

Sin

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.

Unitarian Universalists typically avoid the concept of sin and jump right to our theology of love, and yet it is important to wrestle with the concepts and themes that are uncomfortable. There are no easy answers. We come to our churches to deepen our faith and our theology, but as soon as we start conversations about sin we can get lost in all of our differing definitions. Some think of it as breaking a rule or a law; for others it is a separation from God. Sometimes sin is understood to be an experience of feeling incomplete and disconnected, fraught with doubts of worth, or as a transgression against our better selves and humanity as a whole. These varying understandings of sin lead to many questions. If there is no definitive law then can there be sin? With love as our foundation is there room for sin?

One of the challenges for many Unitarian Universalists is to reconcile past religious baggage with a working definition of sin that encourages us to be our best selves. In Judaism sin is seen as a debt — once it is paid people are allowed back into the community. Sin calls us to atonement and redemption, which is done from a place of love and trust. To hear someone's confession in the midst of great pain cracks open even the hardest heart, and sometimes love fills those cracks to make it whole again.

Part of the work is recognizing a relational understanding of sin — that we have a responsibility towards owning collective sins. The sins of our ancestors are still present today in the United States and there is work to be done for reparations. The first step is acknowledging the sins. An image of the veterans at Standing Rock comes to mind, kneeling before the tribal elders, acknowledging the sins that

their ancestors committed and asking for forgiveness. On a personal level, this happens when we acknowledge our personal history and the place our ancestors had in perpetuating oppressions. With this knowledge comes a responsibility to make personal reparations — which can look different for each person.

Covenant calls us to our best selves, but when we are not in a covenantal relationship with someone, our response to the sin of another is usually one of judgment and othering. We can get lost in moral relativism and place our culture upon others when we decide we know the full story of what is occurring and base our response to it on that presumption. It is human to place people in categories: good, bad, evil, something in between. With stories of the seven deadly sins embedded within the fabric of white middle-class culture, how do we come together and challenge our assumptions about each other and ourselves? These seven deadly sins, in addition to personal and societal wrongs, define sin and evil in the world today.

In order to continue to work together for justice and healing on a national level, the personal work must inform all that we do. Your own definition of what sin is and how it shows up in your life informs your views of the world and each person you are in relationship with. This month I encourage you to have a conversation about sin with others, to widen and broaden your definition. Much as Jacob wrestled with an angel, we can wrestle with this concept and search for the blessings within. We can embrace the questions and allow fluidity for ourselves and others as we do this reconciliation.

Sin is often bound up in secrets and shame, but if they are brought to light the important work of releasing them and paying our debts has begun. One of the goals of this church community is to deepen in our relationships with each other. Acknowledging sin is part of this holy sacred work. By doing it ourselves we model it for the children in our lives. Our theology of love must contain a working definition of sin and how we are actively working to move through it in order to truly meet the needs of this diverse human experience. We can reconcile our religious baggage and proselytize about our life saving faith that doesn't run from the deep questions. This is where the grist of life is, and what comes forth from it is sacred and holy.

*Hallman Ministerial Intern Jessica Clay
with this month's theme team:
Nic Cable, Drew Danielson,
Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Cary Eustis, Lisa Friedman, Karen Hutt
and Ruth Palmer*

Sin Theme Resources

BOOKS

FOR KIDS

Mad at Mommy by Komako Sakai
*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible,
No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith
Viorst

FOR ADULTS

Wise Blood by Flannery O'Connor
Tattoos on the Heart by Gregory Boyle

POETRY

"Wild Geese" by Mary Oliver

MOVIES

Breaking the Waves (1996)

Just Words



When I was in my twenties and working on my Masters degree in Clinical Psychology, I met a group of remarkable seminarians also living in Berkeley, California. I was invited into their social circle and more importantly invited to play a very serious game of Dungeons & Dragons with them. For those of you who have never met a D&D nerd, this is a game led by a very human Dungeon Master who is guided by books of rules and suggestions and a map of their own creation. Players create characters through a series of dice rolls. The dice employed in playing D&D are three sided, six sided, eighteen sided and it goes on from there. I became a magic user. Most of my game mates, true to their calling, were mages or clerics. Two nights a week we gathered to play together as the dice was rolled over and over again to decide our fate. In addition to the dominance of the dice, was the importance of our interactions with one another. We learned early on that we were in this together and it didn't benefit anyone to strike out on their own, away from the group. Our very survival depended on our ability to work together.

Each character was given something to support their journey through the kingdom known only to the Dungeon Master. I was given a choice of a number of spells as I formed my character. I choose a protection spell. My friend, the Dungeon Master, was surprised I didn't pick a more glamorous spell. It wasn't nearly as "magical" as those chosen by others, but what I learned is that protection is a basic need that makes other things possible. I was able to protect myself from imagined and role played ordeals and as my magic grew stronger, I was able to protect those around me. As the game continued on through the months of our devoted and lively playing, it became clear that I was growing in power to protect against more and more that came our way. Eventually, I was the only one playing with their original character. I was a level two magic user with a cloak of invisibility and a powerful protection spell. My character still exists on the pages of my dear friend's dungeon. I learned something extremely valuable through my character and playing D and D. I learned that one can't underestimate the value of protection. Now that I have a much more sophisticated understanding of trauma and healing, its importance is even more central in my understanding of human development.

The importance of protection is a factor in our decision to become a sanctuary congregation. We were invited into the role of protecting those in need and we responded as quickly and efficiently as possible. As this newsletter goes to press, we now know that we will be asked to protect an individual or a family. There are many religious reasons to respond as we have, but I wanted to lift up the basic desire of human protection and its importance as a part of what we are called to do.

— Janne Eller-Isaacs



Still Point

Weekly Contemplative Service

Tuesdays • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Ames Chapel

A weekly contemplative service for people needing a quiet space for reflection during these challenging political times. *Still Point* is a drop-in service (come for a few minutes or stay for the whole time) that will include time for silence, a short reading, and a prayer.

Congratulations!



On January 24, Unity Church was awarded the 2016 Silver Bloom Award for creating an outstanding business/institutional garden in St. Paul! Hearty congratulations and deep gratitude to Unity's Garden Team for their thoughtful design, tireless weekly maintenance, and gentle care in creating spaces that help build Beloved Community.

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

MARCH 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.

March 5: *Unforgiven*

Religious liberals have rejected the concept of sin and its relationship to sexuality. But the sense of sin, the existential state of sin, seems hard-wired into the human condition. Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Kevin Ward begin a series of services on sin by asking some very difficult questions that fly in the face of many of our most closely-held assumptions. Musicians: Justin Roth, guitar; Children's Choir (9:00/11:00).

March 12: *Habitual Sins*

We are told that we live in a sinful world. Some sins, like our precious sexuality, have been labeled as evil when in fact, healthy sexuality is essential to a wholesome and genuine spiritual life. Some sins, however, like arrogance and shame are encouraged in our culture. Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Nicole Linskey will wade into the waters of what constitutes sin, and what does not. Musicians: Unity Choir (9:00/11:00); Kathy Kraulik, piano (4:30). *Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 12. Set your clocks ahead one hour!*

March 19: *Cultural Sins*

Gandhi listed seven cultural sins, or the "collective blunders" as they were sometimes known. They are fascinating to examine as our world feels ever more divided and disconnected. Worship associate Avi Viswanathan and Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs will explore the present day relevance to these sins conceived so many years ago. Musicians: Nirmala Rajasekar, classical Indian singer and instrumentalist; Unity Choir (9:00/11:00); Women's Ensemble (4:30).

March 26: *The Larger Hope*

"In order for a law to work," writes Zen beat poet Gary Snyder, "it must have a hook into the human psyche — and the most effective way to achieve this is to make people doubt their natural worth and instincts, especially sexual. To make 'human nature' suspect is also to make nature — the wilderness — the adversary. Hence the ecological crisis of today." The Universalist strand of our tradition affirms the universal salvation of all souls. We let go of the threat of sin and damnation centuries ago. Worship associate Angela Wilcox and Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs will help us understand what that radical love might mean for us today. Musicians: Women's Ensemble (9:00/11:00); Unity Choir (4:30).

March 26: *Beloved Communion* • 1:00 p.m.

Progressive interpretations of the act of Communion invites us to share in an experience where we can recognize our shared humanity and our interdependence. Above Every Name Ministries warmly welcomes members and friends of Unity Church for an inclusive Communion during their weekly service.

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.

March 5: *Listening House*

Dubbed the "living room of the homeless," Listening House is a day and evening shelter and community center providing hospitality, practical assistance, and guidance to disadvantaged, homeless, or lonely individuals. Listening House is anchored in mutual respect. Guests and volunteers work together to make community happen. Listening House provides safety net services including clothing, personal hygiene, foot care, and first aide. Onsite partner professionals assist as housing advocates, mental and chemical health workers, and VA contact persons. Two-hundred plus people come to Listening House daily.

March 12: *First Step Initiative*

First Step Initiative, in its tenth year, is all about small grants profoundly changing the lives of the women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It works in the poorest parts of Lubumbashi, formerly Elisabethville, to identify budding women entrepreneurs and provide grants enabling them to open small businesses. Businesses launched must be sustainable, able to support the women, and offer employment to other family members. Rob Eller-Isaacs, Estelle Brouwer, Ruth Palmer, and Scott Rehovsky stand among the committed supporters of First Step Initiative.

March 19: *SELF International*

Based in South Minneapolis, SELF (Science Education Literacy and Fine Arts) promotes literacy and creative education through hands-on, cutting-edge exploration in science and engineering, for youths ages 5-18. SELF brings science expertise to community centers that have little or no science resources by offering exciting, informal learning outside of school. Unity's Maria Caliandro is on the SELF board and assists with the annual Minneapolis NanoDay celebration. This event brings university researchers together with science educators to create new and unique learning experiences for children and adults to explore the miniscule world of atoms, molecules, and nanoscale forces.

March 26: *Minnesota Prison Writing Project*

The Minnesota Prison Writing Project (MPWW) teaches creative writing in prisons throughout the state of Minnesota. MPWW's main program places teaching artists in Minnesota prisons to offer quality, creative writing instruction to incarcerated individuals. Additionally, MPWW facilitates a mail-based mentoring program for writers who have taken at least one MPWW course. Most students also participate in final readings and class presentations. Unity Church member, Kelly Hansen Maher is a teaching artist with MPWW and says this about her work, "I believe art and words matter; they are testimony for the inherent work and dignity of every person."

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / HERITAGE SOCIETY



Putting the "oar" in Board From Stu Alger, Trustee

The Board put its back into its work during a six-hour Saturday session in January. Here are some of the matters the Board will focus on this year:

- 1. Transitions.** The Board established a Transitions subteam to advance the work the Board and Executive Team accomplished two years ago to plan for the orderly transition to new ministerial leadership over the next few years. This year the Board will map the timing and sequence of decisions that must be made for the selection and orientation of new ministerial leadership, including the transition model (e.g., whether we will have an interim minister) we will adopt. Our Policy subteam will examine this year Church Policy and By-Laws language that needs revision as part of selecting and calling new ministerial leadership.
- 2. Board Capacity.** Our Board practices what is called policy governance, which basically means that the Board does not manage the church—we govern on behalf of you, the owners. This can sometimes be a fine distinction, but the distinction matters and helps make sure the Board and Executive Team work well together. We continuously train in policy governance, and this year our Communications and Linkage subteam will bring its training to the Congregation in scheduled learning sessions, as a way to invite you into deeper understanding of Board work.
- 3. Evaluation and Monitoring.** The Board spends a significant amount of its time monitoring the work of the Executive Team for compliance with Church policy, including the stated Ends of the Church. Some monitoring comes through surveys of staff, which the Board conducts annually. The Board also asks the congregation annually for its evaluation of how well the church is meeting our stated Ends. Our Evaluations subteam is preparing for this year's evaluation work.

As we pulled together at the oars at our Saturday Board meeting, I was suddenly struck how Board work is for me spiritual work. It is spiritual in that it brings me into community with the universe that is this church, and into concerted action with the people on the Board, Executive Team, and staff who love it.



Join the Heritage Society

Leave a Legacy for Future Generations at Unity Church

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. Wealthy people may have large estates, but people who aren't wealthy often have the resources to make a legacy gift.

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 Friday, May 5, is the church's way of thanking those individuals who have made legacy gifts.

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, please contact Executive Director, Barbara Hubbard, at barbarah@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x116. We have individuals on our Legacy Team who would be happy to advise you in your considerations.

We would love to have you join our Heritage Society!

MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Hallman Ministerial Intern: Jessica Clay



During seminary I volunteered with people who were incarcerated in local prisons. These people often described being defined as their crime, as the sins of their past, e.g. “a thief, criminal, etc.” A frequent saying in prisons is “Use the time, don’t let the time use you.” Many of the people I met were using their time in prison to reflect on

their actions, acknowledge what had led them to make these decisions, and to do some deep personal healing. I taught a class that focused on healing, recognizing the goodness and wisdom inside each person, and empowering them to make different choices in their lives. For many of the people I met, the circumstances of their lives made it difficult to see the ways in which they were good and that, in fact, they could make different choices. Part of this healing was examining their theology of sin and its place within all of the complexities of their lives and the systems of oppressions that made living a daily challenge.

When I was in middle school my family attended an evangelical Christian church. This was my first exposure to the concept of sin. From that experience, I began to believe that I was inherently a sinner, and each time I committed a wrongdoing or made a mistake was further evidence of my sin. Sin was equated with a deep sense of shame and brokenness, but redemption came through faith. My theology has changed since then, but I still experience feelings of shame when I make a mistake or unintentionally harm someone. Being in relationship with other people, disappointment and mistakes are inevitable, yet conflict avoidance often means these wrongdoings go unacknowledged. Conflict avoidance says to move forward while the original wrongdoing festers deep within our souls waiting for another wrong to be added to the pile.

Whether we are being defined by our choices or by the weight we carry on our souls, we have plenty of time to feel shame and regret. How do we use our time and not let time use us? We preach a message of the inherent worth and dignity of all, but on a day to day basis do we speak this message to ourselves? Our faith and this community allow us to reflect on how to be together when we agree and disagree, and on the inevitableness of being human. For evangelical Christians, their saving grace is in Jesus; for us as Unitarian Universalists, we believe in the transforming power of love and the mystery that connects us all. This month I hope you are able see which parts of yourself or behaviors you would consider sinful, and how you are working to use your time to practice self-love and gentleness with the inevitableness of being human. Be kind to yourselves and each other.

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

Ministerial Intern: Nic Cable



So far it feels like 2017 has been a call to resist the sin of separateness, that is, a call to instead affirm our shared humanity and strive faithfully toward a world defined by inclusion, justice, and love. Separateness is the opposite of the covenant that is at the heart of Unitarian Universalism. We know in our bones that we are all connected

to an interdependent web of all existence of what was, is, and perhaps still be. We must resist turning inward and away from our shared humanity and continue to work to build the elusive, Beloved Community. Unity Church is a place that invites us all, in countless ways, toward that vision of what the world may yet still be. Here, we have been nurturing lives of courage and vulnerability, not the least of which is in our consideration of becoming a Sanctuary congregation. I have watched with amazement in how our community—the board, staff, lay leaders, and dozens of congregants from many backgrounds—have joined in as we prepare for the possibility of creating a sanctuary, a home, for an individual or family under threat of deportation.

There is so much fear currently emanating from the media and society at large that it is easy to lose sight of our shared humanity, or that it sometimes feels like the ties that bind us together as a nation are loosening. But, faith in the abundance of life and love tells a different story. You can see this story playing out in our steadfast religious conviction to be in solidarity with immigrants and refugees in this country. It says that we are all Beloved, all of humanity, one family.

The road ahead will not be easy, the sin of separateness sometimes is louder than the soft but persistent call of love. I believe that this work we are doing in preparing our hearts for the work ahead is so important; it is exactly what it means to live lives of integrity, service, and joy. But most of all, being vulnerable and courageous in our living today is a testament to the indomitable spirit we share as members and friends of this religious community. May this be a month of continued care for one another, for our wider community, and for the world. Together, the sin of separateness will make way for the Beloved Community we know is out there, that we know we are striving for as a community, that we know will come. May it be so.

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



WELCOME WORDS / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Welcome Words

Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement



In talking about Unity Church with newcomers, I often say that the good news about Unity is that there is a lot going on and many ways to be involved. And the challenging news about Unity is that there is a lot going on and many ways to be involved! We know that it can be intimidating to forge connections and

to find a personal community within the larger community of the congregation. So next month, we will be launching a new mentoring program to pair people who would like someone to walk with them into deeper involvement at Unity Church with those who are glad to walk alongside in friendship. If you would be interested in either being matched with a mentor or possible becoming one, please contact Janne or me. This is a wonderful way to strengthen the bonds of kinship among us. 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, March 29 • 7:15-8:30 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.

March 5: UU History, Principles, and Sources

March 12: Social Justice & Community Outreach

March 19: Membership 101 & Congregational Life

March 26: Q & A with a Minister

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church
Sunday, March 12 • 1:00-3:00 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!

Fellowship Groups

These groups are open to all members and friends of Unity Church. If you are looking to connect with a group, please contact the person listed, visit the church website, or call the church office at 651-228-1456.

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 (March 16) from noon–2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Elders Circle: Tuesday, March 21, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (March 14) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (March 25) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760.

Living With Grief Group: For people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (March 21) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, March 13 and 27, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (March 9) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

Textile Arts Group: Bring your knitting, crocheting, tatting, embroidery, and cross stitch. All ages and levels of experience are welcome! First and third Wednesdays (March 1 and 15), 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact: Linda Mandeville at lindamandeville41@gmail.com.

Unitots!: A drop-in playgroup for families with kids through preschool age. Monday and Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Contact Michelle Hill at michelle@unityunitarian.org

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. All are welcome—even if you haven't read the book. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net. Upcoming discussions:

March 14: *Just Mercy – A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson

April 11: *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger

Unity Bridge Club: The Bridge Club will meet on Friday, March 3, 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 (March 9 and 23) of each month from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org

Young Adults: Potluck on Tuesday, March 28, 6:30 p.m.

Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction is offered on the first Tuesday (March 7) beginning at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kenfaure@gmail.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



New members (l-r): Teresa Kothbauer, Tom Zell, Ian Evison, Leah Evison, Allen Turechek, Lora Bloom, Jaymie Moore Turechek, Phyllis H. Sherman, Jennifer Tong, Margo Riskedahl, Carol Mahnke, Clover Earl

Lora Bloom stumbled into a service at Unity Church shortly after a diagnosis of Stage IV breast cancer. The announcements that day included signing up to participate in end-of-life conversations, something she had felt suddenly so in need of but didn't know where to start. She has been visiting the church ever since. Lora is an archivist and librarian, but now works only one day a week at the St. Paul Public Library. Maintaining her health and re-prioritizing her life have become her weekly challenges. She volunteers with a Restorative Justice program, a particular passion on hers. She lives on the Eastside of St. Paul, with her cats and her pollinator garden.

Clover Earl recently returned to the twin cities after a 26-year hiatus out west. She and Tom Zell married in 2007. Clover is a CPCC (Life Coach) and Vice-Chair at the Art Shanty Projects. She loves spending time with family, reading, writing and photography. She considers herself blessed beyond words to have landed at Unity Church.

Tom Zell first came to Unity Church in support of Clover Earl. From the first day, he discovered such a warm, inviting community of like-minded people that he wanted to come back for himself. He is passionate about his family, children, building things, bike riding, making connections at Unity Church, and learning to promote UU principles in today's political climate.

Leah and Ian Evison split their time between St. Paul and Chicago. Leah works for the EPA cleaning up waste sites and enjoys playing music with a local Irish band. Ian is a UU minister who leads the staff team of the Mid-America Region, in between cooking and grafting tomatoes for his spring garden.

Teresa Kothbauer is excited to become a member after about 10 years of involvement with Unity Church. She and her husband, Christian, live in Roseville with their two kids, Emily (13) and Xavier (8). She is drawn to Unity as a community that shares her values. She is very grateful for the excellent religious education program.

After 20 years accompanying her Lutheran pastor husband through rural Iowa, **Carol Mahnke** is grateful to be back among Unitarians. A former newspaper reporter, she has a Master of Liberal Arts degree from Moorhead State University.

Her husband, Pastor Terry Mahnke, died in April 2016. She has two sons, Jon and Kerr. Jon lives near her apartment (a few blocks from the east side of Como Lake) with his wife, Laura. Kerr lives in Portland with her grandson, Ambrose.

After moving to St. Paul from Bismarck, ND, in 2015, **Margo Riskedahl** and her husband, Burt, began attending Unity Church. After 40 years of being active in their community and Lutheran church, their quest for changes in their life and faith brought them here. Margo retired from teaching Medical Microbiology at the University of Mary and in recent years gardening and founding a feeding ministry have been favorite pastimes. She finds that Unitarian Universalism affirms her beliefs in relationships with and acceptance of all people, the world around her, and in God. She looks forward to getting more involved and making many new friends.

Phyllis H. Sherman has been a Unitarian Universalist for 12 years and is transferring her membership as she and her husband moved here from Texas. She is volunteering at the Obama Elementary Library through a Unity Church program and finds it uplifting and energizing. She will be spending her summers at their cabin in northern Minnesota where she serves as a DNR volunteer loon watcher.

Jennifer Tong originally came to Unity Church seven years ago seeking a religious education program for her oldest son, and found a community for herself as well. She has taught in R.E. for six years and is on the Anti-Racism Leadership Team. Jennifer lives with her husband and two sons in St. Paul.

Jaymie and Allen Turechek came to Unity Church searching for a sense of community after moving to St. Paul in 2015. Allen is originally from Connecticut via North Carolina where he was based in the army. He now studies at the University of Minnesota and hopes to attend medical school. Jaymie studied environmental science, history, and public health at Catawba College and the University of South Carolina. She enjoys tennis, cooking, and playing flute. They live in St. Anthony Park with their three cats (Bailey, Lola, and Ted) and endeavor to have a more successful garden plot this year.

Tuesday Meditation at Unity Church

A portion of the time in Unity Sangha's Tuesday meditation meetings is devoted to teaching and discussion to deepen our understanding of the meditation path and its roots. Join us Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. in Ames Chapel. Meditation instruction is offered at 5:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month. Please notify Ken Ford at kenfaure@gmail.com if you plan to come for instruction.

Wellspring Wednesday Yoga

Weekly 60 minute yoga practice that includes aspects of deep breathing, slow movement, rest periods, and guided meditation to balance body, mind, and spirit. Suitable for all body types and ages; movement is demonstrated for lying on the floor, standing or sitting in a chair, as needed. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat if you have one. A few are available for loan. See Wellspring Wednesday offering descriptions on pages 10-11 for details. Learn more about the instructor, Elen Bahr, at EveryYogi.com or email questions to elen@everyyogi.com.

Yoga for Stress and Anxiety

Thursdays, March 9–April 13 • 5:45–6:45 p.m.

Classes are held at Unity Church

Stress. It's something we all experience at some level. Unfortunately for many of us, it can overshadow much of our lives and manifest in disruptive sleep, anxiety, feelings of sadness or depression, and physical pain.

This class series will give you tools to find relief.

Each class in this six week series will include lecture, candid discussion, physical yoga practice, breathing techniques, and home integration work. We will explore:

- The physiology of stress and how to develop new physical habits to lessen the symptoms
- Yogic principles for overcoming the diseases of stress
- Tools to support finding a calm center in the midst of stress, anxiety, depression

More information at www.everyyogi.com/stress.

Kung Fu at Unity Church

Unity's UU Kung Fu practice group, *The House of the Upright Ox*, approaches martial arts as spiritual practice focused on resolving conflict on multiple levels. *Hung Gar* Kung Fu is a Chinese martial art which emulates the moment and disposition of the Tiger, Snake, Crane, Dragon, and Leopard. Practice is led by Unity Church member Bryan Kujawski who has been practicing and teaching martial arts for many years. This free class meets on Saturday mornings in the Body Room from 10:00 a.m.-noon, and is for any level of experience, ages 16–106. You can simply show up! Questions? Contact Bryan at bryan.kujawski@capella.edu.

Rainbow Chalice Alliance

Pick up your pie!

If you ordered a pie during Unity's Rainbow Chalice Alliance (RCA) annual Pi(e) Day Bake Sale, pies will be available for pick up on Sunday, March 12, after each service.



Join the Project Home Leadership Team

Unity Church welcomes homeless families with children to stay overnight in our Religious Education rooms during the entire month of May. On Sunday, March 19, the Project Home leadership team will meet to begin preparations for their stay. The team would love to have more folks participate! Much of the work is behind the scenes:

- Do you have computer skills? You could help manage our volunteer data base.
- An outgoing personality? Help us recruit volunteers on Sundays in April.
- A strong back? Help move furniture and tubs around on move-in and move-out days.

For more information please contact Justine at 651-760-8131.

Worship Associates Sought

We are now seeking applicants to serve as Worship Associates for the next term. Worship Associates must be members of the church and make a commitment to serve for two years, beginning in April 2017. Worship Associates are expected to attend three group meetings throughout the year to discuss and develop themes and topics for the Sunday services. Each associate works with a minister or other service leader to develop and conduct three to four services during the church year. Please review and complete the application available online at <http://bit.ly/ucwa2017> and submit it via email to Brian Newhouse at newhousebrians@gmail.com.

Help Provide a Meal for Jeremiah Families

Help cook a meal at The Jeremiah Program (932 Concordia Avenue, St. Paul), a residence and education program for single moms and their children. Meals are provided before evening classes and volunteers are needed to help with preparation on these dates: Tuesday, March 21; Thursday, April 20. Contact Karen Buggs at 651-297-0111 or buggs745@hotmail.com.

March Soup Supper Menu

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

March 5: Wild rice soup with bacon

March 12: Chili

March 19: Moroccan meatball soup // Black-eyed pea stew

March 26: TBD

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Recovery Ministry

Thursday, March 9 • 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 feel you qualify, then you do and are welcome. This is a supportive group within this community to meet people where they are and build connections. If you have questions or to request child care, please contact Jessica Clay at jessica@unityunitarian.org.

LGBTQ+ Community and Support Group

A place for you to come and be in community with other LGBTQ people, wherever you are in your journey. This is an intergenerational place for good times and difficult times, all ages and all identities welcome; including but not limited to transgender, gender non-conforming, genderqueer, bisexual, lesbian, gay, and queer people. Meetings will be held at Unity Church on the first Sunday of the month, March 5, at 12:30 p.m., and the third Sunday of the month, March 19, at 6:30 p.m.

St. Patrick's Day Painting Social

Friday, March 17 • 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Have fun connecting with new friends as we help paint the Religious Education classroom doors! We will come together to have fun and bring color to the R.E. hallways!



The entire family is welcome for dinner and entertainment. There will be a movie and art activity for the kids. Adults will lead the painting and prep of the R.E. doors. Older children who want to paint can partner with their adult. If people want to help, but don't want to paint, there will be other projects and activities available. The evening will begin with a potluck supper from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Bring your favorite dish, drink, or something to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. RSVP online at <http://bit.ly/patpaint> or to Michelle Hill by Friday, March 10.

Elders Circle

Please join us for our March Elders Circle on Tuesday, March 21, at 1:00 p.m., in the Center Room. The focus of our gathering will be on Unity's permanent art collection. We'll view some of the collection and learn not only intriguing history, but also the politics of hanging art. Discussion leaders, Paul Rogne and Marty Rossmann, both Unity Art Team members, will help us to think about the role of art at Unity Church. Questions? Contact Jessica Clay at jessica@unityunitarian.org.

Young Adult Group

The Young Adult group is growing! Join us on Tuesday, March 28, 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.

Unity and Above

Deepening Our Covenant

Unity Church-Unitarian and Above Every Name Ministries have been in partnership for several years. As we continue to live into our covenant as progressive religious communities, Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., will be offering a series of programs in March exploring the themes of sin, sacrament, and community. All are welcome and encouraged to join!

Interfaith Perspectives on Sacrament

Wednesday, March 15 • 7:15-8:30 p.m.

Ritual and sacrament are very common parts of both Unitarian Universalism and Christianity. Join Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., as they discuss what sacrament is and why it is important to create space in community to engage in meaningful ritual.

Practicing Confession

Wednesday, March 22 • 7:15-8:30 p.m.

During this month where we are exploring the theme of sin, we must also practice ways of naming when we miss the mark as human beings or when we break our covenants with others. Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., will lead an inclusive experience where we can practice the sometimes difficult task of confession.

Beloved Communion

Sunday, March 26 (Sanctuary) • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Progressive interpretations of the act of Communion invites us to share in an experience where we can recognize our shared humanity and our interdependence. Joining in Communion together, is an opportunity for us to be reminded we are not alone on this journey. Above Every Name Ministries warmly welcomes members and friends of Unity Church-Unitarian for an inclusive Communion during their weekly worship service.

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*. Unitarian Universalism is perfectly situated to promote constructive multi-faith engagement for increased understanding and enhanced harmony. Success will depend on a new understanding of what it means to "be engaged." If you are interested in attending the conference, please contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org. Conference details are online at www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly.

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.

March 1

Dinner: (Sudan) Ful Medames (roasted beans), Al Aswad (tomato salad), aubergine dip, bread

What You always Wanted to Know about Islam and Muslims

The class will introduce basic terminology, demographics, and differences between religion and culture. You will learn about the beliefs and practices of Muslims as well as religious celebrations. You will also have the opportunity to get your questions answered first hand. *Memoona Ghani's day job is a business analyst at the University of Minnesota, but most of her nights and weekends are dedicated to serving the community. She leads the IMPACT volunteer initiative for Qabeelat Madinatayn (MN chapter of the Al-Maghrib Institute). She is also part of the Speakers Bureau for the Islamic Resource Group which provides education resources and tools to the community about Islam and Muslims. Her passion is breaking stereotypes and myths about Islam and Muslims through blogging. <https://engagemn.com/category/memoona-ghani/>*

Bear Witness Film Screening

On September 23, 2015, two Minnesota explorers decided to spend a year in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, to raise awareness to the threat of sulfide-ore copper mining on the wilderness edge. Join us for a special viewing of *Bear Witness*, the short film showcasing their experience in the BWCA and their efforts to protect it. Staff from the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters will also give a presentation and answer questions. <https://www.savetheboundarywaters.org/>

New Family Religious Education 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.

Yoga Movement and Mindfulness: Saucha

We'll start our study of the Niyamas (observances) with Saucha, which means cleanliness. The practice of Saucha means cleanliness of body, mind, spirit and surroundings, all helping to direct us towards a pure and positive life. Our meditation this week will include the practice of Trataka (candle gazing) to focus our attention and bring our minds to a place of pure calm. Bring a yoga mat if you have one. There will be a few extras available.

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!

Learn and Play Go: A Chinese Board Game

March 8

Dinner: (Iran) Tahchin Morgh (baked rice and chicken), Borani Kadoo (zucchini in garlic tomato sauce), mixed greens salad with fresh herbs, dark chocolate dipped clementines

Cynthia Orange reads from her new book, *Take Good Care: Finding Your Joy in Compassionate Caregiving*

In a time when 40 million people provide care for family members, older adults, and people with special needs, we should all be experts at it. Instead, we often struggle with caring for others and forget to take good care of ourselves. Come hear author Cynthia Orange read from her just-released book which has been called, "A rare combination of inspiration and insight," and which brings together compelling caregivers' stories, advice from leading experts in the field, and her own hard-won wisdom to capture the subtle differences between caretaking and caregiving.

Connecting: Creating Community in Any Setting

Connecting with others is central to living a rich and loving life. But connecting can be hard and dividing can be easy, so how do we rise to the occasion? Unity Church member Mike LaFleur has been active in welcoming people for all of his 15 years as a UU. Serving first on the welcome team at First Parish in Milton, MA, and now here at Unity Church, Mike is constantly scanning coffee hours for visitors and has only limited fear when he is the new guy on the scene! Mike has crafted a workshop which helps participants learn simple and safe ways of beginning conversations and will be helpful to anybody who wants to connect with new people.

Mother/Daughter Movie: *Akeehlah and the Bee*

Please join Unity Church moms and daughters (grades 6 & up) for a female focused film. The following month, we'll discuss (nothing too formal) the previous month's film during dinner.

Yoga Movement and Mindfulness: Santosha

This week's theme, Santosha, means learning to find contentment with what we have and where we are. Santosha teaches us to live in the present and feel true satisfaction. As we move through poses and mudra (hand gestures) and explore mantra (song) related to contentment, we will take time to reflect on the idea of practicing Santosha.

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.

Learn and Play Go: A Chinese Board Game Tween Group resumes tonight!

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

March 15

Dinner: (Somalia) Tangy and zesty chicken, braised cabbage and carrots, quinoa and pomegranate salad, Somali rice

Resolution: A Concert with College of Wooster Chorus

Unity Church is delighted to welcome the Wooster Chorus as they travel on tour. Wooster Chorus is the premier choral ensemble at the college, collaborating annually with the Cleveland Orchestra. Enthusiastic about the performance of new music, Wooster has recently premiered works by several American composers including Eric Whitacre and Jake Runestad. Admission is free and a freewill offering will be taken.

Open Page Writing Session: The Hissing of Sin

Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

We'll reflect on different understandings of sin, and what they can teach us about living our faith in challenging times.

UU History Book Club

Want to learn more about UU history? Curious about all those great authors quoted in Sunday sermons? Join the monthly UU History Book Club. March's discussion will be on the book *A Stream of Light* by Conrad Wright.

Interfaith Perspectives on Sacrament

Ritual and sacrament are very common parts of both Unitarian Universalism and Christianity. Join Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., as they discuss what sacrament is and why it is important to create space in community to engage in meaningful ritual.

Yoga Movement and Mindfulness: Tapas

Tapas is the practice of self-discipline, especially around being willing to stick with something that's hard for us. In a practice of Tapas, we are encouraged to stay in the fire until we are able to find the blessing. In this week's practice we will pay particular attention to how we respond to yoga poses that challenge our egos.

Textile Arts

Learn and Play Go: A Chinese Board Game Tween Group

March Wellspring Wednesday Meals

This month at Unity Church, our Wellspring Wednesday meals will celebrate the rich cultural diversity, food, and farming traditions that immigrants bring to our community. The menus come from countries and communities who are currently facing potential bans and deportation. We share them in the spirit of resistance and solidarity.

Recognizing that some of the cuisine might be adventuresome for younger members of Unity Church, we will offer specifically kid-friendly meals each week as well.

March 22

Dinner: (Mexico) Tamales, rice and beans, guacamole

Book discussion on *A Good Time for the Truth* facilitated by Unity Church member and poet Kate Kysar

Focusing on the book, *A Good Time for the Truth*, this three-part series will offer insights from the book's editor, Sun Yung Shin, facilitated discussion of the book's essays, and guided writing on our experiences of race and whiteness. *A Good Time for the Truth* presents sixteen of Minnesota's best writers, exploring and exposing their lived realities as people of color. Their essays will deepen readers' understanding of race and inspire participants' reflection and writing on their own experiences of race and whiteness. See page 13 for details.

Practicing Confession

During this month where we are exploring the theme of Sin, we must also practice ways of naming when we miss the mark as human beings or when we break our covenants with others. Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., will lead an inclusive experience where we can practice the sometimes difficult task of confession.

Yoga Movement and Mindfulness: Svadhyaya

Practicing Svadhyaya, self study, helps us learn to recognize our most true self. By studying the self and recognizing our habits and thought processes, we learn how much of what we do and think is far from who we really know we are. This week's practice will encourage us to separate deep truth from superficial fiction.

Unity Ukesters

Learn and Play Go: A Chinese Board Game Tween Group

March 29

Dinner: (Libya) Curried chicken legs, pickled carrot salad, Boosla (chickpeas and onion), rice

Reading, comments and book discussion by anthology editor and poet Sun Yung Shin

Focusing on the book, *A Good Time for the Truth*, the second offering of this three-part series will share insights from the book's editor, Sun Yung Shin. See page 13 for details.

Welcome to Unity

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.

Yoga Movement and Mindfulness: Ishvara Pranidhana

The practice of Ishvara Pranidhana, surrender, means if we are able to completely surrender our individual ego identities to our higher self, we will attain the identity of the Divine. This week, we'll contemplate what that sense of harmony would look and feel like for each of us.

Learn and Play Go: A Chinese Board Game Tween Group

PARISH HALL ARTISTS / BOOK SALE

March Parish Hall Artists

Katherine Simon Frank

"Wild" things have figured large in my life and comprise my earliest memories. These creatures include our family pets; wild birds, chipmunks and raccoons in our garden; deer encountered on our wilderness hikes; and fish and crabs and more birds surrounding us on visits to lakes and ocean beaches. Year-round as I come and go, singing birds perched on branches by my door chirp blessings goodbye and welcome me home. All wildlife inspires me to create the hopping, singing, soaring fiber birds that populate my quilted works.

Birds, plants, and other living beings appear on most of the fabrics I choose. Many of the quilt blocks I choose represent abstract animals and plants. Fabrics are my "paints." I cut them into shapes that I sew back together into blocks. Other fabric provides shapes and images that I cut out and applique or collage onto a background. Piece by piece these blocks and applied elements create my rich fiber environments.

My mother and both my grandmothers taught me to sew, embroider, knit, and weave. Over time, I've settled almost exclusively on making quilts and quilted wall-hangings. There's something about the richness of color and wide variety of textures that keep luring me to work in fiber. For a few years in my early twenties my exploration into three-dimensional clay structures and a life-long fascination with folded 3D origami objects lead me to add elements on some quilt surfaces creating dimension, shadows, and surface textures.

Currently I am challenging myself to create flat surfaces that appear to have depth, inviting the viewer to walk into these nature-filled environments. Please enter and imagine yourself in a wild, peaceful place.

Peggy Wright

Playing with color and texture is my passion. I love to get lost in the surface of fabric, using hue, texture, and form to explore the world. I think the sense of touch is a lost sense in Western society and through dyes, paints, fabric, and thread, I work to create a tactile surface that invites the viewer to look more closely.

Because glorious color is important to me, I first dye, paint, and/or print using white cotton fabric, but stitching provides texture, a crucial element. Sometimes I paint a background to set the stage for my machine stitching. Sometimes I use one of my hand-dyed pieces as a background. In my printmaking, I may use my painted or dyed fabric as the ground, color the ground as part of the printing process, or paint it after I have printed an image. I use regular and thickened dyes, acrylic and textile paints, oil paints, and pigment inks, and then I add the free machine stitching.

I use my skills with color and texture to make art about the natural world. When I moved to St. Paul in 1974, I immediately sought out outdoor adventures. In my art I want to show the essence of the emotions that I experience when I participate in nature: a love of its beauty, a feeling of connection with the plants and animals around me, and a concern for the future because of our destructive habits. Therefore, I usually focus on a natural form. I have been creating some evolving series — trees and leaves, water, flowers, and curvilinear abstracts such as curves, circles, and serpentine lines. All my work is actually abstract because I want to focus on color and texture, not realistic details.

Peggy and Kathie have both had wide recognition for their work and are among ten fiber artists featured in *Essays from the American Midwest: The Quiltmaker's Story*, edited by Jennifer Wilder.

You are invited to meet the artists on Sunday, March 5, in the Parish Hall, after the 9:00 a.m. service. An artists reception will be held on Friday, March 10, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. All are welcome.

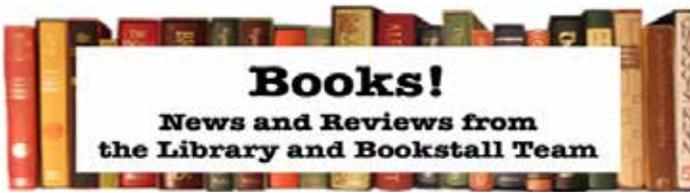
USED BOOK SALE March 25-26



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 March 19. Please no reference or text books.

Saturday, March 25
8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 26
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
\$5 Fill-A-Bag on Sunday
from 2:00–4:30 p.m.



How to Become a Real Patriot? Love the Stranger

From Shelley Butler, Library and Bookstall Team

In the Foreword to *Underground America: Narratives of Undocumented Lives*, Luis Alberto Urrea (Mexican-American poet and writer) says, "In listening lies wisdom. Decide whatever you want to decide.... But first, inform yourself.... Real patriots are not afraid of the truth, and they are not afraid to love the stranger. How can we understand the problem if we don't listen? How can we fix it if we don't understand it?" Reading *Underground America* is an act of listening; real people from many different countries tell their stories of coming to the U.S., making a life but living in fear, and for some, being deported.

In Janne's beautiful sermon last month, "Patient and Purposeful Love," she called on us to move through the world with love, and to not only open our church doors as a sanctuary but to be a sanctuary for each other. One of those ways in which many of us are called upon to be just this is through caregiving. Cynthia Orange offers us insight into the challenge for so many of us in her new book, *Take Good Care: Finding Your Joy in Compassionate Caregiving*. Endorsed by the Rev. Dr. Gretchen Thompson and many others, with a foreword by Susan Allan Toth (*No Saints Around Here: A Caregiver's Days*). *Take Good Care* will be released on March 7. Hear Cynthia read at Unity Church on March 8 (see page 10).



A Good Time for the Truth

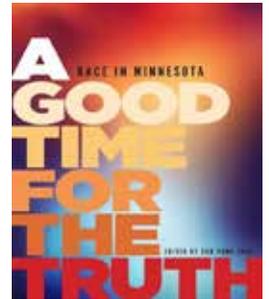
Reading, Writing and Talking about Race

Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m. • March 22 and 29 and April 5

All sessions are held at Unity Church

Led by writers Sun Yung Shin, Kathryn Kysar and Karen Hering

Focusing on the book, *A Good Time for the Truth*, this three-part series will offer insights from the book's editor, Sun Yung Shin, facilitated discussion of the book's essays, and guided writing on our experiences of race and whiteness. *A Good Time for the Truth* presents sixteen of Minnesota's best writers, exploring and exposing their lived realities as people of color. Their essays will deepen readers' understanding of race and inspire participants' reflection and writing on their own experiences of race and whiteness.



"You will not be able to read this book without changing," says author Alexis Pate.

Wednesday, March 22 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Book discussion facilitated by Unity Church member and poet Kate Kysar

Wednesday, March 29 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Reading, comments and book discussion by anthology editor and poet Sun Yung Shin

Wednesday, April 5 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Guided writing session on race and whiteness led by literary minister Karen Hering

Copies of *A Good Time for the Truth* are available for purchase from the church Bookstall and local and on-line booksellers; it is also available at the church library and public libraries. Email karen@unityunitarian.org if you plan to attend.

Open Page Writing Sessions

Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing session participants use stories, poetry, science, history, images and objects to reflect on the month's theme in their own words and on their own pages. No writing experience is necessary. RSVP required to Karen Hering at karen@unityunitarian.org.

The Hissing of Sin

Wednesday, March 15 • 7:00-9:00 p.m. • Unity Church
We'll reflect on different understandings of sin and what they can teach us about living our faith in challenging times.

What Saves Us: Writing About Redemption

Wednesday, April 19 • 7:00-9:00 p.m. • Unity Church
This session explores the many different parachutes that save us, as we reflect on the topic of redemption.

When Silence Speaks
A Contemplative Evening of Poetry
and Song with Naomi Shihab Nye
and Sara Thomsen

Sunday, March 26, 2017
7:00 - 8:30 pm
Unity Church Sanctuary

Poet Naomi Shihab Nye and singer/songwriter Sara Thomsen lead poetry, song and silence, opening our hearts to compassion, community and creativity.

Cost: \$15. Register through Wisdom Ways: wisdomwayscenter.org or 651-696-2788.
Financial assistance is available—contact Janne Eller-Isaacs.



MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

The Kids Are All Right

From Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries



I was raised with belief in a loving God, nurturing and good. Cross him, however, at great peril. My mother embodied this notion in her parenting — “Be good and it’s cookies and love; be bad and be well smote!”

I am by nature easy going and lenient. I like everything nice. But cross a line and feel my wrath! That line might feel arbitrary to some, but to me it’s quite simply the difference between doing something “right” and doing something “wrong.” Wrong is a sin.

No need for discussion. Makes for pretty clear parenting.

As a youth leader, I would not mind being backed up with such a clear ethic.

“Don’t Sin!” Why? “Well, do you understand Hell?”

Alas, the notion of Hell is quaint to our youth, and sin, while still possibly relevant, can be more of a conversation than a path to eternal damnation. How will we compel our young people if we can’t threaten them?! How will they become committed to do right?!

One of our high school seniors, Zoe Redfern-Hall, spoke to her peers at YouthCON in February. She said:

I don’t run onto the highway because I want to feel powerful. No. It’s because of this writhing, knotted feeling — not a good one. When it writhes I am scared, frozen, knowing what I must do, wanting someone else to do it. But I know, and can hear from deep within my soul, an ache telling me what I already know. What I do, I do because I know it’s right, because I want to know a world filled with love. Because I am a bit selfish, because I want to see respect bloom across this nation. Because I want to build equity, to build a platform so strong we can jump, so much higher than I ever thought possible. So I raise my voice, I chant, I lobby — inhale, exhale.

It seems like somehow she is getting it. Maybe better than us. I think the kids are all right.

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 for camp at www.unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html. Scholarships available just ask!

Camp UniStar



Would you enjoy a week on a beautiful island retreat where you can unplug, unwind, and enjoy nature? A place where you can learn something new and engage with a village of friends who are largely rooted in Unitarian Universalist values? Camp UniStar is a special week-long rustic retreat for individuals, couples and families with shared values. Reachable only by water, the camp is surrounded by the Chippewa National Forest on Star Island in Cass Lake, one of the largest lakes in northern Minnesota, near Bemidji. Visit www.campunistar.org to plan your summer adventure!

June 10-17: Helping Hands

June 17-24: Youth Week 1

June 24-July 1: Youth Week 2

July 1-8: Capture the Moment

July 8-15: Justice on the Prairie

July 15-22: Animals & Landscapes of Star Island

July 22-29: Clean Energy Revolution

July 29-August 5: Dance, Music, Story

August 5-12: Win, Lose, or Draw?

August 12-19: Yoga & Writing

August 19-26: Bread for Body & Soul

August 26-September 2: The Gospel of Mary Oliver

Medley Village

Preschool Program Housed at Unity Church

Are you looking for preschool options for your 3-5 year old child? Did you know Medley Village is a newly opened preschool program housed in Unity? Medley Village is a high quality and unique educational experience that blends the Montessori method with the Reggio Emilia approach and includes rich creative art and nature learning. The program combines cognitive and creative capacities to offer a holistic approach to education, including flexible schedules and small classroom size. Enrollment is now being accepted for children ages 33 months-five years, with 1-5 days per week, morning preschool options available. Visit www.medleyvillage.com or contact Anna Johnson 651-210-1458 for more information.



MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Notes: Foote Sunday

From Ruth Palmer
Director of Music Ministries



"Of all the things that exist, we breathe and wake and turn it into song."

— Mark Nepo

We are so fortunate at Unity Church to offer an annual Sunday of music on the first Sunday of May. This event is made possible, in part, by a fund established in memory of Arthur Foote, minister at Unity Church from 1945-1970, and now fondly known as "Foote Sunday".

This year we focus on the gift that music gives to celebrate, inspire, memorialize, encourage and comfort; to literally turn everything in our lives into song. Beginning with this issue, I would like to share information and background on various pieces and elements you will hear and experience on May 7 . . . this year's "Foote Sunday."

We will be doing several pieces with combined adult choirs: Unity Choir, Unity Singers, and Women's Ensemble. One of these works is "Hymn to the Eternal Flame" by Minnesota composer, Stephen Paulus, and librettist, Michael Dennis Browne. This is a profound piece found in the larger work, *To Be Certain of the Dawn*. The stunning happening and accomplishment of this monumental musical offering is best described in the words of the librettist. It is an example of how humanity grapples with and marks challenges of hate and hopeful healing through the arts. A note from librettist Michael Dennis Browne:

This oratorio was commissioned by Fr. Michael O'Connell, rector of the Basilica of Saint Mary, and intended as a gift from the Christian community to the Jewish community. The first performance was at the Basilica in November 2005, a year which marked the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of the death camps and the fortieth anniversary of the Vatican

document Nostra Aetate (In Our Time), which had much to do with the renewal of dialogue between Jews and Christians. The twentieth and twenty-first performances of the work are being held in San Diego and Salem, Oregon, in the month of April.

In Part One (Renewal), we hear from the chorus Christian grief at their failure to support Jews in the terrible ordeal of the Shoah and for many centuries of "the teaching of contempt." We hear their desire for teshuvah—repentance, atonement, a return to the spiritual roots of their faith in Judaism. We also hear four blessings sung by the children: this is an example of the impulse to praise God, daily, frequently, even while storm clouds are gathering. We also hear from the cantor the Sh'ma and phrases from the Kaddish, as well as the introduction of the recurring theme "You should love your neighbor as yourself."

*In Part Two (Remembrance), the soloists sing dramatizations of four photographs taken from Roman Vishniac's book *Children of a Vanished World*—glimpses of what Geoffrey Hartman calls "a vanished life in its vigor." The chorus continues with more expressions of Christian remorse together with a wish to "grow and be known by our love." We also hear quotation from the Nuremberg laws of the 1903s with their inhuman constrictions upon Jewish life. The section concludes with *Hymn to the Eternal Flame*, which is based on the children's memorial of multiple reflected flames at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.*

Hymn to the Eternal Flame, text:

*Ev'ry face is in you, ev'ry voice, ev'ry sorrow in you,
Ev'ry pity, ev'ry love, ev'ry mem'ry, woven into fire.
Ev'ry breath is in you, ev'ry cry, ev'ry longing in you,
Ev'ry singing, ev'ry hope, ev'ry healing, woven into fire.
Ev'ry heart is in you, ev'ry tongue, ev'ry trembling in you,
Ev'ry blessing, ev'ry soul, ev'ry shining, woven into fire.*

In Part Three (Visions), several themes are woven: the desire for Jews and Christians to walk together in solidarity of interfaith in "the country of justice," however scarred the world; divine promises as revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures; quotations taken from interviews with three Minnesota-based survivors and the daughter of one survivor. At the conclusion, both choruses, together with the cantor, sing "You should love your neighbor as yourself" in Hebrew, and we hear the sound of the shofar, with which the work began.

See you on Foote Sunday, May 7!

Sing on!

One Voice Mixed Chorus Presents Well-Versed

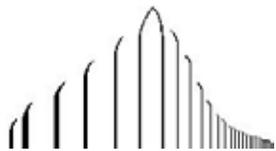
Saturday, March 18 • 7:30 p.m.

Ordway Concert Hall

Buy tickets at www.ovmc.org!

On Saturday, March 18, One Voice returns to the Ordway for *Well-Versed*, a celebration of LGBTQ youth and an evening of choral music, strings and poetry with New York's hottest string quartet, Well-Strung. Inspired by the poetry of local LGBTQ youth, *Well-Versed* also features the premiere of a four-movement composition for One Voice and Well-Strung sponsored by the American Composer's Forum with text by poetry slam champion, Sierra DeMulder, and music by composer George Maurer. Youth poets from RECLAIM, a local community organization offering support to queer and trans youth, are featured as spoken word artists.





UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

Sanctuary Entrance: 733 Portland Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
Business Entrance: 732 Holly Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456 • fax: 651-228-0927 • www.unityunitarian.org • unity@unityunitarian.org

JUSTIN CUMMINS, CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REV. JANNE ELLER-ISAACS, CO-MINISTER
REV. ROB ELLER-ISAACS, CO-MINISTER
BARBARA HUBBARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REV. LISA FRIEDMAN, MINISTER OF CONGREGATIONAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO. 1141

**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

Unity Church-Unitarian presents the 28th Annual Children's Musical

A timeless tale about
digging deep into who we are
to overcome bias and
find our interconnectedness.

SHADES OF HUMANITY

THURSDAY MARCH 2 • 7:00 PM

FRIDAY MARCH 3 • 7:00 PM

SATURDAY MARCH 4 • 5:30 PM

Unity's 6th, 7th, and 8th graders
Music and Lyrics by Sandy Waterman
Written and Directed by Mary Blouin Auffert

Buy tickets in the Parish Hall on Sundays,
at www.unityunitarian.org, and at the door!

\$6/adult // \$4/child // \$20/family