

OPEN PAGE Writing Sessions

"Whether we are writers or not, words help us reach beyond ourselves to find and name and claim our greater wholeness.

They help us summon our best possibilities, bridging between the world as it is today and the place of justice and peace that we long for it to be."

Rev. Karen Hering
Literary Minister and OPEN PAGE facilitator

"OPEN PAGE guided writing sessions create windows to the spark of the divine that we all have but don't always or easily discover."

Writing session participant

OPEN PAGE explores the power and possibilities of story, metaphor and poetry in programs now available to congregations and other communities.



Imagine...

... hearing your own quiet inner voice find the words to explore and express your faith, your story and your wonder.

... holding a common object in your hand – a piece of thread, a broken mirror, a fragile egg, a hammer and nail – and finding in it an uncommon perspective on your own deepest questions.

... a small gathering of people, each pausing to listen to the "still, small voice within" and then sharing with one another the shining truths they've heard.

... discovering the power of words for deepening faith and building community.

OPEN PAGE is made possible by support from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, Unity Church–Unitarian and individual donors.

 **UNITY CHURCH–UNITARIAN**
732 Holly Avenue • St. Paul, MN 55104
651-228-1456 • unity@unityunitarian.org
www.unityunitarian.org

OPEN PAGE Writing Sessions



Engaging writing as a spiritual practice, a tool for social action and a way to increase fluency in the languages of faith.

“Provocative, probing, tender, dear, empowering, inspiring, thoughtful.” — OPEN PAGE participant

What is a guided writing session?

OPEN PAGE guided writing sessions are invitations to the creative spirit, opportunities to correspond with “the still, small voice within.” Focused on a particular theme, they employ poetry, small objects and visual images in a series of simple writing prompts. Drawing from the wisdom of the world religions, history, literature and science, a thematic framework offers openings for participants to record their own associations, stories, longings and discoveries. As they write, participants develop their own language of faith and articulate their own personal worldview. They experience writing as a spiritual practice and as a tool for personal growth and social action.

Suitable for groups of all sizes, and for adults or teens, the 2-3 hour sessions feature themes such as Thresholds, Vocation, Blessing, Brokenness, Transformation, Yin and Yang, Self and Other, Hope, and Redemption. See the web site for a complete list of themes.

How do they work in different settings?

OPEN PAGE sessions have been offered in congregations and in other community settings as a freestanding educational program (singly or in a series), as an activity in day or weeklong retreats, and as part of a congregation’s ongoing programming such as small group ministries or social action or pastoral care groups. They have been used by groups for people who are unemployed to write about Vocation, by Confirmation or Coming of Age classes to write about Belonging, and by travel groups to write about the meaning of Pilgrimage. In communities of faith, participants’ writing can also be fed back into the life of the congregation with powerful effect, integrated into worship, published in print or on-line or shared in coffeehouse events.

Why writing?

OPEN PAGE sessions are not just for those with an interest in writing. They are for anyone who wishes to explore their own story in the context of the larger human narrative of hope and faith. They are for those longing to engage more deeply in conversations where faith speaks to the issues of our times and for congregations wishing to include more voices in those conversations.

What are OPEN PAGE participants saying?

“Very beautifully done. Very calming, focusing, joyful.”

“It helped me name what matters. It made me feel better. It helped me think clearly.”

“A safe and holy space.”

“Karen is a wonderful guide to discovering new ideas and words that had been lying dormant. I was surprised at the memories and associations that I found.”

Project Leadership

OPEN PAGE sessions are led by the Rev. Karen Hering, consulting literary minister at Unity Church-Unitarian, who has been immersed in the work of words for over 30 years. In addition to the OPEN PAGE sessions offered at Unity Church and elsewhere, her ministry includes preaching and retreat leadership; facilitating *lectio divina* or meditative reading using poetry and scriptures; workshops on writing and social action; and literary tours in Nicaragua to engage in a global conversation about the transformative power of writing and imagination. A graduate of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, her writing has been published in numerous periodicals and meditation anthologies.



“Writing can be a way to mine our lives for the inner truths that guide us. It can also help us share with others that which is too big to be carried by one person alone.”

Rev. Karen Hering
Literary Minister and OPEN PAGE facilitator

Schedule an OPEN PAGE Writing Session



For more information, visit <http://www.unityunitarian.org/literary-ministry.html> or contact Karen Hering at karen@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456, ext. 128.