

commUNITY

Vol. 33, No. 6

UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

February 2010

Love

Each month worship, religious education, community outreach ministry, covenant groups and Wellspring Wednesday programs will offer opportunities to contemplate, consider, contend with and discuss an intergenerational curriculum based on monthly themes. Our hope is that this approach will bind us more closely together and inform our lives in effective and positive ways. February's theme is... Love

We could count the ways – of love, that is. Poets have done it; philosophers and theologians too. And lovers, in their own manner, though usually without numbers. We could categorize it and define it – ask ourselves where does *eros* end and *agape* begin? What separates the love of attraction and desire from divinely rooted, selfless love? Where does *philia*, the love found in friendship, enter in?

But love's place, especially in religious life and community, is perhaps less about the names and types of love than it is about the practice of loving. How might we *choose* to love or live with an ethic of love? "We would all love better," claims writer bell hooks, "if we used it as a verb."

Unfortunately, love, like so much else, has been largely privatized by our consumer culture. With almost surgical precision and with dire results, we often sever the love exchanged between two people from the larger love that naturally grows from healthy, intimate relationships. But love is not meant to be segregated. Love itself is a leaning toward wholeness, a longing to return to our original connectedness and oneness, as if recalling to our awareness the shared stardust of which we are all made.

This is no fuzzy New Age proposition. In recent decades, scientists researching the human brain have found that love is not merely some heartfelt counterbalance to the heady seat of our cherished reason. It is, in fact, hardwired into the human brain itself. Our natural connection to one another – our physical and emotional interdependence – has evolved within the human limbic brain as a necessity of survival.

An ethic of love is the natural fruit of

loving in personal relationships. Made vulnerable by our softening toward our beloved, we open ourselves wider to the world around us; and the eye of our imagination, now awakened, begins to see beneath the surface of things. We come, in an act of choice and will and assisted by grace and faith, to decipher the "hidden wholeness" joining us all. It is a beckoning that neither denies nor obliterates our uniqueness; but it does require that we look beneath our differences and humbly receive the gift of a larger union.

Who would suspect that the pleasant inner glow felt with love's first glimmer could lead to something as powerful – and radical – as this? As Emerson notes, we mostly venture into love's terrain wholly unaware that it might open a new relationship with all of humanity; but the trajectory is strong. "In the procession of the soul from within outward," he writes, "it enlarges its circles ever, like the pebble thrown into the pond, or the light proceeding from an orb."

To be sure, we have developed many ways to avoid love's call into larger unity, and this has been at great cost, individually and collectively. "There is life without love," writes Mary Oliver. "It is not worth a bent penny, or a scuffed shoe. It is not worth the body of a dead dog nine days unburied."

The work of religion might be described as claiming life's larger worth by inspiring and equipping us to choose and practice love anyway. Despite our fear of loss. Despite our culture's messages that love is desirable but fleeting, personal but not political, attractive but impractical. Despite the forces that would have us believe we can have love in our lives without challenging the lovelessness

of oppression in the world. We are called, in the name of love, to imagine and remember the larger wholeness in which we all belong and, in so doing, to recover our wholeness within.

"When you hear, a mile away and still out of sight," Oliver's poem continues, "the churn of the water as it begins to swirl and roil, fretting around the sharp rocks . . . when you feel the mist on your mouth and sense ahead the embattlement, the long falls plunging and steaming – then row, row for your life toward it."

— Karen Hering
Consulting Literary Minister

Worship Theme Resources

BOOKS

General Theory of Love by Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon

Into the Garden edited by poets Robert Haas and Stephen Mitchell

The Wisdom of Love: Toward a Shared Inner Search by Jacob Needleman

All About Love by bell hooks

Strength to Love by Martin Luther King

The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi by William C. Chittuck

Love: A Novel by Toni Morrison

Books for children and youth — turn to page 10.

FILMS

Ghost (1990)

Sam (Patrick Swayze) and Molly (Demi Moore) are a very happy couple and deeply in love. Walking back to their new apartment after a night out at the theatre, they find tragedy.

continued on page 8

JUST WORDS

Just Words

"How complicated can it be, this church business?" asked my friend and colleague the Rev. Dr. Patrick O'Neill. He asked this question repeatedly and rhetorically in a sermon he gave a couple of years ago. In the sermon he begins with gathering the people, "Rent a tent, call for a picnic, gather the troops and you're in business. Just like a circus!" He continued humorously with the refrain, "How complicated can it be?" Then he goes on to mention what makes it more complicated than he imagined. He writes, "Did I mention the part about how many people have walked through those doors on a given Sunday morning, hoping to find here in this company of strangers some deeper meaning for their lives, some surcease of sorrow in their times of crisis and loss, some sense of the holy and grace at the center of their lives, some sense of divine connection with a community, some collective permission to be truly themselves, flawed imperfect human beings, with all kinds of crazy ideas and minority viewpoints on the human journey, on theology and philosophy?"

I would add that it is further complicated by the fact that we approach the religious life very differently. Scientists are discovering that the religious impulse may actually be hardwired, but its expression can be as varied as we are. Two church consultants, Robert Norton and Richard Southern, were intrigued by this notion and set out to explore the expression or form the religious impulse can take. In their book, *Soultypes*, they suggest that there are four basic observable "soul types" that characterize our personalities and seek to explain the paths we walk to seek the highest. They refer to this type as heart-centered, soul-centered, mind-centered and strength-centered. Discerning which type or approach resonates with you may help you find practices or activities that are more satisfying and restorative.

Heart-centered spirituality is expressed through gratitude. They place priority on feelings, emotions, personal renewal and transformation. These people hunger for connection and joyful experiences in religion. They find blessings in everyday living, look for the goodness in others and in the world. They see life as a gift and the beauty in life restores their balance. Gratitude realigns them.

Soul-centered folks possess interior personalities. They are intuitive and contemplative. They view life as a sacred journey. Their outlook tends toward the mystical. They are usually attracted to meditation, centering prayer or practices like walking meditation or labyrinth walking.

Mind-centered people prefer orderly thought and intellectual exploration of life's meaning. Knowledge, complex ideas nourish these types. They are interested in the meaning and intent of sacred writings and literature.

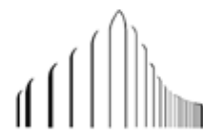
The fourth type identified is the strength-centered person who sees life as the opportunity to create a better society and seeks to serve others. Formal belief systems are less important to this type and direct action can be one of its expressions, though compassion for others might also be an outlet for this type. Walking the talk with integrity is important for this type of spirituality to flourish.

Why have I spelled these types out? Because those described soul types are represented by the folks who gather here at Unity Church. I have heard over and over again. "There is so much going on here, I can't possibly do it all," or "I feel guilty that I don't do enough so I don't do anything here." The staff and volunteers at Unity do not create the multiplicity of offerings so that you might feel overwhelmed or guilty. We do so because we know some people

are nourished by certain kinds of opportunities while others are not. In a congregation as large as Unity, a variety of opportunities to help you grow your soul, or encourage further spiritual maturity is necessary. You don't have to feel guilty. You don't have to feel overwhelmed. We just want you to feel welcomed and encouraged. Think about what nourishes you, experiment, try new things. You never know, you may actually be a different type than you thought.

In the coming weeks, the program staff will further articulate our vision for adult religious education. We hope to frame our vision in such a way that our many offerings have a coherency that makes sense to everyone. Whatever spiritual path calls you and enlivens your soul, we have opportunities to explore. We hope you will feel encouraged and invited.

— Janne Eller-Isaacs



commUNITY is the newsletter of Unity Church–Unitarian. It is published monthly, except the month of July. Deadlines are the 14th of each month. Subscriptions are free to those who make pledges to Unity Church and are available to others for \$30 per year.

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FEBRUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

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

Worship Calendar

January 31

***Simple Courage* — Leon Dunkley**

The more experience a person has, the more simplicity is profound. — Keith Jarrett

It is so hard to tell a decent story. It is even harder to tell a story that is actually true. By what power, by what authority do we tell the stories of our lives. The private stories, the public stories... The stories that insist on being told... With what strength of heart, with what sense of courage do we share our witness of the world? And, more deeply, what is the power of our honest word? Join us for exploration of courage and excellence in public life.

February 7

***Walking the Talk* — Rob Eller-Isaacs**

All our wise and heartfelt words amount to dust and ashes if we don't live out our values in the world. Rob and Worship Associate Amy Kujawski will begin our series of services on *love* by taking a long, hard look at the way of love the Greeks knew as *agape*.

February 14

***Our Whole Lives* — Janne Eller-Isaacs**

Nurturing a loving and intimate relationship is to walk a path of divine and sacred unfolding. It is a demanding path full of profound challenges and opportunities. Janne and Worship Associate Sue Babcock will explore the dimensions of Eros in our lives. The Eclectics will bring their own brand of musical magic to the service as well.

February 21

***The Face of Friendship* — Lissa Gundlach**

When a person can "Friend" and "Unfriend" someone on the internet without ever interacting, what has friendship come to mean? Might it have something to do with the idea of face-to-face "presence?" Hallman Ministerial Intern Lissa Gundlach and Worship Associate Nick Rath explore dimensions of the Greek form of love known as *philia*, or friendship, in building spiritual communities.

February 28

***Turning North* — Rob Eller-Isaacs**

For more than a hundred years Unity Church has faced south. We have been a liberal church for old St. Paul. Our congregation has largely come from the nearby neighborhoods of Ramsey and Crocus Hills. What might it mean for us to turn north? *Caritas*, the fourth form of love, calls us to come to know the neighbors we have yet to know. Rob and Worship Associate Chico Hathaway will wrestle with the deeper meanings of "love your neighbor as yourself."

Offering Recipients

February 7: Family Tree

The mission of Family Tree Clinic is to cultivate a healthy community through low-cost, patient driven health care to men, women and teens in St. Paul. Since 1971, it has provided comprehensive sexual health care, complete services for both visually and hearing impaired and educational programs for schools and other community groups. The agency programs are tailored to accommodate the cultural and family traditions of our diverse immigrant communities. Clients are served on a sliding fee scale with over 6,000 St. Paul residents taking advantage of these services in 2008. Unity member Dick Buggs has supported Family Tree for many years.

February 14: Visitors from UUA Holdeen India Program

During the last two weeks in March, Unity Church will welcome two visitors from one of our Unitarian Universalist Association Holdeen Partner Organizations in India—Vidyak Sansad. While here, Amol NandKumar Namjoshi, president of Vidyak Sansad and Hindavi Kumar, public relations manager, will share their experiences of working for a 30,000 member strong union composed of former bonded laborers. They will tour a variety of Twin City sites and organizations to learn about non-profit management in the U.S. During the last two summers, Unity Church members Wendy Harris and Laney Ohmans each traveled to India to teach in the Vidyak Sansad school for girls. This offering will help defray the trip expenses for our two guests.

February 21: Ten Thousand Things

Ten Thousand Things brings creative, lively, intelligent theater to people with little access to the wealth of the arts. They primarily perform in prisons, homeless shelters, low-income housing and community centers. This remarkable theater group offers a wide variety of plays—ancient tales, classic stories, contemporary plays—incorporating vital open interactions between many of the most talented actors in the Twin Cities and non-traditional audiences. Unity Church members Laura and Ron Schlatter and family are loyal attendees and supporters of Ten Thousand Things.

February 28: Friends of the Parks and Trails

The Friends develop park trails and work to preserve St. Paul and Ramsey County parks, open space, and urban forests. Over the last 25 years, their accomplishments include stopping park land development, establishing park commissions, promoting an annual tree sale that has placed over 6,000 trees in parks, removing buckthorn on the Mississippi River, restoring Pickerel Lake, and installing a safe bikeway trail on the 1-35E bridge over the river. Unity member Marsha Soucheray has served on the Friends board for about 15 years and as board president for one year.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / HALLMAN MINISTERIAL INTERN

Board of Trustees

from Neely Crane-Smith, Trustee

One of my favorite services of the year takes place during the Jewish High Holy Days, where the congregation as one participates in the Litany of Atonement. Together we hold hands, close our eyes and intone - "We begin again in love." And so begins a new year at Unity Church with the Board of Trustees beginning again in love with this amazing congregation and the good work that is done here.

As we welcome our four fabulous new Board members, we are reviewing the Board's actions in 2009. Last year the Board thoroughly reviewed Unity Church Governance, with a dedicated subcommittee going line by line through each to make sure that our policies and by-laws were up to date and reflected best practices at our church. This included updating and streamlining the Grievance policy in order to make reporting easy and convenient for church members. You can find the updated Policies at <http://unityunitarian.org/governing.htm>.

As we leave the "Aughts" behind, the Board is looking forward to visionary conversations, including work on the vision statement, to bring it up to speed with our inspirational Ends Statements which were generated by the congregation's input. The structure of our meetings has changed from several hours on a weeknight to a half-day on Saturday. These longer meetings allow for longer and deeper discussion about the future of Unity.

At first I was a bit nervous about writing the Board column when the worship theme is love, but now it seems all too appropriate. Board members dedicate time and passion to the work of the church not because we don't have anything else going on those Saturday mornings, but because we are truly, madly and deeply in love with this community and the beautiful future we have in store. So, to 2010 - in love!



From Lissa Gundlach
Hallman Ministerial Intern

"Hear! hear!" screamed the jay from a neighboring tree, where I had heard a tittering for some time, 'winter has a concentrated and nutty kernel, if you know where to look for it.'" — Henry David Thoreau

When I came to Minnesota in August, I was immediately asked about my cold-weather preparations. I laughed—it was August—beautiful clear warm days without the suffocating humidity I was accustomed to on the east coast. Why would I think about the winter in August? Why think about floor-length down coats and ice fishing when wearing flip-flops and planning lake getaways? I was sure I was being initiated into Minnesota in some way, but I wasn't sure exactly how. Was I supposed to be excited about or fearful of the legendary Minnesota winters?

One of the first weeks I was here, a new friend of mine offered me a night bike tour of Minneapolis. It was a magical night full of neon lights, mirrored moonlit lakes and unique cityscape views. Included in the tour were full descriptions of winter activities, including sledding and winter biking. There was no talk of winter hibernation, only recreation. I had to believe it as I experienced it.

Now, in the depths of Minnesota's winter, I understand why we talk about the cold weather in the midst of the warmth. It is not to begin the inevitable dissent into frigid temps and ice with dread, but with joy at the unfolding gifts of winter. The life that is germinating below ground thrives above ground in an abiding sense of creativity, playfulness and adventure. The British writer and suffragist Alice Meynell articulates this well with her poem *In February*:

Now in the midst of the old world forlorn, a mystic child is set in these still hours. I keep this time, even before the flowers Sacred to all the young and unborn.

On the coldest January days, bright but frigid, I watched neighborhood children flock to the mounds of snow banks outside of their apartments. Breathless and red-faced, colorful jackets unzipped and hats falling off, they appeared to be hatching elaborate, top secret plans for snow tunnels and snow-creatures. As I grumbled and groaned to myself, cursing the ice, I could not help but crack a smile at their unbothered joy.

I am beginning to remember what Meynell, and Thoreau, speak about when praising winter's gifts. Thoughts of childhood come rushing back. Snowmobiling with my grandfather in Maine, bringing kindling and newspaper to build a fire for outdoor hot-dog roasts. How my ordinary driveway in Massachusetts became a glimmering ice palace. The exhilarating feeling of conquering the steepest of hills in my plastic sled, crashing into a snow bank and scrambling as fast I could to do it again.

All this remembering may just be a "winter strategy" for keeping mind, body and spirit warm and well. I may be kidding myself in the hardest month of the year that winter in Minnesota can be anything but brutal and two months too long. Regardless, I am determined to recover what gifts I can, be they simple, to keep looking for that "concentrated and nutty kernel" Thoreau describes, until what is germinating below ground emerges, fresh and new.

COMMUNITY / FELLOWSHIP / LEARNING

Join a Covenant Group

New groups start this Month

Covenant Groups are a fantastic opportunity to deepen yourself, to practice radical hospitality and to grow your soul. Spend time with a small group of people from Unity Church and learn to connect in surprising new ways. You can sign up for a Covenant Group at the "Welcome Table" table in the Parish Hall following services on Sundays or contact Leon Dunkley at the Church Office.

Guided Meditation in Ames Chapel

Tuesday, February 2, 9, and 16 • 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Buddhist meditation is a centuries old spiritual practice that can bring greater awareness, clarity and peace to our lives. Join Lissa Gundlach for a weekly guided meditation in the beautiful Ames Chapel. Each week we will briefly listen to teachings, practice sitting and walking meditation and support one another in our developing practice. Come every week or drop in. All ages and levels of experience welcome.

Pancake Breakfast and Singing Valentines!

Saturday, February 13 • 8:30–10:00 a.m.



You'll enjoy local sausage, OJ, all you can eat pancakes, and lots of lingering and good conversation. **Bring a friend!** Cost: \$3 per person or \$10 per family. Order your singing valentine (sung by our Unity Singers) on Sunday, February 7, in the Parish Hall following worship. See page 14 for details!

Elders Circle Group

Thursday, February 11, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

The Elders Circle Group meets each month for fellowship, conversation and friendly community connections. The group is always welcome to newcomers as well as regular participants. Join Hallman Intern Lissa Gundlach for this month's conversation on the theme *Love* and fun Valentine's Day treats.

Caregivers Group

Thursday, February 18 • Third Thursday of every month

Are you a part-time or full-time caretaker of loved ones in your life? Do you need support in order to sustain the care you are giving? Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and Pastoral Care Team member Cynthia Orange will be offering an informal support group for caregivers on the third Thursday of every month from 12:00–2:00 p.m. Contact Janne Eller-Isaacs if you would like to participate in this group.

Part 2 of Unitarian Universalist History

Early American Unitarian and Universalism (1600-1900)

Tuesday Evenings, March 2, 9, 16, 23 • 7:00–9:00 p.m. • Robbins Parlor

Have you wondered how Unitarian and Universalist traditions are woven into the vibrant religious and philosophical fabric of American history? Are you interested in learning more in a relaxed and engaging learning environment? Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Lissa Gundlach for the second of a three-part series exploring the history of the two faith traditions which would later merge into Unitarian Universalism in 1961. All ages welcome.

Please e-mail lissa@unityunitarian.org or call 651-228-1456 x129 to reserve a space in the class and a reading packet! Reading packets are available for those who would like to follow along but are not able to attend.

February Group Meetings

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

Men's Retirement Group

Monday, February 8 and 22

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Contact: Phil Morton, 952-934-3578

Unity Singles Group

Watch *This Week at Unity* for events.

Contact: Bonnie Reiland at

bonniereiland@aol.com or Rick

Ahern at hern44@hotmail.com

A New Look at the Bible

First Thursday of the month • 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Paul Gade, 651-771-7528

Afterthoughts

Every Sunday after the 9:00 a.m. service

Contact: Paul Gade, 651-771-7528

Unitots!

A group for families with kids through preschool age

Every Friday • 9:30 a.m.

Contact: Michelle Hill, 651-264-0884

Grandparent Unitots!

A group for grandparents and their grandkids

Every Monday • 9:30 a.m.

Contact: Sue Conner, 651-646-6667

Unity Bridge Club

First Friday of the month • 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Mary Barrett, 651-225-9708

Evergreen Quilt Group

Contact: Michelle Hill at 651-264-0884

Unity Book Club

Tuesday, February 9 • 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Leon Dunkley at the Church Office

Job Transition Networking Group

Every Monday • 9:30 a.m.

Contact: Wendy Frieze at

wendyfrieze@mac.com

LITERARY MINISTRY / UNITY LIBRARIES

Open Page:

reflecting with pens in hand

These guided writing sessions, led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, are invitations to the creative spirit, opportunities to correspond with "the still, small voice within." No writing experience necessary; only an empty page and an open heart and mind. Individual programs, unless otherwise noted, are free and do not require pre-registration.

Open Page Writing Sessions

Sunday, February 7, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Reflection Topic: Brokenness

"There is a crack in everything," observed Leonard Cohen. "That's how the light gets in."

Anticipating the upcoming worship theme of brokenness in March, we'll explore the places where we experience the world or ourselves as broken. How is brokenness healed? And how does it sometimes open our lives and our world to the truth and the light we are seeking? Free. No registration required.

On-line Literary Resources

For more information about the Faithful Words literary ministry and additional writing programs offered in other locations, visit www.unityunitarian.org/WritingMinistry.htm.

Written meditations offered on each month's worship theme, are also available on-line at www.unityunitarian.org/MonthlyThemeResources.htm.

To receive e-mail notifications of upcoming literary programs and invitations for member writings, please contact Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering at karen@unityunitarian.org. These programs are supported by a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism and contributions from individual donors.



What's New at Unity Libraries?

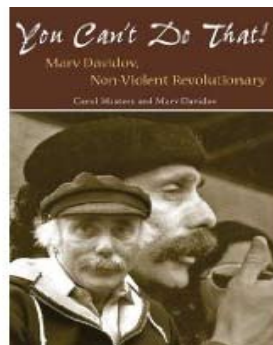
Anderson Adult Library ♦ Bookstall ♦ Whitman Children's Library
Bookmobile ♦ Cairns Literary Journal

The Library Team Presents...

Marv Davidov and Carol Masters

You Can't Do That: Marv Davidov, Non-violent Revolutionary

Wednesday, February 17 • 7:00 p.m.



An activist and organizer for over 50 years, Marv Davidov has been involved in a wide variety of social justice issues, from joining the Freedom Riders of 1961 Mississippi, to founding the Honeywell Project in protest of the manufacture of cluster bombs and other weapon systems by Minneapolis-based Honeywell during the Vietnam War, to the 2008 RNC protests in St. Paul.

In his nomination of Marv for the MN 150: The People, Places, and Things that Shape Our State exhibit at the MN History Center, Will Shapira writes, "Minnesota would not be Minnesota without the state's all-time social

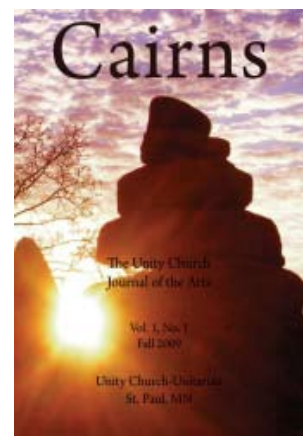
activist on behalf of peace and justice for the entire state for over 50 years.... Marv set the bar for every other peace and justice worker in the state who has followed him. Without him Minnesota would not enjoy the fine reputation it does as a state interested in working towards peace and justice."

Come hear the remarkable story of a man who has dedicated his life to effecting change through peaceful means. Book signing following talk.

Have You Read It Yet?

"Where is the voice that comes to me/ With such a quiet might," pondered William Channing Gannett. Have you ever wondered, where are the voices of our congregation? The first issue of Unity's first literary journal, *Cairns: The Unity Church Journal of the Arts*, answers that call.

It is a collection of art, photography, essays, reflections, and poetry, which honors the diversity of thought, talent, and experience within Unity Church. Inside, you will be taken to New Orleans, Homorodszentpeter, the Grand Canyon, Nicaragua and Colombia; back to the Civil War, the turn of the century, and Unity of a time long past; and in to the hearts of those questioning and sharing change, loss, joy, and self-discovery. Available now in the Unity Bookstall.



Unity Church Book Club

The Unity Church Book Club will meet from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9. The book they will be discussing is *Ladies of Liberty: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation* by Cokie Roberts. The book scheduled for discussion in March is *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan **Everyone is welcome — even if you haven't read the book!**

THE SOURCES SUPPER / ARLT

Unitarian Universalist Heritage Week: February 20–28 Be Part of a New Tradition

Krista Tippet of MPR's "Speaking of Faith" says that every religion she's ever studied is based on a story that it tells over and over. This year we are continuing the Sources Supper tradition where we come together in one another's homes to tell the story of Unitarian Universalism and apply it to our lives today. Even if you came last year—and especially if you did—be part of building an annual tradition that we will spread to the whole denomination in years to come.



In truth, few of us, even those raised Unitarian Universalists, can tell the story of our heritage and connect it with our current challenges and opportunities as a religious people. But this is changing here at Unity as we address questions such as these: How did we begin as a religious movement? What are the key turning points and breakthroughs in our tradition? Who are the martyrs and heroes in our progressive religious journey? How did we come to be a non-creedal faith that nevertheless stands passionately for something in the world? And most important of all: what does this story have to do with how we live and practice our faith—and live our lives—today?

Here's the low-down on the Sources Supper and how you can get involved. The Sources Supper ritual, which was developed over a four year period by Twin Cities UUs, aims to create a deep connection with our Unitarian Universalist heritage via story telling and conversation around a common meal. The stories are about four founding events in UU history plus two key turning points in later history: Transcendentalism and Humanism. The conversations are based on questions following each story. The meal takes place after the first four stories and is intended to be simple and informal, with the conversation going wherever people take it. The final two stories take place after the meal and before dessert. The whole ritual, including dinner, takes about three hours.

As mentioned, the Sources Supper is intended to be done year after year until it becomes part of the religious identity and collective memories of those who participate in it. The ritual, which follows an easy-to-use script, works with adults and youth of 12 years and older; a future version will be adapted for families with younger children. We learned some things last year that will make the experience even better this year.

Now the logistics: There will be sign up opportunities beginning in early February to host and participate in a Sources Supper. Saturday events (February 20 and 27) will be from 6:00–9:30 p.m., with the first half hour for gathering and settling in. Sunday events (February 21 and 28) will be either in the afternoon (1:00–4:30 p.m.) or the evening (5:00–8:30 p.m.) Hosting is not burdensome: you just need a table that seats 8-12 people. The Sources Supper implementation team will provide you with the scripts, guidelines, and orientation for the ritual and the potluck meal. Simple is the rule of the land for the meal—generally a soup, salad, appetizers, desserts and drinks. We can even provide a recipe for a soup that's been popular at Sources Suppers.

There is a big, bold vision behind Unitarian Universalist Heritage Week and the Sources Supper: let this be the last generation of Unitarian Universalists who don't know where they came from. Let the next generation stand inside a tradition they know and love—and then take it to new places.

The Sources Supper Implementation Team: Bill Doherty, Leah Doherty, Lisa Brosseau, Allen Giles, and Barbara Hubbard. To read about the origins of the Sources Supper and the key events covered, go to www.SourcesSupper.org. You can look at a copy of the script on this website.

Navigating the Complex Terrain of Race

Three Wednesdays

March 17, 24, and 31

7:00–8:30 p.m.

Unity Church–Unitarian

Do you find discussions about racism unsettling and/or confusing? Are you unsure about how to navigate the complex terrain of race in the U.S.? This three-part series is meant to provide an introductory and accessible framework to not only understand these issues, but begin to take action on them as well. A key premise of this workshop is that addressing social justice issues, in this case racism, is a core aspect of spirituality and a fundamental way to embody faith. This series ties the conversation of racism and white privilege in the U.S. to core spiritual principles and encourages participants to consider how they can integrate these issues in how they live out their values in the world. While portions of this series involve the presentation of information, the sessions also ask participants to dialogue with each other at various points, so please come willing to learn, share and consider actions you can take in your life.

Dr. Heather Hackman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Relations and Multicultural Education at St. Cloud State University. She teaches courses in social justice and critical multicultural education, heterosexism and homophobia in the U.S., race and racism in the U.S., and oppression and social change. She consults locally and nationally on issues of racism and white privilege, classism in education, LGBT issues in education, and power dynamics in education.

Participants will be asked to sign up and commit to attending all three sessions. The maximum number of participants is 40.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Support Obama Elementary

In collaboration with "Support Our Schools" a Unity Church partnership through the St. Paul Council of Churches, the Obama Elementary School (across the street from the church), is in need of the following new, like new, or gently used items:

- Two upholstered chairs
- Small End Table
- Storage Chest
- Refrigerator
- Kitchen counter w/sink & storage
- One matching counter top surface
- Two matching bookshelves
- Three computers (Mac preferred. Call first if PC.)
- Three computer monitors
- One computer printer

For more information or to donate, contact Gloria Lamphear, Family Liaison for Obama Elementary at g.lamphear@gmail.com or 651-492-0471.

Hosts are Needed!

During the last two weeks of March Unity Church will welcome two visitors from one of our Unitarian Universalist Holdeen partner organizations in India, Vidayak Sansad. Amol Nandkumar Namjoshi, the president of Vidayak Sansad, and Hindavi Karve, the public relations manager, will share their experiences working for a 30,000 member strong union composed almost entirely of former bonded laborers. They will also tour a variety of sites in the metropolitan area and beyond, glean ideas and potential practices from non-profit organizations here in Minnesota.

We are looking for Unity Church people willing to act as hosts and/or tour guides for Amol and Hindavi. If there's a Minnesota attraction that you believe is not to be missed, or a non-profit organization you feel is particularly effective or innovative, please contact Wendy Harris at 651-917-8880 or worldsigner@gmail.com or Pat Haff at the Church Office.

40 Days Toward Reconciliation

"As communities of faith we understand that we are all God's children and that God has created us to live together in community. Yet there is no end to the ways we can separate ourselves and divide our communities. We are aware of some of this separation and its causes but much of this is subtle and easily overlooked."

This is the introduction to a Summit University interfaith sharing series, 40 Days Toward Reconciliation, to which Unity Church members are invited. This five part study series is designed for the purpose of thinking about how we might better live together in community. The series will begin on Sunday, February 28, at 7:00 p.m. and will continue every other Sunday evening for four more sessions at a central community site yet to be determined.

The goals of this series are: 1) to discuss race openly and work boldly toward racial equity; 2) to identify systemic causes of racism so that we can change them as we live and work together; and 3) to deepen the connections and relationships within our congregations. This series was developed by some clergy and spiritual leaders from the neighborhood member congregations of ISIAAH, a broad based interfaith organizing organization in the Twin Cities. The curriculum for this series includes experiential activities in small groups, reflective questions, and scriptural study.

Members of the Unity Church Racial Justice Outreach Ministry team will be participating and would like to encourage other Unity Church members to join in this new interfaith community opportunity. If you would like more information about this series or a series application, please contact Pat Haff at 651-228-1456 or pat@unityunitarian.org.

Balazs Scholar to Visit in March

This year's Balázs scholar, the Rev. Róbert Bálint, will visit Unity on March 20 and 21. He will participate in worship services on the 21st. Robert is the fifteenth Transylvanian Unitarian minister to study for a year at Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, California, under the Balazs Scholar Program.

Róbert, age 31, graduated with a degree in Sociology prior to his theological studies. He serves two congregations in Transylvania, Meszkő, known by tourists as the Alabaster Village, and Csegez. He writes, "I am really interested in learning more about UU organizational life and practices, about the new springs in the UU theological thinking, and ways of handling social issues." Róbert is the third Balazs Scholar to be hosted at Unity by the Partner Church Team.

The offering on March 21 will go to support the Balazs Scholar program and the work of the Partner Church Team.

Films: Love - continued from page 1

Sam is murdered and finds he must warn Molly about the danger that she is in. As a ghost, of course, he cannot be seen or heard by the living. Only love lets him find a way to keep her safe.

What Dreams May Come (1998)

Robin Williams and Anabella Sciora expand the famous poetry from Hamlet into an artistic adventure beyond imagination. Annie (Sciora) is a painter who finds herself alone in life. Through her painting, she reaches beyond this world into the next.

Up (2009)

A young Carl Fredrickson meets a young adventure spirited girl named Ellie. They both dream of going to a Lost Land in South America. 70 years later, he remembers the promise he made to her. Faced with being moved into a retirement home, Carl and his house up and fly away. He sets out at last to fulfill his dream...but with surprises.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Nothing but Presence

Visiting an offender (that's what the system calls her) at Shakopee Prison for Women is the most personally satisfying volunteer work I've ever done.

For personal reasons related to crime and forgiveness, I wanted to do something. Volunteering for Amicus One-to-One (see box at right), known for reducing recidivism, seemed a positive way to do that. So I attended an information session, then a short training. When I decided to continue (you can opt out whenever), an Amicus staff member interviewed me at my kitchen table: "Is there any offense you don't care to deal with?" Amicus honored my answer and provided continuing support.

Because of my knowledge of recovery issues, I was assigned a mentee (let's call her Jean) serving three years for multiple DWI convictions. No one else had visited her. Eager to meet her, I nevertheless had doubts about my usefulness to her. She was Ojibway and (I guessed wrongly) had grown up on a reservation. I was white and, because of that, privileged. I lived in the city... Still, my wish to be there prevailed.

When we first met, we smiled and hugged (you can do that for a few seconds if you don't touch hands), and Jean said her maiden name was the same as mine. We talked that day, and I saw her for an hour every Saturday I was in town, for the rest of her active sentence. (Amicus asks one visit a month.) We talked about everything, always finding a common point or connection. I looked forward to our visits and how afterwards I felt after each one. How often, after all, is one able to spend an hour, uninterrupted, talking with a friend?

Jean was released on Christmas Eve. Prevented by weather from taking her 200 miles to her family that day, I invited her to be with mine until road conditions improved. With permission from her parole officer, Jean was able to celebrate with my family for two days before traveling to hers. Now she looks forward to making a new life—and to harvesting wild rice with me next fall. We will remain friends.

I knew of prisons only what I'd seen in films—and I came to laugh when friends offered cookies to take on my visits. Nothing passes (legally) between visitor and offender—nothing but presence and words. My Amicus Jean says that's everything.

— Ellen Green, member of the Unity Church Restorative Justice Ministry Team

Amicus Volunteer Information Session

Monday, February 15

6:00–8:00 p.m. at Unity Church

For over 40 years, Amicus volunteers have offered friendship to those building new lives. Volunteers visit individuals in correctional facilities, where they provide friendship and much-needed connection to someone in the outside world. You too can help. Training and careful matching ensure a safe and meaningful experience. Find out more at this session.

Please RSVP by Thursday, February 11, by contacting Chris at 612-348-8570 or chris@amicususa.org.

Restorative Justice Team Seeks Transit Donations

The Unity Restorative Justice Team is doing its part to help Minnesotans with a Criminal Record get a new start by raising donations for "Getting Around Kits."

Amicus, a local nonprofit partner of Unity, has found that one of the biggest challenges for those being released from a correctional facility is their lack of affordable transportation. Searches for jobs, housing and other basic needs often mean miles of walking or riding the bus if one can afford the transit fare. Through the "Getting Around Kits," you can help provide a vital tool for new starts – a bus pass.

The team is also accepting checks and in-kind donations for winter hats, gloves and coats. Drop your donations off at the Restorative Justice Table in the Parish Hall each Sunday in February or leave them with Unity's Coordinator of Community Outreach Ministry, Pat Haff.

Questions can be directed to Steve Nelson, a member of the Restorative Justice team who is also on staff at Amicus. Contact him at steve@amicususa.org or 651-788-6573.

Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food Drive Sunday. All non-perishable food and household items are welcome and needed!

Donations can be brought anytime and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances.



Suggested items for Sunday, February 21 are canned vegetables or tomato sauce.

Whole Farm Coop

Buy meat, cheese, produce and more from local, sustainable farms and pick it up at Unity Church! For a February pick up, order from wholefarmcoop.com or call 320-732-3023 by Wednesday, February 10.



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



The Day of Service is coming!



5th annual

Interfaith Youth Day of Service

Save the Date!

February 15th, 2010

Join us for a day of interfaith service and reflection.

Register by February 8.

Enter our video contest! Prizes given at the Day of Service.

Submissions due January 10.

More info:

www.SPACC.org/INTERFAITH

mpaul-cook@spacc.org * 651-789-3852

Twin Cities Interfaith Youth Leadership Coalition, a collaboration of



Dates for Your Family's Calendar

Wednesday, February 3 • 7:00 p.m.
New R.E. Parent Orientation

Friday-Saturday, February 5-6
Coming of Age overnight

Sunday, February 7
New Workshop Rotation Cycle
"Community" begins

Sunday, February 14
NO R.E. CLASSES -- Presidents' Day
Celebration of New Lives, 4:30
worship service

Monday, February 15
Interfaith Youth Day of Service

Books on February's Worship Theme: Love

For Preschool and Elementary:

Mama, Do You Love Me? by Barbara Jooose and Barbara Lavallee

I Love You As Much... by Laura Krauss Melmed

All the Places to Love by Patricia Maclachlan

For Older Kids:

Consider Love... by Sandra Boynton

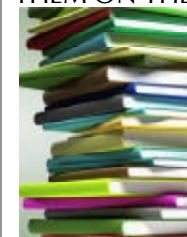
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle

Tower Club Wants Your...

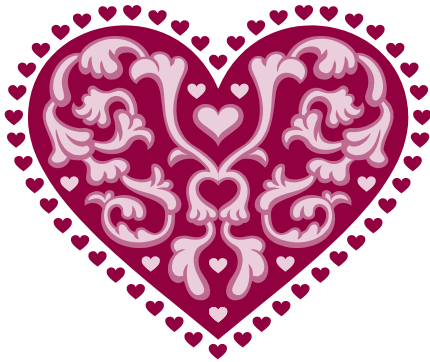
USED BOOKS!

The high school youth are ready to start collecting your gently used books and media items for their annual fundraiser sale in April.

Please bring your books to the R.E. office during the week or to the Parish Hall on Sundays and PLACE THEM ON THE COLLECTION CART.



The proceeds from the used book sale support the youth's Junior year Boston pilgrimage and other youth programming.



Valentines! Unity Singers! Pancakes!

Saturday, February 13
8:30–10:00 a.m.

Purchase a Singing Valentine to celebrate your very own Valentine sung by our award winning Unity Singers!

Reserve your Singing Valentine at the “Singing Valentines” table in the Parish Hall on Sunday, January 31, and February 7, after morning services. Valentines will be sung on site in the Parish Hall or over the phone between 8:30 and 10:00 a.m., during the Pancake Breakfast.

Suggested donations: (cash or check)

- \$20.00 for a Singing Valentine by phone (sung by a small ensemble of the Unity Singers)
- \$35.00 for a Singing Valentine to your Sweetheart sung in the Parish Hall during the Pancake Breakfast with a special dedication read to them (sung by a small ensemble of the Unity Singers)
- \$100.00 for a Singing Valentine sung only to your Sweetheart in the Parish Hall by all the Unity Singers

A limited number of valentines are available. Order yours now!

Lulu Pickle: A Circus Tale

The 2010 Unity Church Children's Musical

Performances: March 4, 5, and 6

Ever feel like you are living with a bunch of clowns? Lulu is. In Circustown, everyone has a talent and perfectly painted faces to match—except Lulu. Will she find her talent and her true self?

February Parish Hall Artists

Barbara Riegel Bend

I delight in discovering the world through art, thinking in form and color, reaching for a glimpse of the unfathomable vastness we are part of and then puzzling through the possibilities of expressing these discoveries.

I am intrigued by the human form's ability to speak directly to our souls through subtle movement and jesters. We can unconsciously read emotions and intent through this unspoken language, causing a connection or repulsion when meeting a stranger. As I maneuver my sculptured forms, I explore this internal dialog using cultural remnants.

The characters I create emerge from somewhere a little out of reach; they come from the edges, a conversation between the materials I use and me. Usually, they grow from a unique fabric or a particularly wonderful combination of colors and textures. I scavenge and glean the relics of our contemporary society with an eye for repetition, color, and compatibility. I take great joy in putting the unlikely pieces I have gathered together and making them into a different whole, with a new purpose, and sometimes unrecognizable past.

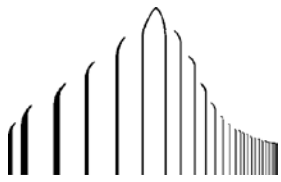
My passion is to wrap. I wrap anything that will lend itself to my obsession. Wrapping was once essential to survival: poles lashed for shelter; grasses twisted and wrapped for food collection baskets, bodies embellished and clothed. I am drawn to the power of its ancient and primal roots. I use an assortment of colored wires, zippers, springs, piano hammers, ties, and labels and entwine them with ethnic fabrics and silk remnants, to create a figure that touches us deeply. The armatures of my pieces are metal that I braze or wind; I wrap this structure with old t-shirts to form the figure. My wrapping is tight so my structures become solid sculptural forms. The arms and heads are bent and turned to express purpose or emotion. My figures become complete when the synchronicity of unrelated elements come together and the creative energy of wrapping moves the soul.

Scott Spencer

During our busy lives, we so often pass neighborhoods, places of business and industry, but no longer see these structures. It is the play of light and shadow that brings them to life in their fixed position.

On the other hand, nature has the freedom to move and change from season to season and captivate us with its flexible beauty.

My hobby as a photographer draws me to many areas of the Twin Cities. I hope you will recognize and enjoy St. Paul and Minneapolis from the beautiful to the mundane.



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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Pathway to Membership

If you have questions or would like to sign up for a class please contact Betsy Moore at the Church Office. Childcare is available at no cost for all Pathway to Membership classes if requests are made at least one-week in advance.

Welcome to Unity

Wednesday, February 3
7:10–8:30 p.m.

This class is geared to newcomers and those seeking to learn more about Unitarian Universalists and Unity Church.

Finding Yourself at Unity

Thursdays: February 11, 18, and 25
6:30–8:30 p.m. • Includes light supper
Unitarian Universalist and Unity Church history (including a tour of the church), opportunities to share parts of your religious journey, and discussion of the expectations and benefits of membership.

Committing to Unity

Tuesday, April 6 • 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Ready to make the membership commitment? This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry.



Inside this issue of *commUNITY*:

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