

LOVE

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.

Love is a difficult concept to capture because it encompasses something so broad and quite elusive and is often misused and overused to the point of either cliché or idolatry. The dictionary tells us love is "an intense feeling of deep affection." Far more than a feeling for many of us, love is often described as a force or energy. Not only do we send and receive love from others, but we connect to and experience the energy of love inside ourselves. According to cardiologists, the heart emits an electrical field 60 times greater in amplitude than the activity in our brain.

Human love is also flawed, imperfect, and messy. Love requires a humbling compassion for ourselves and for those we love. Loving faithfully also requires that we trust, respect, and have confidence in ourselves as well as the other person. Thich Nhat Hanh teaches that true love is made of four elements: loving kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. If our love contains these elements, it will be infused with holiness and will have the power to heal, transform, and bring deep meaning to our lives. We may not get there by "falling" but instead through courageous actions; a willingness to be vulnerable, have patience, and practice generosity and understanding.

What might it mean for us as a people of faith to *be love*, to practice it, to be transformed by it; to live as love's servants — as our Universalist ancestors encouraged us to do? They believed in the simple idea that God's love was so big and all-encompassing, that no one would be left outside the circle or condemned to eternal damnation. Theirs was the radical idea that all human beings share a common destiny, and therefore the greatest commandment was to love God with all their heart and

soul — for this was the way in which God loved them. And, of course since all people were beloved by God, part of loving God was to love their neighbors as themselves. Our contemporary UU principles are rooted in this deep Universalist love — in particular we affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of each person and respect the interdependent web of life of which we are but a part. Following these principles affirms our trust and understanding that love is the way in which we human beings awaken and become who we are most deeply meant to be. In other words, if we are to live lives of integrity, service and joy, love needs to become our spiritual practice.

How do we practice love in this way? By practicing kindness, patience, forgiveness, courtesy, humility, generosity, and honesty. By consciously devoting time and attention to developing these characteristics in ourselves. Adopting love as our way of life enriches our human relationships in such a way that our very lives are transformed, and thus so is our world. By loving our enemies, seeing our tears in another's eyes, and respecting and embracing the "other," we can live the gospel of Universalism. To love is, as the poet Rumi so poetically put it, "to dare to be naked and awake, while others sleep, cloaked in their words and excuses." Love believes that each human life has the power to help change the world. Love as a spiritual practice truly is more than a feeling. It's an action we choose, again and again.

Ministerial Intern

Andrea Johnson with this month's theme team: Drew Danielson, Janne Eller-Isaacs, Lisa Friedman, Karen Hering, KP Hong, and Ruth Palmer

LOVE THEME RESOURCES

FOR FAMILIES

Love You Forever by Robert Munsch
A young woman holds her newborn son and lovingly sings him a lullaby.

Coco

A movie about a young boy who finds himself in the colorful Land of the Dead and discovers what it means to love and honor your ancestors.

Finding Nemo

After his son is captured in the Great Barrier Reef and taken to Sydney, a timid clownfish sets out on a journey to bring him home.

VIDEO

As it is in Heaven

An internationally renowned Swedish conductor returns to his childhood village and agrees to help the local church choir hone their singing skills.

BOOKS

All About Love by Bell Hooks

Radical new ways to think about love by showing its interconnectedness in our private and public lives.

How to Love by Thich Nhat Hanh

Distilling one of our strongest emotions down to four essentials: you can only love another when you feel true love for yourself; love is understanding; understanding brings compassion; deep listening and loving speech are key ways of showing our love.

Love 2.0

More than happiness and even optimism, love holds the key to improving our mental and physical health as well as lengthening our lives and deepening personal experiences.

POETRY

"Love is Reckless" by Rumi

Just Words



We waited a long time before buying the tickets. It couldn't possibly be as good as everybody said it was. The tickets were expensive and we would have to travel quite a way to see it. But the rave reviews kept coming in from people of widely divergent political perspectives and wildly differing worldviews. In the end we could not resist the siren song of *Hamilton*.

We flew down to Chicago to see it at the CIBC Theater. Really? The old Shubert is now named for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce? Oh well, *Hamilton* was fond of big banks. At least it's a Canadian bank. I've been reading Chernow's *Hamilton*, steeping myself in revolutionary history and the dynamics of the Constitutional Convention, and was prepared to be disappointed by the inevitable simplification inherent in fitting the story onto the stage.

But from the moment that the lights came up until the thunderous ovation ended I was utterly mesmerized. At first the image of a young black man with dreads, dressed in elegant red satin, sashay across the stage as Jefferson seemed patently unlikely. But three minutes in I was so caught up in the story, so transfixed by the music, the staging, and the unrelenting rhythm of the play that the skin color of the actors was irrelevant in a way that was itself a significant statement.

The production is absolutely marvelous but what matters most is that in telling an old story in new and startling ways, *Hamilton* declares with passionate conviction that the American promise still rings true. We are shaped by our history but we are also profoundly influenced by both the political philosophy and the systems of governance that encourage us to correct our course when we go astray. Like most of you I can and often do recite the litany of ways we've betrayed the promise. But we cannot afford to lose our Nation to cynicism or despair.

As we at Unity Church map our own future, I hope we will recover a sense of deep gratitude for the ideal of covenant, and the framework for promise-making that is at the heart both of our congregational life and of the American ideal.

Yours in faith,
Rob Eller-Isaacs



**TURN TO PAGE 4 AND
LEARN HOW YOU CAN
HELP MAP UNITY'S FUTURE!**

2018 Congregation Book Read

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies

"If the persistence of white supremacy in twenty-first century America surprises you, this book will give you a startlingly different understanding of why.

If you are not surprised that widespread white supremacy continues to injure America, but have no ideas or little hope for overcoming it, keep reading.

If you see white supremacy as a belief system or ideology, in this book you will discover only a fraction of it exists in our cognitive brains. For the most part, white supremacy lives in our bodies.

If you are convinced that ending white supremacy begins with social and political action, do not read this book unless you are willing to be challenged."

— Resmaa Menakem
Author of *My Grandmother's Hands*

In *Between the World and Me*, Ta-Nehisi Coates writes that "racism is a visceral experience, that it dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle..." *My Grandmother's Hands* begins here and "offers a path of internal reconciliation for a person enduring the generational trauma of American racism," according to Rep. Keith Ellison.

No matter what kind of person you are — Black, white, police officer — this book can lead toward racial healing and justice. That is, if we are willing to accept the challenge.

READ: Now

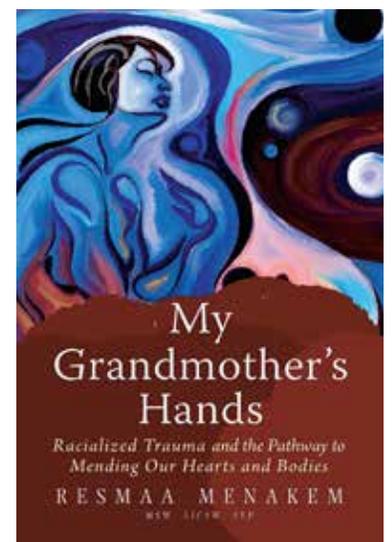
**DISCUSS: Wednesday, February 28 • 7:15 PM
~or~ Sunday, March 4 • 1:00 PM**

MEET THE AUTHOR: Spring 2018

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem. Central Recovery Press, 2017.

Recommended by Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs.

Available in the Bookstall and Anderson Library.



FEBRUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP / OFFERING RECIPIENTS

Sunday Worship

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. Religious Education for children and youth is offered during all services.

February 4: #MeToo

On January 28, Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Terry Linskey invited us to consider the #MeToo movement through the stories and perspectives of female-identified members of Unity Church. This week, we'll continue to explore #MeToo, this time through the voices and perspectives of church members who identify as men. Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Arif Mamdani, worship associate Bryan Smith, and a group of men from the church as they invite us into this important conversation.

February 11: Transformative Love

The poet Walt Whitman declared that love letters from God were falling all around us. If you agree with this wild assertion, the questions remain, how do we notice the letters and how do we let their messages into our hearts? Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Alex Askew will ask these questions as they examine some of God's letters.

February 18: Worn Out Phrases and Longing Gazes

In his 1995 best seller, *The Five Love Languages*, psychotherapist Gary Chapman posits that human beings have a variety of ways we use to show love. What are Unity Church's love languages? Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Heidi Huelster will ask how we might just win each other's hearts.

February 25: Breathe Out Love

This month we've been invited to explore the many facets and complexities of love from the love languages we speak to each other, to the ways love is made real in our work to repair the wider world. Yet even in this commitment and big hearted desire to meet the world's need, we can't help but ask "how?" How do we grow our ability to be a force for love in the world? Can we? Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Arif Mamdani and worship associate Angela Wilcox as we explore the question of how we send love out into the world.

Join a Welcome Team!

Come to Welcome Team Training!

We are looking for 30 generous souls to join our Welcome Teams for Sunday services. It is a great way to meet new people and make a positive impact at Unity Church. The Welcome Team commitment is 1.5 hours per month.

Interested? Attend the Welcome Team Training on Tuesday, February 20, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. To RSVP please email madeline@unityunitarian.org.

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

February 4: Tanbara Memorial Scholarship

Earl and Ruth Tanbara were members of Unity Church for more than fifty years. The Tanbaras were directly involved in the resettlement of Japanese Americans out of the WWII Japanese Internment Camps into Minnesota. The Tanbara Memorial Scholarship of \$1500 is awarded annually to a high school senior who is a member of the Twin Cities Chapter of the Japanese American Citizen League. Scholarship selection is based on academic achievement, community service, and an application essay. Today's collection will go directly to the scholarship fund.

February 11: Exodus Lending

Exodus Lending is Minnesota's only non-profit dedicated to helping Minnesotans get out of payday lending debt. The program model allows enrolled participants to "gift" their past-due payday loan to Exodus Lending who then pays off the loan in full, immediately. Program participants re-pay Exodus in twelve monthly installments. Those enrolled in Exodus also have access to free financial counseling. Unity's Laney Ohmans is a board member of Exodus Lending.

February 18: I AM Resources

I AM Resources, founded by longtime Unity Church member Iris Cornelius, teaches young students life skills needed to self-regulate emotions and behavior so that they are equipped, focused, and confident when meeting academic hurdles. I AM Resources provides a cost-effective model involving early intervention, psychological counseling, and cognitive strategies addressing the mental health needs of minority and economically disadvantaged elementary students with the goal of reducing special education referrals. This collection will go toward engaging an additional psychologist to coach students and parents.

February 25: ComMUSICation

ComMUSICation offers high-quality, intensive music education opportunities that reflect the diversity of Frogtown, a St. Paul Promise neighborhood. This unique program uses singing as one tool to empower youth with lifelong skills that help build a feeling of community belonging and a commitment to service. ComMUSICation utilizes local artist partners to build a choral program encouraging family participation and community engagement. Today's collection will be used to provide transportation, purchase sheet music, and provide food for kids involved in this after school program. Unity's Brian Newhouse is a champion cheerleader for ComMUSICation.

To nominate an offering recipient visit www.unityunitarian.org/generosity-ministry.html.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / MAPPING OUR FUTURE

Board of Trustees: A Work of Love

From Nancy Evert, Trustee



Each month one member of Unity's Board of Trustees uses this column to share significant themes from the trustees' work. As we hope you know by now — based on all sorts of communication strategies — each of you is invited to participate in our Ends renewal process. Briefly stated, "Ends" are our common statement of the impact we yearn for Unity Church to have in three areas — our individual spiritual development, our life as a congregational community, and then beyond our walls in our neighborhood, nation, and world. You are invited to add your voice to shaping our Ends for the coming five years. The last Ends workshops occur in the first two weeks of February — so please, join in this process by signing up for a workshop at www.unityunitarian.org/mission-and-ends.html. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow Unity folk and dream Unity's future into being.

The Board also continues to focus on the transition in senior called ministry that will happen in June 2020, when Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs retire. We are engaging resources available to the Board and congregation through the Unitarian Universalist Association. In January, we met with Lisa Presley, the UUA's Congregational Life Consultant for the Mid-America Region. Lisa talked with us about the various transition options we are considering — including direct transition to a new senior minister(s) or pausing for an interim period with an interim minister(s). We also met with Jen Crowe, Executive Minister of First Universalist in Minneapolis. The UUA has identified Jen as Unity's "coach" for the transition process. Jen was a Hallman Ministerial Intern at Unity Church. So, we feel very fortunate to have a coach who is familiar with the congregation. The Board has connected with other UU congregations to gain insight about their ministerial transitions. And, the congregation will be very involved as this process moves forward, including participation in forming the search committee for Unity's next called minister(s).

We know that Ends renewal process and transition planning are critical steps toward Unity's success in recruiting and thriving with new senior minister(s). The Board is focused on other tasks we believe are also important as Unity prepares for transition — including review and potential clarification of governance documents, deepened understanding of Unity's financial reporting and status, greater familiarity with the depth and breadth of Unity's various ministries, and implementation of a system to preserve and provide easier access to Board documents for ourselves and future trustees. All in all — important, engaging, and time-intensive work.

Finally, the Board includes five new members who have all embraced this work whole-heartedly. As I reflect on February's worship theme of love, I see a deep and generous love for this congregation, its mission and members, energizing our Executive Team, staff and Board. I hope you feel the joy of sharing and receiving love through your engagement at Unity Church!

Mapping Our Future Renewing Our Ends

Every five years we come together to consider who we are as a congregation and what our path should be moving forward in the world. In small groups you will have the opportunity to share your stories about Unity Church and your wishes for its future, and imagine the difference Unity Church could make in people's lives if the group's most desired wishes came true. The information coming from these sessions will clarify the core values, mission, and goals of Unity Church through 2023 and beyond. This sacred work will provide essential guidance to the ministers, the Board of Trustees, and all those who call Unity Church their spiritual home.

No matter how long you have been part of this community, no matter how you have been involved, we need your voice in this process.

To participate in this deeply rewarding experience, **please sign up to help Map Our Future**. Details and a sign-up form are available online at www.unityunitarian.org/mission-and-ends.html. Gatherings have been scheduled during the day, in the evening, and on weekends to help enable everyone to participate. In addition, food, beverages, and child care will be provided.

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WWW.UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG

2017-18 MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Hallman Ministerial Intern: Arif Mamdani



Hey Unity! Do you identify as a man? If so, I hope you'll sign-up for the Men's Retreat on February 17.

It is no secret that the state of men in our world is a far cry from what we'd like it to be. Even before #MeToo shined a spotlight on men's abuse of power and privilege in our treatment of women, the last several years have seen numerous studies and reports that say that men in U.S. society are experiencing declines on many indicators of health and wellness from increased depression, addiction, and suicide, to decreased circle of friends and general satisfaction with life.

The good news is that we don't have to muddle through all this alone. At this year's Men's Retreat, we'll tackle some of the key questions, issues, and challenges that we experience living in the world as men. Our keynote speaker, Jose Santos, anthropology professor at Metro State University, will help frame up our day together by sharing thoughts drawn from his research on the state of male culture in America today. Following our keynote, we'll participate in sessions on some of the key issues and challenges in our lives, including shame and blame, intimacy, communication, and spiritual practice. We'll wrap up our time with an intergenerational panel of church members reflecting on the retreat. Throughout the day, we'll have time to connect more personally through small groups and unstructured time, and there will good food and time for worship as well.

I'm excited about this retreat because I've personally felt the impact of a culture of masculinity that is less robust than I'd like it to be, and from talking with many of you, I know I'm not alone. I know that we yearn for something more than the stereotypes of masculinity that we've received, and that equally, we don't want to toss *all* of it out. I know that we yearn for a fuller expression of gender even though we don't know exactly what that means and some of us are afraid we'll screw something up. I know that we yearn for better expressions of power where the question isn't "who has power over me?" or "who do I have power over?" but instead asks, "how can we exercise our power together in more truly collaborative ways?"

It has been an honor to work with the wonderful team of folks planning this year's retreat, and I hope you'll join us for a day that will inspire, challenge, provoke, and heal. I can't wait to see you at this year's Men's Retreat! (Registration info is on the front page of Unity's website — www.unityunitarian.org).

Please feel free to contact me at arif@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x109.



See back cover for details!

Ministerial Intern: Andrea Johnson



As we settle into the New Year and think about our hopes, dreams, and intentions for 2018, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you again the charge I gave to the congregation on December 31. May it serve as a reminder of how you are practicing what love looks like in public – justice!

There is a tradition here at Unity Church that when we close a memorial service the congregation is charged to carry forward the values that mattered most to the person who has died. However the year was for you; good, bad, or mixed, I think for all of us there were times when we had to ask ourselves who we were and how we were going to show up.

Friends, I am here to remind you of this beloved congregation of who you are, and the values I have seen you hold dear and make real in the world this past year.

You are a people of **compassion** — when you saved a church member from eviction by cleaning out their home and making it safe to live in again. When you drove a man with cancer to the emergency room in the middle of the night. When you showed up time and again to bake cookies and serve as ushers at our memorial services.

You are a people of **courage** when you voted to become a Sanctuary congregation. When you housed a refugee, fed him, helped him get his social security card, learn to ride the bus, and find a job.

You are a people of **justice**. When you show up to programs here to learn about racism and whiteness, and find ways to dismantle white supremacy culture. When you tutor children at Obama School and fill their backpacks with food for the weekend. When you advocated for restoring voting rights to former prisoners.

You are a people of **resistance** when you boarded busses for Washington, DC, and the St. Paul Capitol to stand up and MARCH for Women; for their right to choose, for their right to healthcare, for their right to equal pay, and for their right to be free of sexual harassment in the workplace.

As we lay this year to rest, our charge is to choose to live our lives not from fear or despair but from our heart with the courage to embody the values we hold dear; compassion, justice, resistance, kindness, and love. This is how we continue to move toward our inmost being. Let us take up these values. Let us continue our efforts to bridge that which divides us. Let the love and possibilities of hope that we know exist in this world be made real by our actions. That, beloved friends, will be a form of immortality that we can pass on to the future generations of this church. May it be so and Amen.

Please feel free to contact me at andrea@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x129.

WELCOME WORDS / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Welcome Words

Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement



"Here let no one be a stranger." These words by William Channing Gannett greet us each Sunday as we enter the Sanctuary. But you may not have noticed them because of the smile of the greeter welcoming you to worship. The warm and expansive principle of hospitality has to be embodied to be made real. Unity is

blessed to have a dedicated and long-tenured volunteer crew of welcome team members, and we are currently recruiting 30 more people to join them in this joyful and vital ministry. An inclusive faith invites an inclusive welcome. Come be a part of it!

Pathway to Membership Classes

Sign up for Pathway to Membership classes at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement, at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. She is also happy to meet with you personally to answer questions and to welcome you into the congregation. Childcare is available by request at least one week in advance.

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Inquiry

Finding Yourself at Unity is offered on a regular basis on Sundays, from 10:15-11:15 a.m., in the Ames Chapel. These sessions can be attended in the order that works for you and will offer participants the opportunity to share part of their 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. Childcare is available in the nursery.

February 4: Q & A with a Minister

February 11: Worship & the Liturgical Year

February 18: Building Tour

February 25: Social Justice & Community Outreach

Finding Yourself at Unity is also offered in a one-session all-inclusive format on Saturday, February 24, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Tuesday, March 6 • 7:00-9:00 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 finding the place where the world's needs meet the gifts you have to offer. The class concludes with a celebration ceremony as participants sign the membership book.

Mentoring at Unity Church

Unity Church has a mentor program available to all visitors and new members. A mentor serves as a guide and a resource in the congregation. If you have questions, or would like to request a mentor, stop by the Welcome Table on Sundays or email Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

Fellowship Groups

Groups are open to all members and friends of Unity Church.

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

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (February 15) from noon–2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Elders Circle: Meets the third Tuesday of the month (February 20) from 1:00-3:00 p.m., in the Center Room. This month Priscilla Mac Dougall and Hal Freshley will discuss aging well.

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (February 13) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (February 24) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760

Kung Fu: Saturday mornings in the Body Room from 10:00 a.m.-noon. Recommended for ages 15 and older. Contact Bryan Kujawski at barney.kujawski@gmail.com

LGBTQ+ Group: First Sunday of the month (February 4) from 12:30-2:00 p.m. and the third Sunday of the month (February 18) from 6:30-8:00 p.m. All are welcome!

Living With Grief Group: For people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (February 20) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, February 12 and 26, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (February 8) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

Textile Arts Group: All ages and levels of experience are welcome! Meets the first and third Thursdays of each month (February 1 and 15), from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Bring your knitting, crocheting, tatting, embroidery, needlepoint, and cross stitch. Contact: Linda Mandeville at lindamandeville41@gmail.com

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net. February 13 discussion is on *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

UU History Book Club: Third Wednesday of the month (February 21) at 7:00 p.m. February discussion is on *The Selma Awakening* by Mark Morrison-Reed.

Women In Retirement, The Choice Years: This group meets the second and fourth Thursday of the month (February 8 and 22), from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org

Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction offered on February 6 at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kenfaure@gmail.com

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday is a multi-generational opportunity to gather midweek at church for food, fellowship, and fun. Dinner is at 6:00 p.m., worship in the Ames Chapel at 6:45 p.m., and programming begins at 7:10 p.m. Childcare is available and you do not have to sign up in advance. The cost for dinner is: \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4, and \$20/family.

FEBRUARY 7

Dinner: Sudanese Meal including Ful Medames (roasted beans), Al Aswad (tomato salad), roasted eggplant, bread (kiddie options will be available)

Resettling Japanese Americans to St. Paul during World War II: The International Institute, the War Relocation Authority, and Ruth and Earl Tanbara

Krista Finstad Hanson received a Legacy research fellowship from the Minnesota Historical Society in 2017. She focused her research on a little-known story about how the International Institute of Minnesota helped resettle Japanese Americans out of the American concentration camps during World War II. Longtime Unity Church members Ruth and Earl Tanbara were the first Japanese Americans resettled in St. Paul in 1942. They dove right in to assist other Japanese Americans to relocate here. Their family's story, in conjunction with the International Institute's work during World War II, is the focus of Krista's presentation.

Spiritual Practice Class: Meditation

Spiritual Practices is an ongoing course that offers participants the opportunity to develop regular practices of the spirit, helping them connect with the sacred. Each session focuses on a particular practice and provides a forum for learning and sharing.

Mapping Our Future • This session runs from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

In small groups, participants will share stories about Unity Church and imagine what's possible for its future. The information gathered during these sessions will clarify the core values, mission, and goals of Unity Church through 2023 and beyond.

Religious Education Orientation for New Families

Led by Unity's Director of Religious Education, KP Hong, this session is for families new to Unity Church who would like to learn more about religious education.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga

Join yoga instructor Gabe Brindle with an hour long yoga class structured around the classic Hindu text *Devi-Mahatmyam*. All levels of yoga experience and all body types are honored. Bring a yoga mat.

Above Every Name Soul Session

Join Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., and members of Above Every Name for a soulful journey through scripture in the Bible.

Learn and Play Go

Join Unity Church member Bob Ruud for an evening of learning and playing the Chinese board game, Go. Anyone above the age of 10 is welcome to play.

Tween Group: Grades 5-7

FEBRUARY 14

Dinner: Chicken shawarma, salad, chocolate dipped strawberries

Universalism and the Challenge of Seeing Difference

Universalism has long championed the love of God and salvation for all people. Through the years, this message of universal love also led to proclaiming our universal humanity. But in light of Unity's anti-racism work in seeing the racialized water in which we swim, are there parts of our Universalist theology that need to be revisited? Join Rev. Lisa Friedman in considering the call of love in our faith today.

Family Game Night

All are welcome – festivities led by game master Drew Danielson.

Spiritual Practice Class: Mindful Walking and Eating

Above Every Name Soul Session

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga

Learn and Play Go

FEBRUARY 21

Dinner: Roasted garlic pork, quinoa salad, roasted veggies, dessert

Open Page Writing with Karen Hering

Love's Gifts and Demands • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

"We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone – we find it with one another," said Thomas Merton. We'll move well beyond a greeting card understanding to consider love's many faces, its many gifts, and its many demands.

UU History Book Club

Join the monthly UU History Book Club for an exploration of theology and heritage. February's discussion is on *The Selma Awakening* by Mark Morrison-Reed.

Spiritual Practice Class: Worship and Ritual

Above Every Name Soul Session

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga

Learn and Play Go

Tween Group: Grades 5-7

FEBRUARY 28

Dinner: Red beans and rice, green salad, bread pudding

The 2018 Unity Congregation Book Read Discussion

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem

Copies of the book are available in the Unity Bookstall and the Anderson Library, as well as a book read guide that includes reading and titles for youth and children.

Spiritual Practice Class: Discernment/Devotional Reading

Above Every Name Soul Session

Embodied Spiritual Practice

Learn and Play Go

Tween Group: Grades 5-7

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

Open Page Writing Sessions



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

All sessions are free and are held at Unity Church. Please email karen@unityunitarian.org if you plan to attend.

Love's Gifts and Demands

Wednesday, February 21 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

"Love is our true destiny," said Thomas Merton. "We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone – we find it with one another." We'll move well beyond a greeting card understanding to consider love's many faces, its many gifts and its many demands.

How the Light Gets In: Writing about Brokenness

Wednesday, March 14 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

"There is a crack in everything," observed Leonard Cohen. "That's how the light gets in." We'll explore the places where we experience the world or ourselves as broken, and consider how we can find our way to wholeness. How is brokenness healed? And how does it sometimes open our lives and our world to the truth and the light we are seeking?

Committed Couples Class

Committed Couples is a class designed to support all couples who are committed to one another and to promote healthy and productive conversations about relationships. The class will cover issues like finances, spirituality, the impact of family of origin issues, parenting, intimacy, and conflict. There will be sharing and work done in small groups and as couples. Each couple creates a relationship vision together which serves as a foundation for the work that happens during class.

Led by Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs, the Committed Couples class will be held on seven Tuesday evenings — February 27, March 6, March 13, March 27, April 10, April 17, and April 24 — from 7:00-9:15 p.m. Registration is free for pledging members of Unity Church and \$110 for non-pledging friends. To register, please contact Martha Tilton by email at martha@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x105.

Free child care is available by request to Ray Hommeyer at ray@unityunitarian.org. One week advance notice is required.

Spiritual Practices Retreat

Explore spiritual practices with Spiritual Director Sarah Cledwyn in an atmosphere of contemplative quiet. On Saturday, February 10, from 1:00-5:00 p.m., participants will gather together to get connected and introduced to the day, and then engage in the practices as they feel led. The group will reconvene at the end of the retreat to witness and share experiences. Practices will include an indoor labyrinth, journaling questions, creative arts (including collage), and more. This time is an opportunity to dip your toes into stillness with support and see what you find there.

This retreat is \$30 with sliding fee available. Please RSVP to Sarah at sarahcledwyn@gmail.com or at 651-699-9948 to ensure there is enough space and material for everyone. Free child care is available by request to Ray Hommeyer at ray@unityunitarian.org. One week advance notice required.

My Story, Your Story, Our Story

New Series Explores Family Stories of Origin

What is your family's unique origin story? How is it nested with others' in the larger history we share? And how do these stories deepen our understandings of identity, racism and belonging?

You are invited to explore these questions in a facilitated small group meeting inviting participants into deeper understanding of identity, racism and belonging. Co-led by Karen Hering and Arif Mamdani, the group will meet four times at Unity Church starting Sunday, February 18, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Using guided writing, conversation and other exercises, we will each reflect on our own family's story of origin in the context of the larger history we share as Americans today.

No detailed knowledge of family history is required. We'll use imaginative recollection and simple guided writing exercises to connect with our ancestors' stories and how they have shaped our understandings of ourselves and others.

Pre-registration is required. The group will be limited in size and formed to maximize diversity. Participants are asked to commit to attending all four sessions (on Sunday and Saturday afternoons) and to a small amount of reading and reflection between sessions. The four sessions are:

Sunday, February 18 • 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 17 • 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 15 • 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 19 • 1:00-4:00 p.m.

A \$40 registration fee will cover materials and food. (Waivers will be granted for all requesting them.) To register, visit www.unityunitarian.org/my-story-your-story-our-story.html.

Questions? Contact arif@unityunitarian.org.

Art by Ricardo Levins Morales: www.rlmartstudio.com.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Recycling Challenges

From Unity's Sustainable Living Team

Oddballs of all kinds. The non-conforming, mixed up, castaways that no one knows what to do with. The cause of major angst for good Unitarian Universalists whose idea of sin is throwing away single use plastics: *What to do with items that don't get collected by a recycling service?*

It can be overwhelming! If you put unlisted items out for collection, it is called wish-cycling. It gums up the system and is very expensive to fix. So what do we do with this stuff?

Start by going to the website of your recycling company and getting cozy with the information about what they recycle. Pin the list to the refrigerator, tape it to the inside of your recycling bins, take a picture of it and keep it on your phone.

Ramsey, Hennepin, and most other counties in the metro area have a resource list for what to do with recyclable material that doesn't get collected. Before you toss it into the garbage, check resources like this one for Ramsey county: www.ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/a-z-disposal-guide.

A few of the common recycling challenges include electronics, light bulbs, and fabrics. What about all those fluorescent and LED bulbs? One good solution is Tech Dump: www.techdump.org. Home Depot and Menards also collect CFL bulbs and other fluorescent bulbs for a fee. Best Buy will take most of your electronics for free, or for a low fee.

Eureka Recycling will accept clothing, linens, and rags for recycling. Items simply need to be placed in a plastic bag, labeled, and set on the curb for pick up on recycling day. Items can also be dropped off at USAgain drop boxes. Visit <http://usagain-minneapolis.com> to learn more.

Little changes can have a big impact if we do them together. Part of the Sustainable Living Team's mission is to educate and empower others to make positive change for the environment. Consider joining and making your voice heard.

In the December newsletter we encouraged you to simplify gift giving. If you were successful implementing a simplified giving plan, please stop by our Parish Hall table between morning services and share your story.

The next Sustainable Living Team meeting is Tuesday, February 13, from 7:00-8:30 p.m., in the Center Room.

Serve on the Summit-University Planning Council

Unity Church holds an organizational seat on the Summit-University Planning Council. A member of the congregation is needed to represent Unity Church at monthly board meetings and to contribute volunteer time to one of the council's committees. You do not need to live in the Summit-U neighborhood! Interested in learning about this volunteer position? Contact Martha Tilton at martha@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x105.

Gun Sense Ministry Team Update

From Joan Duke, Gun Sense Ministry Team



Last month as I sat in a local theater waiting for the movie to start, a young man walked down the aisle alone and sat down near the front. I felt a rush of anxiety — what if he is carrying a gun and is planning a shooting rampage? My rational mind kicked in quickly to tell me that was a ridiculous thought — what are the odds, etc. Have you ever had a feeling like that in a public place like a theater or a mall?

The 2018 Minnesota legislative session begins on February 20, and it is anticipated that two dangerous bills that were introduced last session will again be on the agenda. They are the "permitless carry" bill and the "stand your ground" bill. According to Protect Minnesota, Unity's Gun Sense Ministry Team's community partner, the passage of these bills would put Minnesotans at greater risk.

One of the reasons I joined the Gun Sense Ministry Team was for support in "finding my voice" and speaking up about the need for sensible gun laws to make our community safer.

These two bills *will not* make us safer! I plan to be at the Capitol on Thursday, February 22, to lobby and rally against these bills and for sensible gun regulation! Won't you join me?

Protect Minnesota Lobby and Rally Day at the Capitol

Thursday, February 22

Lobby your legislators: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Rally in the Rotunda: 2:00 p.m.

For more information about the rally visit <https://protectmn.org/>. For information about joining Unity's Gun Sense Ministry Team or supporting the work of the team, please contact Sue Conner at sue.conner@comcast.net or Joan Duke at joanduke@comcast.net.

Pi(e) Day Bake Sale

Unity's Rainbow Chalice Alliance (RCA) annual Pi(e) Day (3/14/18) Bake Sale is fast approaching! RCA will have a table in the Parish Hall on February 4, 11, and 18 where you can order a delicious blueberry, apple, or French silk pie. RCA can only make a limited number of pies, so order early! Pies will be available for pick-up on Sunday, March 11, after each service. Your pie purchases make it possible for RCA to support Q-Quest (a yearly festival for LGBTQA youth) as well as help fund Queer Prom and Youth Pride.

Come bake with us! All available volunteers are welcome to help bake with our annual "Pies for Queer Prom" baking sessions. To volunteer, email Elizabeth Giffin at egiffin19@yahoo.com. No prior baking experience needed. Volunteers are *essential* to the success of the fundraiser. Thank you!



February Parish Hall Artist

Tom McGregor

Tom McGregor's earliest memories are of the time spent drawing on a large slate chalkboard in the back room of his mother's business, completely absorbed in his work. That feeling of total immersion is something he strives for every time he paints.

Since graduating from Minnesota State University Moorhead in 1987 with a BFA in art, Tom has pursued a career as a self-employed graphic designer with an office in Saint Paul, Minnesota. When he discovered plein air painting in 2007, painting became his primary creative outlet again. It combines his passion for being outdoors with his love for painting.

Tom strives for honesty in his work, trying to be true to what he feels passionate about while immersed in nature. He tries to find, not just the beauty, but that which tells a story, has a history, affects him emotionally; but most of all, challenges him to think about where he is as a human being living in this particular time and place.

www.mcgregorart.com
tom@mcgregorart.com

Art Team Seeks New Members

The Unity Church Art Team enjoys working to bring the fine art of a variety of local artists to the Parish Hall each month. The team is also responsible for curating the art on display throughout the church building. If you would like to join in that effort, please email Paul Rogne, Art Team Chairperson, at artteam@unityunitarian.org.

Love Fest

From Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries

My family's older dog is a creature only her people could adore. She has the perky little head of a Jack Russell, and the stout, wide body of a well fed Pointer. We call her a Fat Russell. She barks incessantly. She likes no one but her immediate pack. But oh how she loves her pack! When I come home, she explodes with rabid fury and bolts towards the door with deadly intent; but the moment she sees me her scruff goes down, her back half wiggles as if to fall off, she collapses in a licking, squirming, whimpering heap at my feet and persists until I respond in kind. Generally she walks aimlessly around the house until she sees one of us — and when she does, suddenly life enters her body, her eyes light up, she is filled with hope and joy.

At this month's theme meeting on love, it was said that many Unitarian Universalists tend to default to love as the goal, the motivation, the method, the answer for all our questions of theology, of purpose. God is love, love is all we need, we're on the side of love. I think that was seen as problematic, or maybe just as overly simple. It sparked knowing conversation on how complex, difficult, dangerous love can be. The world's ills can't be cured by a love song.

I don't know. I am comfortable using love as a draw in youth ministry, with thinking of the kids as a big group of eager puppies. Granted, my dog's devotion is based on food, tummy scratching, and security. Lots of youth — and let's face it adults, too — come to church for the same things. OK, not actual tummy scratching, but to "scratch an itch." Food certainly. And security.

But we are not dogs. We aren't committed to the practice of unconditional love; we love for clear reasons. We come for the embrace of friends and the security of knowing we are valued and accepted. We feel beloved. But it can't stop with that. The thing about love, the place where it all turns, is in the wonderful and frightening vulnerability and entanglement it requires. Coming of Age, Tower Club, Our Whole Lives — as our kids look deeper into what they are seeking — a real, practicing, meaningful community, they start realizing how much it will ask of them. They have to be very honest with each other. They will be expected to commit. They will have to be there for each other. That isn't simple or easy.

But treats do help.

UU Family Rituals

The Unitarian Universalist Families Initiative is offering workshops on two family rituals that you and your children can enjoy. These rituals, developed here at Unity Church and used by many of our families, create bonding times for parents and children, along with a unique way to connect home and church.

UU Family Meal Ritual: Wednesday, February 7 • 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Come at 5:30 for a demonstration followed by a Wellspring Wednesday meal. Following dinner, parents will meet to get oriented to the ritual, while children make chalices. Families will then practice the ritual together. Along the way, you'll hear from Unity parents who have made this ritual part of the fabric of their lives.

UU Bedtime Ritual: Saturday, April 9 • 9:30 a.m.-noon.

A highlight is that children get to make a string of beads representing the Rainbow Path of the seven UU principles.

Coming later this year: UU Family Covenant Workshop

A workshop where parents and children create a written covenant to articulate their core values and decide how to live out these values in everyday family life.

Sign up for sessions online at www.unityunitarian.org/uu-families-initiative.html.

Music Notes



From Ruth Palmer,
Director of Music
Ministries

*Works of art are of an infinite
solitude, and no means of
approach is so useless as criticism.
Only love can touch and hold
them and be fair to them.*

— Rainer Maria Rilke,
Letters To A Young Poet

As you walk through the halls, at this time of year, on Sunday afternoons or Tuesday and Thursday evenings, you will pass many delighted and excited 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The reason for this? They are currently rehearsing for the annual Unity Church Children's Musical. This year involves 33 youth joyfully acting, singing, and dancing to an original score and script created just for them.

Under the guidance of Sandy Waterman and Mary Blouin Auffert, this activity provides the living example of "only love can touch and hold them and be fair to them." Each child is a "work of art" blossoming before our very eyes. The underlying philosophy that "every child has a place" and "every child is important" has been witnessed in each production. Magically, just the right words, tunes, and moves are assigned to each child who is then joyfully "loved into" the realization of their own unique accomplishment. Our current staff continues this amazing Unity Church tradition, heading for its 29th weekend of performances. Please consider coming to support and witness this for yourself as they present our 2018 Children's Musical. You will be amazed at the joy and delight of these extraordinary youth, supported by their families and friends.

The 29th Annual Unity Church Children's Musical Presents

CLOSE TO HOME

Unity's 6th, 7th, and 8th Graders

Written and Directed by Mary Blouin Auffert

Music by Sandy Waterman

As is the tradition at Unity Church, the entire production — from the script, to the music, to the choreography — is original material created for Unity's 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Sandy Waterman, composer and lyricist extraordinaire, returns for her 29th year as composer of the musical score.

PERFORMANCES

Thursday, March 1 • 7:00 PM

Friday, March 2 • 7:00 PM

Saturday, March 3 • 5:00 PM

TICKETS

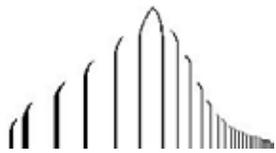
\$5/children • \$10/adults • \$20/family

Children under age 5 are free.

Purchase tickets online at www.unityunitarian.org.

in the Parish Hall beginning February 11,

and at the door on the evening of the performance.



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

Building Heart Connections UNITY CHURCH MEN'S RETREAT

The Unity Men's Retreat will explore the emotional and spiritual aspects of building and maintaining relationships.

KEYNOTE

Jose Santos, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Metropolitan State University

FOUR WORKSHOPS

Courageous Communication: What does it mean to show up in conversations with loved ones and with strangers.

Shame and Blame: Dig into what it means to acknowledge our own shame and the ways in which we seek to deny it through blaming others.

Intimacy: Explore what intimacy means to us as men.

Spiritual Practice: Find ways to connect with what is holy in our daily lives and incorporate those practices.

Our retreat will wrap up with an intergenerational panel of men providing their perspectives on what it means to be male in today's world.

Saturday, February 17 • Unity Church

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (breakfast and lunch provided)

Register online at www.unityunitarian.org/men.html

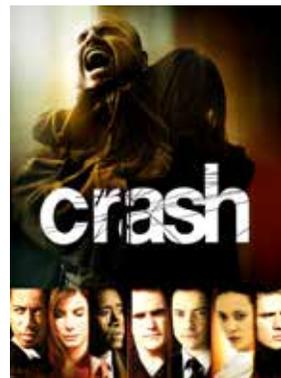
Racial Justice Movie Night

Friday, February 9 • 7:00 p.m. • Robbins Parlor

Join Unity Church members and friends for an ongoing film series to further our growth in the understanding and challenging of white supremacy and structural racism. Popcorn will be served and there will be time for conversation after the film.

CRASH

Haggis wants to tell us that racial conflict is always bubbling beneath the surface of contemporary Los Angeles—it's smart, therefore, that Haggis has written such novel, precisely observed, often unpleasant characters as the ones Bullock, Dillon, and Cheadle inhabit. And if Crash ultimately resolves



itself around a series of sentimental familial tableaux (a child placed in danger; a grown son caring for his sick father; a wayward young brother rescued from grave punishment by his elder sibling), it also makes its social and political collisions resonate in our heads so as to leave them ringing. It's a film you won't stop thinking about, arguing over, debating, after the lights come up.

— From Ken Tucker's New York Magazine review