

Compassion

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. We explore each theme in worship and in our newsletter; in covenant groups, guided writing sessions and Wednesday evening programming; and in our community outreach ministries, our literary journal and programs, and many other opportunities. The April theme is Compassion.

If you look up the origins of the word “passion,” you may, among other things, realize that it’s a curious choice for a name of a perfume. “Passion” comes from the Greek word meaning “suffering.” Suffering was our theme last month, and compassion literally means “to suffer with.” So compassion is an excellent next step in our explorations.

Compassion is also a fitting theme for the month that brings us Easter. You may have heard of or attended Passion plays that depict the Easter story, or perhaps you watched Mel Gibson’s movie “The Passion of the Christ,” which puts Jesus’ suffering on vivid display. But in the stories that take place before the crucifixion, it’s the *com*-passion of Jesus that we see, the Jesus who understands the brokenness of tax collectors, prostitutes, and the Prodigal Son. He is able to be a witness to their suffering, and his own ultimate suffering can be seen as rooted in his deep compassion for humanity — *all* humanity, our Universalist forebears would argue. And Jesus’ mother, Mary, is venerated as an icon of compassion.

Unlike suffering, compassion is inherently relational — there is someone or something for us to feel *with*, although it is possible to have compassion for oneself. In Western societies, there is often the subtext that the person feeling the compassion is not suffering. But Buddhism acknowledges the suffering of all parties and all people, and makes central the cultivation of compassion and lovingkindness.

Today, compassion is in some ways countercultural because it requires

the acknowledgment of suffering, something that sufferers may be reluctant to do amid modern ideals of success and happiness. How often do we hear “I’m fine” from those who are *not* fine? Compassion can break through a person’s belief that “if only this one thing would happen, then I would be happy.” It can acknowledge the reality of another’s brokenness.

When we think of compassion, we may think of compassionate acts. But compassion itself is a feeling, rather than the steps taken. “Compassion refers to the arising in the heart of the desire to relieve the suffering of all beings,” says Ram Dass, an American spiritual teacher who immersed himself in Eastern religions four decades ago.

Though there are many ways to demonstrate compassion, it’s less an intercession than a holding. Compassion can be entirely about witness and presence, about seeing another’s pain. In compassion, there are no “other people’s children” — there is no “other” at all.

We may do more than experience compassion — we may go further and take on the fear, the pain, the energy of another’s suffering and pass it through, the way a lightning rod conducts electricity to the ground. The suffering itself may remain in the other person, but compassion actually may serve to ground *you* in your inability to control the suffering around you. In the face of racism, sexism, and other forces of discrimination, compassion may take the form of looking, seeing and being in the presence of the suffering.

Our compassion may bump up against limits. Workshops are held on “compassion fatigue,” particularly for those who are caregivers or who work in helping professions. It can be difficult to have compassion for those we have not forgiven. And because we are all unique beings, it is impossible to really know the suffering of another person. But because we are human and relational, our compassion still moves us.

— Compiled by Jim Foti on behalf of this month’s cover article “theme team”

Compassion Resources

BOOKS

Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty In The United States, by Sister Helen Prejean, is the story of a nun’s work with a condemned prisoner. Also a 1995 film.

The Things They Carried, by Tim O’Brien, is a compassionately told collection of stories about a group of soldiers in Vietnam.

Tenzin’s Deer: A Tibetan Tale, by Barbara Soros and Danuta Mayer, is the story of a boy who cares for a wounded deer.

The Hundred Dresses, by Eleanor Estes, is about a girl who is made fun of at school until her classmates learn a lesson.

MOVIE

Temple Grandin is a 2010 HBO drama based on the life of an autistic woman whose compassion for animals helped bring changes in the cattle industry. Available on DVD and Netflix.

JUST WORDS / WHEEL OF LIFE

Just Words

Every year the same thing happens. Sometime in August a new Hallman Ministerial Intern arrives. Despite all their research, they don't really know us or the staff or Unity Church for that matter. Despite the letters of recommendation and all that we've read and the interviews held, we are often surprised by who they are in the flesh. Despite some initial awkwardness, the interns are happy to be here. They arrive with a mix of excitement and apprehension and the deep desire to plunge into the reality of parish ministry. Their anticipation is met with enthusiastic support from the lay team already in place to support them when they arrive.

For ten years they have come. Jen Crow, Melissa Carvill-Ziemer, Bill Neely, Dottie Mathews, Katie Lawson, Teresa Schwartz, Justin Schroeder, Jacqueline Duhart, Matt Alspaugh, Leon Dunkley, Lissa Gundlach, Jason Seymour, Rachel Lonberg and Jim Foti. They have learned the arts of ministry through your guidance and your willingness to invest in their formation. They have found their voices through your deep listening. They have shared their passions and their interests and you have responded by generously participating in their classes and workshops.

Your investment lives on in the ongoing life of our faith. From this place that nurtures their vision of ministry, they then go out into the world creating powerful and unique ministries. They carry our blessings with them. They hold the many life lessons they learned here. At every rite of passage our previous interns experience a deep sense of gratitude to all of you. We hear and receive their gratitude but often don't pass it on to you. I do so now.

When I think of Leon moving on to an exciting new ministry, I find that I am full of ambivalent feelings. I am thrilled for Leon but I know I will miss him incredibly. His many gifts have graced this community for years. It's hard to think of letting him go. But I find strength in knowing that Unity Church is in the world to launch ministries: yours, mine and Leon's. When we ordain Leon later this month we will do so with pride, love, and support grounded in the work we are about: creating ministries that bless the world. Leon will take us with him. Yes, we will miss him, but our ministry will continue through the emerging and growing ministry that Leon will find and make in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Your ministry finds expression throughout this denomination. It is a blessing that benefits many. Thank you for all that you do to support the many ministries that emerge from these sheltering walls. The world is a better place due to your commitment and support. Thank you!

— *Janne Eller-Isaacs*

Call to Meeting

Saturday, April 7, 2012

10:00 a.m.-noon • Sanctuary

A special meeting of the congregation has been called by the Board of Trustees. The meeting will include up-to-date information on the results of the capital campaign and a detailed proposal for how best to finance the project. All voting members of the congregation are strongly encouraged to attend.

Heritage Society

Friday, May 4 • Parish Hall

Rev. Marlin Lavanhar

The 2012 Heritage Society program will be held on the evening of May 4. The Reverend Marlin Lavanhar of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, will be our guest speaker.

If you are interested in making a planned gift to the church and becoming a member of the Heritage Society, contact Barbara Hubbard at the Church Office.

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Carmen Amelia Olson-Reiners

born one more redeemer

March 11, 2012

to parents

Annie and Aaron Olson-Reiners

In Memoriam

Gary Michael DeCramer

September 13, 1944 – March 7, 2012

Grace Anne Chamberlain Heege

mother of Peter Heege

1923-2012

Prairie Star District Annual Conference 2012

*Lessons from War and Peace:
Stories of Hope, Faith, and Courage*

Bloomington, Minnesota

April 13-15, 2012

[http://www.psd.uaa.org/
AnnualConference2012](http://www.psd.uaa.org/AnnualConference2012)

Arthur Foote Music Sunday

May 13, 2012

All three services.

Unity Choir

Unity Singers

Sarah Carmack, oboe

*Music of transformation
and imagination!*

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APRIL WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sunday Worship Calendar

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

April 1: *Compassion*^{LTD}

A Meditation on the Loving Enemy — Leon Dunkley

“At what cost would you allow me to purchase this beautiful robe?” The young man asked this question with a glimmer in his eye. The young man knew no reasonable price would satisfy the merchant but he pretended otherwise for the sake of the conversation. The two men took a walk to talk things through. Both were uncomfortable. The merchant knew the young man as an enemy of the state and the young man knew the merchant as an enemy of the people. This was the source of their discomfort with one another. What they said when they were walking was a mystery, indeed, but the young man returned carrying every single robe in the merchant’s store. He returned with the merchant himself who had a great, big smile upon his face. The young man returned laughing because he had not spent a dime! The townsfolk wondered how this could be so. Have you figured out the answer? Come find out if you got it right!

April 8: *Easter Sunday: Practice Resurrection*

To practice resurrection is to know the agony which is part of being human and to rise up in compassion and, yes, in joy despite it all. The whole church family will gather for our Easter celebration. You can expect marvelous music, inspired preaching and a sustaining story for all ages.

April 15: *A Tale of Two Pities — Rachel Lonberg*

Before the Good Samaritan enters the story, two people pass the injured man on the side of the road and do nothing. Why do we sometimes do nothing when faced with hurt or injustice? Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Rachel Lonberg and worship associate Laura Schlatter as we explore what happens when we do not feel compassion – and the rage, pity, numbness, and other emotions we often experience instead.

April 22: *Try a Little Tenderness — Janne Eller-Isaacs*

In our busy and demanding lives, the role of kindness can easily be overlooked and yet the great Buddhist leader the Dalai Lama instructs that there is nothing more important than kindness. He lives his life guided by kindness and the world is better for it. Janne and worship associate Bailey Webster will explore how we might bring more kindness into our daily lives.

April 29: *Who Cares? — Rob Eller-Isaacs*

Compassion is one of the most powerful attributes of spiritual maturity. It is part of what we hope to encourage in our religious education programs. On this Coming of Age Sunday Rob and worship associate Dutton Foster will celebrate the newly-found clarity and commitment of another gifted group of Unity youth.

Ordination of Leon Dunkley

Saturday, April 21, 2012

2:00 p.m. • Sanctuary

In keeping with Unitarian Universalist tradition, a gathered congregation must vote to ordain a ministerial candidate.



The congregation of Unity Church-Unitarian did precisely this at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on November 19, 2011. The congregation voted unanimously to ordain Dr. Leon Dunkley. Having completed his work at Starr King School for the Ministry and having met the requirements of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Leon Dunkley, Unity’s 2008-09 Hallman Ministerial Intern, and current Director of Congregation Life will be ordained on Sunday, April 21, 2012. The ceremony will take place in the Sanctuary at 2:00. The sermon of the ordination will be delivered by Reverend Dr. Rebecca Ann Parker, the President of the Starr King School of the Ministry in Berkeley, California. Parker is recognized as one of the nation’s leading theologians. The author of many books including *Proverbs of Ashes* and *Saving Paradise* (with Rita Nakashima Brock) and *A House of Hope* (with former UUA president John Buehrens), Parker has gifted Unitarian Universalism and liberal religion in general with a powerfully redemptive and restorative theology. She is truly inspiring. A treasure. Do come.

Leon Dunkley will complete his ministry at Unity Church in June. He will, then, move back to the east coast, closer to his family. He has accepted a position at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring in Maryland. He will be working there in partnership with Reverend Elizabeth Lerner-Maclay at an exciting church on New Hampshire Avenue, just northeast of Washington, D.C. Freedom, joy and music will guide their ministry. Both of them, together with the congregation of Silver Spring, are looking forward to unending possibilities. Also, because the church is only fifteen minutes from the University of Maryland at College Park, Leon is hoping to exercise his professorial abilities and re-enter the academy by teaching classes and by establishing a campus ministry. So much is in bud.

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You Are Invited

Coming of Age 2012!

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The entire congregation is warmly invited to witness the Coming of Age of this year’s ninth grade class on Saturday, April 28, at 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary.

Come and listen in amazement as our young people share their personal credos, bravely laying the beliefs of their hearts and minds out for all to hear. Families of junior high youth find it particularly meaningful to attend with their children.

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ARLT / MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Our Journey Toward Beloved Community From Pauline Eichten, Anti-Racism Leadership Team

2012 marks the tenth year since Unity Church's deliberate journey of anti-racism began. In 2002, an anti-racism task force laid the groundwork that led to the commissioning of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) in 2003. The ARLT works with the Board of Trustees and the Executive Team to support the church's goal of becoming an actively anti-racist institution in all aspects of church life.

In early 2005, after extensive research and discussion, the team published an audit of the church's history on issues of race. That summer, the Board redefined the moral owners of Unity Church as those who yearn for the Beloved Community, a community where love and justice prevail.

In 2008, the congregation engaged in conversations that led to the current Ends Statements, which articulate our aspirations for who we want to become. These statements make a personal and institutional commitment to working toward racial healing, to being welcoming and connecting across identities, and to being a public voice against injustice and oppression.

Several community outreach teams have developed over the years to address issues of injustice or oppression, in covenant with communities of color. Among those issues are the criminal justice system, homelessness and housing affordability, the equity gap in schools, and rebuilding New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

The plan to spend several million dollars in building renovations raised the issue of how to make sure the money is spent in alignment with our values. Unity Church established a goal with the construction management company that the workforce on the project will be made up of 31% persons of color and women.

Meanwhile, the ARLT continues to work with church leadership to identify policies and practices that will further the church living out its commitment to anti-racism and racial healing. It recently recommended new policy language to the Board. The proposed language identifies concrete ways to measure how Unity Church's practices in purchasing, hiring, and outreach support the church's stated commitment to anti-racism.

The team's annual reports serve as an institutional assessment, highlighting indicators of progress or opportunities for growth on Unity's transformational journey. The Board of Trustees passed a resolution to accept the recommendations the ARLT made in its 2010-2011 report, and asked the Executive Team to develop an interpretation of them with an action plan and timeline to be brought back to the Board. That is still pending. These reports, and the historical audit, are available at <http://www.unityunitarian.org/anti-racism-leadership-team.html>

The Board of Trustees will be appointing new team members this year. If you are interested in learning more about the team or the appointment process, contact Drew Danielson, ARLT member, or Bob Peskin, Board chair.

Today—we'd lose. Tomorrow depends on you! From Steve Lewis and Laura Smidzik

If an election was held today, the constitutional amendment which would limit the freedoms of Minnesotans and ban marriage for same-sex couples in Minnesota would pass. Only 43% of the Minnesota voters are with us on a NO vote in NOVember. Voters in the Twin Cities and in Greater Minnesota need to be engaged in a conversation about the amendment and what it means to current and future generations. The faith community is being asked to have 250,000 individual conversations about the amendment with an explicit ask to vote NO in NOVember. How many conversations are you willing to have? How many conversations can we at Unity Church-Unitarian have in total? We are a congregation of approximately 1,100 adults. If half of us would commit to having five deliberate conversations that would equal 2,750!

The Marriage Equality group at Unity Church is going to begin to track conversations and create a visual display of how many our church community has completed. We are excited to have a concrete way to demonstrate direct action related to defeating this amendment. In order to equip and inspire us to have these conversations a three-part interactive training was developed by Karen Hering, our previous Literary Minister, and Ralph Wyman, director of Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA). The trainings work best if you commit to all three but no one will be turned away if you come to just one or two. They are uniquely Unitarian Universalist (UU) and will prepare you to have real conversations with friends, colleagues, neighbors and family about why you care about the amendment and why you are voting "no." This skill can easily be applied to other areas of social justice and public policies that are in conflict with UU values and beliefs.

Please join us on Sunday, April 1, 15, and 29, from 12:15-2:15 p.m. for this powerful opportunity. RSVPs are appreciated but not required to Steve Lewis, skslewis2115@gmail.com or Laura Smidzik, laura.smidzik@gmail.com or 651-308-1830.

Marriage Equality Conversation Trainings

These uniquely Unitarian Universalist workshops will prepare you to have real conversations with friends, colleagues, neighbors and family about why you care about the Minnesota Marriage Amendment and why you are voting "no" in November 2012.

Please join us at Unity Church on Sunday, April 1, 15, and 29, from 12:15-2:15 p.m. for this powerful opportunity.

RSVPs are appreciated but not required to Steve Lewis, skslewis2115@gmail.com and Laura Smidzik, laura.smidzik@gmail.com or 651-308-1830.

MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Rachel Lonberg: 2011-12 Hallman Ministerial Intern



Compassion tastes like warm milk. Compassion smells like muddy boots fresh from the pasture. Compassion sounds like an eagerly anticipated knock on the door. The most powerful story of compassion that I know took place during the mid-1990s, during the

war in Bosnia. Chris Hedges shares the story in his powerful book *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning*. The Soraks lived in the small city Goražde, which was under siege for most of the war. They lost their two grown sons during the war. Five months later, their daughter-in-law gave birth to a daughter. This new mother was unable to nurse her baby. The infant was fading fast due to lack of food.

Compassion enters this story in the form of a neighbor, a farmer named Fadil Fejzić. He heard the baby's ever-weakening cries. He arrived at the Sorak's apartment door early one morning, carrying a cup of milk from his cow, which he kept hidden on the outskirts of town to protect it from the hungry soldiers patrolling the city. Fadil brought milk the next morning and the next morning, and the next 440 mornings, only stopping when the baby and her mother were evacuated from the war zone. Muslim Fadil knew what I have learned during my time at Unity Church — there are no other people's children. He knew that the baby, even though her family was Serb, members of an ethnic group at war with Fadil's co-religionists, was his baby too. Even though people told him that he should save his milk for Muslim babies, Fadil brought the milk. Even though people called him a traitor, he brought the milk. Even though he could make large sums of money selling his milk in the hungry city, he gave the milk to the Soraks.

In this month when the focus of our worship life turns to compassion, may we know that compassion can be as unassuming and life-saving as a cup of milk.

Rachel Lonberg can be reached at the Church Office by email at rachel@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x129.

Jim Foti: 2011-12 Ministerial Intern



In college, I once landed a summer job in San Jose, California. I had no idea how I was going to find a place to stay from 2,000 miles away, but I was very pleased nonetheless. The same day I got the job offer, I went to a party and mentioned my good news to the host.

"Oh!" he said. "Come meet John. His mom lives in San Jose, and she has a room for rent." Call it serendipity, grace, or fate — I merely had to let it happen.

Many Unitarian Universalists favor a highly structured approach to religion, from fixed liturgies to detailed ends statements, and these are not bad things. An unstructured religion wouldn't be around for long, tradition can provide great comfort, and, as is often said, "A goal without a plan is just a wish." But as businesses and educators are increasingly aware, much good also can come from spontaneity, and there are a couple of upcoming UU opportunities at which I plan to benefit from a mix of structured and free-form environments.

One is the Prairie Star District conference, which was in Iowa the past two years but is in Bloomington this year. It runs April 13-15 and offers a full slate of workshops and numerous ways to rub elbows with UUs from our far-flung district.

The other venue is Camp UniStar, the UU retreat on a wooded island in northern Minnesota. Mealtimes and the morning programs are structured, but much is left to initiative and chance. Some of my favorite UUs are folks with whom my partner and I have randomly shared a cabin, and many fruitful connections are made in the dining hall.

It's not too late for you to sign up for either of these opportunities. Like my finding that job in San Jose, you have to make that part happen. But after that, you can find out what serendipity might have in store for you.

Jim Foti can be reached at the Church Office by email at jim@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x212.

Blooming Plants for Pick Up!

If you ordered plants during March, the Partner Church Team reminds you to pick up them up on Palm Sunday, April 1!

Thank you for your generous support of our partner church ministry!



Whole Farm Coop



Buy meat, cheese, produce and more from local, sustainable farms and pick it up at Unity Church!

Order from www.wholefarmcoop.com or call 320-732-3023 by Wednesday, April 11. Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, April 18.

Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food Drive Sunday. Donations can be brought anytime and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances. Suggested items for April 21: canned soup.



UNITY TOMORROW

Unity Tomorrow Update

From Lorelee Wederstrom, Unity's Owner Representative

The 100% set of design development documents have been sent out to bid by Unity's construction manager, McGough Construction. This pricing is due March 19 and will serve as the basis for the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the *Unity Tomorrow* project. This GMP will allow Unity to build the *Unity Tomorrow* project, as we have designed it, without the risk of cost overruns. Unity Church will have to be responsible for keeping the scope within what has been designed and authorized. The results of this pricing was reviewed with Unity's Board of Trustees at a special meeting on March 20 and will be reviewed with the congregation on April 7. With this pricing, McGough will select our prime contractors in mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work. This selection will help us complete the design process within the established GMP pricing.

Member Contractor Participation

The 100% construction documents will be put out for final bid in May. All other sub-contractors for the project will be invited to bid at this time. We have had some inquiry from Unity members who are contractors and wish to contribute to the *Unity Tomorrow* project by donating their services. These member contractors can get on the McGough bid list by going to the following link: <http://bit.ly/bidsolicitation> and reviewing the contractor qualification requirements, which include our community's diversity hiring goals. Member subcontractors wishing to submit a bid on the *Unity Tomorrow* project should send contact information to our project manager, Shannon Kelly at McGough Construction. Shannon can be reached at McGough Construction by phone at 651-634-4644 or 612-987-0469 and by email at skelley@mcgough.com.

Sustainability

In January, Unity's Green Team and the Executive Team received a report from a firm called "Affordable Energy Solutions" which was commissioned to

do an infrared assessment of our church facilities to determine its insulation properties. The results were quite alarming and have been forwarded to the *Unity Tomorrow* Project Delivery Team (Miller Dunwiddie & McGough Construction) for estimating and assessment of remediation possibilities. Updates to the Sanctuary will be deferred until a new Sanctuary is built and improvements in the Chapel insulation will be incorporated into our current design. However, the Eliot wing was found to have "major air leakage into the attic" and is in need of structural modifications. Since the Eliot wing is the most used portion of the facility, sealing these leaks is a high priority if we are to realize the energy savings from our investments in improved air handling and conditioning equipment. These findings were presented very late in the design process; therefore, the remediation to the Elliot Wing will not be in the GMP. We are pricing the recommended solutions now which include a modified ceiling system throughout the Eliot wing so that insulation and vapor barriers can be applied properly. The current design of the Eliot wing does not allow for this upgrade without modifications to the ceiling system.

Churn Planning

Unity staff have already begun thinking about what it means to live and work in a construction zone and what the impact of that will be on church activities. Once the *Unity Tomorrow* project is fully authorized to go ahead, the details of what construction will occur where and when will be finalized. McGough has already produced a preliminary schedule of impact, which the staff and *Unity Tomorrow* Owner Representative will work with to finalize the "churn plans" for the facilities. In preparation for this more detailed planning effort around church activities, Bill Lowell, Unity's Facilities Manager, will

be reviewing all storage areas and encouraging service and staff groups to consolidate, purge and organize materials that will need to be relocated during construction. We do not want to be moving or storing materials that are either no longer needed or rarely accessed. This effort should occur in April. All first floor areas will need to be, essentially, vacated due to early abatement and renovation activities. Storage pods will appear on-site in early May to begin the move-out process in preparation for construction.

Next Review and Comment Session
Sunday, April 22 • 12:30 p.m. • Sanctuary
Come for an update on the *Unity Tomorrow* facilities planning process.



There will be time for learning, questions, and comments. All are welcome and childcare will be provided.

Matching Gift!

When total campaign commitments reach or exceed \$5,750,000 the matching gift group will add \$250,000 to bring the total to at least \$6,000,000!

In response to many requests, the Capital Campaign announces that anyone who wishes to add additional funds to their commitment can do so by extending their payments for two more years, up to a total of five years. For example, if you already decided to make a \$2,000 payment each year for 2012, 2013, and 2014, you could increase your total contribution to \$10,000 by adding two more payments for 2015 and 2016.

Capital Campaign Commitment Forms are available online and by contacting the Church Office. The forms can be used to make a new or increased capital gift.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAYS

A weeknight at church including dinner, worship, and learning. All are welcome.

6:00 p.m. Dinner: \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4, and \$20/family, and can be paid by cash or check.

6:45 p.m. Worship service in the Ames Chapel.

7:10 p.m. Programs follow worship. Childcare is available.

April 4 • Dinner: TBA

A Wilderness Journey, Part 1

Take *A Wilderness Journey* with Rob Eller-Isaacs as he recounts his experiences as a participant in what has come down to us as "the empowerment controversy." In the late 1960's Unitarian Universalism was both enriched and challenged by a conflict of values around our collective response to race and racism. As President of Liberal Religious Youth in 1969, Rob was close to the heart of the controversy. He has lived with both the pain and possibility of its implications ever since.

April 11 • Dinner: TBA

A Wilderness Journey, Part 2 • Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs

Understanding Immigration • John Keller

Building on our on-going conversation about immigration, Unity Church welcomes John Keller into our community of learning and growth. John Keller is the Executive Director of the Immigrant law Center of Minnesota. A graduate of the University of Minnesota and the Hamline School of Law, John Keller is powerfully outspoken about the issue of immigration in the Twin Cities. As the General Assembly in Phoenix approaches, John Keller will help us to orient ourselves about the importance of cultural difference and democracy in a liberal faith. Find out what we can do to live into our values and speak truth to power with integrity and compassion.

Summit Hill Laughter Club!

Join Unity Member Katy Taylor to explore the art of laughter to invite more joy, play, and wellbeing into your life! Because of the deep pranayamic breathing exercises, this form of practice is also called Laughter Yoga, but it does not include any physical asanas and can be practiced by people of all ages who are willing to be a little bit silly. Children who come with their parents are welcome.

Wellspring Wednesday Ongoing Offerings

Yoga: Weekly, \$10 per class or \$50/6 classes

Tween Youth Group (grades 4-8): Weekly, all are welcome

Drumming: Second Wednesday, for kids and adults

Our Whole Lives: Weekly, registration required

Childcare/Children's Programming: Weekly, families should check their children in on the evening's sign-in sheet in the Parish Hall. Free.

April 18 • Dinner: TBA

Managing Stress/Discovering Happiness

Part One: Managing Stress • Dr. Mark Sundby

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Most people are about as happy as they make up their mind to be." About 150 years later, scientific research now offers ample evidence to support Mr. Lincoln's observation. Come to this workshop to learn tangible ways to improve your chances for personal happiness and discover ways to assess the level of happiness in others while decreasing their stress and enhancing their well-being.

At this workshop you will learn:

- Factors, based on research, that predict happiness
- Attitudinal choices to increase happiness
- Lifestyle choices, both large and small, that contribute to happiness
- Steps to take to further decrease stress and enhance personal well-being

The presenter, Dr. Mark Sundby, M. Div., Ph.D., L.P., is the Executive Director North Central Ministry Development Center. He is a licensed psychologist and an ordained pastor in the Wisconsin conference of the United Methodist Church. Mark received his doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Minnesota and his Masters of Divinity degree from the University of Chicago Divinity School.

April 25 • Dinner: Pasta, meatballs, salad, dessert

Managing Stress/Discovering Happiness

Part Two: Discovering Happiness • Dr. Mark Sundby

Peacemaking Circles

Unity's Restorative Justice Ministry Team has supported use of Peacemaking Circles within the criminal justice system as well as within and outside the congregation for a variety of purposes. Circles provide a way of talking together where everyone:

- is respected
- gets a chance to speak without interruption
- finds ways to tell his/her own story
- is heard
- is equal in authority to everyone else in the circle
- maintains confidentiality regarding what is said in circle

The Executive Team at Unity Church has said yes to starting a pilot program this spring that offers Circle process, facilitated by an experienced Circlekeeper, to members and friends of Unity who may want to use the format to address issues within families. Find out more about how the Circle Process might provide a different way for families to come together in conversation.

The Great College Search

Anyone currently involved in the "college search" is invited to attend this meeting. Contact: Craig Allen at library42@msn.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

UUSC Bulletin



Looking for a meaningful volunteer position? UUSC offers an opportunity!

Torture is a local, national and international moral issue. UUSC is organizing a local workshop to prepare Unitarians to help survivors of torture.

Everyone at Unity Church is invited to join UUSC leaders from Boston for a workshop to learn about the work of the Center for Victims of Torture. You'll find out what you can do to support survivors, both locally and globally. The workshop will be held on Saturday, April 21, from 9:30-12:30 at First Unitarian Society, 900 Mount Curve Avenue, Minneapolis.

The workshop builds on the work of Unity's partnership with the Center for Victims of Torture. Unity team member, Jen Vanek, and Unity intern, Jim Foti, will be two of the presenters. Other Twin Cities UU congregations are being invited, to create a larger community of like-minded volunteers. Refreshments will be served. Optional afternoon activities include lunch and a tour of CVT's St. Paul healing house a few blocks from Unity Church.

RSVP to Kara Smith at UUSC at ksmith@uusc.org or 617-301-4392 by April 15. Local UUSC Representative, Marty Rossmann, can answer questions at rossm001@umn.edu.

Membership

You can become a member of UUSC by making a membership gift. You will stay up-to-date on human rights issues through regular mailings, action alerts, and a subscription to the UUSC newsletter.

join online at www.uusc.org/uusc-membership to get the enrollment form. Dues are: \$40 General; \$75 General (dual); \$10 student/youth; \$20 senior; and \$40 senior (dual).

Back to the Bad Old Days

From Jane Thomson, member of Racial Justice Ministry Team

That would be the effect of the proposed voter ID amendment to the Minnesota Constitution, should it get on the ballot in November and be passed. There is real danger of its passing, as the knee-jerk reaction to the ideas: "Anyone who wants to vote will see that she has the proper ID", or "I have a driver's license, what's the big deal?"

Neither of my parents would have been able to vote as they did not drive or have a state-approved ID. My mother would have, after some time on public transportation and some expense, gotten hold of her birth certificate which is needed to get the ID. My father would have had a much worse time as he had changed his given name and when he died, my mother had a hard time getting his birth certificate, in order to get a death certificate. My 19-year-old granddaughter's middle name on her birth certificate had a "T" that looked like an "I." That caused problems when she got her driver's license. Multiply these problems for a person with two jobs, with small children, with disabilities, etc. and there are enough hoops to jump through to make the person think, "I want to vote, but I can't do all that right now...maybe my vote doesn't count much anyway."

This, I believe, is the intended effect of the ID measure. Since there has been very little voter irregularity in Minnesota, and none that would be solved by requiring an ID, we must deduce that certain people want to discourage some others from voting — people of color, poor people, the elderly, and college students living out of state.

African Americans know that this measure is intended to decrease their voting power. A man I spoke to said "flashback to poll tax" and "this is 2012, not 1912." Benjamin Jealous, the President of the NAACP, says "...one of the greatest victories Dr. King helped win during his lifetime is under withering attack: The Voting Rights Act." (*Insight News*, January 23–29, 2012)

Unitarian Universalists played a part in the Freedom Rides of the 60s. Mrs. Viola Liuzzo, a Unitarian from Michigan, was murdered in Alabama for her efforts in helping black people get the right to vote. We are not being asked to risk our lives to fight the injustice of the voter ID measure. We do need to contact our Minnesota senators and representatives and tell them we oppose getting this amendment on the ballot. If it gets on, we must talk to our Minnesota friends and family and tell them why requiring voter ID is a bad step backward.

An Alternative to the "Photo ID Proposal"

Secretary of State Mark Ritchie and Governor Dayton have presented a less cumbersome, less expensive alternative called the "Voter Verification Proposal." This alternative would use the currently existing state-wide data base of voter registration. It would add a photo to each registrant's information. The photo would come from current state drivers' licenses or state ID's. Those registered voters without such photos in the state system could have a photo taken at the polling place and entered into the database immediately. Some advantages of this plan are that the state is the holder of the required information so a registered voter is not penalized in any way, and same day registration can continue.

More information is available at:

Minnesota Secretary of State: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us>

League of Women Voters: <http://www.lwvmn.org/page.aspx?pid=1118>

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

An Exhibit, Silent Auction, and Quilt Raffle **CELEBRATIONS**

April 1–29 • Parish Hall at Unity Church

Throughout April, celebrate everything you can think of with Evergreen Quilters—birthdays, holidays, the seasons, your health and happiness, stages of life. Evergreen Quilters will entice and excite you with its bi-annual exhibit and silent auction of small quilts, wall hangings, mats, bags, and a beautiful raffle quilt.

Evergreen Quilters' 2012 show and sale represents the effort of twenty-five Unity Church members and friends who created the original pieces especially for this show. You may also buy raffle tickets for an extraordinary hand-quilted queen-size quilt that celebrates trees in many shades of blues and greens!

Evergreen Quilters hope that all the quilts will remind you of events you regularly celebrate and introduce you to some new ways of celebrating. May these quilts raise your spirits and remind you that every day is a day to celebrate!

Everyone wins at the Evergreen Quilters' show and sale! Please be generous in purchasing tickets (\$2 each) for the raffle quilt. And please also be generous with your bids for the smaller quilted items in the silent auction. Remember, when you are the high bidder on one of these beautiful quilts, you'll win by becoming the proud owner of an original handmade art piece.

The community wins too. One hundred percent of all the money you donate for silent auction items and raffle tickets goes to help people in need through three local groups: Sharing Korner Food Shelf, The Family Place, and Jeremiah House. These are non-profit programs that help dislocated, homeless, and hungry people in our community. They help our neighbors in St. Paul find food and shelter, obtain education, and establish more stable lives. Sometimes Evergreen Quilters also contributes a share of the proceeds to help homeless and hungry people in other parts of the world where they may be experiencing particular hardships. The more generous you are, the more others will benefit.

Evergreen Quilters thanks you in advance for your support of this year's fund-raiser.

Tickets for the raffle quilt will be available in the Parish Hall after morning services throughout April. Raffle ticket sales will end April 29, at 12:45 p.m. The drawing for the raffle quilt will take place at 1:00 p.m. You may submit your final silent auction bids until 12:30 p.m., April 29. You do not need to be present to win.

Evergreen Quilters are members and friends of Unity Church-Unitarian who quilt or want to learn how to quilt, and who love to share their creativity and skills with each other and the wider community. All people of the church are welcome to join the group at any time. For information please contact Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760 or e-mail her at mwright1438@comcast.net.

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 the chosen community non-profit recipient. **Please make checks payable to Unity Church.**

April 1: Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota (WRC)

The Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota provides quality medical care and rehabilitation services for all injured, sick and orphaned wildlife and promotes the healthy cohabitation of people and wildlife with the goal of releasing animals back into the wild. Unity Church member Becky Rose supports the work of WRC.

April 8: Mano a Mano International Partners

Co-founded in 1994 by longtime Unity Church members Segundo and Joan Velasquez, Mano a Mano International Partners is dedicated to improving health and economic well-being in rural Bolivia where subsistence farmers live on less than one dollar a day. Mano a Mano built 100 community health clinics and also constructs schools, roads and water reservoirs in partnership with residents of these areas. Mano a Mano International Partners is the community partner of the Unity Church Mano a Mano Outreach Ministry Team.

April 15: Hallman Ministerial Endowment

This permanent endowment, which provides funding ministerial interns at Unity Church, presently stands at \$196,137. Once the Fund reaches \$500,000 it will generate enough to support the internship. At present the internship, including stipend, health and dental benefits and professional development costs the church approximately \$22,000 a year. Hallman Interns since 2002 include: Jen Crow, Melissa Carvill-Ziemer, Bill Neely, Katie Lawson, Teresa Schwartz, Justin Schroeder, Matt Alspaugh, Leon Dunkley, Lissa Gundlach, Jason Seymour, and Rachel Lonberg. Other Unity interns include Dottie Matthews, Jacqueline Duhart, and Jim Foti.

April 22: Mission Haiti, Inc.

Mission Haiti is a non-profit organization founded in 2006 and run by volunteers who are dedicated to making a difference in the most impoverished country in the western hemisphere. Due to lack of public schools and extreme poverty, many Haitian children do not attend school. Mission Haiti built an elementary school in the village of Leogane that provides a daily meal, books, and school supplies for 165 students. Unity Church members Shelley and John Butler have been supporters of Mission Haiti for many years.

April 29: Scholars of Minnesota-COPE Project

COPE (Creating Opportunities for Post-Secondary Education) Project assists low income underserved high school students in the Twin Cities as they transition into a post-secondary program. This work happens with their community partners through after-school mentoring, ACT/SAT classes, college tours and fairs, financial aid workshops, health and wellness seminars, community service leadership opportunities and scholarship assistance.

UNITY LIBRARIES & BOOKSTALL / ONGOING GROUPS

What's New in the Library and Bookstall

From Louise Merriam, Library Team



April is **National Poetry Month**, so it's fitting that Cafe Unity, where poets and other artists read and perform, occurs in April. But if you can't get to Cafe Unity, there are other ways to celebrate the role that poetry plays in our lives. Stop by the Bookstall or visit the libraries to sample the incredible variety of poetry available to enrich and enlighten including:

Mary Oliver: *Evidence* (2009), and *New and Selected Poems* (2005). Mary Oliver has been writing poetry for more than 40 years and her poems are often part of Unity's worship services.

Kathryn Kysar: *Pretend the World* (2011). Unity member Kathryn Kysar published another book of poems, *Dark Lake* (2002), and is the editor of a collection of essays, *Riding Shotgun: Women Write About Their Mothers* (2008).

Wendell Berry: The works of this prolific artist include essays, fiction, and magazine articles about organic gardening. He received the Poets' Prize for *The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry* (1998).

Robert Bly: Minnesota poet Robert Bly is best known for *Iron John: A Book About Men* (1990) and for his role in establishing the mythopoetic men's movement. Now 85, he continues to write and publish poems; his latest volume of poetry, *Talking into the Ear of a Donkey*, appeared in 2011.

Barbara Hamby: Born in 1952, Hamby received the New York University Poetry Prize for *The Alphabet of Desire* (1998) and several prizes for her first book of poetry, *Delirium* (1995).

Jack Prelutsky: *Ride a Purple Pelican* (1986) by the first American Children's Poet Laureate, is nonsense verse at its best. The illustrations are by Garth Williams.

Ashley Bryan: Ashley Bryan's *ABC of African-American Poetry* was a Coretta Scott King Award-winner in 1998.

The St. John's Bible Final Volume is Here!

Last fall Unity Library was honored to receive the first six of the seven-volume reproduction set of *The St. John's Bible* in memory of a congregant's parents. *Letters and Revelation*, the seventh and final volume is now here! This remarkable hand-created work is the collaboration of artists, scribes, and theologians over a period of twelve years. In the tradition of medieval times, the work was hand lettered with quills and illustrated with paints created from minerals and precious stones. The entire set is in the Anderson Library in the open display case and available for library use whenever the library is open and other times by request. Please do come and explore these magnificent volumes and view the Bible like you never have before.

Ongoing groups at Unity Church

Please contact the person listed for more information or contact the Church Office by phone at 651-228-1456 or by email at unity@unityunitarian.org

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (April 12) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

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

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (April 19) from Noon-2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (April 10) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (April 28) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760

Grandparent Unitots!: A playgroup for grandparents and their grandkids. Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Contact: Ona Lentz at 651-222-8117

Job Transition/Networking: Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Contact Linda LaBarre, Facilitator, at lindaleelabarre@gmail.com

Lectio Divina or Spiritual Reading: Sundays after the 9:00 a.m. service in the Ames Chapel.

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (April 17) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, April 9 and 23, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

Unitots!: A playgroup for families with kids through preschool age. Fridays at 9:30 a.m.

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. On April 10 they will discuss *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* by Edmund Morris.

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, April 13, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209

Unity Singles: Watch for announcements in *This Week at Unity*. Contact: Bonnie Reiland at bonniereiland@aol.com

Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding in the practice of Zen meditation. Tuesdays from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kford5@comcast.net

Elders' Circle: Tuesday, April 17 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

The Elders' Circle is a group of church elders (self-identified) who gather monthly for fellowship, learning, and fun. Refreshments will be served. For more info, or to inquire about a ride, contact Ministerial Intern Jim Foti by e-mail at jim@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x212.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH / MUSIC MINISTRY

2012-2013 Religious Education Registration

Families planning to enroll children and youth in next year's Sunday School program MUST attend an in-person registration session. Please mark these dates on your family's calendar and choose ONE to attend. Childcare provided at all sessions.

Wednesday, April 18, 7:10 p.m.

Sunday, April 22, 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 24, 7:10 p.m.

Saturday, April 28, 10:00 a.m.

Note that at all sessions, parents will sign up for their volunteer role in our shared ministry. To view a list of volunteer roles with descriptions, log onto www.unityunitarian.org. At all sessions, pledging families will have priority registration, followed by returning teachers, followed by open enrollment. Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Mary Blouin Auffert by email at kerri@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x104.

Important: If your family is relatively new to Unity Church and has not yet attended a New Family Orientation, please plan on attending the April 4 Orientation Session which begins at 7:10 p.m. Childcare is provided.

Easter is a Family Sunday

On April 8, children of all ages will worship with our family of families at all three services. Nursery care open for little ones ages 6 months to 4 years.

Teachers Needed!

Our shared ministry with children requires many hands and hearts! Several Workshop Leaders are needed for our upcoming R.E. Unit on Endings. Teach the same lesson several Sundays to different groups of kids: April 1, 15, 22 and 29, May 6. Lesson plans and materials provided. Our central idea is that everything in the known universe is impermanent. How does this bless and challenge us as human beings?

11:00 a.m.

Music: Sing *Lone Wild Bird* and listen to Mozart's Requiem
Drama: Read and perform the story of *Kisa and the Mustard Seed*
Body: Create a large sand mandala

4:30 p.m.

Music: Sing *Lone Wild Bird* and listen to Mozart's Requiem
Drama: Read and perform the story of *Kisa and the Mustard Seed*



Annual Used Book Sale!
April 14 and 15
Donations accepted through April 13.
See back cover for details.

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries

"But doesn't music and beauty itself contain compassion by its unique ability to communicate with and embrace so many different beings?... To touch the listener without any judgement or filter?... To give caring love merely by its presence?"

These questions were raised in conversation with musical colleagues with whom I was sharing my goal to write this article and somehow relate it to the month theme of "compassion." Their responses were overwhelming with thoughts that by its very nature of reaching out to all who listen, music is innately capable of and uniquely contains "compassion" within its very being. These thoughts lead to a discussion of beauty itself. I am not here to answer these questions, if they can be answered at all! It did, however, remind me of an article I wrote a few years back that talks about "beauty." This is shared below to assist in your own answers. I'd be interested in hearing your thoughts, also.

"Beauty alone confers happiness on all, and under its influence every being forgets that he is limited."

— Friedrich von Schiller

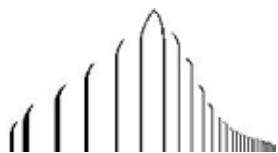
In his book *My quest for Beauty*, Rollo May states that many people, including him, believe that the greatest and richest discourse on beauty in our Western culture was written by Friedrich von Schiller, just before 1800. In that discourse, *Letters Upon the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Schiller offers many penetrating insights into the meaning of beauty and the struggles it inspires. That struggle of having the maturity of spirit that both recognizes the finite and yet seeks to reach beyond it into expressions of the infinite.

In studying these ideas, Rollo May offers the following in answer to the question, "What Is Beauty?":

"Beauty is the experience that gives us a sense of joy and a sense of peace simultaneously. Other happenings give us joy and afterwards a peace, but in beauty these are the same experience. Beauty is serene and at the same time exhilarating; it increases one's sense of being alive. Beauty gives us not only a feeling of wonder; it imparts to us at the same moment a timelessness, a repose - which is why we speak of beauty as being eternal."

As we all appreciate unique ideas of beauty in many forms of art, it seems that it is that very ability to "see and experience" that offers a bond between all various forms, cultures and artistic expressions. Rollo May offers the following words which seem to encapsulate these thoughts so perfectly:

"The great contribution of art is that, in our years on this planet, we are enabled to share, to give to each other, to communicate, to love the world and, in the broad sense, to love each other. This will sound strange to those who think the work is a cold mass of whirling star dust, but not to those who can form their world in communication by whatever beauty they can see and experience."



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

Maundy Thursday Chapel Service

All are welcome!

Thursday, April 5 • 7:00 p.m.

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

Annual Used Book Sale!



April 14 and 15

Come stock up on good reads! Unity folks read the best stuff – benefit from our congregation’s shared love of reading while supporting Youth Ministries! Donations for the sale can be dropped off in the Religious Education office through April 13.

UNITY MEMBERS ONLY

SNEAK PREVIEW

Saturday, April 14

Midnight to 1:00 a.m.

Before the sale opens to the public! Please, no book sellers!

Saturday, April 14

8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 15

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

\$5 Fill-A-Bag from 3:30–4:30 p.m.

the library and bookstall team present

Café Unity

Poetry & Music Salon



Reading of original prose and poetry, music and singing, refreshment and fellowship.

Childcare available upon request—contact Christy@UnityUnitarian.org.



Friday April 13, 2012

7:00 p.m. — free

Where? At Unity Church, of course.