are for over 100 years now, and in various ways. Books travel by bus, car, truck, boat, mail, and even by camel, in some parts of Africa. Ergo, the Unity Library Team figured it was about time to bring the library to you (actually, Justin suggested it, but you get the idea).

Starting the first Sunday in January, you will no longer have to make that long climb up the stairs to the second floor of the Elliot Wing to check out books. No more will Unity book lovers have to wonder just where the library is or just what is in it. Each week, The Unity Bookmobile will carry a selection of new and interesting books from the Adult and Children's Libraries for check out, right in the Parish Hall. No library card required.

"Like what?" you ask? For kids, *How the Ladies Stopped the Wind* by Bruce McMillan tells a tale of the ladies of Iceland and how they used their wits and natural resources to tame the wind enough to take a walk; the illustrations are priceless. Also, *Junk Collector School* by Adam Dahlin, is a delightful new story of a young boy and his fascinating, junk-collecting neighbor who shows him the fun of reusing and recycling.



New in the Adult Library, *Thirst: Poems*, the latest collection of the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Mary Oliver, is a must-read. An "earth ecstatic" as some say, she lives and breathes a sense of love for the natural world. The CVT (Center for the Victims of Torture Team) recommends *Toward an Evangelical Public Policy: Political Strategies for the Health of the Nation* by Ronald J. Sider and Diane Knippers. Also recently acquired: *Comfortable with Uncertainty: 108 Teachings on Cultivating Fearlessness and Compassion* by Pema Chodron, an ordained Buddhist nun who seeks to help readers practice compassion and mindfulness in daily life.

So, after you grab a cup of coffee, take a peek at the Unity Bookmobile. As the great philosopher, Anonymous, once said, "Knowledge is free at the library. Just bring your own container."

### **So Help Me God Books Have Arrived!**

If you ordered a copy of Forrest Church's, *So Help Me God: The Founding Fathers and the First Great Battle Over Church and State*, following his Wellspring Wednesday appearance in October, the books have arrived. Please pick up your copy at the Bookstall in the Parish Hall.

## Bookworms Unite!

from Justin Schroeder

Unity Church has two newly formed book clubs that you're welcome to join!

**The first group** meets from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in the Gannett Room. The next meeting is January 8, 2008. They will be reading *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen. At their February meetings, they will read *Urgent Message from Mother* by Jean Shinoda Bolen, and in March, they will read *Love in the Time of Cholera*, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. This Book Club considers all genres and literary styles for its selections. Meetings are open to all, even if you haven't read the book. If you plan to attend, please bring one or two book suggestions. Each book has a "Sponsor," who begins the meeting time by presenting a bit about the author and the selected book.

**The second group** meets from 6:30-8:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the Anderson Library. Their first meeting is January 22 and they will be reading *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, by Barack Obama. This Book Club also considers all genres and literary styles. At the beginning of the meeting, there is a quick "go-around" to get everyone's thoughts and responses to the evening's book. Participants are asked to bring a question about the book.

**Potential Book Swap?** Do you have one of the titles listed above that you might lend to a book club member in exchange for another book? If you're interested in "swapping books," contact Justin Schroeder.

If you're interested in joining a book club, but Tuesdays don't work for you, let Justin Schroeder know – we'll try to get another book club started on another day! You can reach Justin at Justin@unityunitarian.org or 228-1456 x 107.

Read on!



## Workshop: Families Raising Young Children Religiously

**Saturday, February 9 • 9:30 a.m. until noon**

Tongue-tied when your children ask about God and heaven? More confident about what UU's do not believe in than about what they do believe in? Everyone agrees that religion is taught — or caught — mainly in the home, yet we think of religious education as something occurring for a hour on Sunday mornings. As a community of parents, we have collective expertise from which to draw, but rarely find the occasion to share it. Join like-minded Unity parents for a Saturday morning gathering that will draw from this shared expertise and foster confidence in your ability to articulate and live out family beliefs with intention and integrity.

Family therapist Bill Doherty will facilitate a workshop of family-to-family learning about what it might mean to be a Unitarian-Universalist family trying to pass on our religious heritage to our young children. Participants should anticipate dialogue and interaction. Topics that may arise include creating family rituals, engaging children in moral and theological conversation, and modeling the importance of spiritual community in our lives. This is the kick-off for an initiative that could transform the way we think about children, families, and Unitarian-Universalism. Childcare will be provided; contact Christy Randall at the Church Office to sign up. This event follows a pancake breakfast, so bring the kids, feed them well and let them play with church friends while you attend the workshop.

## Celebration of New Lives

Families from Unity Church celebrating the arrival of a new baby into their lives are invited to participate in the February 3 Celebration of New Lives at the 4:30 p.m. service.

Interested families should contact Christy at the Church Office to register for this special event marking Unity Church's commitment to raise each new child as a beloved part of our spiritual community. The deadline to sign up is Wednesday, January 30.

### Dates for your Family Calendar

**Sunday, January 6**

Regular R.E. classes resume; New Workshop Rotation cycle begins: the Divine Within

**Sunday, January 13**

Regular Religious Education

**Sunday, January 20**

Story Sunday (Workshop Rotation students begin in worship before heading to class.)

**Friday - Saturday, January 25-26**

Coming of Age overnight

**Sunday, January 27**

Regular Religious Education

## Bring in the Books!

Our high school youth are now accepting books for their annual Used Book Sale, the proceeds of which benefit their social justice work and fund their pilgrimage to Boston. A cart will be parked in the Parish Hall each Sunday through March. Books can also be dropped off during the week in the R.E. Office. Thank you for your support!

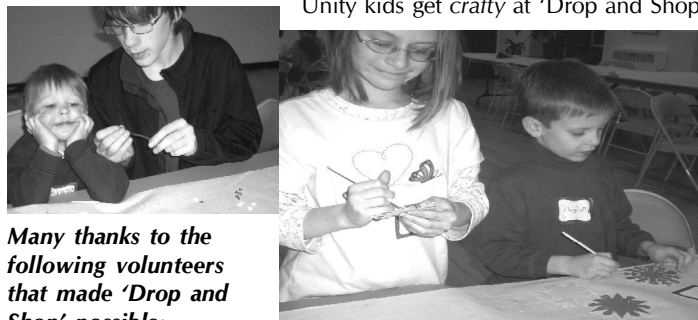
## Jello Jamboree Seeks Sponsors!

Our annual evening of wiggly fun needs one or two church families who will organize Jello Jamboree and make the fun happen for our church families on Friday, February 15. This party for all ages is the perfect antidote to cabin fever. Contact Kerri at the Church Office if your family would like to be in charge of planning games, organizing Jello competitions and getting the word out about this event.

## Christmas Reclamation Project

Wait, didn't we just do Christmas?! Yes, we did, and we all managed to survive the stress, the challenging family dynamics, the theological uncertainty and the glut of consumerism. Wouldn't you like to look forward to a calmer, more meaningful holiday season in 2008? A dozen Unity adults are already committed to meeting throughout the coming year to explore ways in which Unitarian Universalists can "reclaim" Christmas as part of our own families and align its traditions with our values. We hope that the products of our discussions will benefit Unity Church families and our entire faith movement. Join us from 1:00 -3:00 p.m. in the Anderson Library for our first meeting on Saturday, January 12. Contact Phil Lund at plund@psduua.org for more information.

Unity kids get crafty at 'Drop and Shop'



**Many thanks to the following volunteers that made 'Drop and Shop' possible:**

Alison Greene & Kelan Chang  
 Therese Sexe-Hage & Sam Hage  
 Ginny Allen & Katherine Allen  
 Peter, Kirsten and Brian Mitchell  
 Julie & Otto Marckel  
 Laura Park & Emily Park-Jordan  
 Rene & Elias Meyer-Grimberg  
 Martha Tilton  
 Ray Pillmann  
 Jack Alger  
 Galen Erickson  
 Maddie Hite-Smaka  
 and our new friends Brady and Nathan



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# MUSIC MINISTRIES

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## Announcing Auditions

for the  
19th  
Unity Church  
Children's Musical  
starring  
5th and 6th Graders!

Sunday, January 6  
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.  
Arthur Foote Room

Auditions for the 2008 Children's musical will be held on Sunday, January 6 from 2:00 until 3:30 p.m. in the Arthur Foote Room. Parents can attend an informational meeting at the same time where we will give a brief overview of the show, music, rehearsal schedule, volunteer opportunities and answer any questions. A project like this is fun, exciting and requires team work. We ask actors and parents to make a firm commitment to the six week rehearsal schedule. Rehearsals are on Sunday from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. as well Tuesday and Wednesday from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. starting on January 22. Performances will be February 28, 29 and March 1.

**Michael Lee, Sandy Waterman and Joyce Paxton invite all 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders to audition for the play - everyone will get a part and everyone will have an opportunity to be a star.**

Wear comfortable clothes and be prepared to try new things in regard to acting, singing and movement. For more information or questions call Joyce Paxton at 651-353-1428.

## Music Notes

from Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries

"Choral singing is the perfect manifestation of 'ubuntu.' When people sing together there is an indescribable feeling of 'connectedness' that nothing can duplicate."

— Steven M. Fisher



In 2008, I would like to begin a series of articles which share various writings of choral professionals which speak to the idea of the global uniting power of choral music: a type of global choral citizenship. Steven Fisher co-coordinates an exchange program for teachers in Kimberley, South Africa.

Taken from Mr. Fisher's article as published in *The Voice of Chorus America*, Winter 2006-2007:

In 1995, I spent my summer in South Africa, teaching music at the first black charter school in the overwhelmingly white city of Kimberley. I was honored to be a part of post-apartheid integration, but was eager to venture into the township of Galashawe and connect with black South Africans in their own community. I made contact with St. Boniface High School, and the principal was delighted by my idea to form a chorus.

On the day of the auditions, I bicycled out to the township wondering what I would find. My experience with high school choruses was my alma mater's chorus, where I had been the only boy, and the high school choir I directed at home where there were a hundred girls and only a handful of boys. My assumption that the turnout at St. Boniface would be of a similar girls-to-boys ratio was completely wrong. As I approached the schoolyard, I first thought I was witnessing try-outs for the school rugby team. Much to my surprise, the 100-plus boys gathered there were waiting to audition for my chorus!

After I developed a rapport with my new choristers, I asked them how it is that so many boys sing. They didn't understand my question. I explained to them that in the United States, boys are not encouraged to sing, and when they do, they are often made fun of and called hurtful names. It was their turn to be surprised. They explained that in South African culture, if you are male and you do not sing, you would be ostracized. Can you imagine?

I eventually discovered why all South Africans sing. It has to do with an African concept known as **ubuntu**: A person is a person through other people. Think about it. As humans, we realize our humanity by our relationships with other people. Throughout black South African history, from ancient times when societies were migratory to the more recent struggle against apartheid, the people have relied on each other for their very survival.

So what do choruses have to do with **ubuntu**? Everything! Choral singing is the perfect manifestation of this wonderful concept. When people sing together there is an indescribable feeling of "connectedness" that nothing can duplicate. In an age where many of us hardly know our neighbors, singing in a chorus gives us a sense of community. My young men in the Keystone State Boychoir know this. They may not be able to articulate it, but there is a reason they get out of bed early every Saturday morning to come to rehearsal. The reason is quite simply, **ubuntu**.

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# PARISH HALL ART / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

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## January Parish Hall Artist

**The artist's work will be on display in the Parish Hall at Unity Church during the month of January.**

Every Wednesday morning for the past two years, a small group of art students has been meeting at Unity Church Unitarian for a drawing and painting class. What makes this class unique is that the participants are among our newest neighbors — refugees who have fled from danger in their home countries and made the journey to Minnesota to build a new life. With help from the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) and Unity Church-Unitarian's CVT Ministry Team, the weekly art class has provided a forum for acquiring drawing and painting skills, an outlet for creative expression, as well as space to feel a sense of community and connection. In the words of one student, "As a victim of torture, I just discovered that drawing, painting and music are some ways of communicating which not only makes you feel relief, but also happy, something very difficult to come by these days."

This art exhibition is a small window into the lives and cultures of individuals who have been deeply affected by political violence and the trauma of war. The rich cultural heritage of the refugees' home countries is exemplified by traditional art work, such as the African masks. Contemporary art work, made by both adults and children, reveals much about the journey of flight — from a life at home among friends and family, to the challenge of creating a sense of belonging, safety, and home in new and distant surroundings. The work is a testament to the vital human need for creative expression, as well as the courage and resilience of the individual artists.

**"Welcome" continued from page 5**

**much more.** This unique internship has welcomed me into the dynamic world of both parish and community ministry.

As the light slowly returns, I am aware that my BEING is lighter, for it has been welcomed. From this state of feeling "WELCOMED" I have opened my heart wider. You all have helped me to grow my capacity to care. In this New Year I can draw from a deeper wellspring and welcome the learning that is yet to be, welcome the birth of new relationships and continue to nurture newly formed relationships. Thank you Unity Church-Unitarian for blessing me with the gift of WELCOME.

## January 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.*

### U-Knitarians

...for those who enjoy knitting and crocheting  
Fourth Wednesday of each month at Wellspring Wednesdays  
Contact: Justin Schroeder at the Church Office

### Men's Retirement Group

Monday, January 7 & 28 • 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
Contact: Phil Morton, 952-934-3578

### Unity Divorce/Transitions Group

Meets every Saturday • 10:00-11:30 a.m.  
Contact: Justin Schroeder at the Church Office

### Unity Singles Group

Watch *This Week at Unity* for scheduled events.  
Contact: Justin Schroeder at the Church Office

### A New Look at the Bible

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

### Afterthoughts

Every Sunday following the 9:00 a.m. service  
Contact: Paul Gade, 651-771-7528

### Unity Young Adult Group

Second and fourth Sundays of each month following the 4:30 p.m. service. Contact: Joseph LaFerla at the Church Office.

### Mother-Daughter Book Club (grades 6-8)

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month as part of Wellspring Wednesday.  
Contact: Ginny Allen, 651-645-7176

### Unitots!

A group for families with kids through preschool age.  
Every Friday • 9:30 a.m.  
Contact: Bridget Borell, 651-644-5618

### Grandparent Unitots!

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

### Unity Bridge Club

First Friday of each month at members' homes • 7:00 p.m.  
Contact: Mary Barrett, 651-225-9708

### Evergreen Quilt Group

Second Tuesday of each month • 7:00 p.m.  
Fourth Saturday of each month • 10:30 a.m.  
Contact: Michelle Hill at 651-264-0884

### Unity Book Clubs

Second Tuesday of the month • 7:00 p.m. -or-  
Fourth Tuesday of the month • 6:30 p.m.  
Contact: Justin Schroeder at the Church Office

CALLING ALL 5TH AND 6TH GRADERS!

**AUDITIONS**

for the

**Unity Church Children's Musical**

will be held on

**Sunday, January 6, 2008**

**2:00 - 3:30 p.m.**

in the

**Foote Room at Unity Church**

***See page 14 for details!***

## **New Orleans Pilgrimage** **March 8 - 15, 2008**

A pilgrimage sponsored by Unity Church  
to help rebuild New Orleans.

See page 7 for details.



Unity Church helps rebuild New Orleans, spring 2007



732 HOLLY AVENUE • SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55104  
651-228-1456 • FAX: 651-228-0927 • WWW.UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG

ZACK STEVEN, CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
JANNE ELLER-ISAACS, CO-MINISTER  
ROB ELLER-ISAACS, CO-MINISTER  
BARBARA HUBBARD, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

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