

commUNITY

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Unity

This month we mark the start of a new church year by instituting an integrated, intergenerational curriculum based on monthly themes. Each month, from September through June, worship, religious education, covenant groups and Wellspring Wednesday programs will offer opportunities to contemplate, consider, contend with and discuss a theological theme. Our hope is that this approach will bind us more closely together and inform our lives in effective and positive ways. This month's theme is... Unity.

The word "unity" points to a number of our key values. Each church year begins with a ritual at which we merge the waters of the world. On September 7, when we come together at Harriet Island to worship as one family, we will embody one essential meaning of "unity." As people who care deeply about the earth and its creatures we affirm and promote the understanding that we are part of "the interconnected web of all existence." Unity has an ecological dimension. When we recognize that everything is connected we are inspired to be mindful of the effects of our actions. Native Americans ask us to live with an awareness of seven generations. This worldview refers not only to the future but to the past and to the present as well. We are asked to remember three generations past, to imagine three generations forward and to live in the moment informed both by history and prophetic vision.

The name of our church, Unity Church-Unitarian, recalls the years when Unitarianism and Universalism were struggling with whether or not to remain within the Christian fold. In the wake of the Transcendentalist controversy, a number of young ministers inspired by

Emerson and Parker in particular, felt they could no longer in good conscience call themselves Christian. In the latter half of the 19th century

both Unitarianism and Universalism were avowedly Christian movements. Church leaders were wary of these Transcendentalist radicals and sought to exclude them from the ministry. Fleeing the confines of the Eastern seaboard, the radicals moved to the Western frontier, to Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and yes, to Minnesota. They called themselves "the Unity Men." They preached that the experience of the Holy was the same regardless of language or religious tradition. They taught that beliefs were not the essence of religion, that "deeds not creeds" were at the heart of moral life and that the three pillars of liberal religion ought to be freedom, fellowship and character. William Channing Gannett, second minister of Unity Church, and his friend and colleague, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, were the key leaders of the Unity movement within the liberal church. It was Gannett's essay *Things Commonly Believed Among Us* which finally convinced Unitarians to move beyond Christian sectarianism and embrace a larger view.

So the word Unity has an historical meaning for us which in turn points to a theological position. If one believes that the experience of the Holy is the same experience whether one is a Christian or a Jew, a Buddhist or a Hindu or a Muslim, it's only logical to posit that God is either all or nothing. One experience. One God. Absolute unity. The minute one begins to cut creation up into pieces claiming one piece is godly and another is not, one has planted the seeds of violence and

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Worship Theme Resources

Books

American Transcendentalism (2007) Unitarian Universalist historian Phillip Gura offers a vibrant story of the philosophers and activists who shaped the American mind and led liberal religion beyond sectarian limits.

Yes to a Global Ethic: Voices from Religion and Politics edited by Hans Kung.

The Mind's Eye by Timothy Ferris. Exploring the scientific research about mystic experiences of the unity of all.

Infinite in All Directions (2004) the great physicist, Freeman Dyson, publishes his *Gifford Lectures* in praise of diversity.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X (1965) the classic story of one man's journey from racial isolation to all embracing love.

Film

The Englishman Who Went Down a Hill and Came up a Mountain (1995) a family comedy in which the whole village responds to disappointing news.

Amazing Grace (2007) a marvelously well-crafted historical drama about the struggle to end slavery in England.

Norma Rae (1979) Sally Field stars in this film about union organizing.

Pay it Forward (2000) how one boy wants to make a real difference. Do watch it with your older children.

On the Web

Gannett's essay: *Things Commonly Believed Among Us* at www.unityunitarian.org.

PARENTS!
Check out the special worship theme activity and resources for kids on page 9.

I am part and parcel of the whole and cannot find God apart from the rest of humanity. — Mahatma Gandhi

JUST WORDS / WHEEL OF LIFE

Just Words

Forty years ago I helped conduct a worship service intended to let the adults in the congregation know what a mess they had made of the world. We were all about confrontation. As I recall the opening hymn was "The Times They are A' Changing."

"Come mothers and fathers throughout the land and
don't criticize what you can't understand.
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your
command; your old world is rapidly aging.
Get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand,
cause the times they are a' changing."

After repeated diatribes against the established order, each of which held the gathered congregation personally responsible for every evil from slavery to the war in Vietnam, the service came to its crescendo. One of our techies had scratched a Simon and Garfunkle record so that the same line would repeat over and over again. "And the pattern never alters until the rat dies. And the pattern never alters until the rat dies. And the pattern never alters until the rat dies." With each repetition we brought the volume up a notch until when we were sure they couldn't stand it any more it stopped. We allowed a moment for the words to echo in the empty air and then the bell began to toll and the service was over. We were right they were wrong. It was the mid-sixties.

Last Sunday, Janne and I attended a service put on by the Tower Club. With a little help from their advisors, some of the youth of our church shared their hopes and their recipes for lives well-lived. I admit I arrived a bit wary. I know them and love them but given my own history I couldn't help but steel myself for what they might have to say. What a nourishing service it was! They were confrontive but they were also loving. Instead of get out of our way, they said where are you? Instead of recounting our failures and insisting that they could do better they called for engagement. They asked us to stop telling them they were our future and instead to carve out the time and summon the courage to work side by side right here and now. "Don't be afraid of us," they said. "Don't let us go before we're gone."

Most if not all of you know that in addition to serving as one of your ministers I am president of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA). As such I travel the country speaking to groups of my colleagues about the state of our ministry and its future. I tell them that the UUMA has three key priorities. First of all we work to strengthen the chapters where ministers meet for inspiration and mutual support. Secondly we strive to be an ever more effective partner in the work of ending racism and other oppressive systems and in helping expand Unitarian Universalism. And thirdly, I tell them, we want to foster effective, transformative ministry to and with youth. The first two they get. But the third one seems at best a distant dream and at worst work for someone else to do. Why teenagers, they wonder? Don't we already have more than enough on our plates?

It has to do with covenant. It has to do with what we ought to promise one another. It is time to move beyond the old model. We have always told our people that Unitarian Universalism is primarily about gathering and maintaining congregations. It's a good thing to do but it's not our primary purpose. Our primary purpose is to help people live lives of "integrity, service and joy." I want us all to ask ourselves, what do we want our children to learn at church? Here's how I answer that question. I want my children, our children, to learn the efficacy of daily spiritual practice, the intimacy skills needed to share deeply with strangers and a deep desire to bless the world. I can see our ministry for and with youth is urging them to grow in just those disciplines. The same disciplines, I might add, in which all of us still need to grow. My prayer for this and every new church year is that we will engage each other, our neighbors and the world more fully, that we'll learn to be less afraid and that the ministry we share will continue to touch and bless and change the world.

Yours in faith, *Rob Eller-Isaacs*

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

September 2008 marks ten years of creative quilting for Unity's Evergreen Quilters. *Thank you* to all the quilters, past and present, for your dedication to beauty, service, and community.

Happy 10th Anniversary!

In Memoriam

Anne Bosanko Green

September 20, 1924 –
August 13, 2008

In Remembrance

Frank N. Allen

August 5, 1918 - July 18, 2008
Father of Rose Allen

Many thanks!

Thank you to Unity staff member Harold Watson, Unity parent Jenny Thompson and Unity youth Neal Bauer for their work re-creating our Spirit Play classrooms this summer! Their efforts have made for a welcoming, child-friendly space!

The Church Office will be closed Monday, September 1, in observance of Labor Day.

On September 14, 2008, we will return to our three-service Sunday schedule, with services at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sunday 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 on line at www.unityunitarian.org.

September Worship Calendar - Worship Theme: *Unity*

September 7: *Merging the Waters of the World*

One 10:00 a.m. service only at Harriet Island

Bring the water you have collected from your journeys this summer and come merge the waters of the world in a service of reunion with the whole Unity Church congregation - all on the banks of the Mississippi River. Our ministers, Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs, will conduct the service and will be joined by Director of Religious Education, Kerri Meyer, 2008-09 Hallman Ministerial Intern, Leon Dunkley, and musical guests Peter Mayer and the Eclectics. Detail for this special worship service are all on the back cover of this newsletter.

September 14: *What's in a Name?* — Rob Eller-Isaacs

The founders of our church chose their words carefully. For them the word pointed to the unity of religious experience. For us the word implies a quality of curiosity, engagement and respect. Are we living up to our name? Rob will be in the pulpit and Allen Giles will serve as Worship Associate.

September 21:

E Pluribus Unum: Our Covenant With the New Americans — Janne Eller-Isaacs

Religions have an important role to play in promoting unity in a pluralistic world, but so often they provide a divisive and divided view of society. How can the liberal church be a more effective voice for unity that also honors our diversity? Janne and Worship Associate Ann Kirby McGill will explore this important issue.

September 28: *Moral Ownership* — Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs

Who are the moral owners of Unity Church? What is the relationship between personal and institutional morality? How can we move from "charity to solidarity" in our efforts for social justice? Rob and Janne will be joined by Worship Associate Jean Olson.

'Unity' continued from front cover

undermined the possibility of peace. Some traditions portray the aspects of the Holy with a wide array of images. Hindus and Buddhists bow down before a multiplicity of images but they also recognize the ultimate unity of God. Jews and Muslims (and to a large degree Unitarian Universalists) distrusting the dance of images and fearing the dangers of idolatry, imagine one God without form while slipping all too easily into anthropomorphism by worshipping "God the Father." Unity asks that we recognize, respect and celebrate it all while always being wary of those aspects of ourselves and of the world we need to guard against if evil is to be kept at bay.

If one lives secure in the knowledge that one is part of "the interconnected web of all existence," and if one believes that the experience of the Holy is one without regard to language or culture and if one holds to the theological position of the unity of God then one has no choice but to recognize that the human condition implies and requires that we cultivate a sense of social solidarity. There is a justice dimension to the concept of unity. However flawed our practice may be, as a faith tradition and, in fact, as a nation, we have committed ourselves to "e pluribus Unum," out of many, one. Our approach to social justice embodies this message as we seek to enter into partnerships with people whose core values we share, people from whom we can learn and with whom we can work for positive change. To work toward unity is to practice mutual respect across all of the dividing lines, particularly race, class and gender identity. Understood these ways unity becomes our birthright and our obligation.

Sunday Offering Recipients

September 7 — The **Iowa Flood Relief** was established by the UUA Prairie Star District. Fifteen households from the Unitarian Society of Iowa City have been flooded. Some lost everything. In addition, a number of church members are employed by the University of Iowa which suffered millions of dollars of damage. It is likely that church members' livelihoods will be affected. Through our generosity we offer a reassuring and urgent gesture of solidarity to those whose lives have been ripped apart by the raging flood waters.

September 14 — **Project for Pride in Living (PPL) Emergency Repair Program** is a decades-old program to assist low-income and disadvantaged homeowners — such as unemployed or underemployed households, families with children, the elderly and physically disabled persons living in the Twin Cities with essential home repairs that threaten the stability of their homeownership. Several PPL staff members have given presentations at Unity Church at the invitation of the Unity Church Affordable Housing Ministry Team.

September 21 — **To be announced.**

September 28 — **AMICUS** is a Minnesota not-for-profit organization with over 40 years of experience in improving public safety by helping inmates and ex-offenders through positive relationship-building, restorative justice practices and individual transition services. Through innovative programming, AMICUS helps inmates and ex-offenders reshape their lives, reach their goals, and make successful transitions from prison into the community. AMICUS is the community partner of the Unity Church Restorative Justice Ministry Team. Longtime Unity Church member, Louise Wolfram, is president of AMICUS.

LIVING OUR VALUES

Everything you wanted to know about this year's Pledge Drive but were afraid to ask...

from Marianne Combs, Pledge Team

I admit, I know of no one who actively looks forward to Unity Church's annual pledge drive. But come to think of it, shouldn't we? After all it's an exciting time for us as a congregation; it's when we actually make a commitment to fund the dreams and vision we have for the future. This is important stuff!

There are a few things you should know about this year's pledge drive.

1. The pledge drive officially begins on Sunday, September 21. This is going to be a wonderful Sunday service, with a special surprise included, so you will not want to miss it!
2. Our featured guest speaker this year is Mark Morrison Reed. He and his wife Donna served as co-ministers for 26 years, first in Rochester, New York, and then in Toronto, Ontario. He is a leader in the movement of African-American involvement in Unitarianism, and is a powerful speaker. Be sure to attend his sermon on Sunday, October 12.
3. The pledge drive officially comes to a close on Sunday, November 9. This is a crucial bit of information. Why? In May, the congregation voted to make our fiscal year (formerly July 1-June 30) coincide with our pledge year (January 1-December 31). That means that this fall we will be building the 2009 budget as our pledges come in. And...
4. The congregational meeting to approve the budget will be November 22. Thus it is imperative that we all make our pledge decisions within the period of the pledge drive, September 21-November 9, so that the Board of Trustees can approve a budget to present to the congregation on November 22.
5. We are rolling in our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and Prairie Star District (PSD) contributions into our pledges. In the past couple of years we've added a separate line where people could choose to pledge an additional \$75/\$150 dollars to cover the costs of our membership to the UUA and the PSD. This year there will not be a separate line item on the pledge card, but it is still just as important that we pay our fair share of dues to these organizations. So please, don't forget to add \$75 (the average cost of dues per member) to your pledge this fall.
6. We recognize these are difficult economic times. It's in times of stress that we really discover the power of community. And so this fall you're going to see a lot of program offerings about managing your money, funding your kids' tuition, estate planning, and more. Just as families are being affected by high gas prices and increasing costs at the grocery store, so too is our church. For some, these are uncertain financial times. But we can all give generously according to our own circumstances.

Happy Pledge Drive!

Giving to Unity – A Great ROI

from Rick Heydinger, Unity Church member

Giving to Unity Church is one of my pleasures. Why? Because I get such a handsome ROI – *return on my investment*.

It's the kind of return that feeds my soul, stretches my mind, expands my circle of friends, and even facilitates the accomplishment of my own objectives.

Unity feeds my soul through the worship services led so poignantly and thoughtfully by our ordained ministers. Yet my soul also benefits from those leading the summer services. The first Sunday in August we were given the rare treat of walking through the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve and drawn into the difficult choices they had to make. This rare combination of music, theater, and theology was good nourishment for the soul.

Unity stretches my mind when I participate in pilgrimages, whether it be Transylvania or New Orleans. I gain new perspectives when I hear our friends from Homorod St. Peter – Kinga, Csaba, Ilonka and others, describe their attachment to the land, and watch them work seven days a week to keep their dairy herds healthy and productive. It stretches my mind when I recognize that their wealth of self-sufficiency, organic farming, smaller carbon footprints, and a joy with life is a wealth that I am still seeking.

Unity expands my circle of friends when I travel to New Orleans and work rehabbing a property. As Matt Brown divides us into work teams, as Nancy Moe and I look for tools, as Ann Nelson and I hold ladders for each other, and as we celebrate our collective progress with the home owner, we are building new friendships — friendships that run deeper because of our collective efforts. And friendships that last upon the return to St. Paul.

Unity facilitates the accomplishment of objectives that I hold dear. When I felt a need to contribute to underprivileged inner-city youth, Pat Haff and Unity were there with a mentoring program at Webster School. When I felt the need to get to know people in a predominantly African-American church, people like Collin Rust, Mary Zanmiller, Terri Campbell and Kate O'Brien of the Racial Justice Outreach Team said, "We can do this, let's go," and go they did.

Yet none of these are possible without our investment in the staff, programs, and infrastructure that is Unity Unitarian. **If we want to reap these returns we must continue to invest our own money in Unity Church.**

Certainly these returns are the life accounts that are more important than bank balances or retirement funds.

Each year members of the congregation speak about their financial commitment to the church at a Sunday service during what has commonly been known as the "Pledge Drive." This year we are expanding on this idea, recognizing that sharing our stories is a significant part of what it means to be a community and considering how we support this community must not be limited to a few weeks of the year. If you are interested in sharing your thoughts in these pages, please contact Lia Rivamonte, Pledge Team member, at 651-224-6108 or lia.rivamonte@gmail.com.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / HALLMAN MINISTERIAL INTERN

Letter from the Board of Trustees

from Bob Utke, Trustee

Come one, come all. On Sunday, September 7, we are taking our tradition of Merging the Waters to the shores of the Mississippi River at Harriet Island. There will be only one service that morning at 10:00 a.m., and oh what a service it will be. This will be our first whole church celebration and service during the regular church year.

We are a great church, and we are also a big one. In a recent count we were in the top ten of all UU churches for membership and in the top three for average Sunday worship service attendance.

This will be our third year with three worship times each Sunday. When the 4:30 p.m. service was introduced my oldest daughter was in Coming of Age. With the later service, COA programming was moved to Sunday afternoon and I began attending those services. After a few weeks, I attended a morning service and was surprised to realize how long it had been since I'd seen many of my friends. During the following year I attended another morning service and I was struck by how many people I did not know at all. As each service takes on its own character, its own rhythms, I am eager for times to connect back with the whole Unity Church community. An all-congregation worship service will let us start the new church year together.

There will be music; both Peter Mayer and the Eclectics will perform during the service. There will be joy; we are having an all-church picnic following the service. There will be time to visit with old friends and to meet new ones. Please see the back page of this newsletter for all the details. So plan to come, and plan to stay awhile. See you on the 7th!



Unity Church Welcomes...

Leon Dunkley

2008-09 Hallman Ministerial Intern

Good morning, St. Paul!
Good morning, Unity Church!

I am so excited to come to Minnesota. I would like to take a moment to introduce myself to you.

My name is Leon Latimer Dunkley, Jr. I carry both my father's name (Leon Latimer, Sr.) as well as his father's name (Lockland Latimer Dunkley). I am proud of that but if you talk to my mom, Juanita, I am clearly her child. My father is okay with that. He has to be. My father is wise. My parents are both fantastic and I love them dearly. They still live in New Jersey in the home in which my sister and I were raised. My mom is a painter, my dad is an architect and my sister, Lisa, works at Princeton University.

Education is big in my family. My first career was as an educator. Teaching is still in my dearest heart. Teaching is a chance to grow and change. It is a chance to improve one's mind but it is limited. It was this limitation that brought me to the ministry. Like teaching, ministry is a chance to grow and change. It is an opportunity to explore life and love and learning. Ministry does not end at the limits of one's mind.

As an educator, I taught at Tufts University (where I was an undergraduate). As a professor, I taught at Brooklyn College and at Duke University. I hold a doctorate in the field of Musicology but have never been more challenged than I have been at the Starr King School for the Ministry here in Berkeley, California.

I have learned so much. I have grown considerably over these few years. The deepest lessons I ever learned I learned in church back in New Jersey. I grew up going to the First Unitarian Church of Monmouth County in the town of Lincroft. Reverend Harold Dean was the minister. Harold taught fearlessness and hope. He was deeply concerned with the ways of the world. He chose to be outspoken on the issue of nuclear war. He would lean in to classrooms to tell us that he was off to visit the UN, to take the tour and to listen in on the treaties that were being negotiated. He would ask if we wanted to go. We would decline — not for disinterest. We declined because we were only eight years old. That was his lesson. He took life seriously. How precious he knew life to be. What a gift he has given to me, a flower that has taken all these years to blossom.

I look forward to living and loving and learning together in full bloom.

Every blessing,
Leon Dunkley

COMMUNITY / FELLOWSHIP / LEARNING

Wellspring Wednesdays

Wellspring Wednesdays begin on **September 10!** Watch your mail for the *Fall 2008 Unity Church Event Guide and Calendar*. This guide details all Wellspring Wednesday programs through December as well as other events happening this fall!

September 10

Dinner: Welcome Back Taco Bar Fiesta!

- **Feature:** Religious Education Orientation for Families and Members — see page 9 for details
- Singing Meditation with Katy Taylor
- Kundalini Yoga

September 17

- **Feature:** Cathy Sultan, author of *Tragedy in South Lebanon: The Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006*
- Unity Men's Group: Topic TBA
- Kundalini Yoga

September 24

- **Feature:** Summit University Living at Home (SULAH) Block Nurse Program Explained with Amy Michael and Soyini Guyton
- Kundalini Yoga
- Financing Your Kid's College Education with Daniel Boyer

A Bold and Tender Heart:

A Course in Forgiveness Especially for Men

by Forgiveness Trainer Mary Hayes Grieco and the Men's Training Team of John Mischke, Paul Kirst, and Charles Ranft

This class is co-sponsored by Unity Church and The Midwest Institute for Forgiveness Training and will be offered during Wellspring Wednesday from October 8 through November 19.

This course is especially designed for men who want to learn some powerful tools for healthy relationships, and want to explore what it means to be male and soulful. Mary Hayes Grieco will teach the model and methods of *Unconditional Love and Forgiveness*, and she and her men's training team will address the challenges that men face when it comes to healing a wound in the heart, or the problem of having a fiery anger inside that needs to be expressed somehow, without violence. You will learn *The Eight Steps of Forgiving Another*, and get a chance to forgive yourself for your problems and failures, past or present. If the women or partners in your life have been encouraging you to "open up" or "share your feelings" or "get more spiritually connected," this course will help you do all of that — in a way that is right for you as a man.

The cost for this course is \$200 for church members and \$250 for the general public. Financial assistance is available. Contact the Unity Church Office or The Midwest Institute for Forgiveness Training at 612-874-6622 to register. Registration can also be done online at www.maryhayesgrieco.com.

Men's Retreat • Save the Date!

November 1-2, 2008 • Camp St. Croix

Come join with other men for two days of spiritual and practical exploration! We have decided to move the retreat to the Fall in the hopes of having warmer weather. We will gather Saturday morning at Camp St. Croix and depart Sunday after dinner. Camp St. Croix is just 30 minutes from Unity Church. These rustic accommodations help keep the retreat affordable. We are currently planning a variety of activities and workshops. Time will also be available for hikes, play, conversation or some rare alone time. We can't promise bagpipes again this year, but we are working on a bonfire. Contact Justin Schroeder at the Church Office or go to unitymen.blogspot.com for more information.

It's Time to Sign up for Circle Suppers!

As we begin another church year, you are invited to sign up to enjoy and share good food and great company with other Unity Church members and friends. Circle Suppers will start in October. Participants will meet in church members' homes. The groups will meet for eight months from October 2008 through May 2009.

There are a variety of suppers planned for families, vegetarians, those who strive to eat local, and more!

If you are interested in hosting or attending a Circle Supper, please sign up in the Parish Hall after Sunday services on September 14, 21, or 28. Suppers will begin in October and hosts will open their homes for 8 - 10 guests and potluck dishes will be organized. Hosts at one meal will be guests at another and vice versa. Questions? Contact Ryan Carlson at 651-699-2888 or rc_and_lauren@yahoo.com.

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COMMUNITY / FELLOWSHIP / LEARNING

Second Saturday Pancake Breakfasts are Back!



Did you miss out on the flap jack experience last year? This is your chance! We're having a kick-off pancake breakfast on Saturday, September 13, from 8:30–10:00 a.m.

You'll enjoy local sausage, OJ, all you can eat pancakes, and lots of lingering and good conversation. Come for breakfast, stay for the Religious Education Orientation (see page 9) afterwards! Cost: \$3 per person or \$10 per family.

Remember: Every second Saturday of the month, pancakes at Unity Church!

What's New at Unity Libraries?



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

Did you know that the library team welcomes book recommendations from teams and project groups at Unity Church? This year we've purchased books for the adult and children's libraries upon the recommendations of the poetry group, the anti-racism team and the mother-daughter book group, to name just a few. If your team or group would like to recommend a title, please e-mail Shelley Butler (sjbutler@comcast.net) or Louise Merriam (louise_merriam@yahoo.com). We want to hear from you.

Looking for a good book? Check out these recent additions to the Geneste M. Anderson Adult Library:

Red Earth, White Earth by Will Weaver. Weaver's first novel, a tale of conflict between native and white Americans in Minnesota, was made into a TV movie in 1989. Weaver is a professor at St. Cloud State University and has been compared to famed American realist John Steinbeck.

American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson by Joseph J. Ellis. Thomas Jefferson, known to hold Unitarian beliefs long before the actual founding of the denomination, was a man of many contradictions. This work explores these contradictions and in doing so, gives the reader a portrait of the man, not the icon.

Jayber Crow by Wendell Berry. Part of Berry's ongoing saga of Port William, Kentucky, this novel explores faith, doubt and organized religion. It is also an affirmation of the importance of community and friendship. Above all, it is a love story. The *Chicago Tribune* called this book a "masterpiece".

Book Club Update

Unity Church Book Clubs are open to all!

THE SECOND TUESDAY BOOK CLUB will meet from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 9, in the Gannett Room. The book they will be discussing is *Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ's Childhood Pal* by Christopher Moore. Each book has a "sponsor", who begins the meeting by presenting a bit about the author and the book.

THE FOURTH TUESDAY BOOK CLUB will meet from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 23, in the Anderson Library. The book they will be discussing is *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali. The meeting begins with a quick "go-around" to get everyone's thoughts and responses to the evening's book. Bring a question for discussion.

Osher Lifelong Learning

How Much Stuff Is Enough? *The Meaning of Ownership*

Thursdays: September 25–November 20
Time: 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Location: Unity Church–Unitarian

We are consumed with consuming in contemporary American society. What is the meaning of all this "stuff" in our lives? Learners will examine: literature and theoretical concepts surrounding changing ideas of ownership over time and across cultures, the concept of private property and the relationship of private property to political economy, psychological motivations for buying and consuming in contemporary consumer societies, what it means to live in a "culture of consumption," his/her own "philosophy" of property, the impact of consuming on environmental sustainability.

Text: *The Limits to Satisfaction: An Essay on the Problem of Needs and Commodities* by William Leiss. (Paperback: \$25 from Amazon.com)

Ten slots in this course are open to Unity Church members. Please reserve your slot by emailing Justin Schroeder at justin@unityunitarian.org.

This course is taught by Neala Schleuning, American Studies writer and educator.

Mother-Daughter Middle School Book Group

The Mother Daughter Book Club will meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of the month beginning September 23, for a girl led discussion of modern and classic books.

The September 23, meeting will be at Java Train Coffee Shop (1341 Pascal Street in St. Paul) with future meeting locations to be determined. We'll get acquainted and choose a book for our October 28, meeting. Please RSVP to millie@peapods.com.

PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP / YOUTH NOTES

Pathway to Membership at Unity Church

A series of three classes.

1. *Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers*

This class is geared to newcomers, visitors, and those seeking to learn more about Unitarian Universalism. This class will be offered

- Sunday, October 5, 12:15–1:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 5, 7:10–8:30 p.m.
- Sunday, December 14, 12:30–2:00 p.m. (with lunch)
- Wednesday, January 7, 2009, 7:10–8:30 p.m.

2. *Finding Yourself at Unity:*

A Deeper Exploration of Who We Are

Finding Yourself at Unity is the follow up class to *Welcome to Unity*. You will meet the clergy and other staff, as well as lay persons who have chosen Unity Church as their spiritual community. Content includes Unitarian Universalist and Unity Church history, opportunities to share parts of your religious journey, discussion of the Mission and Ends of Unity Church, and an exploration of how we care for one another and how you might become involved in ways that nourish you. This class will be offered:

- Saturday, September 13 • 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Includes a potluck lunch
- Three Thursdays: October 9, 16, and 23
October 9: 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.
October 16 and 23: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Light supper provided all three nights
- Saturday, November 8 • 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Includes a potluck lunch

3. *Committing to Unity: Joining Our Faith Community*

Our Pathway to Membership series concludes with *Committing to Unity* and is designed for those who are a ready to make the membership commitment. This class will explore the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry and offer time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can be generous to the church with your time, talents and resources in ways that bring you joy. This class will be offered:

- Saturday, September 27 • 10:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Saturday, November 15 • 9:30 a.m.–noon

Childcare is available during any of the above classes with advance reservations. If you have questions or would like to sign up, please contact Justin Schroeder, Director of Congregational Development, at 651-228-1456 x107 or justin@unityunitarian.org.

Youth Notes

OWL/COA

The 9th grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) and Coming of Age (COA) program kicks off with a weekend retreat at YMCA Camp St. Croix on September 12-14. OWL is a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum co-developed by the UUA, rooted in the values of our faith, that provides accurate, age-appropriate information to teens. Regular OWL classes begin on Sunday, September 21, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. This year's OWL teaching team includes Alain Baudry, Jacques Capesius, Angela Newhouse and Julie Rice.

Special thanks to the 9th grade parents and families who will be serving on soup supper cooking teams and Welcome Teams at the 4:30 p.m. worship this year!

Tower Club

Our Tower Club high school youth group begins on Sunday, September 14, from 5:30-8:00 p.m. Tower Club is a dynamic and inspirational experience for teens! Weekly meetings emphasize community-building, social justice learning and projects, youth worship and food fellowship. Tower Club is joined by staff members Kerri Meyer and Joseph LaFerla. All high school teens are welcome!

Interfaith Opportunity for Teens

A new interfaith Youth Leadership Coalition, developed in part by Unity teen Nick Allen for the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches, begins its bi-monthly program for 7th through 12th graders this fall! The Coalition will focus on interfaith dialogue, leadership development and service-learning. An informational meeting will be held on Sunday, September 14, 2:00-4:30 p.m. at the SPACC offices, 1671 Summit Avenue in Saint Paul. For more information or to RSVP, contact Meghan at mpaul-cook@spacc.org or 651-789-3852.

Unity Youth News

High school senior Nick Allen is a candidate for the UUA Board! Maddie Hite attended LEADD, an interfaith leadership summer program founded by Unitarian Universalists. Nathan Eckstein is working on a performance project to connect Unity's anti-racism work to the artistry of Penumbra Theatre.

If your youth is doing good work in the world, let us know about it so we can share the news in the church newsletter!



R.E. Parent Orientations

Mark your calendar and attend one of the following orientations:

- Wednesday, September 10
7:15-8:15 p.m. (After Wellspring Wednesday Dinner)
- Saturday, September 13
10:00-11:00 a.m. (After the Pancake Breakfast)

Whether you've been involved with Unity for years or months, you'll benefit from this hour-long orientation which includes an introduction to staff and lay leaders as well as information on the following topics: Unity's theological framework for R.E., tips for a positive worship experience with kids, the congregation's commitment to and expectations of R.E. families, and basic faith development stages. Time will be reserved at the end of the session for questions and answers.

Childcare will be provided; only one parent need attend. We hope you will take advantage of this great opportunity to meet other R.E. parents and acquire valuable information about our Ministry with Children and Youth!

Bless the World: Teach R.E. at Unity!

Teachers are needed in the following program areas:

9:00 a.m. Service:

- Drama and Art Workshop Leaders (6 weeks, Fall or Winter)

11:00 a.m. Service:

- Spirit Play preschool teachers (10 Sundays throughout the year)
- Journey Guides, Grades 1-2 and Grades 5-6 (September - January)
- Drama, Art and Music Workshop Leaders (6 weeks, Fall or Winter)
- High Feasts and Holy Days Junior High teachers (September - January)
- UU History and Identity Junior High teachers (September - January)

4:30 p.m. Service:

- Spirit Play preschool teachers (10 Sundays throughout the year)
- Workshop Rotation teachers (6 weeks, Fall, Winter or Spring)
- High Feasts and Holy Days Junior High teachers (September - January)

Religious Education Begins September 14!

Our Sunday School programs begin the 14th and continue through mid-May. Children must be registered for classes by September 7 in order to participate in the first Sunday of classes. Children registered after September 7, will be warmly welcomed on Sunday, September 21. Confirmation letters and calendars were mailed out in early August; if your family didn't receive a letter, your children may not be enrolled - contact Kerri at the Church Office.

On the first Sunday of R.E.:

- Escort preschoolers directly to their Spirit Play classroom
- At 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., escort Workshop Rotation children to the Ames Chapel
- At 11:00 a.m., attend the first part of worship in the Sanctuary with your Workshop Rotation students and, if necessary, help them find their Journey Guide when they are blessed out to Sunday School
- Junior High youth can find their own way to and from their classes

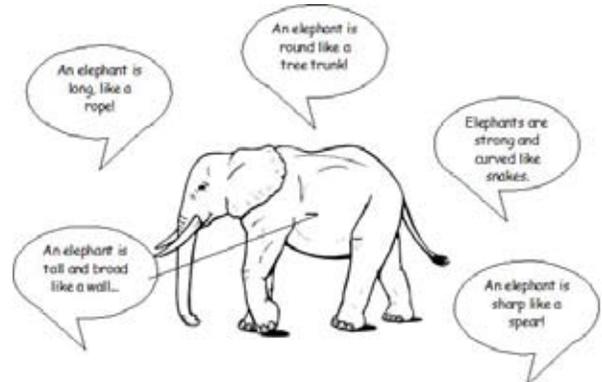
UNITY for Kids: One Big Elephant!

Can you remember all the way back to last September? Our Sunday School lessons were about the story, *The Blind Philosophers and the Elephant*? This old story from the Hindu faith talks about how sometimes we think we know what a BIG thing is when really, we can only feel one SMALL part.

Our Unitarian ancestors thought that God was like that great elephant in the story. One person can only know a SMALL part of God, but even if everyone we meet seems to feel something different, we're actually all touching the same BIG thing that is God. Arguing about the small parts didn't help the blind philosophers figure out the ONE BIG thing, did it? See if you remember the whole story well enough to tell it to your parent.

The picture at right might help you remember parts of the story. Can you connect what each philosopher thought an elephant was to the part of the elephants body that he or she was touching?

Unitarian Universalists believe that every religion, every source of wisdom, no matter how different, is all about ONE THING. That's the idea of unity that our church is named after. We're glad you're part of Unity Church – Unitarian – you can help us figure out something about God!



Books for children about the idea of 'Unity':

The Everything Seed, by Carole Martignacco

Stone Soup, by Jon J. Muth

Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez, by Kathleen Krull

God In Between, by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

MUSIC MINISTRY / COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

from Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries

"Beauty is not just a call to growth, it is a transforming presence wherein we unfold towards growth almost before we realize it. Our deepest self-knowledge unfolds as we are embraced by Beauty."

— John O'Donohue, from *Beauty: The Invisible Embrace*

As we begin another year together, I sit in amazement at all the wonderful people and opportunities that are heartfully invested in our music program. I can point to huge gifts of time and deep commitment in any direction I turn. It is this understood treasure of beauty in our midst that gives such value to the creative endeavors of all involved.

This season brings yet another gift for our community to share. As a congregation, you all know Ruth MacKenzie as a singer; composer of many works, including *Theotokos* (seen here at Unity last December 2007); director of our Youth Ensemble; and as a member of Unity Church who is deeply active in several areas. Now Ruth has widened her artistic life to include a unique partnership with Unity Church as 'artist-in-residence'. It is a delight to welcome Ruth in this role which promises to enrich our creative life here at Unity Church.

from Ruth MacKenzie:

For the past three years I have attended United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, an ecumenical community with a specific focus on theology, spirituality and the arts. Over the course of my studies, one thing has become profoundly clear: we are all artists. As artists, we participate in the infinite story of creation, the infinite poetry of the Divine coursing in and among us, through the meter of our own creative acts.

As a professional artist, I walk in conscious companionship with creativity. As an artist of ministry, I use my creative skills to create moments of *transparency* between the mundane and the transcendent. Whether it is igniting a creative fire under junior high students or creating a new liturgical work that presents a fresh lens from which to view a traditional holiday, the heart of my ministry is exploring the Divine living in me, recognized in thou and flourishing in us – the community of creation.

As Artist in Residence at Unity Church–Unitarian, I hope to join with you, my creative companions, in a journey of discovery about how the arts and creativity can enliven the life of worship, the life of the spirit, and forge new visions of grace and healing in a broken world.

I hope this work as Artist in Residence will expand beyond the walls of Unity Church–Unitarian into the broader faith community. I want to embody the heritage of our Universalist tradition that proclaimed all creation, all humanity reconciled in the holy. In the act of creation we affirm and strengthen our understanding of what unites us, the wonder and complexity of what differentiates us, and our prayerful work for a world that is whole.

I look forward to this year of discovery, in creative companionship with you all.

Mark Your Calendar: First Rehearsal Dates!

Unity Choir – Thursday, September 4, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Please bring a snack to share and come at 7:00 p.m. to meet and greet your colleagues after our summer away.

Unity Singers – Tuesday, September 9, at 7:30 p.m. in the Foote Room.

Children's Choir – Sunday, September 14, at 10:15 a.m. in Ames Chapel

Youth Music Ensemble – Sunday, September 14, at 11:00 a.m. in Ames Chapel.



Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food

Drive Sunday. All non-perishable food and household items are welcome and needed! Donations can be brought anytime (even if it's not the third Sunday) and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances.

These items are suggestions and any nonperishable item can be donated. All food is taken to Sharing Korner Food Shelf.

September 16 — canned fruit

October 21 — hygiene products

November 18 — canned tuna, canned meats, rice, beans

December 16 — detergents: dish or laundry, toilet paper

January 20 — spaghetti, canned stews, pancake mix, syrup

February 17 — canned vegetables, tomato sauce

March 16 — peanut butter and jelly

April 20 — basic canned soup

May 18 — diapers and baby food

June 15 — cooking oil, detergent



FROM THE GREEN SANCTUARY/
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE
MINISTRY TEAM

Whole Farm

Buy meat, cheese, produce and much more from local, sustainable farms and pick it up right at Unity Church from Whole Farm Cooperative. For this month's pickup, place an order at wholefarmcoop.com or 320-732-3023 by Friday, September 12.

Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, September 17. Pay by sending a check, with the invoice enclosed with your order, to Whole Farm.

PARISH HALL ART / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

September Parish Hall Artist

Betsy Bowen

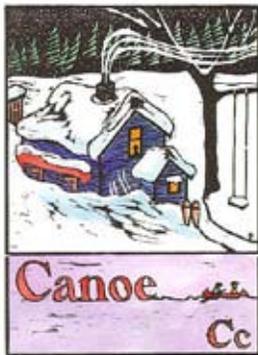
"The aim of an artist is to make people love life," said Leo Tolstoy, and I agree.

I live and work on the edge of the wilderness near Minnesota's north shore of Lake Superior, on the old homestead bought by my suburban parents in 1963 to establish another way of life. In my early creative years, I focused on hand-made crafts. My work in woodblock printmaking seeks to continue the ethic of generating a straightforward livelihood through making goods by hand.

The prints recently have focused on illustrations for picture books, written by myself and others.

My topics have evolved from views of my local rural life into folktales and stories which inform rural lives worldwide. Recent interest in the oral tradition of these folktales has led me toward pageantry, creating puppets, scripts and staging for community street theater and dance.

I have been woodblock printing actively since 1982. In recent years I have had the good fortune to write and illustrate several picturebooks: *Antler*, *Bear*, *Canoe: A Northwoods Alphabet Year*, 1991; *Tracks in the Wild*, 1993; and *Gathering: A Northwoods Counting Book*, 1995. In addition, my illustrations appear in *Shingebiss: An Ojibwe Legend*, by Nancy Van Laan, 1997; *The Troll With No Heart in His Body and Other Tales of Trolls from Norway* by Lise Lunge-Larsen, 1999; *A Wild Neighborhood* by John Henriksson, 1997; *Heart Talks with Mother God* by Bridget Mary Meehan and Regina Madonna Oliver; *Nina's North Shore Guide* by Nina A. Simonwicz, 1996; *Borealis* by Jeff Humphries, 2002; and Helen Hoover's *Great Wolf and the Good Woodsman*, a story for children that was first published in 1967. My most recent illustrations appear in *Dhegdheer*, a scary Somali folktale retold by Marian Hassan and published by the Minnesota Humanities Commission.



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Unity Church–Unitarian • 732 Holly Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota • 55104
651-228-1456 • fax: 651-228-0927 • www.unityunitarian.org

September Fellowship Group Meetings

All are invited to attend the following groups. For more information, contact the Church Office or the persons listed with each group.

U-Knitarians

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

Men's Retirement Group

Monday, September 8 and 22 • 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Contact: Phil Morton, 952-934-3578

Unity Divorce/Transitions Group

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

Unity Singles Group

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

A New Look at the Bible

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

Afterthoughts

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

Unity Young Adult Group

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

Mother-Daughter Middle School Book Club

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the Month
Contact: Millie Adelsheim, millie@peapods.com.

Unitots!

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

Grandparent Unitots!

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

Unity Bridge Club

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

Evergreen Quilt Group

September 16 (not the 9th) • 7:00 p.m.
Fourth Saturday of each month • 10:30 a.m.
Contact: Michelle Hill at 651-264-0884

Unity Book Clubs

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

Merging of Waters Family Sunday

All Congregation Worship and Celebration!

Sunday, September 7, 2008 • 10:00 a.m.
Harriet Island, St. Paul



Come merge the waters of the world in a service of reunion with the whole Unity Church congregation - all on the banks of the Mississippi River. Our ministers, Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs, will conduct the service and will be joined by Director of Religious Education, Kerri Meyer, 2008-09 Hallman Ministerial Intern, Leon Dunkley, and musical guests Peter Mayer and the Eclectics. **Bring the water you have collected from your journeys this summer for this first service of the new church year.**

Bring your own picnic lunch as well as a favorite dish to share with others sitting near you. Whatever you enjoy - loaves and fishes, deviled eggs, chocolate brownies, pasta salad - bring enough for yourself or your family and a bit extra to pass to a neighbor. Beverages will be provided.

Nursery care for children ages three and under will be provided during the worship service. Harriet Island is handicap accessible.

This is a special opportunity for the entire Unity Church congregation to worship together and will be the only service on September 7.

The St. Paul Classic Bike Tour is also September 7, and some streets may have limited access. Please plan accordingly and allow for extra time to arrive at Harriet Island.



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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