

How Youth *Come of Age* at Unity Church

from Joseph LaFerla, Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministries



Coming of Age Youth at Camp St. Croix during their fall retreat.

According to *The Book of Lists*, most of us have a greater fear of public speaking than a fear of death. If this is true for our church's 9th graders, it doesn't show. When they share their personal credos as the culmination of the *Coming of Age* program, they share their intimate thoughts about theology with relative strangers and they do it with courage, insight, wisdom and charm.

Coming of Age (COA) is a meaningful experience for youth at the threshold of young adulthood. It is a program in which we pose important theological questions to our youth, and pause to listen to their responses. These questions include:

- What is the nature of God?
- Where do you find meaning as a human being?
- How do you experience the sacred in the world and the divine within you?
- What role do communities—especially religious ones—play in your life?
- How should we understand death and loss in our lives?

There are a number of ways the COA program helps youth consider and clarify their beliefs about these questions. One way is through Sunday afternoon class sessions, led by volunteer advisors, which include large- and small-group activities that broaden the youths' perspectives on the range on beliefs that exist within and outside of the Unitarian Universalist heritage.

Youth also pair with an adult member of the church in a mentorship, attending worship and having some guided conversation about the five theological questions that frame the class. These conversations provide the youth some practice in articulating their own spiritual beliefs, a sort of "pre-writing" before they sit down to compose their personal credo.

Other events help enrich this clarifying year: small group meetings with the ministers to discuss alternative ways to ask the five theological questions; a large group community service project to provide context for a conversation about connections between social justice and spirituality; opportunities to hear COA graduates read their statements and talk about the writing process; a group-bonding retreat at Camp St. Croix and a sleepover at the church. All of this is preceded by the *Our Whole Lives* program in the fall, a comprehensive sexuality education program rooted in the values of our faith, which forms a

caring, trusting class environment.

The end products of all this rich time and energy invested by the youth are the personal credos called Statements of Spiritual Identity. Usually taking the form of speeches, but sometimes including musical or artistic performances, these Statements underscore the youths' spiritual understanding at this point in their lives. We do not expect the youth to have clear answers to all the questions posed to them, nor do we expect these statements of belief to remain unchanging throughout their lives; we only ask that the youth make an effort to reflect on their own truths and to share them in a meaningful and coherent way with the rest of the class,

continued on page 5...

PLEASE JOIN US...

***Coming of Age Ceremony
and Statement Readings***

**Saturday, April 26 • 6:00 p.m.
Unity Church Sanctuary**

***Coming of Age Sunday Service
featuring the youth, mentors,
and The Eclectics***

Sunday, April 27 • 4:30 p.m.

Interested in mentoring a 9th grade youth or joining the team of *Coming of Age* teachers? This is a half-year commitment that is rewarding and inspiring! Contact Joseph LaFerla at the Church Office.

JUST WORDS / WHEEL OF LIFE

Just Words



In 1953, eight full years before the founding of the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Unitarian and the Universalist youth groups combined and took the name, Liberal Religious Youth. By the time I became an LRY'er in 1966 the term "youth empowerment" was coming into common usage. Youth advisors didn't quite know what to do. By 1968 the whole world was coming apart at the seams. The only place in my life that seemed whole and safe and sacred was the halls of LRY.

Bob Dylan's words rang in our ears:

"Come mothers and fathers throughout the land and don't criticize what you can't understand, your sons and your daughters are beyond your command your old road is rapidly aging. Please get out of the new one if you can't lend a hand For the times they are a'changin'."

Every generation imagines that a great and final sea change will occur at the very moment that they come of age. Every generation pushes up against their parents. But those of us who came of age in the late 60's and early 70's had what I believe was a unique experience. When we declared that our parents' generation had badly botched the job, they agreed with us. When we proclaimed, full of anger and disdain, that henceforth we would set our own true course our parents cheered us on, delighted and distraught at being off the hook. It was a heady, dangerous time and we were on our own.

By the late 1970's LRY was beginning to fall apart. The abdication of adults who might have been helpful combined with the lack of continuity inherent in youth-led organizations to bring LRY to an end. In the early 1980's two continental conferences were held, Common Ground 1 and 2, out of which a new organization Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, or YRUU was formed. Though begun with significant involvement from religious professionals and other interested adults it shared many of the values as well as the shortcomings of LRY. Within a few years YRUU was struggling with many of the same dynamics, which made LRY untenable. Though always effective for cultivating continental leadership, neither LRY nor YRUU had much traction in supporting youth ministry at the congregational level.

For the past three and a half years the UUA has been engaged in a consultative planning process intended to establish new structures and staffing for effective youth ministry. As president of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association I've been intimately involved in the conversation. Here's what I know: effective youth ministry is counter-cultural. The work requires consistent attention both from caring, well-balanced effective adults and from congregational leadership.

Kerri Meyer, Unity's Director of Religious Education, attended a National Interfaith Conference on Youth Ministry. There were more than 500 congregations represented. They had been invited because they had exemplary youth programs. A study of those 500 congregations determined that they had three key similarities:

1. Their Senior Ministers were visibly supportive of young people and committed to being personally involved in youth ministry.
2. The congregational mission explicitly included a commitment to youth ministry.
3. Youth ministry was skillfully staffed and adequately funded.

There are some promises I think we ought to make to make. If we want our children to bless the world we will promise them spiritual depth, skills for interpersonal intimacy and the skills and inspiration leaders always need. If we focus on making these promises real our youth ministry will take root and flourish. We're getting there but we still have a ways to go both as a congregation and as a faith tradition. The times they are a'changing.

Love reaches you,
Rob Eller-Isaacs

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Caroline Marie Overmoen

born March 3, 2008

daughter of

Melanie Reiland and

Todd Overmoen

granddaughter of Bonnie Reiland

Whitney Rose Whiteis

born March 15, 2008

daughter of

Nate and Laurel Whiteis

granddaughter of

James and Marion Seeley Kreisman

In Memoriam

Jacqueline DeLong

March 30, 1938 – March 13, 2008

Unity Church 137th Annual Congregational Meeting

Saturday, May 17, 2008

10:00 a.m. – noon

Join us for a pancake
breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and
stay for the
meeting.

Childcare is
available.



APRIL SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

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

Worship Series • March 30 through April 27 ***Covenant and Creed***

Covenant and Creed is a five-service series on the history and present-day realities of liberal religion. Revelation is not sealed. We therefore have no creed, no fixed set of beliefs. Our detractors accuse us of practicing “religion lite.” But being in covenant — being promise making, promise keeping people — is a demanding path. Are we up to it?

April Worship Calendar

April 6: *The Promises That We Inherit* — Janne Eller-Isaacs

The liberal church was founded upon the understanding of covenant as the central binding agent, not creed. Given that historic understanding, Janne and Worship Associate Elizabeth Alexander will explore the promises the liberal church makes to its members and friends.

April 13: *A Passion for Freedom* — Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazzi

Although there are considerable differences between American UUs and Transylvanian Unitarianism - because we live in different societies and in slightly different kinds of cultures - I am more and more conscious about our common passion for justice, human dignity, true fellowship, real peace and love – and I know that we all feel responsible for these values. As a progressive liberal from Transylvania, being here gives me the unique opportunity to learn from your experience, spirituality, and social involvement.

Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazi is the 2007-2008 Balázs Scholar at the Starr King School for the Ministry.

April 20: *Arthur Foote Music Sunday*

Arthur Foote Sunday is Unity Church’s celebration of the part music plays in our services and church community. Honoring the memory of Arthur Foote and his love and contribution to music, we annually offer services filled with this great art in appreciation for what it adds to our lives. Using earth/natural world texts and a ‘cloudburst of sound’, we celebrate the focus that music brings to us in our time together as we seek reflection and support in order to move ‘from this house to the world’. From a single blue bird to visions of the universe, from Haydn to musical inflections from Africa, Unity Choir, Unity Singers and several instrumentalists will inspire our celebration together.

April 27: *What Matters Most* — Rob Eller Isaacs

We conclude our series on covenant and creed with a service to honor those who are Coming of Age this year. Building on the Saturday night ceremony at which each participant will offer their theological statement, the services will highlight those practices, which are essential to our liberal faith. Community Ministerial Intern, Jacqueline Duhart, who has been working with our Coming of Age class all this past year, will join Janne and Rob in conducting the service.

April Sunday Offering Recipients

Each week, Unity Church gives away 70 percent of the Sunday offering to non-profit agencies within the larger community. Through this Generosity Ministry these community organizations are being nurtured by that same oasis of compassionate embrace that draws us into the circle of Unity Church. The remaining 30 percent of each Sunday plate goes to the support of the Community Outreach Ministry of Unity Church.

The April offering recipients are:

April 6 — *Shades of Praise*: The *Shades of Praise* interracial gospel choir has been called the *community choir* of New Orleans for it brings together sixty-five members from more than fifteen denominations and twenty churches. The *Shades of Praise* will be performing April 18-20 in St. Paul in a series of concerts followed by dialogues aimed at *discovering our beloved community*. Part of the funding for this weekend is a challenge grant from The Pohlad Family Foundation to support the work of the *Shades* back in New Orleans as they perform in events of rededication and reconciliation. Every dollar raised through the Unity Church collection will be matched dollar-for-dollar (1:1); collections are also being taken at other St. Paul churches involved in this weekend. Rick Heydinger, member of Unity Church, has organized and raised the funding for this series of weekend performances.

April 13 — *Francis Balázs Scholar Program*: This program brings a Unitarian Transylvanian minister to the Starr King School for the Ministry to study theology, ethics, counseling, preaching, practical ministry and non-profit organizational skills. This study enhances their parish ministry in Transylvania as well as their work in the community and the larger church. Kinga-Reka Szdkely, minister of our partner church in Homorodszentpeter, was the Balázs Scholar in 1999-2000. Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazzi, the current Balázs Scholar, will preach at the April 13 services.

April 20 — *Arthur Foote Fund for Foote Sunday*: Arthur Foote was minister at Unity Church from 1945-1970. Upon his death in 1999 the Arthur Foote Music Fund was created as a permanent endowment to provide an annual music Sunday in his memory.

April 27 — *Emergency Food Network*

The Emergency Foodshelf Network (EFN) is a nonprofit food bank that collects, warehouses and distributes quality food and essential support services to 200 Minnesota hunger relief organizations in 35 counties. Member agencies receive monthly shipments of free food, the opportunity to purchase high demand and culturally specific items at below retail prices and liberty to use EFN’s office and media equipment. The Unity Church Coming of Age class chose EFN to receive this Sunday’s offering.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Forward!

from Carol Bauer, Trustee

Have you heard? Unity Church is in full bloom!

Let's start with the 11:00 a.m. service. Holy sha-moley! If it were any more crowded, we'd have to take reservations. Good for the collective ego, but not exactly welcoming for visitors. Fortunately, we have a third service at 4:30 p.m.... and it comes with soup!

Speaking of crowded, the religious education program is bursting at the seams. When the RE folks encourage you to register early, they're not kidding! We are turning people away because we can't accommodate them. Good set of problems unless it's *your* kids.

Did you know that Unity Church now has 38 ministry teams doing good work in the church and in world? These teams cook together, welcome people to Unity, cultivate environmental responsibility, work for social justice and affordable housing, lend a hand to people who need help or comfort, and much, much more.

Looking to connect with like minded people? At Unity Church, you can meet up with readers, writers, storytellers, singers, yoga enthusiasts, quilters, knitters, gardeners and more. So, you're single? Join the singles group. Retired? There's an elders group. Also to be found—groups for teens, parents of toddlers, grandparents of toddlers... you get the picture.

Maybe all you need is a place to recharge your batteries on Sundays. Well, I don't know about you... but I always find something inspiring. The readings, the music (oh, the music!!!), our talented worship leaders—co-ministers, interns, lay leaders. It just *works*.

It's no accident. Every five years, the board of Unity Church invites you to talk about what is important to you and share your dreams for the future. This information shapes the life of the church. In March, the board launched a new series of conversations called *Lift Every Voice*. If you have not already done so, I urge you to lend *your* voice to this discussion which will plant the seeds for our growth over the coming years. I can hardly wait to see what comes up!

Lift Every Voice

Workshop Registration

Sign up for one of the workshops below either online at www.unityunitarian.org or by contacting Barbara Ford at brford@tcinternet.net or 612-333-1197. All workshops are free and take place at Unity Church.

Thursday, April 10 • 9:30 a.m. – noon

Saturday, April 12 • 9:30 a.m. – noon and 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 13 • 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Monday, April 14 • 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.



Unity Church Heritage Society Welcomes Mark Ritchie

Mark Ritchie, Minnesota's Secretary of State, will speak at the Unity Church Heritage Society Dinner on Friday, May 2, 2008. 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Mark also has served Minnesota both in the Department of Agriculture, addressing the economic crisis facing family farmer and rural communities, and as president of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, a Minnesota-based public research center.

The Heritage Society is made up of Unity Church members and friends who have made a planned gift to the church. They have chosen to make a commitment that benefits our church community for our future generations: in their will or estate plan, in their life insurance policy or retirement plan. You need not have a large estate or be wealthy to join the Heritage Society; people of all means are able to join and encouraged to do so. Unity members who express their intent to create a planned gift to the church are welcome to attend the Heritage Society Dinner.

To find out more or to let us know of your intent to make a planned gift to Unity Church contact Barbara Hubbard at the Church Office.

Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) Annual Report

The ARLT, commissioned in 2003, has a stated mission of leading the church in developing and living out an intentionally anti-racist identity in all aspects of church life. As part of that mission, the ARLT presents annual reports on the progress the church has made to the Board of Trustees and the Executive Team. The 2007 ARLT Annual Report is now available online at www.unityunitarian.org/antiracismteam.htm. Printed copies are available by contacting the Church Office.



COMING OF AGE / FROM OUR HALLMAN INTERN

Coming of Age continued from front...

their families, and the congregation.

The year culminates in a special ceremony in which the Statements are read aloud by each youth. Wisdom from the Statements shared at the 2007 ceremony include:

"If I had to define God, I would find myself using words that reflected my values, like fairness, kindness and forgiveness, as well as the creative force that is inside every one of us." (Simon Alexander-Adams)

"I believe something is sacred if it brings out the best in us and makes us value who we really are." (Eric Baudry)

"Life is never easy; it's not supposed to be. The secret is finding the little things to make you happy and make your life whole." (Abby Guthmann)

In the Unitarian Universalist tradition, our ministry to our COA youth honors their direct and unique relationship to something higher than themselves, helps them determine their own spiritual and religious truths, and nurtures a real sense of community both among the youth and in the broader adult life of the church. Please consider attending this year's *Coming of Age* ceremony to witness the bold, clarifying work our youth have accomplished.

2008 Coming of Age Youth and Mentors

Youth

Alex Arnott
Alex Friberg
Amber Evans
Amelia Johnson
Ansel Lies
Ariane Giles
Audrey Hommeyer
Brit McCoy
Charlie Andre
Charlie Diamond
Cori Patterson
Evan Quirk Becker
Henry Brown
Jasmine Maack-Magnusson
Kaia Wahmanholm
Leif Park Jordan
Lizzie Bolstad
Mac Mischke
Madeline Hansmeyer
Mara Keyes
Max Lykins
Oliver Alexander-Adams
Rex Hendrickson
Westley Mager
Willie Webb

Mentors

Jeff Risberg
Bob Lies
Steve Harper
Becca Pournoor
Rich Hamer
Laurel Lien
Patricia Eaves
Pam Scott
Craig Rot
Drew Danielson
Barbara Ford
Todd Hayne
Steven Arnott
Andy Steiner-Manning
Neely Crane-Smith
Chico Hathaway
Sarah Foster-Walters
John Mischke
Amy Michael
Mary Blouin
Todd Seabury-Kolod
Laura Park
Gary DeCramer
Paul Adams
Lisa Stuehringer

COA Advisors: John Andrew, Mary Bjork, Jacqueline Duhart, Jen Hogan, Tara LaFerla, Jeff Risberg

OWL Advisors: Alain Baudry, Jacques Capesius, Jacqueline Duhart, Angela Newhouse, Linda Smidzik



We Shall Not Be Moved

from Matt Alspaugh, Hallman Ministerial Intern

In early March, fifteen of us spent a week in New Orleans as part of a pilgrimage organized by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and First Church of New Orleans.

We observed first-hand the devastation resulting from Hurricane Katrina over two years ago and worked to restore the house of Matt and Jewel McGee and their family. The house is in the Lower 9th Ward, the area most affected by the levee breach. Their house was completely flooded and rendered uninhabitable. The McGee's Katrina experience was similar to many working class families in New Orleans: facing insurance companies that denied claims and government agencies that abandoned them or tried to demolish their homes. Matt and Jewel were determined to return to their home, and have overcome many challenges since the storm. They've lived in a trailer, Matt's job moved to another city, and they've dealt with theft and vandalism.

Now the McGee house is nearly completed. During the week, our Unity crew lived and worked closely together and learned to function as a team. We installed windows, put in plumbing, cut and placed trim, hung vinyl siding, installed kitchen cabinets, and painted. The family will complete the work and hopes to move in shortly.

One could question the need to travel all the way to New Orleans to offer service when there is so much need in St. Paul, even blocks from Unity Church. But this pilgrimage was more than a chance to be of service. For many of us, leaving our normal surrounds gave us a chance to reflect more deeply on larger issues, such as racism and privilege, government corruption and civil society, and the nature of community. For me, this trip was a reentry into the south, and that alone brought up many old feelings and images. Some of us still struggle with our national complicity in abandoning this city in its time of need. Others confronted the magnitude of the devastation, against which our hard week of work on one house seemed so miniscule.

One night, many of us visited the Shades of Praise choir at their rehearsal. The Shades choir is the only interdenominational gospel choir in New Orleans. They sounded fabulous, and I'm looking forward to seeing them when they come to St. Paul on the weekend of April 20. [See page 8.] They were bubbling with excitement at the prospect of this trip, especially after Unity Church member Rick Heydinger explained how he and Michael Cowan, the founder of the Shades choir, conceived this trip as a catalyst for building interfaith connections between historically black and white churches in the Twin Cities. I'm excited about the richness of this possibility too, and the place Unity Church can play in this opportunity.

During our visit, the last piece the Shades rehearsed was a version of "We Shall Not Be Moved," with intricate syncopation of voices. "Like a tree planted by the water, we shall not be moved," goes the refrain. What perfect words, speaking of the resiliency of the people of New Orleans who, in the face of disaster and suffering, find persistence and tenacity and hope.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Balázs Scholar

Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazi

*The Future of the Transylvania -
U.S. Unitarian Partnership*

Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazi, the 2007-2008 Balázs scholar at the Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, California, will visit Unity Church on Saturday, April 12, 2008.

Rev. Jakabhazi's will discuss Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007 and the impact of the economic and political changes already underway.

Rev. Jakabhazi will also describe the Balázs Scholar program which since 1994 has brought young Transylvanian Unitarian ministers to a one year residence at Starr King.

All are welcome to attend and listen to the engaging and informative program.

Rev. Jakabhazi graduated in 2002 from the theological seminary in Kolozsvár and serves as minister of the Unitarian Church of Nyomat in Transylvania, Romania. His grandfather has been in the ministry for 70 years, and at 92, is the oldest practicing Unitarian minister in Transylvania.

Táncház Hungarian Dance

Saturday, April 12, 2008 • 7:00 p.m.

Unity Church's Partner Church Ministry Team along with the Minnesota Hungarians will sponsor an evening of Hungarian dancing at Unity Church to help us celebrate the visit of Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazi.

Dance instruction will be available at 5:30 p.m. for children and 6:00 p.m. for adults. Hungarian food will be available for purchase. The recommended donation is \$10 per person, youth under 17 may attend free. Proceeds go to the Minnesota Hungarians and the Partner Church Ministry Team at Unity Church.

EVERGREEN QUILTERS ANNUAL ART SHOW AND FUNDRAISER

April Flowers

A Silent Auction and Quilt Raffle

April 6 – 27, 2008 • Parish Hall

After this long cold winter, everyone is looking forward to spring's riotous displays of brilliant color and lush greenery. Unity Church Evergreen Quilters will help speed up that process during April's showers at our *April Flowers* raffle and silent auction. This year's show and sale represents the effort of approximately twenty Unity Church members and friends who have fashioned a unique handcrafted queen-size quilt, *Midnight Garden*.

These quilters will also offer a variety of smaller quilts and related items in a silent auction. You're invited to attend the group's annual show, raffle, and silent auction in the Parish Hall during the month of April. The exhibit and sale opens Sunday, April 6, and closes Sunday, April 27. The raffle quilt, as well as the silent auction items, are all handmade by the Evergreen Quilters and donated by them to this event.

If our *April Flowers* raise your spirits and give you hope that spring is really on its way, you'll want to buy many raffle tickets for the raffle quilt (\$2 each) at the Evergreen Quilters' table in the Parish Hall. Tickets will be available there until noon on Sunday, April 27, when the drawing for the raffle quilt will take place about noon after the second service. You need not be present to win.

In addition to purchasing raffle tickets for the *Midnight Garden* quilt, please bid generously on the smaller fiber pieces made by individual Evergreen Quilters and offered through a silent auction. You may submit your final bids until noon Sunday, April 27.

Everyone wins at this art show and sale! We encourage you to be as generous as you can in your bids for the *April Flowers* quilted items. When you win the bid for your favorite piece(s) in the show, you get to take home an original handmade art piece. All the money you donate for raffle tickets and silent auction items will go to help people in our community who are in need. One hundred percent of all proceeds from the raffle and silent auction go to four local organizations: Sharing Korners Food Shelf, Ramsey County Family Center, The Family Place, and Jeremiah House. These non-profit programs help dislocated, homeless, and hungry people in our community find food, shelter, education and stability in their lives. The more generous you are the more our neighbors benefit.

Evergreen Quilters are members and friends of Unity Church who quilt or want to learn how, and who love to share their creativity and skills with each other and the wider community. About twenty members participate in various ways. All people of the church are welcome to join the group at any time. Call Michelle Hill at 651-308-6038 for more information.

Remember: you'll definitely know that Spring is on its way when you visit *April Flowers* in the Parish Hall, April 6–27. You may buy raffle tickets for the large quilt for \$2 each or enter silent bids for other items at the Evergreen Quilters' table in the Parish Hall after each service throughout April. See you there!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Project Home: A Covenant Group's Perspective

from Cindy Starkweather-Nelson

While Unity's Affordable Housing Team studies the roots of homelessness and advocates for housing justice, its service arm, Project Home, is an opportunity for us to directly serve homeless families. Volunteers are needed in May for evening (5:30-8:30 p.m.) and overnight (8:00 p.m.- 7:30 a.m.) shifts. In last month's commUNITY, Martha Eaves and Bruce Beneke wrote about their experiences as overnight hosts. This month we hear from Cindy Starkweather-Nelson whose covenant group has staffed both shifts.

Covenant groups at Unity Church are asked to do a community service project once a year. There are many possibilities. Our Covenant group has hosted a Project Home evening at Unity Church twice in the past. We have found working as hosts to families needing a safe shelter to be a very rewarding experience.

At first there were apprehensions about what to expect and what our responsibilities would be. Two members of our group attended the Project Home training session so we could report back at the next covenant meeting what we should be looking forward to. Even with the information in hand there was a sense of awkwardness about taking this on. What will it be like, how much privacy should the families have and need, should we reach out or leave them alone?

These questions were quickly answered once the families entered our church. Some of the children were anxious to head to the park across the street to work off the after school energy. At least two hosts went with a parent of the children to the park. The children were able to play with others from the community in the playground and had some good interactions with their parents in this open atmosphere. Other hosts and guests in the activity room were busy playing with the games. A few of us had a good time in the art room just free flow painting and talking about our interests. The homework room was active with students trying to finish work for the next day and hosts willing to assist. It was our observation that the children were readily adaptive to the situation and enjoyed our attention.

There are many ways that individuals, families and covenant groups can assist Project Home:

- Visit the recruiting tables in the Parish Hall after services in April and May to sign up for a shift or contact Pat Haff at the Church Office.
- Sew curtains to maintain guest privacy in the sleeping rooms.
- Donate art supplies, personal care items and gently used dress-up clothes, games and magazines. Items for teens especially needed.
- Donate healthy snack items during the month of May (fresh fruit and yogurt are especially needed).
- Training sessions are offered to help volunteers understand what to expect, including responsibilities and emergency procedures, and to find their way around the RE spaces that house the project: Tuesday, April 29 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. or Sunday, May 4 from 12:15-1:45 p.m.

It was lights out at ten and most had no problem settling in. Two members of our covenant stayed for the night and were up early to put out breakfast before the six a.m. bus arrived. The families were soon off for the next day of school, searching for jobs and affordable housing.

In conclusion, we learned to step out of our comfort zones and take on some challenges we might not have without the support of our whole group. It was easier to take the step of taking on this project as a group knowing who we would be working with, especially the overnight assignment. The first time is the hardest because of the "unknown" elements. But as our review suggested to us, the experience turned us away from the worries of how we would handle this new challenge and focused us instead on how we could work to make the lives of others in need more comfortable.

We strongly urge others to seriously consider volunteering their time and gifts to this very needed project!



FROM THE SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE MINISTRY TEAM

Meet the Farmer!

If you were at all curious about those mysterious boxes sitting next to the Peace Coffee sales table during last summer, here's your chance to meet with a representative from the Women's Environmental Institute community supported agriculture ("CSA") following the 9:00 a.m. service on April 13. They will be here to speak about their upcoming season and answer questions of prospective partners. June 1 is their deadline to sign up for a share but they sold out last year – don't miss out on a weekly box of veggie heaven! If you need more information, you can contact Tria at WEI at 651-583-0705. For more general information about CSAs, you can call Cyndi at 651-647-9403 or stop by the Peace Coffee table any Sunday.

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 at wholefarmcoop.com or 320-732-3023 by Friday, April 11.

Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, April 19. Pay by sending a check, with the invoice enclosed with your order, directly to Whole Farm.

Evergreen Foodshelf

April Evergreen Foodshelf items are canned soups. 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.



SHADES OF PRAISE / MICHAEL COWAN

Raising Our Voices

Celebrating Our Beloved Community through New Orleans Gospel Music from Rick Heydinger

How do we fulfill Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's vision of a society of opportunity, compassion and justice for all rooted in our shared daily experiences – the "Beloved Community"?

The weekend of April 18-20, our Unity Church "family" will have an opportunity to explore this question with members from neighboring St. Paul churches.



The catalytic event is a set of performances by *The Shades of Praise*, a New Orleans interracial gospel choir. *The Shades* will be performing in three neighboring, historically black churches.

Each performance will be followed by a reception or dinner and a discussion focusing on how we can continue to build the beloved community right here in St. Paul. This is the first in what we hope will be a series of activities that bring us together across church lines to get to know each other better and celebrate those things that draw us together.

Specifically, *Shades of Praise* performances and follow-up discussions will be held:

Friday, April 18 • 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

UNITY Baptist Church, 118 North Victoria

Shades of Praise Concert followed by reception and dialogue.

Co-hosts: St. Clements Episcopal, St. Paul Reformation Lutheran, UNITY Baptist

Saturday, April 19 • 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

New Hope Baptist Church, 712 Burr Street

Shades of Praise Concert followed by community dinner and dialogue.

Co-Hosts: New Hope Baptist, Unity Church–Unitarian

Sunday, April 20 • 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Morning Star Baptist, 739 Selby Avenue

Morning Worship with Shades of Praise followed by lunch and singing.

Co-Hosts: House of Hope Presbyterian, Morning Star Baptist

Although events are co-hosted by specific churches, people are encouraged to attend the events that best fit their schedule and to bring friends. All events are free and no tickets are necessary.

Members of *The Shades of Praise* choir will be staying in people's homes. To host a choir member for the evenings of Thursday, April 17, through Saturday, April 19, contact: Sally Foster at 651-227-1105 or sallyfoster@msn.com.

This is an opportunity to reach out and get to know members in our neighboring churches. Please join us. You can learn more at the Raising Our Voices table in the Parish Hall following Sunday services or by going to www.raisingourvoices.org

Racism at Unity Church:

What's Next?

Saturday, April 19 • 9:30 a.m.

Dr. Michael Cowan, psychologist, theologian, community leader and co-founder of the *Shades of Praise interracial interdenominational gospel New Orleans* choir will facilitate a conversation about race on Saturday, April 19, for the Unity Church–Unitarian congregation.

This will be an opportunity for participants to understand and explore the different positions on race that Dr. Cowan has developed in his many years of working across racial and ethnic lines in the city of New Orleans.

This highly interactive morning will be a chance to examine the strengths and limitations of each position and find a common ground of understanding that may lead towards healing the destructive history of racism in our communities.

The conversation (sponsored by the newly forming Racial Justice Outreach Ministry Team) at Unity Church and will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Foote Room. Refreshments will be served.



Dr. Michael A. Cowan
Photo courtesy of Loyola University

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAYS

April 2

Tomato/Brie Salad, Potato Cod Cakes, Vegetarian Pasta, Lemon Risotto, Banana Pudding

- The "All Do Better" Imperative — Dane Smith
- Video: *Sex Ed and the State* — Jim Winkle
- The Power of Covenant — Matt Alspaugh
- Money Talk: Money and Poetry — Marianne Combs
- Welcome to Unity Church — Justin Schroeder



April 9

Coq au Vin, French Bread, Mixed Greens Salad, French Apple Galette

- Video: *JourneyMan* — Charlie Borden
- The Power of Covenant — Matt Alspaugh
- Speed Connecting

April 16

Hot Pizza, Fresh Salad, Sweet Dessert

- Sabbatical Stories Part III — Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs
- Singing Meditation: Sing for Joy — Ruthie Rosauer and Katy Taylor
- Unity Salon
- Unity Men's Group: Proactive Men

April 23

Chicken/Carbanzo Bean Tangine, Couscous, Flat Bread, Salad, Cake

- Your Home is Your Sanctuary — Julia McFadden and Shannon Steven
- Drop in Covenant Groups — Rob Eller-Isaacs and Jacqueline Duhart
- U-knitarians: Knitting and Crocheting
- Singing Meditation: Sing for Joy — Ruthie Rosauer and Katy Taylor
- Mother/Daughter Book Club (Grades 6-8)

April 30

Menu to be announced.

- Your Home is Your Sanctuary — Julia McFadden and Shannon Steven
- Mano a Mano: Bolivia in Focus
- Drop in Covenant Groups — Rob Eller-Isaacs and Jacqueline Duhart
- Singing Meditation: Sing for Joy — Ruthie Rosauer and Katy Taylor
- Unity Salon

Coming up! Wednesday, May 14

Sami Rasouli • Iraq: Five Years of War and Occupation

Speed Connecting: **Expand Your Network of Unity Friends in Minutes**

Unity Church is a busy and vibrant place. The size and activity level of our community can sometimes feel overwhelming making it difficult to feel connected. There's good news, though – meeting people at Unity Church just became a whole lot easier!

Join us on Wednesday, April 9 at 7:15 p.m. for Unity's first ever Speed Connecting event where you'll have the opportunity to make new connections or re-connect — quickly and effectively. Meet in the Center Room for an informal conversation and a structured activity where you could have ten or more, one-on-one, three-minute conversations.

Whether you're a long-time member or newcomer, this event provides a welcoming, intentional, and fun way to meet others. Hosts Teresa Thomas-Carroll, Ann Nelson and Zack Steven (all Unity Church members) will provide tips for crafting a 60-second intro — helping you get the most out of the experience.

This is a great way to connect quickly with others one-on-one, meet people with common interests, learn about church activities, and share what you do in your personal and professional life. For more information, contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office.

Join Unity's "Little Salon on The Prairie"

from John Pournoor

Unity Salon was an outgrowth of a Wednesday night supper conversation by a handful of people. This inclusive group strives to (in part):

- Deepen awareness and knowledge of social, political, literary, scientific, cultural and other topics
- Provide an opportunity to invest time and energy into deeper investigation of a subject chosen by a focused, committed group
- Build a sense of community among people with diverse perspectives

The group will function as both an on-line community and an in-person gathering. Have an idea? Read an interesting article? Found a stimulating website? Post it on the on-line community. The on-line community allows for sharing of your finds more frequently while in-person gatherings allow for more in depth discussion. Unity Salon's on-line home is at the Intentional Communities section of Yahoo! Groups. To join send an e-mail to: unitysalon-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

The group will meet on April 16 and 30, in the Anderson Library from 7:10-8:30 p.m.

Bolivia in Focus

Wednesday, April 30 • 7:15 p.m.

This talk features a comprehensive tour of Bolivia, including: history and culture, demography, political unrest, Indian rights movements, and the role of coca leaf, the source of cocaine.

The speaker is Dr. Robert Werner, a geography professor at the University of St. Thomas, who has traveled to Bolivia a number of times and will be publishing two books on Bolivia in 2009.

Flower Arranging ~ Honoring Ruth Tanbara!

The YWCA St. Paul will be holding a one-time flower arranging class on Saturday, April 26, 10:00 a.m. - noon. The class will combine the Japanese art of Ikebana with western ideas of flower arranging. This class was inspired by the legacy of Ruth Tanbara who was a longtime employee and avid flower arranging teacher. She also spent years providing beautiful arrangements for services at Unity Church. Ms. Tanbara passed away this past January and we can't think of a better way to remember and honor her. Join us in honoring her commitment to educating women.

The class is free of charge, but space is limited. Please register by April 18, by contacting Elisa Pluhar, Community & Donor Relations Associate at 651-222-3741 or repluhar@ywcaofstpaul.org. The class will take place at the YWCA St. Paul at 375 Selby Avenue.



Three Instincts Workshop

Our instinctual nature, while extremely powerful in our daily decision-making processes and lifestyle choices, is given little emphasis in many spiritual paths. The Enneagram clarifies and deepens our understanding of the Instincts, helping us create balance in our lives and harmony in our relationships. Includes presentation, meditation, music, poetry, experiential exercises, and recommendations for growth. **Open to anyone—you don't need to know your Enneagram type to benefit!** Five Thursdays: April 10 to May 15 (no class 5/8), 7:00-9:30 p.m. \$150 for the series. Contact Katy Taylor at katysong@earthlink.net or 651-291-8551 to register.



Pancakes! Pancakes! Pancake Breakfast!

Our next pancake breakfast is Saturday, April 12, from 8:30 until 10:00 a.m. All you can eat, pancakes, local sausage, coffee, and orange juice. Can't make it? Pancake breakfasts are scheduled for other upcoming Saturdays from 8:30-10:00 a.m. Mark your calendar for: May 17, and June 14. **The April pancake breakfast is hosted by Unity Choir.**

Heart to Heart A Couples Enrichment Weekend November 7-9, 2008

Heart to Heart is a program designed to enrich communication and intimacy in your relationship. This will be our 14th annual retreat. All couples committed to their partners and to their relationships are welcome — same-sex and opposite-sex, married and unmarried. Space is limited, so register early. For more information, visit the Heart to Heart website at <http://heart.mn.cx> or call Laurel and Eric Lein at 651-227-0486.

Singles Fellowship Group!

Are you in your late twenties to late forties and looking to find fellowship with other Unitarian-Universalist singles? In the coming months, we will be planning events that sometimes take us outside of the walls of Unity Church but help us to connect with each other in fun ways. Come take part in helping this group to take shape and grow strong.

To learn more about the group contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office.

Elders Group: The Great Questions

Thursday, April 8 • 1:00–2:30 p.m.

We'll consider the Great Questions in our lives. These may be global or personal, questions of the future or of the past. Why are these questions important to us? Do we, as Rilke asks, "Live the questions now?" If the answers were given to us, what then? Contact Matt Alspaugh at the Church Office for more information.

Men's Group: Proactive Men

Wednesday, April 14 • 7:15 p.m.

"I'm a self-made man, but I think if I had it to do over again, I'd call in others."

- Roland Young

The new male no longer wants to be stolid and totally self-sufficient. No more of this: "I'm fine just as I am." How do we break out of male inactivity and male reactivity, to become truly pro-active modern men? How do we free ourselves from the dictates and limitations of traditional masculinity to which we've been shackled? Join us as we dig into this with spirited conversation. Contact Matt Alspaugh at the Church Office for more information.

Spring beckons, Unity Gardeners get going!

The **Unity Gardeners** are volunteers that care for the gardens on the church grounds. They will meet at church on April 6, after the 11:00 a.m. service to plan for the 2008 season. New this year: a children's garden that will become the focus for the summer RE program. If you can help, you are needed! Prior gardening experience is not required. Please contact Anna Newton at 651-483-2986 if you would like to attend the planning meeting, help with soil preparation, tending this summer, or if you have an interest in working with the children.

COMMUNITY / FELLOWSHIP / LEARNING

Pathway to Membership

Whether you've been here a month or a year, we welcome and invite you to deepen your relationship with Unity Church by signing up for one of the classes listed below. Please contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office for more information.

Welcome to Unity

Welcome to Unity is offered the following Wednesdays from 7:10 - 8:30 p.m.: April 2 and May 7.

Finding Yourself at Unity

Welcome to Unity is a prerequisite. Saturday, April 26, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., includes potluck lunch.

Committing to Unity

Saturday, April 5, 9:30 a.m. - noon
Saturday, May 17, 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Donations to Unity Church can now be made online!

This includes operating pledges, UUA/PSD pledges, religious education fees, and other gifts.

Go to www.unityunitarian.org and click on "Make an on-line payment." You will need a credit card to complete your transaction at our secure server. If you have any questions please contact Barbara Hubbard at the Church Office.

Sunday Soup Fellowship

There's nothing like a hot soup dinner to beat the winter blues! Join us every Sunday after the 4:30 p.m. service for soup



or chili in the Parish Hall. Meet people, enjoy hot soup, and linger! The meal is donation only (\$2-\$5) and everyone is welcome.

Unity Church's 137th Annual Congregational Meeting

Unity Church's 137th Annual Congregational Meeting will be Saturday, May 17, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. The annual meeting includes the election of three new trustees, an overview of the 2008-2009 budget and highlights of the church activities from the year.

Though only voting members (those who have signed the church's membership book and make an identifiable pledge) are eligible to vote, everyone is invited to attend.

This annual meeting will follow a pancake breakfast that begins at 8:30 a.m. Come for pancakes and stay for the meeting. Please contact Christy Randall at the Church Office if you would like childcare during the meeting.



If Walls Could Talk!

Do you know the story behind the skylight in the Sanctuary? How about the Bell Tower, where the high school "Tower Club" meets? Have you seen the St. Martin of Tours stained glass in the chapel?

Our faith has a long and rich history, and so does our building. You're invited to join us for a tour of Unity Church on the first Sunday of every month (April 6 and May 4) following each service. We'll gather in the back of the Sanctuary and then explore the building together. Tours are given by long time Unity Church members: Betsy Guthmann, Ruth Stryker-Gordon, and Laura Park.

Days of Prayer and Action for Colombia

from Sigrid Bachmann

Even though Colombia has been called the "Darfur of the Americas," and is located closer to the U.S. than any other South American country, most U.S. citizens have little or no knowledge about the tragic day to day political reality.

Colombia is a beautiful, rich country of 44 million, who have suffered for decades from a brutal Civil War. Violence and massacres have led to Internal displacement of nearly four million, mostly women and children, into the slums of the bigger cities, where they languish without hope to oneday return home. They receive little, if any support from their government. At least another million have fled into neighboring countries the U.S. or Europe. Massacres, kidnappings, disappearances, and torture are done with utter impunity.

On Sunday, April 27, we will respond to the pleas for solidarity from Colombian churches to churches in the U.S. and Canada. There will be prayers for our brothers and sisters in Colombia. We also offer an educational meeting in the Center Room from noon until 1:30 p.m.

Food and refreshment will be served.

Guest speakers include:

John Pegg, a minister, former Marine, and former organizer with Witness for Peace Upper Midwest.

Rosita Balch from Bogotá worked as an activist and educator for the Resource Center of the Americas and she is the co-founder of the Colombia Support Network.

Gerardo Cayamarca, a Colombian union leader, who courageously investigated human rights violations against union workers and leaders in Colombia. He was forced, to seek asylum in the U.S. after receiving death threats.

For more information, please contact Sigrid Bachman at sigrid50@earthlink.net or 612-338-0862.

LIBRARIES / BOOK CLUBS / WRITERS



What's New at Unity Libraries

Geneste M. Anderson Adult Library • Bookstall
Elizabeth M. Whitman Children's Library • Bookmobile

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find resources of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. — Rachel Carson

Is there anyone who appreciates the beauty of the earth at springtime more than a Minnesotan? I don't think so, and we pass on this appreciation to the children in our lives. Still, many parents ask what to do with all those kids' questions about global warming: What's all the fuss? Is climate change real? What can we do about it?



Planet Patrol: A Kids' Action Guide to Earth Care and This is My Planet: The Kids' Guide to Global Warming by Marybeth Lorbiecki are just two of the good books that answer these questions, on the new "Environment" shelf in the in the **Whitman Children's Library**.

For younger book lovers, two new pop-up books, *Giant Pop-Out Vehicles and Peek in My Pocket*, are loaded with surprises and peek-a-boo fun.



We add books to the **Anderson Adult Library** collection every month, striving to obtain items that might not be readily available at your public library or local bookstore. The titles below are examples of the items we buy. They may not be newly published, but they are new to us.

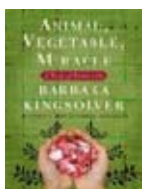
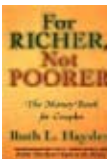
Out of the Closet Into Our Hearts: Celebrating Our Gay/Lesbian Family Members, 2001. True stories about GLBT families.

Comfortable with Uncertainty: 108 Teachings on Cultivating Fearlessness and Compassion, 2003. This book can be both daily readings and a progressive program of spiritual study by Pema Chodron, an American Buddhist nun.

Channing: The Reluctant Radical, 1971. Biography of an early 19th century Unitarian theologian who was a major influence on the later transcendentalists.

A Holy Curiosity: Stories of a Liberal Religious Faith, 1990. A widely used adult RE text.

If you like to peruse books at your own speed, write in the margins, come back to a book again and again, or otherwise commune with your own literature, the **Unity Bookstall** carries a full stock of books to purchase from featured



Unity programs (Ruth Hayden), suggestions from Community Outreach Ministry Teams (Sustainable Agriculture Ministry Team: *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*), and more. The Bookstall is open Sundays after the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services.

Unity Writers Unite!

After an initial gathering and brainstorming session, three distinct writing groups have emerged at Unity Church. If you're interested in joining one of these groups, please contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office and he'll put you touch with the group leader.

Writing group options at Unity:

1. Poetry Group: This group will focus on the writing and sharing of poetry. Regular meeting times have not yet been established.

2. Manuscript Group: This group will focus on working on manuscripts and will spend their meeting time reading and reviewing chapters, etc. This group meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 7:15 p.m. in the Gannett Room.

3. Writing Exercises and Methods Group: This group is open to all genres but will primarily focus on writing exercises, methods, and accountability to help spark creativity in writing. Regular meeting times have not yet been established.

Each of these groups promise to support and encourage their members in the writing process as collectively they explore the powerful words, storytelling, and sharing of one's deepest truths.

Book Club Updates • Unity Church Book Clubs are open to all - even if you haven't read the book!

The Second Tuesday Book Club will meet from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8 in the Gannett Room. The April book is *Infidel*, by Ayaan Hirsi Ali. The May selection is *People of Darkness* by Tony Hillerman. The June book is *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*, by Joseph J. Ellis. Each book has a "sponsor," who begins the meeting by presenting a bit about the author and selected book.

The Fourth Tuesday Book Club will meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22 in the Anderson Library. The April book is *Red Earth, White Earth* by Will Weaver. At the beginning of each 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 they have read.

NewlyEmergingBookClub: Interweave (the ministry team dedicated to helping to make Unity Church a welcoming place for people of all genders and sexualities) is starting an "Interweave-themed" book group! It's open to anyone who wants to explore the topics of gender identity and sexual orientation through good literature. Please contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office to participate.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Religious Education 2008-09 Registration Information



The **REGISTRATION MATERIALS** for next year's R.E. program are included in this *commUNITY* newsletter. Please be sure to complete both sides – child enrollment and adult volunteer registration. Families who register by May 18 qualify for an Early Bird discount of \$5 per child on the materials fee. Each class has a capacity limit based on Safe Church policies. Be aware that Junior High classes at 11:00 a.m. and Spirit Play classes at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. fill quickly. Spaces are filled on a first-come, first-served basis – register early! Confirmation letters of class assignments will be mailed out in mid-August.

This year, there will be a required **PARENT ORIENTATION TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**, offered on several occasions in late August and early September. Dates and times will appear in the R.E. confirmation letters and the summer newsletter.

Every family is expected to contribute **10 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER TIME** in support of our shared ministry with the children and youth of the church. This volunteer requirement can also be filled by an adult friend of the family who serves in proxy. Adults who choose teaching Sunday School as their role in the ministry may also waive all materials fees for their family.

The **MATERIALS FEES**, which amount to approximately \$1 per Sunday, per child, help cover consumables. The actual cost of R.E. programming hovers around \$300 per child per program year. The majority of this cost is underwritten by the generosity of pledging members. Non-pledging families are asked to contribute \$200 per child (approximately 2/3 of the actual cost). Contact Justin Schroeder, Director of Congregational Development, for additional information about pledging to Unity Church.

NURSERY care does not require registration. Curricular programs begin at age three; children should be reliably potty trained before moving into the Spirit Play classroom. Kindergarteners are enrolled in Spirit Play. Spirit Play is offered during all three worship services.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL programs begin at grade one and are offered during all three worship services. Please note that the worship experience at 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. is Children's Chapel; at 11:00 a.m., children begin every morning in the Sanctuary with their families before being blessed out to R.E. classes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND JUNIOR HIGH students have course options from which they can choose. Each course lasts an R.E. "semester" (Sept-Jan / Jan-May). Youth planning on participating in Coming of Age in their 9th grade year should complete the required one-semester course "Heresy Apparen," which covers Unitarian Universalist history and identity, before the end of their 8th grade year. Families enrolling their youth in the Music Ensemble with Ruth MacKenzie should note that there are additional fees and volunteer requirements for this dynamic program. At the 11:00 a.m. service, 6th graders can choose between the elementary-aged Workshop Rotation program and the classes listed on the registration form.

THE MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH BROCHURE is a 31-page document with detailed information about worship, fellowship and religious education for families. Families with questions not answered in this helpful brochure can contact Kerri at the church office.

Registration is also available on the web at www.unityunitarian.org. Families may enroll and pay materials fees with our secure, online system.

Celebration of New Lives

The next Sunday on which the church will dedicate itself to new babies is April 13 at the 9:00 a.m. service. Families with a new addition under the age of 18 months are encouraged to contact Christy Randall about participating in this beautiful litany and celebration.

The last date to register to participate is Wednesday, April 9. Another Celebration of New Lives will be held in early June and a Dedication of Older Children will take place on Sunday, May 18.

High School Booksale - First Weekend in May!

Unitarians read the most amazing books...

And then they donate them to the Unity High School Book Sale!

Donations will be accepted until Friday, May 2. This year's book sale is the weekend of May 3 and 4 here at church.

As in years past, members of Unity are welcome to join us for a Midnight Madness sneak preview at midnight, May 2-3: buy your books before the booksellers and the public snatch them up (we can't guarantee flawless organization at that point, but it sure is fun!).

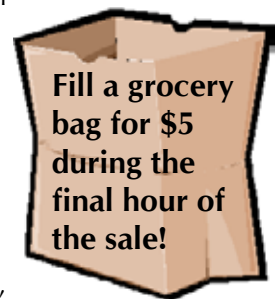
Booksale hours are:

Saturday, May 3 • 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 4 • 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Contact Joseph at the Church Office with questions about the book sale.

Proceeds support Youth Ministries at Unity Church, including the annual pilgrimage to Boston.



Fill a grocery bag for \$5 during the final hour of the sale!

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Music is Life ~ Life is Music

from Priscilla McAfee, Hornist, Teacher, Technologist and Unity Church Member

On February 28, 2008, after our Unity choir rehearsed the piece: "It takes a whole village to raise our children," my daughter called my cell phone, joyfully announcing she had just given birth to Rhea, my first grand child.

Looking back at the vignettes of music in my life, I recall singing in church choir, my mother teaching me to sing harmony, playing a gamut of instruments, and then discovering my passion and affinity for the French horn. Music is integrally woven throughout the tapestry of my life. We moved a lot, and music was a consistent tether for me, offering continuity, and a wonderful way to interact with people, and the world. Ultimately, it greatly expanded my global awareness, as I was able to travel and perform worldwide.

Tours opened the world to me, the first being a month in Italy playing opera at the Spoleto festival. Subsequent tours covered the spectrum of cities from Buenos Aires to Tblisi, Quito to Vienna, Montreal to Warsaw, and to water bodies spanning the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, to the Adriatic and Caspian Seas. Participating in Music festivals took me to mountains, notably Aspen, the Berkshires, Grand Tetons, White Mountains, and Santa Cruz. These experiences brought insights, breadth, and scope to my global and political views. I knew

I was an ambassador, and made a political statement being the only woman in the brass department my first year at Juilliard, and later, the only woman in the brass section of the New York Philharmonic. With SPCO, we traveled to Eastern and Western Europe, as well as extensively in both North and South America. As preparation for a multi-week tour of the then-Soviet Union, some colleagues and I arranged for a comprehensive, intense, Berlitz Russian course, which catered to both our rehearsal schedule, and to learning the sorts of phrases we would find helpful as we connected with the Soviets before and after our concerts. This resulted in powerful connections with people, beyond the universal language of music.

Arriving in NYC, at 17, surviving the big city, and thriving at Juilliard, I completed my Bachelor's and Master's degrees, as well as my broader, deeper education of living in New York. Landing my first professional job required perseverance, and it took 16 major auditions around the continent, over the course of three years, before being offered Principal Horn in the SPCO. Music, for all of its passion and joy, is a fiercely competitive field. Not for the timid, meek, and mild, although an understanding of tenderness, compassion, and vulnerability is required to express some of the deeply moving music, such as Mahler. A fierce tenacity and boldness is required for other types of music, such as Strauss. And still other pieces require a humorous whimsy—even Mozart is much harder to play than it appears. With both the SPCO and the Cabrillo Music Festival, I had the honor of working with many composers, some

very notable, like Aaron Copland and John Cage. We gave world premieres of numerous pieces. The serious dedication which we gave to these endeavors offered me deep respect for how composers meld their creativity with their perceptions of the world. Reflecting back on those opportunities is awe-inspiring. Premiering Persichetti's "Parable for Solo Horn," in Alice Tully Hall, and returning to Tully Hall, with the SPCO, to premiere "The Young Dead Solide,r" a work for soprano, solo horn and chamber orchestra (by Archibald MacLeish and William Schumann) were thrills. My pianist and I premiered a piece for Horn and Piano, in Unity's very own Parish Hall, a few years back! Another notable high point for me was playing Mahler's Symphony no. 2 in the New York Philharmonic for Leonard Bernstein's 1000th NYP concert. A delightful highlight with the SPCO was an encore at the Ordway, with Bobby McFerrin, where the orchestra sang the William Tell Overture, (after our brass fanfares).

In the mid-90s, SmartMusic came in to being, and I discovered this remarkable interactive accompanying technology let me immerse myself in playing the beautiful music which I had passionately loved my entire life. It can be used on my own time table, at home, catering to my practice needs, offering discipline, and choices of music and accompaniment. Its gamut of repertoire, encompassing over 50,000 pieces and exercises, re-kindled for me the joy of making music. It also opened up new genres of music to me, including playing jazz. The call to teach has always been very strong, and very spiritual. I know I have been greatly gifted by having masterful teachers, and powerful performing opportunities. It has been a sacred calling to give that inspiration and

continued on page 15...

Arthur Foote Music Sunday

April 20, 2008 • 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Arthur Foote Music Sunday features Unity Choir, Unity Singers, and an instrumental trio with Fred Sewell, violin; Laura Sewell, cello; and Ruth Palmer, piano.

2008 Unity Music CD

The 2008 Unity Music CD, *Journey*, will be released on Sunday, May 4 and will include this year's Arthur Foote Sunday music. Can't wait? 2002 and 2005 Unity Music CDs and 2007 Arthur Foote Sunday Music CDs are still available at the Bookstall in the Parish Hall.

PARISH HALL ART / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Call for Artists

This is a call for artists who are interested in exhibiting their work for a one or two month period at Unity Church–Unitarian in the Parish Hall Gallery and/or in the Eliot Wing Gallery from August 2008 to June/July 2009.

Applications are available by contacting Justin Schroeder at the Church Office. All applications should include a minimum of five slides, photographs or digital prints. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, May 28, 2008. Applications will be reviewed by the Art Exhibit Team and materials will be returned to applicants in early June.

April Parish Hall Artists

The Evergreen Quilters Silent Auction items will be on display in the Parish Hall during the month of April.

You'll definitely know that Spring is on its way when you visit *April Flowers* in the Parish Hall, April 6–27. You may buy raffle tickets for the large quilt for \$2 each or enter silent bids for other items at the Evergreen Quilters' table in the Parish Hall after each service throughout April. See you there!

April 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, April 7 and 21 • 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

Music is Life continued from page 14...

wisdom back to students (of all ages). I have found integrating the music technology, with standard teaching, has worked in a most satisfying manner. I want to continue to use SmartMusic to enhance and expand the joy of music-making for everyone, bringing it to people of all ages, abilities, and musical backgrounds. I see this as my next musical chapter and calling. That is, along with singing in the Unity choir, and singing with my new granddaughter!

Priscilla (Prill) McAfee)



For me, UNITY 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, Rhea, born February 28th! 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.

What is the Future of Minnesota?

A Samuel Morgan Community Forum

Saturday, April 26 • 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

What does a progressive future for the state of Minnesota look like?

A panel of diverse community leaders will present their visions for our state at a Unity Church Samuel Morgan Community Forum on Saturday, April 26.

Peter Hutchinson, President of the Bush Foundation, Dr. Meria Carstarphen, Superintendent of St. Paul Schools, Rick Shiomi of Mu Performing Arts and several other state leaders have been invited to participate as panel members. Following the panel presentation, the audience will have a chance to discuss some of the ideas presented by the panel in small group sessions.

Board and staff members of the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Funding Program at the Shelter Rock Church in Manhasset, New York, will also be present for this forum following a weeklong visit to Minnesota. This UUA funding program is targeting Minnesota as one of five states in which to focus their giving in the next few years.

Samuel Morgan Forums are free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served in the morning with a luncheon following the forum.



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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