

Redemption

The life of a congregation is a rich community tapestry of people, programs, ministries and worship. We lift up the patterns of this tapestry at Unity Church with the threads of monthly themes woven through our worship and programming. These themes deepen our understanding of our own faith and strengthen our bonds with one another in religious community. We explore each theme in worship and in our newsletter; in covenant groups, and religious education; and in our community outreach ministries, our literary journal and programs, and many other opportunities. The April theme is redemption.

Here at Unity Church, we welcome each newborn babe as “one more redeemer.” What does it mean for us to say that? What, or whom, are these infants expected to redeem, anyway?

Redemption sounds very similar to salvation, and indeed it is. The word *redemption* literally means “liberation by payment of a price.” According to *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, redemption is used religiously to “signify the salvation from doom or perdition that is wrought by a savior or by the individual.”

The word *salvation* brings to mind all the times in my life I’ve been asked if I wanted to be saved by Jesus. Throughout my lifetime, I’ve moved from a faith tradition whose salvation is the death of a man and into a faith tradition whose salvation is the birth of children. Through our theological assertion of original blessing, we believe that every person is born with inherent worth and dignity *and* that it is up to us to help them nurture that sense of worth and dignity along their journey. Through this exchange of grace, children have the capacity to restore the world to wholeness. When we name infants *redeemers*, we are claiming them as saviors who can liberate the world if we pay the price of raising them well and with love.

And then there are those who believe so exclusively in their own worth and dignity that they cease to believe in the worth of others. Take Darth Vader, for instance. In the great monomyth as revealed through *Star Wars*, evil Vader is ultimately redeemed when Luke Skywalker draws him back to wholeness. Even though Vader never recognizes his own need for redemption, it comes

unbidden when Luke recognizes goodness in him.

But what if no one ever recognizes good in us? What of the babies and children who are not affirmed in their worth and dignity? For them, redemption can be the reclamation of the worth that had been lost or denied along the way. If no one else is able or willing to redeem us, we still have the capacity to redeem ourselves and others, and the loving God of our Universalist heritage is the ultimate redeemer of all.

In 2006, when a shooter attacked a group of young Amish girls in their schoolhouse, the father of one of the victims noted that the shooter “had a mother and a wife and a soul and now he’s standing before a just God.” Amish community members visited and comforted the attacker’s widow, parents, and parents-in-law, in addition to establishing a charitable fund for his children. Is this what redemption looks like – not simply forgiveness but active movement toward creating a more hopeful and compassionate future? The wounded community did what was in their power to help restore a broken family to some sense of love and wholeness, to liberate them by paying them compassion. The tragedy could never be undone nor the wrong pardoned, but healing could take place with radical love and commitment.

Situations like this are often the greatest test of our faith. Our Universalist theology affirms that *all* souls are redeemed through God’s love. No one is beyond the reach of this great and universal love, which has the capacity to redeem us even when redemption seems impossible. But do we really believe

that? Are all people truly redeemable – even those people who commit the most heinous acts imaginable? And is that up to us to determine?

Even though we cannot ever undo what we’ve done, can we redeem ourselves with others and with the world in the future? *Star Wars* says we can, as does this true story about a woman who was gravely injured by a young, intoxicated driver: when the victim was asked for input into the driver’s sentence, she requested that he not be incarcerated. Instead, she wished him to directly serve others in his community who had suffered similar types of accidents. Years later, the young man became a cop. The victim’s choice gave the young man an opportunity that allowed him to move in a new direction. The fact that he became a cop wasn’t evidence of his redemption but was actually his continuing journey of redemption. Sometimes we are redeemed through a second chance, even if it’s not directly with the original person or group we’ve harmed.

In so many ways, the painful circumstances of life can lead us to feel powerless. The idea of redemption here in this earthly realm calls us to name the power that we *can* claim, to see where in our lives we *are* powerful. We may not have the power to prevent death, destruction, and pain, but we do have the power to forgive, to see goodness in others, and to help facilitate healing, and this is deeply redemptive work.

— By Mae Gibson Wall, with help from Janne Eller-Isaacs, Lisa Friedman, Pat Haff, Kerri Meyer, and Ruth Palmer

Redemption Resources

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JUST WORDS

Just Words

It was one of those moments when everything seemed to align. We were in the midst of a Saturday morning Unity Board meeting. The primary purpose of the meeting was to begin work on the end's process. Every five years we renew the stated ends of the church. The Board, whose job it is to write the ends, begins by asking the congregation: how do you imagine the church can be more effective in pursuit of its mission five years from now? The Board broke into three small groups each of which tried to come up with a "powerful question" to help focus the congregation's thinking. Staff and ministers were excused to give maximum voice to Board members. By the time we came back into the room the question was clear. *How can members of Unity Church become more vulnerable and more courageous people?*

It was a deeply confirming moment for us. We live out our ministry at the intersection of spiritual development and social justice. The Board had arrived at a stunning insight. The more open, the more attuned, the more vulnerable we are with our neighbors; the more courageous we will be in moving into solidarity with others in embodying the Beloved Community to which we aspire.

During the month of March the Board invited us into an amazing variety of opportunities to wrestle with that powerful question. My friend Don Brunquell and I led a sing-a-long. We offered a set of songs loosely related to vulnerability and courage followed by discussion. I've always been moved by John Prine's classic song, *Hello in There*, which is about the isolation so many older people feel. It ends with this charge:

*So when you're walking down the street sometime
See some hollow, empty eyes,
Don't just pass them by and stare,
Say hello in there, hello.*

The song, and I suppose the open heartedness that singing together can bring, led into a conversation about elders who have stopped coming to church. Sometimes the problem is mobility. Sometimes it just feels like too much



effort. Sometimes they feel they have been forgotten. Sometimes the isolation is reinforced by an unwillingness to be vulnerable. It's hard to ask for help. It takes courage to admit we all could pay closer attention, make stronger connections, reach out more effectively.

This month the Board is reaching out beyond the congregation to those "moral owners" to whom they need to listen in order to be sure that the church continues to turn outward to strengthen the partnerships and deepen the sense of solidarity with people and communities of color and with in the words enshrined in Unity Church policies *all those who yearn for the Beloved Community and see Unity Church as one instrument for its realization.*

The Board's ends process has included Sunday gatherings of the children of the Church School at which they were asked to imagine the future of the church. We recently received a letter from Amy Bryant, a devoted member of Unity Church, who has been a small group facilitator in the process:

I just returned from facilitating a Charting Our Course Together! conversation at church. On the way home, Francesca asked me what I was writing on the big paper when they walked past my room. I told her we were talking about Unity's End Statements, which help form the direction the church will take in the next five years.

Francesca lit up with excitement and said, "We did that!" I said, "You did?!" And she said "Yes! I'm going to be in 7th grade in five years, and I need to know what we're going to be doing until then!" She went on to tell me all about the conversation they had and the ways in which they and the church could be brave and vulnerable in the next five years.

I can't begin to tell you how proud I am of this church and how it is led. It makes my heart soar to know that the entire congregation — including our children — have the opportunity to have a voice regarding our future together. What a model of true leadership. What a blessing!

I couldn't agree more.

Imagine,
Rob Eller-Isaacs, Co-Minister

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Zoe Victoria Wilson

born one more redeemer

on January 7, 2013,

to mother Vicky Wilson

and grandparents

Ann Romanczuk and Keith Wilson

In Memoriam

A memorial service for

Duncan Baird will be held on
Saturday, April 13, at 2:00 p.m.

APRIL SUNDAY WORSHIP & OFFERING RECIPIENTS

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 7

The Salvation of a Second Chance — Mae Gibson Wall
How do we move forward into the future when we can never change the past? Are we forever marked by the mistakes we've made? Only when we are willing to receive grace and offer it to others can we create the world anew. Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Mae Gibson Wall and worship associate Ray Wiedmeyer as they share sacred stories of second chances.

April 14

Redemption: Now and Then — Rob Eller-Isaacs
It doesn't happen once and for all. Redemption happens now and then. I used to wear a bright red tee shirt. On the front it said "Born Again Unitarian Universalist" and on the back it said "...and again, and again, and again, and again and again." Rob will be joined by worship associate Kate Conners.

April 21

The Sweet Honey of Old Failures — Janne Eller-Isaacs
"The sweet honey of old failures" is a line from a poem by the Spanish poet Antonio Machado who created an image of bees creating honey from a hive of old failures. Ministerial intern Jim Foti, Janne, and worship associate Sherry Essen will explore how our failings, our imperfections and our mistakes can have a redemptive role in our lives.

April 28: Coming of Age Sunday

To Show the World a New Community

There is no more sacred moment in the church year than the day our ninth graders come of age. All year they wrestle with the five great questions of systematic theology. Sure, they have a good time wrestling. They develop deep and often lasting relationships with friends and mentors. In time a tenderness takes hold. The services will include a collage of wisdom from this year's Coming of Age class.

You Are Invited Coming of Age 2013!

The entire congregation is warmly invited to witness the Coming of Age of this year's ninth grade class on Saturday, April 27, 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.

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 7: Hallman Ministerial Endowment

This permanent endowment, which provides funding ministerial interns at Unity Church, presently stands at \$198,644. 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, Rachel Lonberg, and Mae Gibson Wall. Other Unity interns include Dottie Matthews, Jacqueline Duhart, and Jim Foti.

April 14: A Night on the Street

A Night on the Street is an overnight youth service and learning experience organized by Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative (formerly PORTICO Interfaith Housing Collaborative). Each year, 7th through 12th grade youth from various religious traditions in the Twin City area spend a night in the Minneapolis Plymouth Congregational parking lot in cardboard boxes and engage other youth about issues of poverty and homelessness. It's an opportunity for youth groups to speak with one voice and take action against homelessness by spending the night sleeping out and raising funds for affordable housing. Unity Church youth plan on participating in a Night on the Street on April 19.

April 21: Amicus

This week's offering goes to support armed services veterans who need a new start in our community. Amicus, the community partner of the Unity Restorative Justice Ministry team, has been working with offenders, ex-offenders and juveniles in the criminal justice system for over 45 years and recently began the Amicus Veterans Justice Program. Through Amicus, veterans can connect with the resources they need to rebuild their lives after a prison sentence and to avoid further incarceration. With community support, we can help those who served our country find a second chance to make a real change in their lives.

April 28: Mano a Mano Pilgrimage Scholarships

In collaboration with Mano a Mano International Partners, Unity's Religious Education teachers and other professional educators will be traveling to Bolivia this coming June to learn and serve the children and teachers in rural Bolivia. They will bring school supplies donated by the congregation and work with local Mano a Mano staff to offer support and training to Bolivian schoolteachers. This scholarship fund is for teachers who would like to join the trip but need assistance with some of the travel costs.

LETTER FROM KERRI MEYER / BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dear friends in faith,

It's because you have loved me – you, Unity Church – *loved me into being* as a religious leader, that I feel called to take new steps on my journey toward ordained ministry. The trust, support, encouragement and love of this congregation has shaped me and transformed me in ways I never could have anticipated when I joined the staff as Director of Religious Education in 2004. It's with a full heart – full almost to breaking – that I take my leave now to pursue the next part of the path that I see now as my vocation in ministry.



I've been blessed with a full-tuition scholarship for the three-year Master of Divinity program at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. As many of you know, my partner Jennifer, is on the faculty at San Francisco State University and we've been trying for some years to create a life together in the same city. I'll move to the Bay Area this summer and start seminary in September.

The shared ministry we've created together here at Unity – our vibrant family of families who worship, learn and play together – will continue to thrive because of the commitment and energy of the adults and youth who make it happen. It is my intention to leave a whole and healthy ministry ready to be picked up and carried on by Unity's next Director of Religious Education. I encourage parents to renew their dedication to one another and to our families during this transition and will pray for clarity, courage and good cheer for you all.

To the children and youth of Unity, I want to say a particular "thank you." Thank you for your joy and your compassion. Thank you for your listening ears, your caring hearts and your bold voices. What an extraordinary group of seekers you are! Your answers to our Big Questions have become part of who I am. If I know now that I am called to be minister to all people, it's because *you have allowed me to be a minister to you*. I imagined that I would somehow see all of you grow up, come of age, and return to the Christmas Pageant as adults in the pews, but like every teacher, I can only share in part of your growing up years. I find a lot of joy and comfort imagining all the ways in which you'll continue to grow and change long after our time here together. I pray that your minds and spirits will be shining lights in the world, just as they have been in my life.

There isn't enough space in this newsletter for me to name all the blessings that you have given me in the past nine years, friends. Know that I am grateful beyond words for this community, for its vision of the religious life and its aspirations of integrity, its love of service and its capacity for joy. You have been my family through times of joy and sorrow; this goodbye will be a time of both. I hope we don't run out of blue and yellow stones around here, because I'll need them all.

Thank you. Thank you for this worthy work and thank you for walking with me into this season of gratitude and goodbyes. Let's love one another well.

Every blessing,
Kerri Meyer, Director of Religious Education

Board of Trustees

From Marg Walker, Chair

Did you know that Unity Church-Unitarian has "Moral Owners?" A few years ago I didn't either, but it makes perfect sense.

Our governing policies define moral owners as "those who yearn for the beloved community and see Unity Church as an instrument for its realization." Moral owners are all of us, and they are many others. They are local, national and international organizations with whom we work and share resources. They are neighbors, ministers of other churches, people we worked with on the campaigns to defeat both amendments last fall, and more.

The fact that our church has moral owners outside our congregation is incredibly important. It says we are not accountable only to ourselves. It says we don't have all the answers. We don't even have all the questions. We believe in the power of community and the importance of working in partnership with others to make a difference in the world. This is a primary way we live out our values.

Now that we are renewing our Ends Statements (you *do* know we're doing that, right?), it is imperative that we seek ideas from moral owners outside, as well as within, our congregation. So the board is contacting many of our community partners and asking them to engage in deep conversation about these questions:

- How would you describe the community you long to see and live in? What does it look like? Who lives there? What is happening?
- What could be done in the next five years to help make that vision of community real?

What will these moral owners say to us? By the time this newsletter is printed, board members will be out there listening. This is a privilege, and, we expect, a pleasure. Will their answers differ from ours? How will they inform our ends? Will they reveal new ways of working together?

We believe that conversations with our partners help our church grow in our understanding of this beautiful, broken world we share. And we trust that what we learn will challenge us to reach beyond where we thought we could go, and to move forward with courage and vulnerability, and with joy.

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MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Mae Gibson Wall

2012-13 Hallman Ministerial Intern

Humpty Dumpty has been on my mind lately – the famously fragile little fellow who sat all alone on top of a wall and fell, broken beyond repair. I keep wondering why he was up there in the first place. Was he trying to prove something? Get away from someone? Take in a picturesque view? It seems terribly dangerous to climb up there all alone, so he must have had a good reason.

Or maybe he didn't. Maybe he hated being up there on that wall. Maybe it wasn't his choice to be there at all. To paraphrase something I read long ago, maybe Humpty was like the person who walks on stilts, so high above the rest of the world but longing to just be on the ground among everyone else, walking with her own two feet. Humpty and the woman on stilts are the people we look up to and perhaps even envy, all while they are desperately lonely and terrified of heights.

I wonder if you know someone like this. I wonder if you are someone like this. I wonder how we care for our bodies and our souls when they are at their most fragile. Do we isolate them high up on a shelf somewhere so that we won't have to think about them? Or do we hold them tenderly and give them extra attention when they need it most, re-upping our devotion to them? Like the wise woman who prays for an hour every day except on the days when she is so busy she hardly has time to breathe. On those days, she prays for two hours, not because she is a masochist but because she knows that those are the days when she needs to be grounded in her practice the most.

But back to Humpty Dumpty. When he fell, why couldn't all the king's horses and all the king's men put him back together? Was he irredeemable? When do we become so broken that we cannot be mended? I wonder if you've ever felt that way. I wonder if you feel that way now.

Finally, I wonder if Humpty tried to put himself back together again. Did he fight for himself and believe in his own strength, even while he was faced with his own vulnerability? Or did he lie there helplessly and leave it to the professionals? I hope it was the former, although I doubt it. I think the story may have had a happier ending in that case.

May we meet our own brokenness with tender care and infinite courage. May we redeem ourselves even when no one else believes it's possible. And may we tell ourselves and each other to come down off that wall already, because it's so much more pleasant to be grounded in the company of love.

Mae Gibson Wall can be reached by email at mae@unityunitarian.org and by phone at 651-228-1456 x129.



Jim Foti

2012-13 Ministerial Intern

My discovery of Unitarian Universalism was a happy accident. General Assembly happened to be held in Milwaukee while I was working at a newspaper there, and I happened to edit an article about General Assembly. If I hadn't been working that day, or available to edit a story at that moment, I have no idea when Unitarian Universalism and I might have crossed paths. I was not at all seeking religious involvement in my early 20s, mostly because I had no idea that a religion could be like ours.

There are other stories like mine — I recently read about a now-minister who first learned about UUs from a flyer on a bulletin board. If the vast majority of people can't tell you the first thing about Unitarian Universalism, it may be because they haven't had a random encounter with our faith.

The very idea of attending church can be a tough sell in today's culture, which makes it tempting to not talk about what we have to offer. But I want to share with you an outside-the-box idea to perhaps help a few more people begin to understand who we are.

Because Unity Church is not on a high-traffic corner, few pedestrians randomly stroll past our church. But there's one day a year when hundreds of people do walk right by our building: Grand Old Day. What if we gave fate a nudge on that Sunday with some creative and radical hospitality right outside our new front door? Offering paper fans with a message of hope and love on them, for example, or setting up a water bottle refill station (with brochures right nearby) — something to get people to give us a look, or to consider the possibility of church at all.

If you'd like to explore how we might best take advantage of that first Sunday in June, please contact me, and we'll see what kind of "happy accidents" we might create.

Jim Foti can be reached by email at jim@unityunitarian.org and by phone at 651-228-1456 x109.



Integrating Your Catholic Heritage

Saturday, April 27 • 9:00 a.m.-noon

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Everyone who has made the transition from Roman Catholicism to Unitarian Universalism has a story, and this workshop, developed at Unity, is a theological, cultural, and interpersonal exploration of the gifts and challenges we bring with us. Members of the Unity community are invited as Ministerial Intern Jim Foti offers the workshop at his home congregation for the first time. To register, please contact Jim at jim@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x109.

Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT)

From Avi Viswanathan, ARLT member

On Sunday, March 10, the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) held its annual meeting at Unity Church. MUUSJA brings together UUs and UU congregations to work collectively for social change based on our religious imperative to create a just, sustainable, and peaceful world. One of MUUSJA's core goals is to advocate for racial equity in employment.

MUUSJA held the event at Unity Church for two reasons. The first is that MUUSJA is a member of the HIRE Minnesota Coalition, where I serve as the Coalition Organizer. The second is that Unity is at the forefront of leading private organizations to look at their own practices and how they promote racial equity.

The importance of this work cannot be understated. Did you know that the Twin Cities has the worst racial disparities in employment in the entire country? A black worker in the Twin Cities is 3.3 times more likely to be unemployed than a white worker. Even when factoring for education and criminal record, there is still a significant disparity. A black worker with a college degree and no criminal record is still less likely to be employed than a white worker with a high school diploma and a criminal record.

At HIRE, we focus on ensuring government agencies hold true to minority hiring goals when using public dollars in construction. We have had successful campaigns with green jobs, Minnesota Department of Transportation, and Central Corridor Light Rail. At the meeting I shared that MnDOT has tripled the number of people of color in the workforce over the last three years and that all but one of the top 15 projects is meeting its goal for people of color. And CCLRT construction has reached one of the highest levels of minority participation of any infrastructure project in the state.

HIRE's work is significant, but we need private actors to engage in this work too. Unity is leading that charge. At the meeting, Jim Foti shared Unity's success and new policies to ensure that the church is doing what it can to eliminate disparities. On the Unity Tomorrow project, Unity weighed the potential contractors' plans for having a diverse workforce in choosing the contractor. In the end, McGough construction had over a 30 percent minority workforce. Unity has also instituted a policy to have at least a conversation with each vendor the church works with about this issue and what their employment practices are.

Unity Church, MUUSJA, and HIRE are working tirelessly to reduce employment disparities. Through our strong partnership and deepening commitment, our work will spread throughout the region and we will have a continued impact in our communities.

Ongoing Groups at Unity Church

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

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (April 11) 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 for more information.

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (April 18) from Noon–2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (April 9) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (April 27) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760 for more information.

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (April 16) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, April 8 and 22, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578 for more information.

Unitots! A playgroup for families (parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles) with kids through preschool age. Every Monday and Thursday, from 9:30 a.m.-noon, in the nursery. Contact Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month (April 9) from 7:00-8:30 p.m. The book they will be discussing is *Lost in the Wild* by Cary Griffith Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net for more information.

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, April 5, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209.

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

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CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Welcome Words

For me, spring is not just the arrival of a season — it is an act of faith. My eldest son was born on the first day of spring in a snow storm, but I knew in my heart that the greening earth would soon prevail.

Each year, just when we need it most, life calls to us. I watch for the small signs of vitality that herald hope — the brighter birdsong, the longer days, the emerging buds on the trees. They are not unlike the signs of vitality that I witness each week in this community we create together. The chatter of conversation in the halls and classrooms, the laughter over a cup of soup, the joy of greeting each other as we begin worship — these, too, are signs of hope. Sometimes, just when we need it most, we invite one another to join in a larger life and love. It is a miracle and blessing indeed.

Lisa Friedman

Director of Congregational Life

lisa@unityunitarian.org



Pathway to Membership

Unity Church offers three classes for visitors who are exploring Unity as a spiritual home. Sign up at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Laney Ohmans at 651-228-1456 or laney@unityunitarian.org. Childcare is available by contacting Christy Randall at 651-228-1456 x127 or christy@unityunitarian.org at least one week in advance. Rev. Lisa Friedman, Director of Congregational Life, is happy to meet with you to answer questions and to welcome you into the congregation. She can be reached at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107.

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers

Wednesday, April 10 • 7:15–8:30 p.m.

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

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Exploration

Thursday, April 4, 11, 18 • 6:30–8:30 p.m. ~ also offered ~
Saturday, May 4 • 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

In this class, we will have an opportunity to share part of our religious journey, to take a more in-depth look at the history of Unity Church, to discuss the expectations and benefits of membership, and get to know the programs and ministries of the congregation.

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Saturday, April 13 • 9:30–11:30 a.m. ~ also offered ~
Saturday, June 8 • 9:30–11:30 a.m.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. The class will conclude with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book! There will be a New Member recognition ceremony on Sunday, April 14.

Welcome New Members!

Marv and Jeannie Spears

Marv and Jeannie were members of Unity Church in the 70s and 80s before moving to Colorado for 20 years. Their five children grew up in this Sunday school, and two are still active Unitarians. Marv is a photographer and loves politics, Jeannie is a quilter and loves gardening. It is good to be home.



Scott Burnett and Courtney Nagle

Scott Burnett and Courtney Nagle have been attending Unity Church for almost two years with their two children, Skyler and Hope Burnett. They live in St. Paul and spend their summers in Montana.

Justine and Theresa Nelson

Justine does research on low-income families. Theresa provides therapy to clients with co-morbid medical and psychological conditions. Margaret is their artistic 6-year-old, and Rosie her rambunctious little sister. They love cooking, gardening, and exploring the Twin Cities. They value the spiritual curiosity they find at Unity, especially in the religious education program, and after seven years are finally becoming members!



Richard Cooper

Richard was born in Flint in 1935, attended college from 1953-1955, joined the Marines from 1955-1959, worked for Univac in the Twin Cities from 1960-1991, and went back to school at Metro State from 1992-1996. He married Beverly in 1965, and their daughter Beth, who now lives in Decorah, IA, was born in 1965. Beverly passed away in 2002, and Richard met his life partner and fiancée (Unity member) Barbara Anderson in 2007.

Steven Carney

Steven lives in St. Paul with his partner of 17 years, and their dog and cat. His hobbies include travel, reading, cooking and biking. He is a clinical social worker, psychotherapist, and part-time college instructor by training. He looks forward to the next chapters of his spiritual journey at Unity Church.

CHALICE CAMP

Friends

Fun

Crafts

WATER



Singing

GAMES

Chalice Camp Week 1: June 24-28
Chalice Camp Week 2: July 8-12

Unity Church will once again offer two separate weeks of summer day camp! Share in summer fun and Unitarian Universalist values with Unity friends entering grades 1-6.

Our camps run Monday-Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily.

The programming for weeks 1 and 2 will not overlap completely, so sign your camper up for both weeks!

Payment

Early-bird tuition is \$200/week per child if paid by May 1. After May 1 tuition is \$250/week

Registration, payment, and applications for junior and senior counselor positions are available online at www.unityunitarian.org.



Unity's Rides Ministry

We now have a pool of more than 60 drivers who are available to give occasional or regular rides to Sunday worship. If you are in need of a ride to services, please contact the church at 651-228-1456, and the volunteer or staff member who answers the phone can see whether there is a match for your geographic area or preferred service time.

About a dozen people have expressed an interest in receiving rides so far. And because members of the Unity community are quite spread out across the area, we can always use more drivers.

The Rides Ministry is currently focused on providing rides on Sundays for those who might not otherwise be able to attend worship. But increased interest in the idea of giving and receiving rides has led to conversations about general Sunday carpooling and ride-sharing for events at other times of the week.

If you have questions about the Rides Ministry or know of congregants who might be interested in receiving rides, please contact Ministerial Intern Jim Foti at 651-228-1456 x109 or jim@unityunitarian.org.

High School Book Sale! April 13 & 14

Pick up your summer reads or some great additions to your personal library at the High School Book Sale! Thank you to all who donated books. Hours:

Saturday Midnight Madness: 12:00-1:00 a.m. • Sneak preview for Unity congregants only (password required!)

Saturday, April 13: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 14: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Fill a Bag for \$5 starts Sunday at 3:00 p.m.! Proceeds help youth make the pilgrimage to Boston and participate in other denominational activities. Book donations are accepted until April 12 at 5:00 p.m.!

Call for Art

Unity Church-Unitarian is accepting applications for exhibits during the exhibit calendar year 2013 / 2014. Exhibits run monthly from September 2013 through July of 2014. Exhibit guidelines and applications can be found online at the church website: <http://www.unityunitarian.org/parish-hall-artists.html>. **Application deadline is May 24, 2013.** Please contact Cynthia Starkweather-Nelson by email if you have any questions: starkweathernelson@cstarnel.com.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 19-23, 2013 LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

Represent Unity Church at General Assembly!

Do you love Unity Church? Do you take pride in your Unitarian Universalist identity? Do you enjoy meeting other Unitarian Universalists to socialize and learn together? Then consider representing Unity at the upcoming General Assembly from June 19-23 in Louisville, Kentucky! Imagine gathering with other UUs from around the world to help move our faith "From Promise to Commitment." Picture yourself putting words to action as a voting delegate of our church. If you are interested or have questions, email Hallman Intern Mae Gibson Wall at mae@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x129.

Young Adults Group at Unity Church

Dear young adults: do you enjoy coming to Unity for the sermons but then feel adrift at coffee hour? Would you love to have someone to discuss the sermon with over a cold beverage or a basket of tater tots? Would you like to help design the programming that you want to see here at Unity Church? Yes? Are you also between the ages of 21 and 35? If so, please email laney@unityunitarian.org for more information about our nascent Young Adults Group.

Join Unity Gardeners

We have big plans for spring and summer! As the snow melts, we will discover exciting new garden spaces around the new entrances. We will be designing, planting and maintaining these new spaces as well as revitalizing the old gardens along Grotto and Portland which suffered from construction and drought last summer. There is much to do and we welcome all levels of experience! If you enjoy working with flowers and foundation plantings, contact Ethel Griggs at c.griggs@comcast.net or 651-429-0064 to learn more about the Unity Gardeners team.

Job Transitions Group beginning again!

The first session is scheduled for April 8 and will meet weekly on Monday mornings from 9:00-11:00 a.m., in the Anderson Library.

The Job Transitions group took a break during construction. It was missed during that time so it is coming back. Linda LaBarre, the group's leader has graciously agreed to facilitate the group again. If you are newly without employment, retired, contemplating retirement, between jobs, or discerning an employment or vocational change, you will benefit from the conversations, resource sharing, exercises and camaraderie this group supplies. For more information contact Janne at janne@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x106.

Women's Retirement Group Begins on April 11

There is a new Women's Retirement Group forming here at Unity Church, and all are welcome. You are warmly invited to come to a first meeting on Thursday, April 11, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. The group plans to meet twice a month on the second and fourth Thursdays. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or Leah Doherty at doher001@umn.edu.

Indoor Family, Food, and Fun

Miss the Young Unitarian Universalist Families summer picnics? So do we! While we are waiting for the weather to warm up, we invite families — especially those who have never attended one — to an indoor potluck picnic on Sunday, April 21, following the 11:00 a.m. service. We will gather downstairs at 12:30 p.m. in the religious education area for food and fun. Bring a picnic for your family and a dish to share. We'll play a few games that will allow the kids to run around and commiserate about what a long winter it has been! Hope to see you there!

Elder's Group

Tuesday, April 23 • 1:00-2:30 p.m. • Center Room • Topic: Ethical Wills

Everyone is welcome at Unity's monthly Elders gatherings! This month, Janne Eller-Isaacs will lead the group through a discussion about ethical wills. She will explain what they are, share examples and provide an outline for some of the issues people might like to include in an ethical will. Our gathering will include time for visiting with friends old and new, and refreshments will be served. For more information about the Elders Group or to offer or inquire about receiving a ride to this event, contact Ministerial Intern Jim Foti at 651-228-1456 x109 or jim@unityunitarian.org.

Redemption Resources

Films

Les Miserables (2012, feat. Hugh Jackman and Russell Crowe). This musical, set in 19th-century France, explores the conflict between right, wrong, and the concept of redemption.

As It Is in Heaven (2004, Swedish film). An international conductor returns to his childhood village in Sweden, where his life is changed when he conduct the local church choir.

Seven Pounds (2008, feat. Will Smith and Rosario Dawson). A man with a secret embarks on an extraordinary journey of redemption by forever changing the lives of strangers.

Books

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini. The heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant.

Bone to Pick: Of Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Reparation, and Revenge by Ellis Cose. Drawing on the stories of people around the world, Cose offers a wide-ranging discussion of the power of reconciliation.

Children's Resources

Tico and the Golden Wings by Leo Lionni (ages 3-7). After a little bird born without wings receives golden wings, his friends turn against him.

Martha Walks the Dog by Susan Meddaugh (ages 4-8). When a tough dog moves into the neighborhood, Martha and her animal pals realize he's not exactly what they think.

Mr. Lincoln's Way by Patricia Polacco (ages 6-10). A school principal tries to get through to "Mean Gene," who is known as a bully and a bad student.

Holes, by Louis Sachar (ages 8+). Stanley is sent to a boys' detention center and uncovers a secret truth.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis (ages 8+, picture book for ages 4+). Lives are changed forever after siblings discover the magical land of Narnia.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday is a multi-generational opportunity to gather together midweek at church for food, fellowship, and fun. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship at 6:45 p.m., and an evening of rich programming beginning at 7:10 p.m. All are welcome. Childcare is available and you do not have to sign up in advance.

Dinner: The cost for dinner is: \$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. (Children under the age of 24 months are free.) Reservations for dinner are not required. Financial assistance is available to cover the cost of dinners; contact Lisa Friedman by e-mail at lisa@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x107.

April 3

Dinner: North African vegetable stew over almond and currant quinoa, salad, and dessert

Can we feed our world without destroying it?

Join award-winning speaker and U of M professor Dr. Jonathan Foley to learn why we desperately need to begin what he calls "terraculture"...farming for the whole planet. Find out what we can do — as individuals, families and church members — to better feed ourselves, and the world. Sponsored by Unity's Sustainable Agriculture interest group, which focuses on how our production and consumption of food nurtures us physically and spiritually; affects the just distribution of food; and alters our earth's environment.

P90X Workout

Join P90X certified instructor and church member Jason Lien for a 60-minute P90X workout that includes stretching, yoga, cardio and core strengthening. Bring a mat, water bottle, and towel.

Religious Education New Family Orientation

April 10

Dinner: roasted salmon, asparagus, potatoes, and dessert

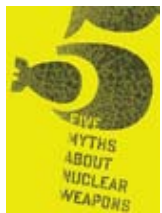
Welcome to Unity

If you would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and Unity Church, join us for a *Welcome to Unity* class.

Documentary Screening: *Two Who Dared: The Sharps' War*

Two Who Dared is the never-before-told story of Waitstill and Martha Sharp, an American Unitarian minister and his wife who boldly committed to a life-threatening mission in Europe to help save imperiled Jews and refugees at the onset of World War II. After seventeen ministers declined the Unitarian Association's request for relief volunteers in Europe, Waitstill and Martha committed to the dangerous undertaking, leaving behind their two children and risking their lives to save thousands.

Five Myths About Nuclear Weapons — Ward Wilson



For the first time since the end of the Cold War a sweeping revision of ideas about nuclear weapons is underway. This radical rethinking will leave nuclear weapons policy profoundly changed. Ward Wilson argues that nuclear weapons are as dangerous as we've always thought, but not very useful, even if you have a monopoly. Richard Rhodes, Pulitzer-prize winning author of *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, has called Wilson's book "brilliant, original, and important."

P90X Workout

10

Integrity, service, and joy.

April 17

Dinner: lemon chicken and broccoli bake with whole grain breadcrumb topping, salad, dessert

Laughter Yoga – Katy Taylor

Join Katy Taylor, a Certified Laughter Yoga Leader, to explore the art of laughter to invite more joy, play, health, 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 try on being a little bit silly.

R.E. Enrollment for the 2013-14 Church-Year

This is an opportunity to register children for religious education and to choose a volunteer role. See page 14 for details.

Open Writing Page Session

Reflection topic: Redemption

See box at right (page 11) for details.

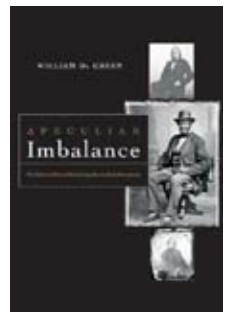
P90X Workout

April 24

Dinner: TBA

A Peculiar Imbalance: The Rise and Fall of Racial Equality in Minnesota — Dr. William Green

Dr. Green has researched Minnesota's history as a frontier democracy and the dynamics of race, class, power and politics in its early years of statehood. He concludes that the early road to racial equality in Minnesota was not paved with progressive thought, but was lengthy and arduous. He will also share some of the new research which is shaping his sequel to "A Peculiar Imbalance." Dr. Green is an Associate Professor of History at Augsburg College and served as interim superintendent of the Minneapolis Public Schools. Find *A Peculiar Imbalance* on the new book shelf in Unity's Anderson Library!



Healing Arts 101

Have you heard of Acupuncture? Homeopathy? Ear Candling? Chiropractic care? Many people have heard of these different holistic health options, and wonder what they are and how they can help. Join Christine Huff for this session where we'll talk about alternative/holistic medicine in general, and we'll cover specific practices as well. Feel free to bring questions!

P90X Workout

April 2013 commUNITY

Open Page Writing Sessions

Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing sessions are opportunities to correspond with the "still, small voice within." Using stories, poetry, images and objects as well as wisdom from religious teachings, science and history, participants reflect on the month's theme in their own words and on their own pages. No writing experience is necessary.

Wednesday, April 17

7:00-9:00 p.m. • Unity Church

~also offered~

Sunday, April 21

2:00-4:00 p.m. • Unity Church

Reflection Topic: Redemption

Free; RSVP karen@unityunitarian.org

The poet William Stafford once said of his poems, "I have woven a parachute of everything broken." This session (the same program offered on two different dates) explores the many different parachutes that save us, as we reflect on the topic of redemption.

Wednesday, May 1

7:00-9:00 p.m. • Unity Church

Reflection Topic: Blessing

Free; RSVP karen@unityunitarian.org

A blessing, according to John O'Donohue, "is a circle of light drawn around a person to protect, heal, and strengthen. . . A blessing awakens future wholeness." Join in a May Day writing session exploring the wholeness and the healing found in blessing and being blessed.

Other Literary Programming

For more information about additional writing programs offered in other locations, visit www.unityunitarian.org/literary-ministry.html, or to receive periodic e-mail notifications of Karen's upcoming literary programs at Unity Church and elsewhere, contact karen@unityunitarian.org.



What's New in the Library and Bookstall!

From Louise Merriam, Library and Bookstall Team

Hello from Budapest where Partner Church Team member Jim Oberly and I are living until June. It's a great city, and a great opportunity. One of the things that excited me about this adventure was what I thought would be an opportunity to really experience Hungarian Unitarianism. That turns out to be more difficult than I had imagined, primarily because I didn't have my facts straight.

Hungarian Unitarianism originated in Transylvania in the 16th century among the Hungarian-speaking people in what is now central and eastern Romania. Its history is complex and intertwined with the European wars of religion, the expansion of the Hapsburg empire and the wars against the Turks. Unitarianism in today's Hungary migrated westward from Transylvania, its adherents displaced by wars, revolutions and economic disasters.

I had it backwards. There are many more Unitarians in Romania than in Hungary proper. There are only three small Unitarian congregations in Budapest and fewer than a dozen in the entire country. We visited one recently, and found the service to be very similar to what we experienced at Unity's partner church in Homoródszentpéter.

If, like mine, your grasp of Unitarian history is a little weak, the Library Bookstall Team can help! There are general resources available for sale in the Bookstall, and the Anderson Library has several volumes on the history of European and Transylvanian Unitarianism. These include: *A History of Transylvanian Unitarianism Through Four Centuries of Sermons*, by Imre Geller; *Out of the Flames*, by Lawrence Goldstone; *Hunted Heretic: The Life and Death of Michael Servetus, 1511-1553*, by Roland Bainton. There are also a number of online English-language resources available; simply Google "Unitarians Hungary" and "Unitarians Transylvania."

the library and bookstall team present

The 5th Annual

Café Unity


Poetry & Music Salon

Come to the parish hall coffeehouse at Unity for:
reading of original prose and poetry,
music and singing, refreshments and fellowship.

Friday April 12, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Childcare available upon request — call Christy.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Congregation Book Read: *Thank You!*

We want to thank everyone who participated in the Congregational Read of *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. The Bookstall sold 109 books and we had over 120 people participate in the discussions. Participants included folks from other churches as well as local community members. There were many ideas generated for what could be done to address the injustices identified in Alexander's book. The compiled list of ideas will be sent out to participants who supplied their contact information.

Meanwhile, the planning committee is considering how to keep the momentum going to help bring these ideas into action. The Restorative Justice and Racial Justice Teams will be coordinating this effort.

Copies of the book are in our library if you did not get a chance to read it. If you would like to get Michelle Alexander's newsletter, contact: outreach@newjimcrow.com.



Michelle Alexander, who wrote *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* will be speaking at the University of St Thomas at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 8. The talk will be in the Anderson Student Center at 2115 Summit Avenue in St Paul. This event is free and open to the public.

A Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Action

Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121. Ask to be connected to the office of one of your senators.



Talking points:

- Tell your senator's office that you care about restaurant workers' rights.
- Ask that your senator support the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013, which would increase the federal minimum wage, including the base wage for millions of tipped workers.
- Explain that tipped workers are often paid as little as \$2.13 per hour, a wage that hasn't been raised in more than 20 years!
- Optional: Mention that although the current law requires employers to make up the difference between the tipped minimum wage and the regular minimum wage if tips fail to cover the gap, the reality is that employers often don't.

When you have finished the first call, dial the switchboard again and ask to be connected to your other senator's office.

Go to www.uusc.org for more information about this campaign and other UUSC actions.

URGENT: Gay Marriage Bill Could Fail

From Jane Eastwood

We need your help to make sure that gay marriage legislation passes this session. Right now, we're actually losing – despite appearances of the committee votes last week. The opposition is out-organizing us by a mile.

In the committee vote last week, a DFL legislator voted against the marriage bill. When asked why, he said he'd received five calls from constituents who opposed gay marriage. He had apparently received none from our side. Five calls shaped his vote!

How We Will Win

By having volunteers make phone calls only to people who support gay marriage:

- Call supportive constituents who live in one of 10 districts where we want to change a legislator's vote. On the call, you will patch the constituent through to the legislator to leave a message saying why they support for marriage. It's fun and you're coaching people – nothing scary or negative.
- Call to recruit past supporters and sign them up for volunteer shifts. Not a sexy job, but one that will help us win.

We Are the Gay Marriage Campaign

Right now, volunteering for MN United is anemic: Two to three people per phone bank. Everyone is burnt out or too busy. Some people think there's a big paid staff or "those other folks" who will pull this campaign out. *Not true.* We are the campaign, and we've got eight weeks to win.

How do you want to feel on May 21?

Now is the time to dig deep and sign up for as many shifts as you can. One per week? 10 in eight weeks? Only six? Sign up for as many as you think you can do and then one more.

Think about how you'll feel if you wake up on May 21 knowing we won in the Senate – and lost by two votes in the House.

Where and How to Volunteer

Unity Church and the St Paul Interfaith United group, of which we're a member, are working to fill two volunteer shifts per week, with a third, hopefully at Unity Church, coming soon:

Mondays, 6:30-9:00 p.m.: Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 Dale St. N; volunteer recruitment calls

Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.: SEIU headquarters, 2233 University Ave W, St. Paul; calling constituents of faith to leave messages for their legislators.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Project Home Returns to Unity Church in May

Remember how great it felt to show off that first apartment? Remodeled kitchen? New couch? The thrill came not from the item but rather from the sense that you are now better able to welcome guests into your life. After missing our "Project Home Season" last year due to construction, we are now in a position to show off all that hard work and even more importantly provide clean, comfortable and inviting lodging for families in search of more permanent housing. Each afternoon for the entire month of May our Junior High wing will transform into private spaces for individual families to regroup and recharge after a day spent at school or work. Our Coming of Age space will be utilized by guests and volunteers as a place to talk, play games, do homework and just hang out. Our beautiful new nursery will give our youngest visitors and mom or dad a place designed just for them. What a pleasure it will be to spend time in these wonderful spaces knowing that our efforts are truly making a difference for members of our community.

In keeping with the new and improved Project Home experience, we will be making use of the online recruitment tool SignUp Genius in addition to our weekly Parish Hall outreach after every service. This program has been used successfully by other churches to enlist evening (5:30–8:30 p.m.) and overnight (8:00 p.m.–7:00 a.m. Sunday–Thursday and 8:00 p.m.–9:00 a.m. Friday–Saturday) hosts. Not only does it make it easier to plan volunteer shifts around individual schedules, SignUp Genius also allows volunteers to see the schedule in its entirety. During April the Project Home team will be reaching out to Unity Church members and friends to fill 155 volunteer slots.

As before, experience is not necessary and training will be provided. Project Home prescreens participants to ensure a safe experience for guests and hosts alike. Sleeping accommodations will be available for overnight hosts. Responsible youth are always encouraged to join their parents as volunteers. We hope covenant groups of all types will extend their fellowship to a Project Home day. Links to SignUp Genius will be provided in later communications. We can't wait to show our Project Home families these beautiful new spaces and all the wonderful faces that call this place their spiritual home!

*Interested in serving as a Project Home host?
Consider attending one of the following training sessions.*

Project Home 101 Volunteer Basics: Sunday, April 21 • 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Come learn how to be a part of this dynamic, hands-on, family-friendly volunteer opportunity. Get an overview of the Ramsey County family shelter system and the basic duties of a Project Home Evening or Overnight Volunteer. Our goal is for you to leave the training feeling both excited and confident for your upcoming volunteer shift. Meet in Coming of Age Room on the lower level.

Project Home 201 Beyond the Basics: Sunday, April 21 • Noon-1:00 p.m.

A discussion tailored to seasoned volunteers. Let's gather to have some honest conversations about child development, parenting in public, and respecting boundaries when working with very low income families in crisis. Specifically, we'll talk about the challenges of volunteering and what to do when tough situations arise. Meet in the Coming of Age Room on the lower level.

Project Home Walk-through

April 28, May 5, May 12, May 19 • 10:15-10:45 a.m.

A short overview of the volunteer host role, a quick tour of where/how Project Home is set up in our church, and answers to any questions you may have. Meet at the base of Whitman lobby stairs on the lower level.

Whole Farm Co-op Deliveries



Buy meat, cheese, eggs and other local sustainable produce from Whole Farm Coop farms and pick it up in the Unity Church basement each month! Order from www.wholefarmcoop.com or call 1-320-732-3023 by Wednesday, April 10, and orders will be delivered on Wednesday, April 17.

Evergreen Quilters Pre-Mother's Day Boutique

Buy one-of-a-kind gifts at the Evergreen Quilters' Boutique on Sunday, May 5, in the Parish Hall after the morning services. You'll find items for any gifting budget and all proceeds support Unity's outreach programs.

Spring house cleaning? Think Bridging, Inc.

Bridging, Inc. thanks Unity Church for our help with their "Dresser Challenge" in February. With the offering money we collected, we were able to supply them with 21 five-drawer dressers!

Bridging, Inc. is in constant need of quality furniture and household items to help those in need who are referred to Bridging by social service agencies. The clients arrive at Bridging with a list of needs determined by a social worker. If you are downsizing or spring cleaning, your contributions would be much appreciated. For more information about donations and volunteer opportunities visit www.bridging.org.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

Religious Education Enrollment for 2013-14

We look forward to a great religious education program year beginning next September! Parents of returning children, please plan to attend ONE of the four sessions of R.E. Enrollment at which you will learn about next year's program, sign up for your adult volunteer role in the ministry and enroll your child in the appropriate class at one of the three worship services.

We conduct registration in person because it is efficient and gives parents more influence over their child's experience and their own volunteer commitment. In-person registration also makes sure that important information is communicated well in advance of the program year. Most importantly, our registration sessions are a chance to see and speak with one another across services, to share advice and ask questions of one another. Expect the whole session to last under an hour. Childcare is provided at all sessions.

Never registered your child for R.E. before?

Families new to Unity Church and families whose nursery-aged child will turn 3 by October 1, 2013, should attend a New R.E. Family Orientation on Wednesday, April 3 or on Wednesday, May 1.

Enrollment Sessions dates and times:

Wednesday, April 17 • 7:00 p.m. (following Wellspring Wednesday dinner)

Sunday, April 21 • 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 23 • 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 27 • 10:00 a.m. (following pancake breakfast)

Priority in enrollment will be given first to voting, pledging members of the congregation, then to returning teacher families from 2009 and then to any returning family. Materials fees will be collected at these sessions—please bring your checkbook (\$30/child for pledging families and \$200/child for non-pledging families—many waivers are available for pledging members who teach). Note that Our Whole Lives (sexuality education) and Coming of Age have separate enrollment and orientation processes.

***New this year: Junior High added at 9:00...** Parents of youth in Grades 6, 7 and 8: We'll offer ONE section of Junior High R.E. at 9:00 to ease the crowding at 11:00 and 4:30. Youth must select one course each semester from the following options:

Grades 6-8 First Semester (September–January) CHOOSE ONE:

Islam: Allah and His Prophet — An introduction to the beliefs and practices of our Muslim neighbors

High Feasts and Holy Days of the Fall & Winter — An exploration of the world's religious celebrations connected to harvest, repentance and the turning of the seasons

Stories of the Old Testament — A survey of the best-known stories of the Hebrew scriptures in the context of Jewish faith and tradition

Grades 6-8 Second Semester (January–May) CHOOSE ONE:

Heresy Apparent: UU Heritage and Identity — PREREQUISITE FOR COMING OF AGE, this course traces our faith's development from early Christianity to today

High Feasts and Holy Days of the Winter & Spring — An exploration of the world's religious celebration connected to reflection, renewal and the turning of the seasons

The Religion of Star Trek — Using the worlds of this science fiction series, we'll ask our Big Questions about humanity, sacredness, death and more

Practice Memorial Service, April 21

Note this calendar change!

On Sunday, April 21, the R.E. experience for children in grades 1-6 will be our Practice Memorial Services at 9:00, 11:00 and 4:30. This is an opportunity for children to experience and ask questions about funerals and memorials apart from the big feelings of an actual loss. The ministers will participate. The accoutrements of a funeral, including an empty casket and urn, will be in the Chapel for children to examine. The service will be followed by a practice reception/wake, at which the ministers and a funeral home director will be present to answer questions.

Families have found this to be an invaluable experience for their children. One parent must attend the memorial with each child. Older youth are welcome to attend with a parent, as well; otherwise, Spirit Play and Junior High classes will be offered as usual. In order to avoid overcrowding, please attend at your usual morning service or choose to attend at 4:30 — please do not switch to one of the morning services, as the Chapel's capacity is limited to 100. Contact Kerri with questions or needs.

Unity Church is deeply grateful to our neighbors at Willwerscheid Funeral Home for their help in making this event possible.



Book Sale
April 13 & 14
See page 7 for
details about
hours and
bargains!

MUSIC MINISTRY

Arthur Foote Music Sunday

Sunday, May 5

9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 4:30 p.m.

Come celebrate the blessings of music with our Children's Choir, Women's Ensemble, Unity Singers and Unity Choir. Artaria String Quartet, musical guests at 9:00 and 11:00 services.

Children's Musical Celebrates 25 Years

We would like to invite people to share their memorabilia, stories, and knowledge of past shows — and help us plan a story for 2014 that honors the 25-year history. If you are interested in helping, have information to share, or own a copy of one of the posters from a musical listed below, please contact Rene Meyer-Grimberg at 651-298-9711.

Missing musical posters:

- 1991 *A Dragons Tale*
Sarah, Sandy & Joyce (3/4)
- 1992 *Snowbound: a Purimspiel*
Sarah, Sandy & Joyce (5/6)
- 1993 *Fancy Feat*
Sarah, Sandy & Joyce (3/4)
- 1994 *The Lot*
Sarah, Sandy & Joyce (5/6)
- 1995 *The Magic Violin*
Virginia, Sandy & Joyce (3/4)
- 1996 *Freedom Friends*
Susan, Sandy and Joyce (5/6)



Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministry

*May all things move and be moved in me and know and be known in me
May all creation dance for joy within me.*

— Chinook Psalter

This is exactly how I begin to feel as nature begins to glimmer through the ice, snow, cloud cover and cold; as sounds of birds, melting snow and spring-beckoning sun begin to defy what is physically still clinging to the world around us. In the pursuit of musical creativity, this is how it feels to receive and realize ideas that come through after the long slogging through practicing and study. This is the way it feels to me personally when the sudden, simple opening to a deeper spiritual recognition clears and cleanses some corner of "long winter."

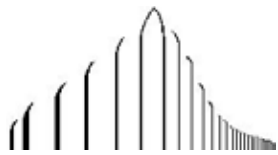
Since childhood, music has always been my closest inner companion, serving as friend, soulmate, therapist, constant challenge and discipline, joyful playmate, sacred bond and revelator. I live in reverence of what this art offers to us as a medium to feelings so deep as not to be articulated, or demanding celebration, quiet, calm or joy and ebullience. It somehow offers us the chance to greet parts of ourselves that require the assistance of a gentle friend, the companionship of one that recognizes the possibility of a soul we don't yet know, that takes us into corners that we sense but do not see, to feel our way into knowing... to "feast on our life."

Below is a poem to share from a teacher I once knew. A teacher who, like many, talked about the quest of a musician as one which asks us to risk and be always vulnerable. The reward for taking these risks was the absolute and continual gifts of the music and, hopefully, the gift of meeting, knowing and loving one's own self.

Love After Love — Derek Walcott

*The time will come
when, with elation,
you will greet yourself arriving
at your own door, in your own mirror,
and each will smile at the other's welcome,
and say, sit here. Eat.
You will love again the stranger who was your self.
Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you
all your life, whom you ignored
for another, who knows you by heart.
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,
the photographs. the desperate notes,
peel your own image from the mirror
Sit. Feast on your life.*

May the music we share together, the music that allows privacy and connection within community, that celebrates "each" and celebrates "all," offer the same companionship to you that I have been given throughout my life. May it help you to "feast on your life."



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Building Rededication Ceremony

Unity Church welcomes Van Jones

On Sunday, May 19, at 2:00 p.m., the congregation will gather in the Sanctuary to rededicate our church home. We are thrilled that Van Jones will be the primary preacher at the ceremony. We will also welcome a number of community leaders including Mayor Coleman.

Following the ceremony we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of Growth & Justice. Growth & Justice is a research and advocacy organization that develops innovative public policy proposals based on independent research and civic engagement. Growth & Justice believes that when Minnesota makes smart investments in practical solutions it leads to broader prosperity for all.

Church leaders are thrilled that we are able to further our partnership with Growth & Justice in the context of the celebration.

Details to follow. Please save the date.



Van Jones is president and co-founder of Rebuild the Dream, a platform for bottom-up, people-powered innovations to help fix the U.S. economy. A Yale-educated attorney, Van has written two New York Times Best Sellers: *The Green Collar Economy*, the definitive book on green jobs, and *Rebuild the Dream*, a roadmap for progressives in 2012 and beyond. Van is currently a CNN Contributor. In 2009, Van worked as the green jobs advisor to the Obama White House. There, he helped run the inter-agency process that oversaw \$80 billion in green energy recovery spending. Van is the founder of Green For All, a national organization working to get green jobs to disadvantaged communities. www.vanjones.net



**UNITY
TOMORROW
IS TODAY!**

*Share the Enthusiasm
Share the Goal*

We have \$2.3 million to raise.
How will we do it?
As a congregation, we will
commit to purchasing
920 shares at \$2,500 each.
(Payable immediately or through 2015.)

**Buy shares during April.
Watch for details!**