



Repair

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 December theme is Repair.

'Tis the season for...repair? Why yes, friends, 'tis! We are now in the season of Advent, which means "coming" – a period of waiting expectantly for the birth of Jesus. And, just as intentional waiting makes the actual Christmas celebration that much more wondrous, so is the work of repair that much more effective when we take it seriously enough to wait. When, instead of patching up the broken thing in the quickest and most inexpensive way possible, we take the time to mend it with care and intention.

But what about those of us who like quick and inexpensive? For me, the word *repair* quickly invites the question, "how much will it cost?" In examining this reaction, I must acknowledge that much of the time, when something needs fixing, I expect someone else to do it. However, there is another interpretation: "If I am going to fix this, how much will it cost ME?" Will it cost me pride to repair a damaged relationship? Will it cost me courage to repair a broken family system? Will it cost me precious time to repair the effects of a poor decision?

This brings us to an ultimate truth about repair: it is something we do with inanimate objects, and it is also something we do with our lives. And when we attempt to repair that which is broken in our lives and in ourselves, surrender is necessary. There are many things we can do to prevent ourselves from healing; it is only when we are able to come into affectionate company with our powerlessness that we stand a chance at success. Effective repair is a combination of work that is in our control and work that is not; we need to

know when to work hard at repair and when to let go and step aside so that the work can be done by forces outside of ourselves. The Advent story culminates in the ultimate surrender: the labor and delivery of a baby.

When a baby is born, it is easy to tell when the work is done so that we can celebrate the result of our surrender. But how do we know when the work of repair is finished? A wound may appear healed on the surface but harbor infection underneath, so mere appearance cannot be our only guide. Also, to know when repair is complete, we must be able to articulate our end goal. Are we striving for the former, for the better, for the new, or for the merely functioning? Here at Unity, we are trying to restore our mission while repairing our broken building. We seek to honor the past while creating something new through the careful art of mending.

And so we understand another truth about repair: in order to do it, we must desire to preserve that which is broken instead of indulging in the impulse to have something new. Today, it is almost always more convenient — and often less expensive — to replace than it is to repair. We have to really love our old shoes to get them repaired when shoe stores abound and a shoe repair shop is an anomaly.

Does this indicate that we've lost the skills needed to do the work of repair? "Fix-it clinics" are springing up around the world in response to this reality, bringing together professionals and volunteers to teach people how to mend their broken goods. The idea of a "fix-it clinic" does not seem altogether different from church: clergy, staff,

and laypeople come together to heal brokenness when we can't do it alone. The church reminds us that we are indeed worthy of repair and that there is a community to help us do the work when we are unable to do it alone.

In *Housekeeping Made Easy*, Linda Marvin writes, "A patch is never a disgrace, but a hole is. Even if the threads or material do not match, a patch or a darn will always mean a badge of self-respect." And that badge can add beauty to the broken thing. As in the Japanese art of *kintsugi* ("golden joinery"), a mended vessel can look more gorgeous and become more precious than before it was fractured.

May we honor that which is broken, take care in its mending, and celebrate that which is newly created from the pieces — this season and always.

— by Mae Gibson Wall
and the December theme team:
Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Jim Foti, Lisa Friedman, Pat Haff,
Kerri Meyer, and Ruth Palmer

Please turn to page 12
for the
monthly worship theme
resources on *repair*.

Just Words

"What is a redeemer anyway? Why do you say every child born is one more redeemer?" It's not easy to explain. Traditional Christians might simply say, "our redeemer died to save us from all sin." We teach a wider view. In a very real sense we all serve and save one another. I mean no hubris here. Whatever we might name it we know there is a power beyond our own. Some call it the collective or the community and credit group cohesion and creativity with redeeming power. Others yearn for an intimate relationship with God. They speak of God's love and see themselves as instruments of that larger love in helping to heal a broken world.

In the Christian calendar advent is the season of waiting. Advent is intended as a contemplative time, a time to set aside the rush and bother of our daily lives. That's why stores shorten their hours, malls close down early and commercial activity is virtually curtailed. Not! We Puritans lost this battle long ago. Instead of inviting us into the quiet December has become a whirlwind of sales and marketing. Even though we know better here at Unity Church we gear-up for the holidays. When I tell colleagues that we offer a "carol shout" and five services on Christmas Eve they tend to shake their heads, smile and say something like, "you guys really know when to slow down."

Some years back Bill Doherty offered a workshop on how we might take back the holidays. The workshop inspired a group of people to gather together as "The Christmas Reclamation Project." Their work has helped us to reclaim and reframe the winter holidays in a variety of ways. Chief among them is our Black Friday service. Held on what the team has come to call, "the Day of the Feast of Consumption" the service asks us to pause for a moment at the start of the festivities and frenzy to ask ourselves and each other what we really want from Christmas.

May I suggest we do just that? As we head into the turning of the year I invite you to join me in asking these three questions. How can I best befriend the empty place inside me? What gifts do I most want to give? Who am I waiting for now? Janne and I wish you a joyous and peaceful holiday season.

Yours as always,
Rob Eller-Isaacs

William Schulz at Unity Church

Two events at Unity Church on December 8

A Samuel Morgan Community Forum

Human Rights and the Challenges of the 21st Century • 9:00 a.m.-noon.

Beverages and pastries will be available. This event is free and reservations are not required.

Dinner and Presentation

Hope: Why I've Still Got It • 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Tickets for dinner (tastes of India menu) and presentation are \$15 per person. Childcare will be available. Limited spaces remain. Reserve by contacting Martha Tilton at 651-228-1456 or martha@unityunitarian.org.

William Schulz is the President and CEO of the UUSC. He was President of the Unitarian Universalist Association from 1985 to 1993 and served as Executive Director of Amnesty International from 1994 to 2006. Bill is an internationally recognized human rights activist, scholar and passionate advocate for social justice.

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

John F. Blackstone

January 18, 1944 –
November 20, 2012

In Celebration

Soren Daniels Rubischko

born one more redeemer

September 6, 2012

to parents

Shannon and Nate Rubischko
and big sister Veda

Olivia Gratz Lien

born one more redeemer

October 14, 2012

to parents

Emerald Gratz and Jason Lien
and big sister Lilian

Winter Holidays Office Hours

The Church Office will be closed on December 25 and 26, and on January 1, for the winter holidays.

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Unity Church–Unitarian
732 Holly Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
phone: 651-228-1456
www.unityunitarian.org
unity@unityunitarian.org

DECEMBER SUNDAY WORSHIP

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.

December 2

Unveiling — Rob Eller-Isaacs

As we enter into the time of advent, the season of waiting, Rob and worship associate Sherry Essen will offer a service centered on the end times. Religious liberals consider the Rapture highly unlikely but there is more to apocalyptic thinking than meets the eye.

December 9

A Simple Way to Save My Sanity — William Schulz

Rev. Dr. William Schulz, President of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, former Executive Director of Amnesty International USA (1994-2006) and President of the Unitarian Universalist Association (1985-93), will talk about how to insure both his mental health and your own and, in the process, save the world. Not a bad combo!

December 16

Holy Families — Janne Eller-Isaacs

What makes a family? What makes a family holy? Janne and worship associate Mike Huber will explore the meaning of family—the family of humanity to which all are admitted, our families of origin and the families we make through love and commitment.

December 23

Family Sunday: Now 'Neath the Silvery Moon

As Christmas Day approaches the whole church family will gather to sing (SHOUT at 11:00 a.m.) carols, prepare ourselves to greet the child and hear again the beautiful old story of Santa Lucia. The ministers will be joined by Director of Religious Education Kerri Meyer for a festive celebration.

December 30 • One service only at 10:00 a.m.

Innocents' Sunday — Mae Gibson Wall

On December 26, 1862, thirty-eight Dakota men were executed in Mankato, Minnesota, at Abraham Lincoln's orders. On this Holy Innocents' Sunday, Hallman Ministerial Intern Mae Gibson Wall and worship associate Don Lorr will reflect on the 150th anniversary of the largest mass execution in United States history.

Please turn to page 13 for the holiday worship guide and Christmas Pageant information.



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.**

December 2: Prior Crossing Youth Housing Project

Over the next two years, PORTICO Interfaith Housing Collaborative will create and operate a 44-unit supportive housing development at 1949 University Avenue for youth transitioning out of homelessness in Ramsey County. This project will provide young adults with a place to begin healing from past traumas, create community, and build the needed skills to live stable, independent lives. The Unity Church Affordable Housing Outreach Ministry team is working in collaboration with the development of Prior Crossing.

December 9: UUSC

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a nonsectarian organization that advances human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. Through a combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, the UUSC promotes economic rights, advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties and preserves the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis.

December 16: CLF Prison Ministry

Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) is a long-standing virtual Unitarian Universalist congregation with 3,500 members. More than 400 of these members are in CLF's Prison Ministry. CLF prisoner members take correspondence courses, participate in letter writing ministry, and study printouts of Unitarian Universalist books. A group not often exposed to the saving message of Unitarian Universalism, the CLF's Prison ministry offers its incarcerated members a "place to finally feel at home." Rev. Meg Riley, CLF's Senior Minister, has long been a friend of Unity Church.

December 23: Heart of the Beast

The Heart of the Beast Puppet Theatre provides community theatre, produces original plays and commissioned spectacles, and teaches workshops in mask making and peacemaking throughout the Twin Cities area. Many Unity Church children and adults have participated in performances, puppet making workshops and the parade.

December 30: ECSE—Birth To Three

Early Childhood Special Education Birth to Three is a program provided through the St. Paul Public Schools for infants and toddlers who have been determined eligible because of a delay in play and learning, communication, motor, sensory, or social skills or through another condition known to hinder school success. This offering will provide toys, equipment and supplies to use in delivery of services to low-income families. Unity Church member Donna Blaney Johnson works as a Birth to Three social worker.

Repair?

From Ellen Green on behalf of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team

I live in a great old place in a great neighborhood in the Summit-University district—one of the most diverse in race, gender preference, and income/net worth in the country, I'm told. When I'm away I miss that diversity, and I appreciate that we live here together in relative peace. I am privileged to be part of it all.

At the same time, I know I benefit, am privileged, from the systemic racism inherent in the power structure founded and maintained by white men (and by extension, allowed by white women, of whom I am one). This system has allowed my turn-of-the-19th-century condo (and my church, built about the same time) to remain in the neighborhood and grow in worth—at the expense of our Rondo neighbors.

When Interstate 94 was conceived more than a half-century ago, did anyone consider a route that would take out Portland Ave? If so, I'm sure it was quickly rejected. What I do know is that the I-94 route divided and partly demolished the strong, black, middle-class, working community centered on Rondo Avenue. And Rondo is still fighting to gain back the financial and social safety and security it once enjoyed.

Am I responsible for the damage done there many years ago? It doesn't matter. The fact is, I have benefited from a system favoring white people over those of another race. I haven't paid for that benefit—so I must owe somebody something.

What can I do to repair the community that has paid a price for my privilege? The answer is little—on my own even less. But I must do what I can, and Unity Church provides a way for me to do it. Church members and staff—and the church's physical plant and availability—provide the connections and space for me to connect with members of the Rondo community in ways I never could alone.

One way I do this is through the Restorative Justice Team, which partners with Amicus, a Minneapolis-based organization providing One-to-One friends for those in prison and supportive services after their release. When a grandson of Russell Balenger, vice president of Amicus and longtime resident of Rondo, was shot, he decided, "Enough. No more shooting" and determined to bring together a circle of peace, of parents, to determine how they might change things. Unity Church provides a place for the circle to meet. The Restorative Justice Team, for one, provides one meal a month for the 30 people who meet every week.

The circle has grown to include incarcerated and released youth, parents, elders of the community, members of the police force... As a result, some at-risk teenagers are taking the straighter way, finishing high school and planning for college with the help of a developing scholarship fund.

I can't think of a better way for Unity Church—and me—to pay for our white privilege than to support the Rondo community in this effort to repair its own.

2013 Board of Trustees

At the Annual Meeting that was held on November 17, the congregation elected three new trustees. The 2013 Unity Church Board of Trustees is as follows:

Deborah Carter McCoy: mcdeborah1991@gmail.com

Rich Hamer: rhamer@deftresearch.com

Steve Harper: steve.harper@alumni.macalester.edu

Terry Linskey, Secretary: terrylinskey@gmail.com

Bob Peskin: bpskin42@comcast.net

Sarah Pradt: spradt@hecua.org

Lia Rivamonte: lia.rivamonte@gmail.com

Tim Thoreen: timthoreen@yahoo.com

Marg Walker, Chair: marg.walker@comcast.net

Elders Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 19

1:00-2:30 p.m. • Center Room



Everyone is welcome at this Unity tradition! We are delighted that Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries, will be at the piano, and we'll have the Christmas songbooks on hand. There'll be time for catching up with longtime friends and making new ones. Beverages and treats will be provided, and if you are inspired to bring something to share, please do, but the most important thing you can bring is yourself! For more information, or to inquire about offering or receiving a ride, contact Ministerial Intern Jim Foti by e-mail at jim@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x109.



Church elders gathered in November to discuss how to transition from home to senior living facilities. Over 23 church members attended the discussion.

MINISTERIAL INTERNS / JOB OPPORTUNITY

Mae Gibson Wall

2012-13 Hallman Ministerial Intern

There are two things I feel compelled to confess this time of year:

1. I love Christmas!!! I love it so much that I insist on those three exclamation points! (Allow me to whisper, just between you and me, that I have been known to listen to Christmas music in July, on days when I have needed a special pick-me-up.)
2. I have never identified as a Christian. I was not raised by Christian parents, and I did not grow up attending church.



For more than two decades, I was able to ignore the tension inherent in these two truths as they happily co-existed in my life. But the day I answered the call to ministry, I knew this dichotomy was something with which I would have to wrestle.

And wrestle I have. Is it authentic, I wondered, to celebrate Christmas with such fervor? Is it okay for me to sing “Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!” and “Glory to the newborn King!”? What exactly am I celebrating anyway?

My husband says that the mark of a great story is that it means different things to different people, depending on who we are and where we are in our lives. Even if we only believe in the Christmas story as just that — a story — it has something meaningful to offer. As with many truly great stories, it employs archetypal characters in symbolic situations to teach us something meaningful. The Christmas story, in its beautiful simplicity, transcends the need to read as nonfiction.

I may not believe that Jesus was *the* Savior, but I certainly believe he was a savior, just as every child is. Every new person is a savior because they each deliver us to a different world, a world that has been made new by their presence in it. Whether or not I believe every piece of the Christmas story is literally true, it offers me hope for a better tomorrow, and it reminds me of the revolutionary idea that all it has ever taken is one of us to change the world with our love. In my estimation, that is a hope worthy of celebration and song.

Merry Christmas, friends.

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



I was driving along Main Street in my hometown one day last winter, and as the mid-morning sun filtered through the bare branches, a low bank of grayness appeared on the horizon. I'd been down that street a thousand times — must be some wintry clouds out over the lake.

But then it struck me. The gray mass wasn't clouds. It was the landfill. It had been growing my whole life, and it was now tall enough to be visible from the center of town.

It's more common for us to think about our relationship with the earth in the spring, when abundant daylight, bright flowers, and Earth Day celebrations call our attention to the world that sustains us. But in this darkest month, with its contradictory mix of reverence and consumption, it's worth remembering that our planet is among those things needing repair.

We might start by acknowledging the power of language and banishing the word “landfill.” That tract of land in my hometown was already “full” and had been since the last glacier — full of trees, fields, and living things. The current pile is not a landfill but a dump, one filled with items that were manufactured, bought, and discarded in a fraction of cosmic time. Yet this giant mound of broken plastic toys, industrial waste, and unrecycled paper will be there for millennia.

There are a lot of shiny objects vying for our attention during the Christmas season, and despite my best intentions, some of them will end up in my shopping cart. But when I'm doing my gift-buying, I do try to ask: Where did this item come from? Who made it and under what working conditions? With what materials? How long will it be useable? Is it fixable? And when the recipient is done with it, where will it go? To which dump? And in whose hometown?

In our complex, interconnected world, we can't know all the answers. But Advent's candlelit nights invite us to reflection, and that's a good place to start.

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

Job Opportunity

Unity Church is looking for a hard-working individual to join our facilities team in the position of "Hospitality/Housekeeping Custodian." Responsibilities include housekeeping maintenance of the facility and hospitality on weekends and during special events. This is a part time position and benefits are included.

Please inquire with Bill Lowell for an application or with questions by email at bill@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x103. Application deadline is December 15.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Welcome Words

I am looking forward to my first holiday season at Unity! December is a time for awe and wonder, for being present to the miracles in our lives. As we move back into our renewed building, inhabit our new main entrance, and reclaim our fabulous new kitchen, may we pause to be present to the gift of community, to the awe and wonder found in each other. Make a new friend on Sunday. Share a hymnal with your neighbor. Laugh and sing with the children. For these are holy times, and in the hustle and bustle of our beautiful and troubled world, it is a blessing to be together.

See you in church!
Lisa



Lisa Friedman
Director of Congregational Life

Pathway to Membership

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

Welcome to Unity: A Class for Newcomers

**Sunday, December 16 • 12:15-1:30 p.m. ~ also offered ~
Wednesday January 16 • 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

**Tuesday, February 5, 12, 19 • 6:30-8:30 p.m. ~ also offered ~
March 2 • 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

Wednesday, January 23 • 7:15 – 8:30 p.m.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can discover the places in your life where the world's needs meet the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class will conclude with a celebration ceremony as participants sign the membership book and officially join the church! There will be a special New Member recognition ceremony on Sunday January 27.

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 (December 13) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528 for meeting locations during construction.

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

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (December 20) from Noon–2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (December 11) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (December 22) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760 for more information.

Grandparent Unitots! This group will begin meeting again in the new year.

Lectio Divina (Spiritual Reading): Sundays at 10:15 a.m.

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (December 18) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, December 3 and 17, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578 for more information.

Unitots! A playgroup for families with kids through preschool age. This group will begin meeting again in the new year.

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month (December 11) from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at 722 Holly Avenue. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net for more information. The book they will be discussing is *A Peoples History of the United States* by Howard Zin.

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, December 7, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209 for meeting location.

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

Scan the codes below with your smart phone to find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!



MEET UNITY'S NEWEST MEMBERS!



Nate & Shannon Rubischko

Nate and I live in the Midway area of Saint Paul. We have two children, Veda in fifth grade and Soren who is 2 1/2 months. Nate owns Accent Ceramics, a tile installation company, and I'm a Massage Therapist with an office on Grand Ave. As a family we love to travel, especially to state and national parks, where we love to camp and hike. We also love yoga!

The children's program is what drew us to Unity, which has been wonderful! We're looking forward to meeting more people and making lasting friendships through the Unity community.



Pam Satre & Michael Funck

Pam: My husband, Michael Funck and I – along with my sister and brother-in-law, Jolene Satre and Dana Benson – have been on a long spiritual journey, which included the search for a church that shares and celebrates

our liberal values and social passions. We've found it! We're excited and grateful to be joining Unity! **Michael:** My ongoing passions are lifelong learning, writing, science, and our natural world. I come to Unity Church with a newly recognized interest in spirituality rather than religion, and a desire to find a community that is compassionate, open, diverse, inspiring, welcoming and thoughtful.



Cynthia Crawford

I moved to Minneapolis about a year ago, to live in a co-housing community, after having been a children's librarian. Though a native of California, I then lived in Missouri and Arkansas, and I look forward to reconnecting with UUism here. Past social justice involvement included

anti-death penalty work in Arkansas, and I am also interested in spiritual inquiry, dance/movement, hiking, reading and travel.



Michael Lutz & Sarah Classen

We discovered Unity in March after several years of searching for a more meaningful spiritual experience. Unity quickly became a place that fostered our individual spiritual journeys while providing a supportive community in which to grow. We are planning for our October 2013 wedding with much excitement.



Jolene Satre & Dana Benson

We have one child, our 24-year-old daughter Madeline, whom we love and adore beyond all reason. We share a passion for reading and travel. A decades-long search is what brought us to Unity. Jolene manages

communications for a Lutheran church. Dana teaches journalism at the University of Minnesota.



Erika Sanders & Adrian Hegeman

We were both raised as UUs (elsewhere in the Midwest). When we started attending Unity Church two years ago, it felt like coming home. We have two daughters, Sylvia (7) and Ramona (4), and our

family is grateful to be a part of Unity's R.E. program. We like to garden, hike, and learn about the world around us.



Heather Schierland & Barrett Solberg

We're looking forward to joining together, and deepening the involvement we've begun with participation in the spring talent show and partner church socials. Heather is a Twin Cities native

and reformed preacher's kid — mother of Britney and Brandie and nana to Brayden. Barrett is a lifelong UU who recently relocated to the Twin Cities. Outside of our full time jobs — in the tech field (Heather) and insurance (Barrett) — we have a range of interests! Heather loves Zumba fitness, gardening, biking and cooking. Barrett is a performance artist (Grin and Barrett), biker, musician and avid kayaker.



Mike McDonald



Becky & Pat Steeber

Pathway to Membership

If you would like to sign up for Pathway to Membership classes, please contact Laney Ohmans at 651-228-1456 or laney@unityunitarian.org.

Unity Tomorrow Update

From Lorelee Wederstrom, Unity's Owner Representative

The *Unity Tomorrow* project experienced many challenges and opportunities but as the work comes to a close I want to call out just a few as I reflect on the overall performance of the project.

A team of talented professionals committed to the objectives of the Unity Tomorrow Project.

Many of you had the opportunity to meet our lead architect Paul May from Miller Dunwiddie during the planning and design process of the Unity Tomorrow project. For months, during planning and design, Paul listened intently to us and transformed our dreams and hopes into plans for a built reality. His associate Jean Turck has been here throughout the renovation ensuring that those plans are built to Paul's specifications, design intention and programmatic requirements. She works daily with the contractor solving the many, many challenges we had on the project to ensure that the design intent was intact.

I have never seen a contractor – and I have had the privilege of working with McGough since the late 80's – bend to the needs of an organization as much as I have on the Unity Tomorrow project. Unity can feel very assured that through the leadership of Shannon Kelly (Project Manager) and Scott Steinberger (Site Superintendent) we have received great quality, great value and great performance by this delivery team.

There were many others too: Unity Church members and staff, LKPB Engineering; Damon Farbor Landscape Architects; Pierce Pini Civil Engineering, Meyer, Borgman and Johnson Structural Engineers; Master Mechanical; Gilbert Mechanical; Gephart Electric; Egan Mechanical; Olympic Communications and many, many others. In addition, Unity Church directly hired several firms to do window restoration, hazardous material abatement and air monitoring. Representatives from these

firms and Unity Church met weekly beginning May 30 and will conclude these meetings in mid-December.

On a project as complex as this one, we had many challenges but the creative environment that was fostered by this team moved the project forward.

We were prepared, financially, for all the unforeseen conditions we encountered (we just didn't think there would be so many of them) including: buried house foundations, an abandoned fuel tank, unmarked/un-insulated shafts, structural upgrades to the Parish Hall floor and Eliot Wing ceiling, hidden hazardous materials that required proper abatement, re-doing the sanitary sewer piping below a 108-year-old concrete slab... just to name a few.

Working with the construction schedule and its interaction with expectations for church programming demanded our constant attention, cooperation, and collaboration among team members. What could have been an adversarial relationship was turned into creative tension and just plain hard work.

With respect to completion of the Unity Tomorrow project, we're almost there. Here is what remains:

End of November

- East Canopy entrance
- Auto door operators on our new entrance
- Interior and exterior finishing around Eliot Wing windows
- Wood panels in ceiling of new lobby entrance
- Code required upgrades to our elevator
- Preliminary air balancing of new HVAC systems

December

- Limestone for arch at entrance to Sanctuary
- New entrance tile floor
- Built-in casework in religious education rooms, staff mail boxes and new choir room

- Monument sign and interior signage
- Window treatments
- Trash enclosure gates

Determining a successful project.

Three typical measures:

1. On-time completion. We are ahead of schedule. Original "substantial completion" was published as December 14, 2012. Our current "substantial completion" is November 26.
2. On-budget. While we spent a considerable amount of our contingency due to the unforeseen conditions and have added scope to the project such as furniture, low voltage security systems and a flat panel messaging system, we are currently projecting a favorable variance of \$60,000-\$75,000.
3. Accomplishes the key objectives from our strategic facility plan:
 - Balance our historical nature with increased capacity of our current site
 - Provide spaces that are welcoming, visible, accessible, and energy efficient
 - Improve and increase capacity of key program areas such as worship, religious education, music, outreach and fellowship space

Those are the typical measures but the Unity Tomorrow project touches lives in immeasurable ways. The investment that has been made will sustain the work, learning, singing, teaching, sharing, memorializing, and joyous celebrating of this beloved community for many years to come.

On January 1, I will resign my position as Unity Tomorrow's Owner Representative. It has been an absolute privilege to serve the congregation of Unity Church in this role. Thank you.

December Parish Hall Artists

Delor Erickson

Delor Erickson grew up in Northeast Minneapolis, the son of Swedish immigrants. After graduating with distinction from Art Center in Los Angeles and receiving a masters degree in studio arts at the University of Minnesota, Delor enjoyed a long, distinguished career as a Twin Cities illustrator. Once retired, he devoted himself full-time to doing his own work, painting what he knew best. Delor's love for farmscapes grew out of boyhood summers spent with Swedish relatives. His much loved series of urban landscapes inspired a book by St. Paul poet Margot Fortunato Galt called *Between the Houses* (available for viewing in the gallery). In 2004 on a trip to visit a friend in California, Delor first encountered banana palms and found himself fascinated by their unique shapes, wonderful colors and abstract qualities. In the next four years until his death in 2008, Delor produced countless images of banana palms: drawings in magic pencil, paintings in acrylic and gouache, and, finally, stunning watercolors. Delor's work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group shows and hangs in many private collections across the country.

Some pieces are available as originals, many as high quality, archival (Giclee) prints.

Beth Lehman: Natural Abstractions

The *Natural Abstractions* series explores the intimate architecture of living things. Looking close-up and close-in, I respond to the patterns and textures of plant forms as "visual music." At times, the structural dynamic is majestic, expressed with thrusting line or bold color. Elsewhere, the rhythm rises softly from a delicate edge or subtle gradation in palette. Taken as whole, these photographic meditations transform mundane botanical specimens into something far more ethereal and archetypal. I hope the viewer sees more than strong visual design within these abstractions. My goal is to spark fresh appreciation for nature's sensuous and lyrical geometry.

My photographic "eye" has been honed by years of training as a musician. Early on, appreciation for the structural elements of music became intertwined with my visual aesthetic. In these images, the interplay between tempo, harmony and rhythm has been transposed upon my understanding of form, line and pattern. By extension, I am sensitive to the relationship between images, and I relish occasions when one frame seems to initiate a natural conversation with another; I believe that short sequences from within the series, in diptych or triptych format, often present a more eloquent impression than a single image. Not surprisingly, I encourage viewers to compose their own photographic melodies with these lush 'visual notes'.

Technical notes: All of the images in this series were shot with a hand-held DSLR camera in natural light within glass-domed conservatories in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. The blurred effects, where used, were created entirely in-camera, using a combination of on-camera flash and subsequent camera movement during the exposure (shutter-dragging).



"Upon Reflection" from *Natural Abstractions* © Beth Lehman

Medium: Photographs/Archival Pigment Prints

Presentation: Printed on heavyweight 100% cotton rag paper with pigmented inks. Conservation mounts and mats in aluminum frames.



What's New in the Library and Bookstall?

So, did you hear the one about the guy who goes into a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "Where's the self-help section?" She said, "If I told you, it would defeat the purpose."

Though the Library and Bookstall Team have been enjoying a hiatus during construction, we are back to work and looking forward to helping you locate what you need.

The Bookstall will re-open in early December with a great selection of new books. Look for:

New Collected Poems by Wendell Berry

HELP, THANKS, WOW: The Three Essential Prayers by Anne Lamott

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander, new introduction by Cornell West

Big news about **The Whitman Children's Library**: It is moving! Look for the new Children's Library/Story Room in the RE wing when we open in December or January. Parents and kids won't have to go looking for the library anymore; the library is coming to you. **The Anderson Library** is staying put but being improved, and will be open again sometime in December.

Volume 4 of *Cairns: The Unity Church Journal of the Arts* is in the works and will be out in December, also — watch for a notice of exact date coming up. This one features some wonderful new artists and writers. The work inside takes you around the world and into our own backyard; looks into the past and marvels at the present; and will touch your heart. Enjoy.

Voter ID Amendment

Thank you!

Thank you to those members of Unity Church who worked to educate our community about the proposed Voter ID amendment and its possible ramifications. People wrote articles, letters to the editor, staffed and prepared information tables, provided Q and A sessions, attended trainings and presentations, and worked together to decide how best to address our congregation on this issue.

Thank you to Jane Thomson, Terri McNeil, Steve Lewis, Carol LeBourveau, Carol Bauer, Martha Eaves, Steve Nelson, Linda Fei, Sherman Eagles, Priscilla Morton, Patricia Ohmans, Alana Howey, Brooke Darst Rice, Judy Rieke, Jim Davnie, Sherry Knuth, Jim Meisenheimer, Rob Fulton, Pat Haff, Pauline Eichten, Mary Morris, Sue Conner, and the following Outreach Teams: Affordable Housing, Racial Justice, Restorative Justice and Mano a Mano.

Work still needs to be done to make sure our voting system includes everyone and is not vulnerable to fears and suspicion. Our democracy depends on a trusted electoral system.

Volunteer with Project Homeless Connect!

Join the Affordable Housing Ministry Team on December 10 at the Minneapolis Convention Center for Project Homeless Connect, a one-stop shop for delivering services to people experiencing homelessness. Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis have partnered with service providers, businesses, and faith communities to bring multiple resources (housing providers, employment specialists, medical and dental care, legal assistance, haircuts, and food and clothing) to one location. Visit homelessconnectminneapolis.org for more information.

Unity Members Complete 7th NOLA Pilgrimage

From Rick Heydinger, Pilgrim

Within Unitarianism, pilgrimage has a special meaning: time for reflection; opportunity for discovery; embracing the unexpected; broadening life's odyssey; the gift of unexpected gratitude; and the unanticipated development of deep friendships.

Since Katrina ravaged New Orleans (NOLA), Unity Church has led seven pilgrimages to assist residents rebuild their physical and spiritual lives. These trips always bring to the fore a provocative "gumbo" of questions about race, class, privilege, culture, and the lasting impact of history. The "recipe" for the trip uses a variety of ingredients.

Cultural Orientation. To understand contemporary NOLA, we toured the Lower Ninth ward, followed by attending Sunday service at a prominent Southern Baptist church. We also attended the Louisiana Creole Heritage celebration to learn about the mix of Native, Cajun, Creole and Zydeco music.

Housing. Pilgrims again bunked at Annunciation Episcopal Mission, founded by a church that took its flood insurance money and developed a dormitory to house pilgrims. Picture five UUs sleeping in one room discussing the optimal time for lights-out.

Rehab Work. Linda, this year's homeowner, had been out of her house since Katrina. To move her closer to having this Thanksgiving at home, pilgrims finished closets, tiled bathrooms, painted walls, doors and one side of the house. There was an emotional farewell at the end of the week (see photo below).

Policing and Music. Each pilgrimage identifies 1-2 themes for examination.

To discuss NOLA policing we had visits with the Mayor's former Commissioner for Public Safety, the City's Independent Police Monitor, and the Commander of the Central City precinct, one of the "toughest" NOLA neighborhoods.

To satisfy our musical cravings, pilgrims were in attendance at no fewer than nine venues ranging from gospel music to jazz, from creole chanting to zydeco.

Food. We always try to go to "local" places – not the tourist spots in the Quarter. This trip we compared po-boys at three different spots. One pilgrim remarked that this year's Friday celebration dinner was his best meal ever!

Friendships. This year we had an emotional reunion with the owners of a home where we had worked the previous two years. It's rewarding to feel their gratitude and see amazing progress where you individually spent hours of your life working.

We also felt the friendship and deep appreciation for what we do as we were invited to dinner at Mike and Kathleen's home to eat crawfish monica and have an in-depth discussion about race, education, and NOLA politics.

NOLA Rewards. Whether it's your first or seventh pilgrimage, we all seem to leave with new insights, renewed sense of the complex questions of equity and justice, and appreciation for the ties that bind all of us. We are already looking forward to our eighth trip next fall. To learn more, contact Pat Haff at pat@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x126.



Warm and Groomed and on the Way!

From the Restorative Justice Team

Men and women released from prison face huge challenges. They start with finding a bed and enough to eat on the first day out—nothing compared to finding an employer and/or a landlord who will hire or rent to an “ex-offender.” Doing either is difficult without transportation, especially during the winter, and who would want to apply for a job or an apartment without the basics for personal grooming?

These little things mean a lot to those trying to make good after doing their time. That’s why Unity’s Restorative Justice (RJ) Team asks you to help provide the following items for its community partner, Amicus, who assists ex-offenders in need:

- New gloves, hats, scarves, and socks
- Hand and foot warmers
- Hygiene items such as shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo, and shaving cream*
- Bus passes or the cash to buy them

The RJ team will collect these items starting on the first Sunday in December* and continuing through February. You can bring them on Sundays to the RJ table in the Parish Hall or leave them at Pat Haff’s office anytime. Both Menard’s and Minnesota Glove Company (in West St. Paul) are good sources for inexpensive hats, gloves, and socks. Hand warmers and foot warmers often are available at flea markets. *Thank you!*

*Please give hygiene items to Unity’s religious education kit-making project until December 16 and to the RJ team in the months following. The RJ team will not be collecting clothing items other than those listed.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee News

From Marty Rossmann, Unity Church UUSC Representative



Guest at Your Table Ends January 6

The celebration of *Guest at Your Table* helps participants nurture a spirit of gratitude and “justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.” *Guest at Your Table* fosters understanding and awareness of UUSC’s human-rights work.

What do kids have to say about Philanthropy?

“That’s a hard word, but I bet it’s good.”

“When you give to one another you can: #1 care for others and #2 make more friends that way.”

Those who take part in *Guest at Your Table* learn about people with whom UUSC is working. This year, UUSC is featuring some of their innovative partnerships. These people become “guests,” with whom blessings are shared to support the UUSC mission.

Supporting Restaurant Worker Justice

Workers in the restaurant industry are calling for better working conditions, including basic improvements like paid sick days and a fair minimum wage for tipped workers. The UUSC believes that these demands are just and that the goal of changing the U.S. restaurant industry is ambitious but ultimately achievable.

The UUSC is seeking leaders to raise awareness of the need for worker justice in the restaurant industry. The focus is on creating a groundswell of consumer pressure, calling for respect for the rights of restaurant workers. Remember how Michael Pollan’s *Omnivore’s Dilemma* created a sea change of public interest in healthier eating? That’s what’s hoped will happen for restaurant workers.

The UUSC works closely with an organization called the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC-United). Their co-director and cofounder Saru Jayaraman has a new book titled *Behind the Kitchen Door: What Every Diner Should Know About the People Who Feed Us*. Scheduled for release on February 13, 2013, this book provides an inside look into the experiences of people who prepare, cook, and serve our food. The publication of this book provides a unique opportunity for UUSC and ROC-United supporters to interject a discussion of restaurant worker conditions into the national conversation.

The long-term plan is to pass federal legislation that increases the minimum wage for tipped workers (tipped workers are often paid as little as \$2.13 per hour, and that wage hasn’t been raised in more than 20 years!) But the UUSC contacts in the U.S. Congress have made it clear that if we want to see such a bill passed, we need to create a groundswell of popular support for raising the tipped minimum wage. In particular, we need to counterbalance the powerful voice of the National Restaurant Association lobby, which spends millions of dollars each year to shape federal and state legislation on issues like the tipped minimum wage and paid sick days.

So this is where the UUSC starts - with a book...And with you. Together, we can change the public conversation and make a real-world impact on the lives of restaurant workers.

The UUSC is a membership organization — please join! Membership gives the benefit of knowing that you’re enabling the UUSC to make a difference in the lives of those who confront unjust power structures everyday. You will be part of an organization that’s working to make human rights violations a rare phenomenon in this world! UUSC has Unitarian values, vision and goals. Go online to www.uusc.org/uuscmembership to get the enrollment form. Dues are: \$40 General; \$75 General (dual); \$10 student/youth; \$20 senior; and \$40 senior (dual).

WINTER SOLSTICE REFLECTION / REPAIR RESOURCES

Winter Solstice Reflection

Winter solstice occurs this year on December 21, at 5:12 a.m. CT, the earliest arrival of winter since 1896 according to *The Farmer's Almanac*! This is the first day of winter—the shortest day and longest night of the year. Every day thereafter, the days grow longer until summer solstice, when we have the longest day and the shortest night. The ancient Mayan calendar marks winter solstice 2012 as the end of the 13th 144,000-day cycle, completing a full 5,200-year Mayan cycle of creation. While many fear that something may threaten our world at the end of this creation cycle, astronomers are not concerned.

Whether we face actual physical challenges or more internal ones, wintertime is the time to pay attention to how we are doing on the inside. It is the time to crawl into the cave of ourselves and give extra attention to our physical and psycho-spiritual wellbeing. Just like the mama bear who hibernates, we need to prepare our cave so that we have the support we need to go into the mysterious dreamtime of connecting deeply with ourselves. We prepare by making space for all of ourselves—all thoughts, feelings, or physical suffering—we accept and allow whatever arises, meeting it with loving kindness.

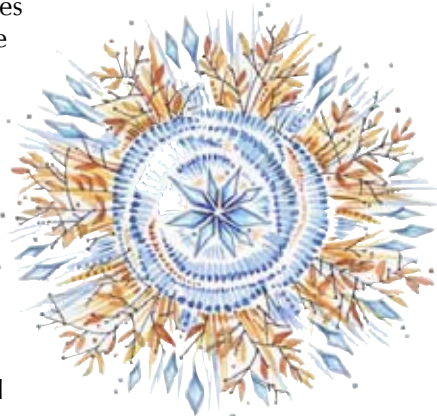
Winter is the season to learn to yield, to surrender to your own truth, however painful, to listen carefully, and to take time to integrate your experience. It's a slower time, a resting time, a staying-with time. Yielding to your own process means slowing down enough to make contact with what you are experiencing, what is moving you on the inside. Is there a practice you can commit to that will support you in this endeavor? It could be as simple as a few minutes of meditation, taking breathing breaks, sharing your heart with a close friend, or writing in your journal... How will you support your inward journey this winter so that you may emerge renewed and refreshed in the spring?

Here's a starting place for a journal exploration, or a short ritual alone or with friends:

- Begin in the dark, saying this chant 3-5 times: *deep is the darkness, with no light at all, before and behind, and to either side*. Feel the rhythm of the chant drawing you inside, into the still, silent darkness. See if you can yield into the chant and the darkness. What does that feel like?
- When you are ready, light a single candle. Breathe that light in, noticing everything you can about how it affects you and the space around you.
- Name out loud or in your journal how you will support yourself in this time of inward turning.
- Name out loud or in your journal anything you want to explore in yourself more deeply during the enfolding darkness.
- Acknowledge your gratefulness for this inward time of listening and being, and blow out the candle.

Please join us for the Winter Solstice Celebration on December 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. May you welcome and find grace in this changing of the seasons.

—Winter Blessings,
Katy Taylor, Seasonal Coordinator Worship Associate
katy@thewingedheart.net



Repair Resources

Books

Nine Lives, by Dan Baum – This true account of nine New Orleanians tells the story of the city's resurrection following Katrina.

Broken for You, by Stephanie Kallos – This “glorious homage to the beauty of broken things” features two women who learn to repair their lives by facing their fears.

Good as New, by Barbara Douglass – Grady's grandpa offers to fix his beloved toy bear in this children's book.

Films

Brave – This Pixar-Disney film is about a rebellious daughter, her orthodox mother, and their attempt to fix their strained relationship.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel – This star-studded film features an assortment of aging Londoners who hope to repair their lives by moving to India.

COMMUNITY

Hennepin County sponsors monthly “fix-it clinics.” The next one will be held on December 8 in Minneapolis. Bring broken household goods and clothing in need of repair, or volunteer to help others fix their stuff. For more information, call 612-348-9195 or visit <http://www.hennepin.us/fixitclinic>

Minneapolis-based home repair company Structure Tech frequently posts eye-popping photos of ineffective home repairs on its website, at www.structuretech1.com/home-inspection-photo-gallery



HOLIDAY WORSHIP AND CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



Holiday Worship Information

Friday, December 21

Winter Solstice Celebration • 7:00 p.m. • Parish Hall

Come join us for a contemplative, family-friendly, Celtic-inspired ritual to mark the turning of the year as the darkness gives way to the growing light. This participatory ritual will include chanting, meditation, candle-lighting, singing, and cauldron jumping. Kids—bring animal masks and hand percussion (rattles, shakers, bells)! If you would like to participate as a ritual leader or if you have questions, please contact Katy Taylor at katy@thewingedheart.net or 651-291-8551.

Sunday, December 23

Now 'Neath the Silvery Moon • Family Sunday

As Christmas Day approaches the whole church family will gather to sing (Carol Shout will be at the 11:00 a.m. service) carols, prepare ourselves to greet the child, and hear again the beautiful story of Santa Lucia. The ministers will be joined by Director of Religious Education, Kerri Meyer for a festive celebration.

Monday, December 24

Find A Stillness • 10:00 a.m.

In the full rush of Christmas Eve morning we will gather in the quiet of Ames Chapel. There will be extended periods of silence to provide time for relief and contemplation. The service will include an invitation to join in communion.

Christmas Pageant • 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.

Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs narrate the story of the nativity as Unity Church's children and youth act out the story in the Sanctuary. Children, youth, and adults are welcome to come and participate in Unity Church's annual holiday tradition. Families with children age three and under are encouraged to attend the 4:00 p.m. service.

Christmas by Candlelight: Family Lessons and Carols • 7:00 p.m.

Join worship leaders Kerri Meyer and Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs as we retell the Christmas story and celebrate the promise of peace within. This is a service for the entire family, with hymns and homilies that children and adults will enjoy. Nursery care available for infants and toddlers.

Christmas by Candlelight: Lessons and Carols • 10:00 p.m.

Join worship leaders Kerri Meyer and Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs as we retell the Christmas story and celebrate the promise of peace within.

Sunday, December 30

Innocents' Sunday • One service only at 10:00 a.m.

On December 26, 1862, thirty-eight Dakota men were executed in Mankato, Minnesota at Abraham Lincoln's orders. On this Holy Innocents' Sunday, Hallman Ministerial Intern Mae Gibson Wall and worship associate Don Lorr will reflect on the 150th anniversary of the largest mass execution in United States history.

Sunday, January 6

Tolling of Bells • 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

We begin each new year with a memorial service for those who have died in the previous year. Everyone will have an opportunity to acknowledge those they've loved and lost.

Christmas Pageant and Pageant Choir

All families with children and youth who are or have been recently enrolled in Religious Education are invited to participate in the annual Unity Church Christmas pageant. Pageant information has been e-mailed to families and registration is available online at <http://www.unityunitarian.org/pageant-registration.html>. Registration must be completed by Sunday, December 2. For more information about the Pageant contact Kelley Loughrey at kelleyloughrey@comcast.net.

The adult Pageant Choir is open to all. The Children's Pageant Choir is open to children in third through sixth grade. For more information about the Pageant Choirs, please contact Ruth Palmer at the Church Office.

Please note the important dates below (parents are asked to assume volunteer roles and should plan to attend all of the following events):

Wednesday, December 5

Cast assignments are posted on church website.

Sunday, December 9

Pageant Costume Fitting

Costume fittings at 10:15 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. in the hallway outside of Ames Chapel. Children's Choir robes will be fitted at this time too.

Sunday, December 23

Pageant Adult Choir Rehearsal

10:00–11:00 a.m. in Choir Room

Pageant Children's Choir Rehearsal

10:00–11:00 a.m. in Foote Room

Sunday, December 23

Pageant Dress Rehearsal

12:45–4:00 p.m.

Monday, December 24

Pageant Performances

Pageant services are at 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. Performers and parents should arrive at 3:00 p.m.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Return of the Mitten Tree!

Unity's holiday tradition of generosity begins again on December 2. Our little tree will stand in the Whitman Lobby on the lower level, waiting to be decorated with warm hats, gloves, scarves and – yes – mittens! All donated items should be new or like new. Children's winter items will be distributed to area families through Obama School and Jeremiah Program. Adult items will be distributed through Amicus.



Buy your holiday wreath from Unity Youth!

Tower Club will once again sell fresh evergreen wreaths as a fundraiser to support the annual youth pilgrimage to Boston. Please consider supporting the youth by purchasing a 24" wreath for \$25. Sales will happen just outside the new entrance after each service on Sunday, December 2 and Sunday, December 9 (while supplies last).

Unity's Christmas Pageant nears 100 years!

All families are welcome to participate in Unity's beloved holiday tradition, the Christmas Eve nativity pageant. Registration for children, youth and adults is online at <http://www.unityunitarian.org/pageant-registration.html>. Dress rehearsal is on December 23 and performances are at 4:00 and 5:30 on December 24. More information is on page 13 and on the church website.

Santa Pause!

Free Holiday Childcare: Wednesday, December 12

Unity Junior High Youth and their parents offer their annual gift of time to parents of young children. Sign your child(ren) up for two-and-a-half hours of free holiday fun at Unity so that you can finish making gifts, planning gatherings or just take a moment's pause during this full season. Wednesday, December 12, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Dinner, crafts, games and a movie for children ages 3 to 10. Advance RSVP required. Contact christy@unityunitarian.org to sign up.

Hey, Children and Youth

Lead 7:00 p.m. Worship on Christmas Eve!

Readers and musicians are needed to help lead our 7:00 p.m. Family Lessons and Carols service on Christmas Eve. If your family is in town and your child or youth is interested in being part of the worship team, please contact Kerri in the Church Office as soon as possible. There will be one rehearsal, TBD per participants' availability.

The Children's Musical is Coming!

For the past 24 years, talented members of the Unity community have come together each year to write, compose, direct, choreograph, and perform a unique show for Unity Church. Participating in the Unity Children's Musical has been a rite of passage and transformative experience for many of our young people. If you have a 5th or 6th grader, consider whether this creative, fun, teambuilding experience might be right for them. To find out more, come to an informational meeting at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday, December 9, in the Robbins Parlor. Auditions and parent meeting for this year's musical are Sunday, January 6, from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Performance dates will be February 28, and March 1 and 2.

December 2012

Notes for your family's calendar:

Sunday, December 2

Regular R.E. classes, High School
Cookie and Wreath sales begin

Mitten Tree is up and accepting
warm clothes for area families

Wednesday, December 5

New Family Orientation, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 9

Regular R.E. classes

Children's Musical informational
meeting for 5th and 6th graders and
their parents, 10:15 a.m.

Wednesday, December 12

"Santa Pause" holiday childcare
event (advance registration required)

Saturday, December 15

Teachers Night Out (RSVP required,
must be a 2012-13 R.E. teacher)

Holiday Concert, carol sing, and
dessert buffet, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 16

Regular R.E. classes, Celebration of
New Lives (RSVP required)

Friday, December 21

Winter Solstice Service, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 23

Family Sunday (No R.E. classes)
Carol Sing (9:00 a.m., 4:30 p.m.)
Carol Shout (11:00 a.m.)

Monday, December 24

Christmas Eve services:
Pageants at 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.

Family Lessons and Carols
Candlelight Service, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 30

No R.E. – Special activities for kids,
childcare available for kids under 5

MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministry

*Dark of winter, soft and still, your quiet calm surrounds me.
Let my thoughts go where they will, ease my mind profoundly.
And then my soul will sing a song, a blessed song of love eternal.
Darkness, when my fears arise, let your peace flow through me.
Darkness, soothe my weary eyes, that I may see more clearly.
When my heart with sorrow cries, comfort and caress me.
And then my soul may hear a voice, a still, small voice of love eternal.
Darkness, when my fears arise, let your peace flow through me.*

— Shelley Jackson Denham

The words above, from hymn #55, remind me of the sweet and difficult times that are presented to us in this upcoming season. My hopes for all of us are that we may find moments of beauty to balance moments of challenge; moments of silence to balance moments of sound; moments of stillness to balance moments of stress. And, in it all, moments of peace which flow through with reminders of love around us.

December Holiday Music Dates



Holiday Concert/Carol Sing and Dessert Buffet

Saturday, December 15

- 6:30 p.m.: Carol Sing in the Sanctuary
- 7:00 p.m.: Holiday Concert in the Sanctuary
- 7:45 p.m.: Holiday Dessert Buffet in Parish Hall

Mila Holiday Concert

Sunday, December 16 • 2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Winter Solstice Service

Friday, December 21 • 7:00 in the Parish Hall

Pageant Choirs Rehearsals

Sunday, December 23 • 10:00-11:00 a.m.

- Children in the Foote Room
- Adults in the Choir Room

Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24

- Christmas Pageant • 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.
- Family Christmas by Candlelight • 7:10 p.m.
- Christmas by Candlelight • 10:00 p.m.



Friday, December 14 • 7:30 p.m.

Crossings Art Center, Zumbrota
\$16 in advance • \$18 at the door

Saturday, December 15 • 7:30 p.m.

Croatian Center, South St. Paul
\$10: Kids, students, seniors • \$12: Adults

Sunday, December 16 • 2:00 p.m.

Unity Church-Unitarian, St. Paul
\$10: Kids, students, seniors • \$12: Adults



25th Anniversary

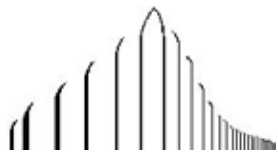
One Voice Mixed Chorus 25th Anniversary Concert

January 26, 2013 • 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

**The Cowles Center
528 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis**

One Voice's 25th Anniversary Concert includes music that was especially popular in the early days of the chorus: musicals with lyrics tweaked to switch genders, songs of struggle for belonging, traditional choral music, and large doses of humor!





UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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

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Save the Date! The Gathering

Fifth Annual Unity Church Women's Retreat

Saturday, January 26

The Gathering is a one-day women's spiritual retreat. Please plan to join in a day of self-enrichment with opportunities to connect with ourselves and with each other - through worship, song, movement, writing, drumming, conversation, and contemplation. Breakfast and lunch will be provided, as will opportunities for massage and spiritual direction.

If you would like to be part of the planning team for the 2013 women's retreat, please contact Barbara Hubbard at barbarah@unityunitarian.org. The next planning meeting will be held on Thursday, December 6, at 6:00 p.m., and dinner will be included.



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