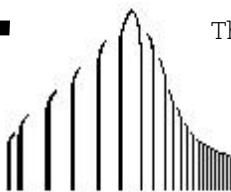


commUNITY



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

Vol. 40, No. 8

Unity Church–Unitarian

April 2017

Redemption

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

To Be One More Redeemer

"Every child is born one more redeemer
In each new heart is a spark divine,
One more voice for compassion, one
more holy sign,
One more chance to restore and reveal
and receive.

This is our faith, this we believe:
Every child that is born brings one more
redeemer to this world."

Do these words sound familiar? They were co-written by the Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and former Hallman Ministerial Intern the Rev. Bill Neely. In 2006, they were used in a new choral composition by Unity Church member Elizabeth Alexander. The theological and musical impact of this creative interchange has had an undeniable impact on our shared, living tradition as Unitarian Universalists. In other words, the main proposition in this quote above, that "every child is born one more redeemer," has ultimately changed us as a religious people. It has embedded in each of us and in our congregation(s) a character of responsibility into our individual and shared lives as human beings. We recite a variation of these words with the birth and dedication of every new life, and we reiterate them in various religious teachings throughout our lives.

But what does it exactly mean to suggest, "Every child is born one more redeemer?" What is a redeemer? A redeemer is often relating to the topic of redemption, which from our Christian heritage relates to the central narrative of Jesus' crucifixion. But for Unitarian Universalists, including for both Rob and Bill, this notion of sacrificial and violent redemption is substituted by a belief that all human beings have the capacity to bring greater love, justice,

and peace into the world. Each new life represents our shared humanity and our shared responsibility to be an agent of redemption, to be an active participant in repairing the world anew.

I think a harder and more practical question emerges beyond the existential belief: "What would it look like for us to live as redeemers in the world?" In other words, how do we fulfill the prophecy that is proposed in suggesting each new life, each child, is to be one more redeemer? I think we can pretty easily wrap our minds around being charged with being instruments of peace and compassion. But something more difficult is being asked when it comes to redemption. It relates to our theme for March: sin. Uh oh, sin is one of the sticky subjects for many UUs! It represents, perhaps, lots of feelings from experiences we have had with Christianity either personally or peripherally. However, sin is inextricably tied to redemption, for through redemption we are making a way forward that can atone for our missteps along the way. Redemption, in that sense, is about getting back on track, about restoring our relationships with one another and with the world.

This requires us to be reflect on some of the ways we have been out of covenant over the last year, or even decades and centuries. United States history is filled with countless acts of public sin, or acts that have divided and done unimaginable harm on marginalized communities. To face these realities, to address the ways we have failed as a nation, whether through slavery, dropping two atomic bombs on Japan, or neglecting the AIDS epidemic, we are able to begin the redemptive process that can lead to healing, justice,

and new life. To be redeemers would mean to name the truth of how we have messed up and how we want true redemption, true healing. This means that we need to be willing to sit with discomfort a little longer and grapple with complexity that emerges when sin goes undiagnosed and unaddressed for a long time.

Just one example for now: I remember when Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Atlantic* article on reparations came out. It was a game changer, particularly because it got a lot of readership by white liberals. The conversation around reparations for slavery is complex and emotionally charged, but it is directly related to that initial question of what would it look to be redeemers. Redemption is not a quick process, it isn't always easy. It is relational and we need to name that we are not on the journey alone. As we aim to restore our relationship and the world, whether around an issue like reparations or anything else, may we hold true to a sense of faith that we were made to do this work, that we can handle the vulnerability and courage that will be required in the work ahead. Truly, if every child is one more redeemer, then this holy work of redemption is ours to do. May it be so.

*Ministerial Intern Nic Cable with this month's theme team:
Jessica Clay, Drew Danielson,
Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Cary Eustis, and KP Hong*

Redemption Theme Resources

Turn to page 15.

JUST WORDS

Just Words



*How could we tire of hope?
So much is in bud...
So much is unfolding that must complete its gesture,
So much is in bud.*

— Denise Levertov

In the wake of the election, I met with the president of Transform Minnesota, a statewide network of Evangelical Christian congregations. We had met twice before, first when he attended a planning meeting in anticipation of the 50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday, and then more recently at an interfaith press conference called to condemn the anti-Muslim travel ban. Given the deep divisions that plague our country now, I thought he and I might work together to convene a series of respectful conversations across the great divide.

We began by chatting a bit about our lives. With great enthusiasm he shared that he had recently returned from a pilgrimage organized by Transform Minnesota that sent thirty ministers to Atlanta, Montgomery, Birmingham, Jackson, and Memphis. Fifteen white Evangelical ministers and fifteen ministers from black congregations, representing a variety of denominations, traveled, prayed, and sang together, and together came back longing to help to build and to be the Beloved Community. Sound familiar?

As we talked, I realized I needed to check my assumptions at the door, acknowledge my own ignorance, and ask some serious questions. "Am I right in assuming most Evangelicals are Republicans?" I inquired. "Not in the Twin Cities," he replied. "Our urban congregations tend to have at least as many Democrats as they do Republicans if not more. But out in the suburbs and certainly in rural Minnesota our congregations are pretty solidly Republican." This led me to ask, "And are the Republicans you work with pleased with the new President?" His reply: "I would say they are pensive, wondering, questioning what might happen next."

I felt the need to offer him some rationale for asking him to get involved in this cockamamie scheme. "Well, I could tell you that I worry for the well-being of the Nation," I said. "And I do. But what really worries me is the lack of humility I experience among our congregants. I want us to make room in our hearts for one another. I don't want to live in a world where false and disparaging assumptions continue to divide us." This seemed to resonate with him. "I don't either," he replied. He admitted that he shared my sense that gathering a group of religious people from both sides of the divide for a series of deep, covenantal conversations about the issues that really matter in our lives as a community could be a very useful thing to do. Perhaps it could even be redemptive. We plan to talk again in a couple of weeks. Meanwhile he is going to talk to a number of his most conservative colleagues. He imagines there are some in his circle of faith that might join us in setting aside our assumptions and, dare I say it, start over?

— Rob Eller-Isaacs

commUNITY is the newsletter of Unity Church–Unitarian. It is published monthly, except the month of July. Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Subscriptions are free to those who make pledges to Unity Church and are available to others for \$30 per year.

Unity Church–Unitarian • 733 Portland Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456 • www.unityunitarian.org

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

Virginia Greenman

September 30, 1928–March 3, 2017

In Celebration

Jaya Lee Foster

born one more redeemer

March 2, 2017

to parents, Ben and Jenny Foster.

Also beaming with joy are

Aunt Sarah, Uncle Nick, and
grandparents, Sally and Mark Foster.

Maundy Thursday

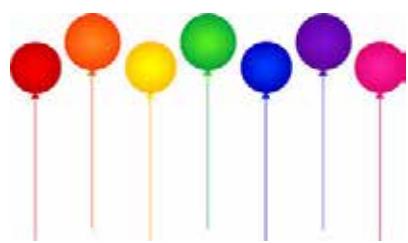
Worship Service



Thursday, April 13

7:00 p.m. • Ames Chapel

Please join us for a service of ritual and community, sharing in traditional holy week practices of Eucharist and Foot Washing. In the Memorialist tradition, we join to remember the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, which include welcoming all people to a meal of love, giving thanks for the gifts of life, and serving each other in humility.



Coming of Age 2017!

The entire congregation is warmly invited to witness the Coming of Age of this year's ninth grade class on Saturday, April 29, at 2:30 p.m., in the Sanctuary.

Come and listen in amazement as our young people share their personal credos, bravely laying out the beliefs of their hearts and minds for all to hear.

APRIL WORSHIP CALENDAR / OFFERING RECIPIENTS

Sunday Worship

Sunday worship services are held at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., and 4:30 p.m. except where noted. Sermon podcasts and archives are available online at www.unityunitarian.org.

April 2: Whose Are We?

Having wrestled with the concept of sin, we turn our attention to what redeems us. Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Rochelle Lockridge will explore the spiritual lessons of interdependence and the process of redemption.

April 9: Till Sleeping Nations Woke

In the Hebrew Scriptures, God seems to love the cities best. Whether shown by Jonah's mission to the Ninevites or the ways in which Jesus turns toward Jerusalem, it's clear that God loves the diverse peoples and creative potential of the city. As we enter into what Christians call the Passion Week, Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Grant Wacker hope to shed some light on the redemptive power of these places where we gather in great numbers.

April 16: Practice Resurrection: Peter's Denials

Easter Family Sunday: Worship at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. only

At the Last Supper, Jesus predicts that before the cock crows Peter will deny knowing him three times. It comes to pass. Shamed and devastated, Peter somehow finds his way back to life and service. He is redeemed. How do we rise up from despair? How do we find our call to ministry after we've been captured by remorse? The whole church family will gather for a joyful Easter celebration as together we find that the stone's been rolled away and the tomb is empty. **There will be no 4:30 service on Easter Sunday.**

On Family Sundays, children experience the entire worship service together with their families in the Sanctuary. A children's message and activity books related to the stories and sermon help children to engage in the experience of worship. Regular religious education programming does not take place on Family Sundays; however, the nursery is open for children under five years of age.

April 23: Wake Now My Senses

Earth Day is an opportunity to be mindful and caring of this planet. Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Jessica Clay and worship associate Nicole Lynskey as they explore theological perspectives in caring for the earth and our responsibility towards the redemption and repair of it.

April 30: Coming of Age Sunday

Coming of Age Sunday celebrates the signature year-long journey of our 9th grade youth, transitioning from the inherited faith of childhood to the adult journey of faith, and marked by youth sharing their statement of faith or Credo. COA youth, mentors, and families will be present at the 9:00 a.m. service, while all services will include a collage of voices, with religious education staff and ministers leading in joyful celebration.

Offering Recipients

Each Sunday, thirty percent of the offering goes to support the Community Outreach Ministry at Unity Church and seventy percent is given to a chosen community non-profit recipient.

April 2: AGAPE High School

AGAPE (Adolescent Girls and Parenting Education) High School in St. Paul offers a secondary educational program to teens who are pregnant and/or parenting. This small learning community offers courses, therapy, supplies, intervention services, and cultural events to help address barriers to educational success. The vision of AGAPE is to ensure all students have the opportunity to earn their high school degree or equivalent, and that every graduate is prepared for post secondary education or training, and to be the best mom they can be.

April 9: Microgrants

Microgrants is a Twin Cities nonprofit that gives small grants to selected low-income persons for training, classes, equipment, tools, or other means of assistance to follow their goals and achieve a better standard of living.

April 16: ISAIAH

ISAIAH is a faith based community organizing non-profit that is working to make Minnesota communities places where immigrants feel safe and can flourish. ISAIAH works to connect members of the immigrant community to legal resources, to create deportation safety plans, and as an advocate for immigrant rights at the legislature. To date, they have supported 28 congregations — including Unity Church — in becoming Sanctuary Congregations, and have created a network of Sanctuary Supporting Congregations. Currently, ISAIAH is training hundreds of moral observers to be part of a state wide rapid response effort during ICE raids.

April 23: In A New Light

In A New Light is a therapeutic nature photography program at Northwest Passage, an organization that works with youth in transition. This program focuses on skilled expressive arts training and nature immersion with the goal of empowering youth to see themselves through the lens of their strengths rather than their weaknesses. In A New Light is the April Parish Hall art exhibit and this offering will support an artist-in-residence program.

April 30: Mano a Mano International Partners

Co-founded in 1994 by longtime Unity Church members Joan and Segundo Velasquez, Mano a Mano International Partners is dedicated to improving health and economic wellbeing in rural Bolivia. By collaborating with Bolivian communities, municipal governments, and counterpart organizations in Bolivia, Mano a Mano works to build health care clinics, schools and teacher housing units, agricultural water projects, and more. Mano a Mano also collects donated medical, school, and construction supplies in the U.S. and distributes the items through these projects.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY



Redemption

A Perspective From The Board

From Justin Cummins, Chair

For many, redemption means being saved from sin. In other words, redemption often has an overtly theological connotation. A broader understanding of redemption, however, includes the idea of saving or being saved from evil more generally or even from some sort of error. Thankfully, Unity Church embraces all concepts of redemption.

The Celebration of New Lives liturgy at Unity Church provides an example of how the congregation recognizes and celebrates the idea of redemption. With the introduction of each new life to the congregation, Unity commits to support that young person and the person's direct caregivers. To that end, the ministers and congregation explicitly and collectively welcome "one more redeemer" in the world.

The work of the board reflects perhaps an even more expansive understanding of redemption. The recent decision to become a Sanctuary Congregation exemplifies this reality. Before voting to become a Sanctuary Congregation, the Board respectfully debated and carefully considered an array of issues and factors. Given the unknowns surrounding what it means to be a Sanctuary Congregation in practice, the decision to become such a congregation has been — and will continue to be — an act of faith.

Significantly, the act of faith in becoming a Sanctuary Congregation has redemptive force. In particular, the decision to become such a congregation manifests the desire to save us from the error of acquiescing to divisive and, even worse, bigoted policies that dehumanize our neighbors and, ultimately, ourselves.

Unity's Ends Statements, which the congregation approved nearly five years ago, have provided vital guidance to the board throughout the process of becoming a Sanctuary Congregation. As it does every five years, the Board will soon be engaging the congregation extensively to develop Unity's Ends Statements to best express our shared values and vision for the future. Stay tuned!

2017 Congregational Survey

We need to hear from you!

An email containing a link to the survey will be sent out on April 9. A link to the survey will also be available on the home page at www.unityunitarian.org. Please take 30 minutes and complete the survey during April. Thank you!



Weigh in with the Congregational Survey

Help Unity's Board of Trustees gauge how we're doing and you can earn a voucher for a free doughnut. Delightful as that may sound, completing the annual Congregational Survey will also earn you a lot of gratitude. The board — and Unity's Executive Team — rely on the results to gauge how we're doing. The board works with the congregation to map out our shared goals, as articulated in the Ends Statements. The survey helps us track whether we're heading where we said we intended to go. So it is important that we hear from you. An e-mail will be sent out April 9 with the link. All Unity Church members, friends, and high school youth are encouraged to participate.

A new tool for you: Spirit Map

This year there will be new ways for individuals to benefit personally from taking the time to do the survey. The Spirit Map section delves into how you feel about your personal spirituality and how you live your life in the world, with the aggregate results helping the board. You will now be able to request a summary of your answers to these questions, to potentially help you reflect on your own spirituality. In addition, a customized analysis can be requested for a fee, which can be waived if it is a barrier to participation.

And if those opportunities aren't motivation enough, think again about doughnuts. Complete the survey and the code word you'll be shown will open doors to one, free, sugar-crusted treat during coffee hour on April 16, 24, or 30.

Survey location: An email containing a link to the survey will be sent out on April 9. A link to the survey will also be available on the home page at www.unityunitarian.org.

Deadline: Please complete your survey by Tuesday, April 25.

Estimated time: With the inclusion this year of the Spirit Map questions, the survey will require a bit more reflection and time than last year. Please set aside 30 minutes or so to complete the survey.

For more information: Stop by the board's table in Parish Hall on Sundays during April. If you are at the 4:30 service, look for a board member checking in during soup suppers. We'll also have Wellspring Wednesday sessions (see page 12) on April 12 and 19; these will be opportunities to discuss the survey and the Spirit Map section in particular, with time for people to complete it — bring a tablet or phone to the session!

Alternative formats: Large print and regular print copies are available in the Parish Hall after services and by contacting the Church Office.

Responses to the survey will be reviewed carefully by the board, as well as the Executive Team. The results will be shared with the congregation in the fall. But first, the board needs you to complete the survey this month! Thank you!



Spirit Map

MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Hallman Ministerial Intern: Jessica Clay



Often people ask how I found Unitarian Universalism. When I respond and tell them it was via an online quiz the conversation usually turns to laughter and ends there. What is lost in this conversation is how Unitarian Universalism saved my life and how I was personally transformed by it. Through relationship with a community, space to explore my theology, and space to come out of the closet I was able to step fully into my authentic being.

As a minister I love hearing people's stories of this life saving faith and how Unity Church has been a place where they can be fully themselves. When encountering grief we often have to compartmentalize to move throughout our days — yet when people come to Unity they often feel this is a place where they can unleash their tears. Unity Church is a place where they don't have to compartmentalize and can be more open about the realities of life and its burdens.

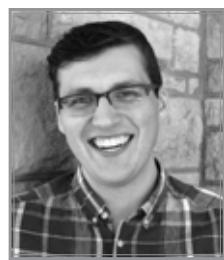
Redemption is the act of being saved, it is exemplified in Easter, in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Life is made of beginnings, endings, and transitions in between. One of the privileges of ministry is to accompany each of you on your journey, to enter your stories, and provide comfort or congratulations when needed.

Our churches give us opportunities to practice redemption, to acknowledge our needs with one another and accept the help of getting our needs met. Within U.S. culture individualism is prized, yet our churches say there is another way. We survive and thrive because of the community here, because of the commitment to spiritual depth, spiritual disciplines, and transformation.

One Sunday when I was teaching religious education at a UU church I asked the youth why they came to church. One of them replied "Because this is a place where I can fully be myself." This is redemption, the saving grace of being in community and being accepted as you are. Within that we will still challenge and urge each other towards spiritual growth and towards righting societal wrongs. When I first started coming to church it was for me and my spirituality, what made me join and engage was the people around me. Being part of a community was new to me and while it was uncomfortable at times it held me as I grew and changed. May you find redemption within this community when you need it the most and know that as you grow and change we are here.

Please feel free to contact me at jessica@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x109.

Ministerial Intern: Nic Cable



Turning Time

April feels like a time of turning. A turning from the winter. A turning to the spring. A returning to the warmth and the longer days ahead. It is a time when the program year at church begins its final push. For me, April also feels like a turning point because of the timeline of the formal Unitarian Universalist Association

Ministerial Search Process. Every year, the end of March and the beginning of April marks a turning point for congregations and ministers who are in search for new chapters in ministry. For over a hundred congregations and ministers this is a time of great anticipation, a time of incredible reflection, and of hopeful discovery of that breakthrough moment towards a new, shared ministry.

This feels like a redemptive time, in a way, a moment each year when congregations and ministers can search with open hearts for a new way forward. Sometimes the road for both minister and congregation is long, winding, filled with tough moments of disappointment or even broken covenant. Sometimes the search process, which often follows an interim period of renewal, provides space for finding clarity once more. As I sit in this liminal space, imagining where my call to ministry may lead this August, I hold in prayer the dozens of ministers and congregations looking for strong, new chapters in ministry. It is an opportunity not just for them, but for all of us here at Unity Church and throughout the Unitarian Universalist Association to know that redemption is possible, that new life springs forth from winter, and every year there is this gift of renewal and beginning again in love. Each year, there is an invitation to redeem the promise and aspirations of our wider faith tradition. It is an essential part of faith to walk towards redemption, towards an opportunity to reflect and move forward with a collective passion for our shared, living tradition.

While Unity Church is not in search for new ministers at this time, we are always in search of renewed commitment to our deepest aspirations. The annual congregational survey is one way for us to continue forward with redemptive opportunities to do better together in this community and in the wider world. May we enter this time of renewal and redemptive hope holding strong to our deepest convictions that love will guide us through these days to come.

Please feel free to contact me at nic@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x129.

9th Annual Café Unity: Poetry and Music Salon

Friday, April 7 • 7:00 p.m. • Parish Hall • Details on page 7

HERITAGE SOCIETY / EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Join the Heritage Society

Make Unity Church part of your legacy.
From Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director



Legacy giving is an intentional act that leaves a lasting legacy in your name and sustains the powerful work of this church for generations to come.

A legacy gift is a designation from your estate to a charitable organization. Your "estate" is the sum of your assets, including property you own, insurance policies, retirement accounts, cash on hand, etc. There are many gift possibilities. Each of these gifts allows flexibility, though some requirements apply, and you always retain the right to amend your estate plans.

- A charitable bequest in your last will and testament can be a specific amount or a percentage of what remains after providing for your heirs.
- A life insurance designation names Unity Church of St. Paul as owner or beneficiary of the policy.
- Retirement plan assets name the church as a beneficiary of an IRA, 401(k), 403(b), profit sharing or other retirement plan.
- Other types of legacy gifts include gift annuities, life-estate agreements and charitable remainder trusts.

By making a legacy gift to Unity Church, you will be joining over 200 others who have committed to supporting the church into the future. Our annual Heritage Society Dinner on May 5 is the church's way of thanking those individuals who have made legacy gifts. Bill Doherty, educator, researcher, therapist, speaker, author, consultant, community organizer, and Unity Church member will be our guest speaker.

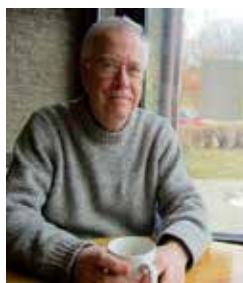
If you have already made a legacy gift to Unity Church (but haven't told us!), if you are in the process of making a gift, or if you would like more information about legacy gift possibilities, contact Barbara Hubbard at barbarah@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x116.

Heritage Society Dinner

Friday, May 5

William J. Doherty, Ph.D.

Unity Church member Bill Doherty is Professor in the Department of Family Social Science and Director of the Citizen Professional Center at the University of Minnesota. In his community work, Bill has helped health care and human services organizations develop ways to engage patients and clients in the mission and legacy of the organization—as productive contributors rather than just as consumers of professional services. It's a different way to think about the everyday practice of democracy.



Emergency Preparedness at Unity Church

How would you respond if we had to evacuate the church in response to a fire, a gas leak, or a bomb threat? What is the protocol if there's a medical emergency, or if an inappropriate person is posing a threat? Where do you go if there is a tornado? These are some of the questions that our talented and dedicated Emergency Preparedness Team (EPT) at Unity Church has been discussing for the past year and a half. Many of the situations are low probability, but if they were to happen, would create a high impact. Our best protection is to be prepared!

The EPT has developed an "Emergency Action Plan" (EAP) which offers guidelines and procedures in the event of an emergency. As a result, we have purchased additional first aid kits, defibrillators, and evacuation chairs for the church. We have identified weather shelters within the church and evacuation paths should we need to get out. We have created a response structure for staff and volunteers which will allow us to effectively respond.

The EPT has begun offering a variety of training opportunities and drills to enhance our "situational awareness." The initial audience for the trainings has been staff, front desk volunteers, and building tenants. We are planning additional trainings for welcome teams, religious education teachers, and the congregation in general.

We invite and encourage you to read our Emergency Action Plan. You can find it on our website or request a paper copy by contacting Barbara Hubbard at the Church Office. Remember the fire drill that we did last summer? We will be scheduling additional evacuation drills and weather emergency drills over the next months.

It is our intent to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

Members of the EPT are Richard Birger, Rob Fulton, Leah Doherty, Bill Lowell, Nic Cable, and Barbara Hubbard.

Unity's Archives

Unity's Archives Team has contributed several Unity Church items to the Minnesota Reflections project, a database of original digitized materials shared by cultural heritage organizations in Minnesota. Minnesota Reflections is part of the Minnesota Digital Library that makes materials widely available to researchers, teachers, students and the general public.

The team sent more than 30 items for digitizing, some of them notebooks with hundreds of pages and others just a single photo. A large number of the items sent relate to projects from the 1970s and 1980s such as IRAP (Indochinese Refugee Assistance Project) and Univision, a community television studio operated at the church.

Check it out! Go to the Minnesota Reflections website at <http://reflections.mndigital.org/cdm/about> and enter "Unity Church Unitarian" in the search box.

PARISH HALL ARTISTS / LIBRARY & BOOKSTALL

April Parish Hall Artists

Northwest Passage: In a New Light

Finding her place in the world; one young woman's journey of hope and healing

From Northwest Passage

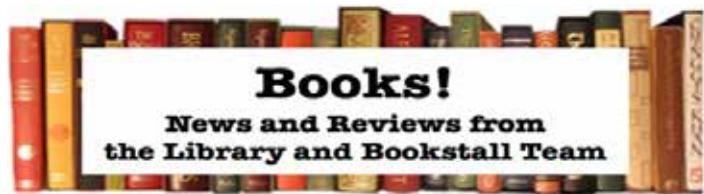
Kids come to Northwest Passage, a residential mental health treatment program in northwestern Wisconsin, for a multitude of different reasons, but the one thing they have in common is that they are struggling with their mental health. Can you imagine? It is hard enough to be a teenager, then layer on the realities of living with crippling depression or schizophrenia. The inability to get out of bed, to function in school, to see any hope in life, these are our kids. They may feel broken when they get to us, but they're not. We believe in these kids. We know that with support, they can heal.

Our kids are treated with an approach to wellness that borrows from the wisdom of the past and combines it with current research about the importance of living a full and mindful lifestyle. We have learned that kids heal through a variety of channels. We know that sustainable change occurs when our kids are able to depend on their doctor and therapist but also when they are able to connect with their community, explore their identity, develop their passions, appreciate time in nature, attend to their relationships, discover effective recreation opportunities, learn healthy nutritional habits, and move their bodies.

The nature photography displayed in the Parish Hall during April was born of this approach. We leverage the power of nature with our *In a New Light* photography programming. We believe that water is medicine and adventure is transformative. Donors and partners alike have helped ensure that the young artists of Northwest Passage have spent the past three summers submerged in Wisconsin's rivers and lakes to photograph a story of otherwise unseen magic and beauty. One such artist, Rachel, will be speaking at Wellspring Wednesday, April 26. We urge you to make time to meet this outstanding individual, alongside leadership at Northwest Passage, and hear her story. She is why we're all here, after all.

CALL FOR ART
Unity Church Parish Hall Gallery

The Unity Church Art Team is now accepting applications for Parish Hall exhibits. Application deadline is May 1.
VISIT WWW.UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG FOR DETAILS



Book Launch

Incense Drifting to the Horizon by Kathryn Oakley

Friday April 21 • 7:00 p.m. • Parish Hall

Sponsored by the Unity Library and Bookstall Team, long-time Unity Church member Kathy Oakley will launch her new book of poetry, *Incense Drifting to the Horizon* (North Star Press), at Unity Church on Friday night, April 21, at 7:00 p.m., in the Parish Hall.

Incense was selected by North Star Press for its 2017 literary list and includes over 50 poems written in the course of Kathy's career as an English teacher and nonprofit administrator. (Several of them appeared for the first time in Unity's *Cairns!*) The poems, in the words of one reviewer, "gives us evocative imagery to lift up the small and large moments of our lives: memory, death, the pain of limitation. In her poems on love — young love, old love, hot love, mother love — you will recognize what is hard to name but true."

All interested Unity Church members and friends are cordially invited to attend. Kathy will read from her work, and a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception will follow. Copies of the book will be available for sale and signing. The book is also available at Common Good Books on Snelling Avenue, and from Amazon, North Star Press, and the Unity Bookstall.

The 9th Annual
Cafe Unity
Poetry and Music Salon

Music and Singing
Reading of Original Literary Work
Refreshments and Fellowship

April 7, 2017
7:00 pm ★Free

DENOMINATIONAL EVENTS / WELCOME WORDS

Your Unitarian Universalist Elevator Speech

Sundays, April 9, 23, and 30 • 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Do you ever wish you could explain Unitarian Universalism in the time it takes to ride an elevator? Would you like to increase your confidence in talking about your church and your faith? Join us for this three-session class where we will write and practice our elevator speeches. Sign up in the Parish Hall on Sundays or email Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

Coming to Unity!

Jeanne Pupke, Candidate for UUA President

Saturday, April 15 • 1:30-3:30 p.m. • Parish Hall

This June at General Assembly, Unitarian Universalists will elect a new president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). There are three candidates this year and on April 15, the Rev. Jeanne Pupke will visit Unity Church for a meet and greet. If you would like to meet Jeanne or find out more about the UUA and General Assembly, please join us!

MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2017

Finding Our Partners: Faith In Action

April 28-30, 2017 • Oak Brook, Illinois

The Keynote Speaker on Saturday morning will be Rev. Dr. Lee Barker, President and Professor of Ministry at Meadville-Lombard Theological School! Rev. Dr. Barker's topic will be: *To Multi-faith: A Verb*. If you are interested in attending the conference, contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org. Details at www.midamericaaua.org/events/regional-assembly.

UUA General Assembly

New Orleans, LA • June 21-25, 2017

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. If you are interested in attending GA or serving as a delegate, contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.



Pilgrimage

Boston: October 18-22, 2017

Janne and Rob will lead a pilgrimage to the Unitarian Universalist homelands of New England. We'll visit Plimouth Plantation and wander the streets and back lanes of Boston and Concord. We will explore the historical roots of our faith and our democracy and walk the paths that our religious ancestors walked. If you are interested, please email Janne at janne@unityunitarian.org. The trip will cost between \$1400-\$1800, exclusive of airfare.

Transylvania: Summer 2018

Watch for more information.

Welcome Words

Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement



Albert Schweitzer once observed: "At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by the spark of another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." I don't think we can explore the theme of redemption without gratitude for the power of community – to offer us new beginnings, to encourage second chances, to inspire us to take new risks to rekindle the spark of our humanity and our world. May we be always rekindlers of the flame to one another. See you in church!

Pathway to Membership Classes

Sign up for Pathway to Membership classes at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement, at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. She is also happy to meet with you to answer questions and to welcome you into the congregation. Childcare is available by request.

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers

Wednesday April 26 • 7:15-8:30 p.m. ~also offered ~ Sunday, May 21 • 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

If you have been visiting Unity Church and would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and our congregation, we invite you to join us for a Welcome to Unity class.

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Inquiry

Finding Yourself at Unity is now offered on a regular basis on Sundays from 10:15–11:15 a.m. in the Ames Chapel. These sessions can be attended in the order that works for you. In these classes, we will have an opportunity to share part of our religious journey, to take a more in depth look at the history of Unity Church, to discuss the expectations and benefits of membership, and get to know the programs and ministries of the congregation. Childcare is available in the nursery.

April 2: Q & A with a Minister

April 9: Pastoral Care

April 16: No class on Easter Sunday

April 23: Religious Education for Children, Youth & Adults

April 30: Building Tour

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Wednesday, May 24 • 7:00-9:00 p.m.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry and concludes with a celebration ceremony as participants sign the membership book and join the church!

Mentor Program

If you are new to Unity Church and are interested in being partnered with a mentor who will help you connect to congregational life, contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Front row: Laura Duke Lundgren, Jean Hammink, Gregg Hellenbrand, Julie Coleman, Tomkin Coleman

Back row: Tom Duke, Anthony McKay, Ed Caldie, Barry Byram, Peter Rudrud, Ariel Currie, Erik Stromberg, Derek Harris



Elen Bahr recently joined Unity Church after a long and winding spiritual journey. The Unity community drew her in to a place where she feels free to explore and express her spirituality wholly and authentically. Elen lives in St. Paul where she helps people feel better in their bodies through classical and therapeutic yoga classes and workshops.

Barry Byram was born in rural Alabama and raised Southern Baptist. He was a UU in Baton Rouge, LA, for five years before relocating to St. Paul. His prior vocations have been in nonprofits and medicine. He is passionate about tennis, learning new ways to experience God, and making the world a safer, more inclusive space for all.

Ed Caldie called St. Paul home until a checkered career in architectural design led him to Fargo/Moorhead. After retirement, he moved to Phoenix, AZ, where he pursued a lifelong desire to study oil painting. Appreciating his recent return to Minnesota and especially his new church home, Ed entertains himself by tickling the ivories, creating fine art, and coaxing humor from stubborn places.

Julie and Tomkin Coleman came to Unity Church post-election, drawn by an inclusive spiritual community that is thoughtful, engaged, inspiring, and active in social justice work. They met at Carleton College and reconnected at Julie's 15-year college reunion in 2007. Julie then quit her job in publishing and moved from Chicago to St. Paul; they married in 2008. Tomkin and Julie founded a nonprofit, Pawsitivity Service Dogs, to rescue dogs and train them as service dogs. They love to travel, host parties, attend theater and ballet performances, and spend time with their Golden Retriever, Quinn.

Erik Stromberg is a previous member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka who is seeking to reconnect with the UU church by joining Unity Church-Unitarian. **Ariel Currie** (said like the letters R-E-L) was brought to Unity Church by her fiancé, Erik. She has dedicated her life to working with people living with serious mental illness, particularly psychosis.

Gregg Hellenbrand heard of Unitarian Universalism while volunteering at Common Cause in Madison WI, in 1978. He was very active in 1980s at the UU church in San Diego where he served as music committee chair, music director of "Hobbit," actor and dancer of Mandalas, and a singer and conductor of choirs. He first attended Unity Church in the summer 2008 and soon became a friend.

Laura Duke Lundgren comes to Unity Church with her husband Rich, and daughters Paige (9) and Claire (8). At Unity Laura enjoys being a Journey Guide and volunteering with Project Home. She is a second grade teacher in School District 196.

Tom Duke and Jean Hammink have been attending Unity Church for several years. They come from and continue connections with Buddhist and Lutheran communities respectively. Jean is a leadership development consultant working with nonprofits and government. Tom is retired and currently working as a volunteer organizing and facilitating interfaith dialogue through the St. Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN). They are happy to be sharing their experience at Unity with children and grandchildren. Jean and Tom live near Como Park in St. Paul and enjoy spending time at their cabin, boating, biking/tennis, travel, and with extended family.

Derek Harris has been coming to Unity Church for a couple of years and is very happy to be committing to a community in which he has felt so comfortable spiritually. Having come from a fairly strict background, Derek is especially thankful to have found a reverence for doubt and questions. He looks forward to learning more that he can doubt and question.

Anthony McKay is a hobbyist philosopher, a guitar player, a lover of natural scenery, and proud to be a member of Unity Church-Unitarian.

Peter Rudrud grew up in Minneapolis. He is a public librarian and serves as the Assistant Branch Manager at Saint Paul Public Library's Rondo Community Outreach Library. Joining Unity Church, Peter hopes to find community, share in the congregation's social justice work, and explore his nascent UU faith.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Mentoring Program at Unity Church

If you are new(ish) to Unity Church and would like someone to answer questions you have about the community and its many programs, to help you find your way into deeper involvement with the congregation, or to get to know you and perhaps join you at activities here... Then you may want a mentor!

We have trained mentors waiting to be matched with someone new to the community. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107 if you are interested in knowing more about the program or in being matched with a mentor.

LGBTQ+ Community and Support Group

Sunday, April 2 • 12:30 p.m. • Robbins Parlor

No meeting on Easter Sunday, April 16

A place for you to come and be in community with other LGBTQ people, wherever you are in your journey. This group meets at Unity Church and is an intergenerational place for good and difficult times, all ages and identities welcome, including but not limited to transgender, gender non-conforming, genderqueer, bisexual, lesbian, gay, and queer people. Questions? Contact Jamie Bosc at bosc.jamie@gmail.com.

Recovery Ministry

Tuesday, April 4 • 5:00-6:30 p.m. • Gannett Room

Join us for a monthly gathering of sharing poetry, readings, and our own stories. This group is for anyone who self identifies as being in recovery. If you have questions or to request child care, please contact Jessica Clay at jessica@unityunitarian.org.

Elders Circle

Join us for Elders Circle on Tuesday, April 18, from 1:00-2:30 p.m., in the Center Room. We will be hearing from Laura Park, Managing Director of Unity Consulting (rescheduled from February). Learn about her role here at Unity Church and how she is sharing her gifts with our denomination. All are welcome, refreshments are provided. Questions? Contact Jessica Clay at jessica@unityunitarian.org.

Young Adult Group

The Young Adult group is growing! Join us on Tuesday, April 25, for a 6:30 p.m. potluck in the Center Room. All are welcome! Contact Nic Cable at nic@unityunitarian.org to be added to the email list to receive Young Adult news and announcements.

April Soup Supper Menu

Join us for a soup supper after our 4:30 service.

April 2: Jambalaya

April 9: Chili

April 16: No 4:30 service on Easter Sunday

April 23: Spring pea soup

April 30: Gazpacho and avocado soup

Fellowship Groups

Groups are open to all members and friends of Unity Church.

Afterthoughts: This group meets after the 9:00 a.m. service. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528.

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (April 20) from noon-2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Elders Circle: Tuesday, April 18, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Center Room. Contact: Jessica Clay at jessica@unityunitarian.org

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (April 11) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (April 22) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760

LGBTQ+ Community and Support: First (April 2, 12:30 p.m.) and third Sunday (not meeting on Easter Sunday) of each month. Contact: Jamie Bosc at bosc.jamie@gmail.com

Living With Grief Group: For people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (April 18) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, April 10 and 24, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (April 13) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

Recovery Ministry: Tuesday, April 4, 5:00-6:30 p.m. Contact Jessica Clay at jessica@unityunitarian.org

Textile Arts Group: All ages and levels of experience are welcome! First and third Wednesdays (April 5 and 19), 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact: Linda Mandeville at lindamandeville41@gmail.com

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net. Upcoming discussions:

April 11: *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger

May 10: *A New View From the Center of the Universe* by Joel R. Primack and Nancy Ellen Abrams

Unity Bridge Club: First Friday of the month (April 7) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209.

Women In Retirement, The Choice Years: This group meets the second and fourth Thursday (April 13 and 27) of the month from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org

Young Adults: Potluck on Tuesday, April 25, 6:30 p.m., Center Room. Contact: Nic Cable at nic@unityunitarian.org

Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction is offered on the first Tuesday (April 4) beginning at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kenfaure@gmail.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

May Means Project Home at Unity Church

Seven Good Reasons You Should Participate

From Ann Russell on behalf of Unity's Project Home Leadership Team

1. Project Home helps families in our community! Project Home engages area faith communities to provide emergency shelter space and volunteer support for Ramsey County families facing homelessness. Each month, two different area faith communities host 20 emergency shelter beds. Project Home is one way we can support struggling families in our area. Serving as a host offers the opportunity for direct service and community building. This congregation-wide effort helps keep homeless families together and provides a safe and welcoming temporary home.

2. It's easy! Volunteer in the evening or as an overnight host.

1. Three volunteers are needed each evening from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. This shift offers more opportunity for interaction with parents and children. If the evening is warm, families may wish to go to the park across the street for much needed fun and exercise. There are games and books to share and evening hosts prepare a healthy snack for families. Guests are on their way to bed at 9:00. Unless the number of families is larger than usual, each family has half of a classroom to themselves.
2. Two volunteers arrive for the overnight shift at 8:00 p.m. and once everyone is settled, they can retire for the night. Families rise at 6:00 a.m. and are served a simple breakfast before they depart at 7:00 a.m. (9:00 on the weekends) for The Family Place (the agency that serves these homeless families), to begin their day which can include work, training, or school.
3. **Be a part of something big!** This project needs 150 volunteers!! We hope to have every slot filled by May first so we can focus our efforts on making this a good experience for everyone. If you have previously volunteered but can't commit right now, please consider signing up as a substitute.
4. **You will have training and support!** If you have not participated in the past, you will be offered a brief training session. You work with a team. Each evening a staff person from the Council of Churches (another partner in this program) will greet you and the families and you will be paired with an experienced volunteer. There is professional staff available by phone and written instructions for almost any situation or emergency.
5. **This is a great way to get to know other Unity Church members and friends!** Hosts become friends and often return to volunteer together year after year.
6. **You can volunteer with friends and family!** Children and parents who have volunteered together tell us it is a meaningful experience. We have learned that spending time with families managing homelessness becomes an opportunity for discussion about the deeper meaning of building Beloved Community.
7. **Signing up is easy!** Stop by the Project Home table in the Parish Hall on Sundays during April. Online sign up will also be available, watch your email for the link.

Thank you! We look forward to working with you!

Food Shelf collection returns to Unity Church!

See the back cover for details.



Sustainable Living Team

Water Campaign

Begins April 23



Buy a water bottle from Unity's Sustainable Living Team and stay hydrated in style! Water bottles will be for sale on Sundays in the Parish Hall. Proceeds support the purchase of a water bottle filler attachment for our water fountain (as well as projects to protect the environment and promote water justice).

Children's Garden Work Days

Summer days are garden days, and we would like to get the Unity Children's Garden off to a good start. Wear gloves and bring tools. All are welcome, no gardening experience necessary.

Saturday, April 15 • 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Pull out last year's vegetation, spread compost, weed, turn the earth to get things ready to plant.

Sunday, April 30 • 12:30-2:30 p.m.
Finish cleanup, divide herbs, plant the first seeds for our summer harvests.

Plant Exchange

Sunday, May 21

Mark your calendars! Unity's Sustainable Living Team is preparing for the second annual Plant Exchange! The Plant Exchange, held on Sunday, May 21, is an exciting opportunity for folks to bring plants from their yard and swap them out for new varieties! No plants to bring in? Just starting a perennial masterpiece in your yard? You're in luck! After the swap people are encouraged to purchase plants to take home. All proceeds support Unity's Sustainable Living Team. Watch for more details.

Unity's Sustainable Living Team meets the third Tuesday of each month from 7:00–8:30 p.m. All are welcome to join! Questions? Contact Jessica Zimmerley at jzimm0813@gmail.com.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday is a multi-generational opportunity to gather midweek at church for food, fellowship, and fun. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship in the Ames Chapel at 6:45 p.m., and an evening of rich programming beginning at 7:10 p.m. Childcare is available and you do not have to sign up in advance. The cost for dinner is \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4, and \$20/family. Children under the age two are free. Email Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org for financial assistance to help cover the cost of dinner.

April 5

Dinner: Vegetable lasagna, house salad, and lemon coconut icebox cake

A Good Time for the Truth: Guided Writing on Race and Whiteness

Led by Rev. Karen Hering and focusing on the book *A Good Time for the Truth*, the third part of this three-part series will offer participants an opportunity to reflect and write on their own experiences of race.

Mentor Training

This session will offer training for mentors who have signed up to be a part of Unity's new Mentor Program for active visitors and new members. If you are interested in learning more about being a mentor, or about receiving one, please contact Rev. Janne Eller-Issaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org.

New Family R.E. Orientation

This session with Rev. K.P. Hong, Director of Religious Education, is for families new to Unity Church who would like to learn more about religious education for children and youth.

Textile Arts

Bring your knitting, crocheting, tatting, embroidery, needlepoint, and cross stitch for an evening of fellowship and service. All ages and levels of experience are welcome!

Yoga for Stress and Anxiety

Using breathing techniques, movement, and guided meditation, Elen Bahr will lead this class that aims to help find the source of physical stress. Participants will leave with ideas for how to bring this practice into your daily life. Bring a yoga mat if you have one, a few are available for loan. This class is suitable for all body types.

Go: A Chinese Board Game

Tween Group

April 12

Dinner: Roasted steelhead trout with herbs, roasted asparagus, scalloped potatoes, baguette, Meyer lemon bars

Minnesota Muslims Up Close

Historical records show a Muslim presence in Minnesota that goes as far back as 1880. Current estimates put the Muslim population in Minnesota at about 140,000. This class, led by Memoona Ghani, is based on the exhibit *Tracks in the Snow: The Minnesota Muslim Experience Since 1880* which the Islamic Resource Group put together with support from the Minnesota Historical Society in 2014. You will get an exclusive insight into the lives, experiences, and pioneering work of Minnesota Muslims from different cultural backgrounds.

Meeting this World of Fear with Compassion

For what reason would we spend a portion of our precious time exploring the inner landscape in silence? For what reason would we make the effort to develop the skill of meditation or the art of mindful presence? Mindfulness can chip away at the rigid boundaries that define this small world of self, the boundaries that allow us to forget that the "other" we meet is, in fact our own life. Mindfully present, we recognize in the other the anxiety and the fragile joy that we know so well as our own and we can offer the gift of compassion. Come for an exploration of this inner work of meditation and mindfulness and for an introduction to the Unity Church Tuesday evening meditation group led by Ken Ford.

Spirit Map: An Introduction

Join Laura Park, Managing Director of Unity Consulting, and members of our Board of Trustees for an introduction to the Spirit Map portion of the congregational survey. Learn how Spirit Map was developed, how we'll aggregate the data to better understand the culture of spirituality in the congregation, and the implications for the work of the church. Hear how you can benefit personally from the Spirit Map information you provide in the survey. And, earn the eternal gratitude of Unity's board by completing the congregational survey during the last half hour of the session. Bring your iPad, laptop, or phone!

Spring Tune Up: Yoga for Shoulders and Upper Body

Elen Bahr will lead a practice of movement and breath work specific to releasing some of the upper body tension our bodies accumulate from the stiffness of winter. This session is based on both classical and therapeutic yoga techniques and is suitable for all body types. Bring a yoga mat if you have one, a few are available for loan.

Mother/Daughter Film Group: A League of Their Own

Please join Unity Church moms and daughters (grade 6 and up) for a female focused film. The following month we'll discuss the previous month's film during dinner.

Unity Ukesters

Come jam on your ukulele. Beginners to pros, ages 8-120 welcome! Show up with your uke, copies of music you wish to share, an open mind, and a sense of humor.

Go: A Chinese Board Game

Tween Group

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

April 19

Dinner: Tostadas, salad, guacamole, pico de gallo, and Mexican wedding cookies

UU History Book Club

Want to learn more about Unitarian Universalist history? Curious about all those great authors quoted in Sunday sermons? Join the monthly UU History Book Club. April's discussion will be on the book *Prophetic Sisterhood* by Cynthia Tucker.

Open Page Writing Session

What Saves Us: Writing about Redemption

RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

The poet William Stafford once said of his poems, "I have woven a parachute of everything broken." This session explores the many different parachutes that save us, as we reflect on the topic of redemption. Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing session participants use stories, poetry, images, and objects as well as wisdom from religious teachings, science, and history to reflect on the monthly theme in their own words. No writing experience is necessary.

Spirit Map: An Introduction

Join Laura Park, Managing Director of Unity Consulting, and members of Unity's Board of Trustees for an introduction to the Spirit Map portion of the congregational survey.

Spring Tune Up: Yoga for Pelvis and Core

Guest teacher, Kristina Kliber, will lead a practice to bring freedom to the pelvis and core for moving with greater ease. This session is based on both classical and therapeutic yoga techniques and is suitable for all body types. Bring a yoga mat if you have one, a few are available for loan.

Religious Education Enrollment

This is one of the opportunities to enroll in Religious Education at Unity Church for the 2017-18 year. Details on page 14.

Textile Arts

Go: A Chinese Board Game

Tween Group

April 26

Dinner: Breakfast for dinner! Savory and sweet breakfast buffet.

Northwest Passage: In a New Light

Come hear from Rachel, a teen turned artist who spent nearly a year at Northwest Passage, a residential mental health treatment in northwestern Wisconsin. Rachel will share her story of healing and discovery as she explores the power of living a therapeutic lifestyle and the restorative properties of art and nature. In a New Light is the April Parish Hall exhibit. Details on page 7.

Welcome to Unity

If you have been visiting Unity and would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and our congregation, we invite you to join us for this class.

Spring Tune Up: Yoga for Hips and Legs

We'll focus on building healthier walking patterns to release tension and get ready for spring and summer outdoor activities. This session is based on both classical and therapeutic yoga techniques and is suitable for all body types. Bring a yoga mat if you have one, a few are available for loan.

Unity Ukesters

Go: A Chinese Board Game

Tween Group

May Yoga

May 3 is the last Wellspring Wednesday yoga session of the church year.

Chakra Tuning

7:15 - 8:30 p.m. (75 minute practice)

In yoga, chakras are seven wheels of energy throughout the body, from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. Chakras help to regulate all of the body's processes from organ function to the immune system and emotions. When the chakras are balanced we experience our greatest sense of health and wellbeing. This practice will include breath work, movement and meditation, and is suitable for all body types. Bring a yoga mat if you have one, a few are available for loan.

All Church TALENT SHOW Wednesday, May 10 7:15 PM • Sanctuary

Do you have a talent or hobby you'd like to share with the congregation?

Can you...

- ... tell a few jokes?
- ... play a musical instrument?
- ... recite a poem?
- ... lead a song from the hymnal?
- ... make a bunny disappear?
- ... juggle?
- ... do an interpretive dance?
- ... jump rope?
- ... paint a picture like Bob Ross?
- ... make an origami chalice?
- ... eat a donut in one bite?

Then we want to see it!

Join us for our annual (indoor) picnic dinner and stay to share in the fun of this talent tradition. Performers of every age are welcome!

Sign up online today: www.unityunitarian.org/talent-show.html

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

Pitter-pattering Questions

[...like raindrops on the window, and little feet running through the house]



From Rev. KP Hong, Director of Religious Education

One of the characters in the film *The Shawshank Redemption*, Brooks, is paroled from the penitentiary after having spent the better part of his life within the prison walls. Everything about life on the outside is unfamiliar, foreign, and terrifying. And eventually, he takes his own life. "He's been in here for fifty years, this is all he knows," comments another inmate gesturing to the prison walls. "I'm telling you these walls are funny. At first you hate 'em. Then you get used to 'em. Enough time passes, you get so you depend on 'em." Live long enough inside the walls of any structure or frame of being, and you forget how to live any other way.

What about our frame for understanding childhood development? What about the routine overemphasis on "growth," "preparation," and "advancement" that has come to shape the pressurized enclosure we call education? (Or more radically for critical theorist Henri Giroux, education that "quantifies all forms of meaning, privatizes social relations, dehistoricizes memory, and substitutes training for education while reducing the obligations of citizenship to the act of consuming.") The language of achievement and social mobility may have its place in the wider culture, but when we assume that growth, preparation, and advancement are patterns intrinsic to adolescents' being, our very *theological* perspective on ministry with children can easily leave out doubt and failure, and consign absence and brokenness to the periphery. We come to overemphasize what is known and certain against mystery and hiddenness; what is present and in our possession against what is absent or lost; what is rational and sensible against what feels absurd and threatening. With good intention, we instruct our children that if they do everything right, then their faith must be strong and true, and life will turn out well. We overstate possibilities but fail to acknowledge the thinness, fragility, and contingency of every possibility. And so growth, preparation, and advancement come to frame the theological profile of our shiny "poster children of serious faith." (Andrew Root)

How do we redeem our children from such caricatures that foreclose their experience of the Sacred in both the known and hidden, presence and absence, the rational and the absurd? That God stands not outside brokenness but creatively within the suffering of loss and absence? That the Holy is paradoxically revealed in hiddenness, brought near in absence, and encountered not outside but within fear and despair? Our children cannot help but inhabit the existential crisis at the heart of being alive. The crisis that some are rich while others are poor. The crisis of melting ice caps and the criminality of our criminal justice system. And that no wall — however high and tempting it may be to depend upon them — can finally keep us safe.

What if redemption begins with vulnerability and the recognition that the faith journey is not essentially about growth, preparation, and advancement? That our ministry with children, at its core, is about being those who can bear the depth and breadth of their reality. And when we do, that the very crisis of overwhelming impossibility makes hope, love, and faith radically real.

Sharing questions that pitter-patter across our sacred journeys...

Religious Education

Enrollment: 2017-18

For families planning to enroll child(ren) or youth in Religious Education for 2017-18, please attend either enrollment session:

- Wednesday, April 19, 7:15-8:45 p.m., in the Sanctuary/Parish Hall
- Saturday, April 22, 10:00 a.m.-noon, in the Sanctuary
- Coming of Age (for 9th grade youth) and Our Whole Lives (sexuality and relationship education for 8th-9th grade youth) will be included in these enrollment sessions

These in-person sessions will orient parents with volunteer roles, provide updates, foster community conversation, and offer instructions for enrolling children in Religious Education. Childcare provided. Watch for further information about tracks for new families and another for returning families. If your family is unable to participate at either of these sessions, contact Michelle Hill at michelle@unityunitarian.org.

Painting Prep Social

Help paint the Religious Education classroom doors and meet new friends. All are welcome!

Wednesday, April 26, 7:15-8:30 p.m.: Tape the classroom doors in preparation for paint.

Friday, April 28, 5:30-8:30 p.m.: Potluck dinner begins at 5:30 followed by prep and painting at 6:30. Sign up for the potluck online at <http://bit.ly/potluckpaint>. There will be a movie and art activity for kids. Older children who want to paint can partner with their adult. If you prefer, you can spend the evening with other Unity Church members instead of painting. Drop off child care requires an RSVP by April 21 to michelle@unityunitarian.org.

CHALICE CAMP AT UNITY CHURCH

JULY 10-14 / JULY 17-21 / JULY 24-28

www.unityunitarian.org for details and registration

MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer

Director of Music Ministries



"To sing is to leave a bit of yourself in every soul you encounter" — From Omnia Sol, Stroop

Researching music is one of my great joys. Finding

repertoire for our annual Arthur Foote Music Sunday (May 7, this year!) can be a revelatory experience. Often, I come across a piece that just says, "Yes!" As this year's Music Sunday starts our theme month of "blessing," finding "Muusika" by Pärt Uusberg was one of those moments. My first introduction to the piece was a recording of its performance at The Estonian Song Celebration (Laulupidu). This is a unique event that is held every five years, bringing together a huge choir of 25,000 people for a weekend in July. More than 100,000 spectators enjoy the concerts and sing along to the most popular songs. I was overwhelmed not just by the piece and the numbers of people singing, but also by the richness of this event's history, inherent in every note. It is important to understand that background (some important dates listed below) as you read the translation of "Muusika," listed at the end of this article.

The following is excerpted from an article published in partnership with *Life In Estonia* magazine by Maris Hellrand.

The singing festivals have become the main anchor of Estonian identity. Twice the song celebrations have led to Estonia's independence. In the 19th century, the choirs and song celebrations were at the core of the national awakening of Estonian peasants, who discovered the value of their own language and cultural heritage through singing. The national awakening and establishment of identity led to Estonian independence in 1918.

After WWII, during the Soviet occupation, the song celebrations helped keep the national identity alive. In 1988, several hundred thousand people gathered at the Song Festival grounds and sang for freedom for many days and nights. The Singing Revolution helped end the Soviet rule and indirectly led to Estonia's independence once again in 1991. The Estonian Song Celebration 2014 was the twenty-sixth of its kind. The timeline below highlights the most important instances of this unique Estonian tradition.

1947: The twelfth and the first post-war song festival, with Gustav Ernesaks as one of the artistic directors. In spite of massive Soviet propaganda, the repertoire was mostly traditional. People were arrested even at the Song Festival grounds. Ernesaks's "Mu isamaa on minu arm" was performed for the first time. In 1950, another wave of Soviet repression swept up the Song Celebration artistic directors Alfred Karindi, Riho Päts and Tuudur Vettik.

1950: The darkest chapter in the Song Celebration history. In the thirteenth Laulupidu, Soviet propaganda songs dominated the repertoire; choirs of Soviet miners and the army choir were among the participants. During the dark era of Soviet oppression, choir singing remained one of the few areas where private initiative and trust were still present. This helped keep the longing for freedom alive. In spite of the schizophrenic situation, most Estonians held the Song Celebration dear as the most important national event.

1960: By the fifteenth festival, the new Song Festival stage, by the architect Alar Kotli, had been built. Before the concert, "Mu isamaa on minu arm" was removed from the programme. However, choirs started to sing it spontaneously and, after a moment's hesitation,

Ernesaks climbed up to the conductor's stand and started to conduct. Since then, the song has been the most anticipated and the "compulsory" finale of the celebration.

Muusika — Pärt Uusberg

It must be somewhere, the original harmony,
somewhere in great nature, hidden.
Is it in the furious infinite,
in distant stars' orbits,
is it in the sun's scorn,
in a tiny flower, in tree gossip,
in heart music's mother song,
or in tears?

It must be somewhere, immortality,
somewhere the original harmony must
be found:
how else could it infuse
the human soul,
that music?

(Juhan Liiv, translated form the Estonian
by H. L. Hix & Juri Talve)

We look forward to singing this for you
on May 7, our annual Arthur Foote
Music Sunday. See you there!

Redemption Theme Resources

BOOKS

FOR KIDS

The Missing Piece by Shel Silverstein

FOR ADULTS

A Man Called Ove: A Novel by Fredrik Backman

The Redemption of God: A Theology of Mutual Relation by Carter Heyward
Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry by Rachel Joyce

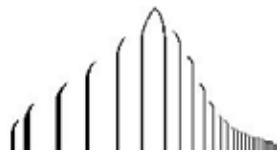
VIDEO

Gran Torino (Drama, 2008)

Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise (American Masters Documentary, 2017)

ARTICLES

"The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates (*The Atlantic*, June 2014)



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TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

THE UNITY CHURCH BOOK SALE *has been rescheduled for APRIL 22-23*

Benefit from our congregation's shared love of reading while supporting youth ministries! Donations of good used books, CDs, DVDs, electronic and board games can be dropped off in the Foote Room through April 21. Please no reference or text books.

Saturday, April 22 • 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Church members are invited to shop the Book Sale early!

Midnight madness begins at 11:59 p.m. on April 21.

Sunday, April 23 • 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

\$5 Fill-A-Bag on Sunday from 2:00–4:30 p.m.



2017 Chalice Camp

Another summer of fun and community is right around the corner! We are so excited to invite all kids going into first through eighth grades (7th/8th graders will be senior campers) to sign up as campers. Three weeks mean three times the fun! All weeks will have an individual focus but all will include outside exploring, art, learning about our faith, and building community.

Staff applications are available via email at chalicecamp@unityunitarian.org.

Register at www.unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html. Scholarships available!



Food Shelf collection returns to Unity Church!

Unity's Evergreen Quilters are now supporting the Hallie Q. Brown Food Shelf at 270 Kent Street in St. Paul. The previous recipient of our food shelf items, Sharing Korner, has closed.

Help feed hungry people in our community! Please bring non-perishable (non-expired) food items, hygiene products, baby supplies, and pet food to church at any time during the week or on Sundays. Beginning April 1, wicker collection trunks will be available inside both the Holly Avenue and Portland Avenue entrances. Don't wait until you have a full bag... Bring just one item and the trunks will fill quickly!

Evergreen Quilters thank you for your support and service to hungry people and families in our neighborhood.

