

Authority

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

You are part of this church because of authority.

No, not like in centuries past, when civic and ecclesiastical authorities compelled the citizenry to participate in specific religions. Rather, you probably wouldn't be here in this church if you didn't accept its concepts of authority.

The history of religion and theology is, in a sense, a history of authority, and that history is forever unfolding. Where do we turn when we need to answer a moral or existential question? To reason? Scripture? Clergy? Experience? Tradition? Revelation? The gathered community?

Authority Resources

BOOKS

Who Owns History? by Eric Foner, is a collection of essays that take a critical look at how history gets recorded.

Hunger Games, by Suzanne Collins, is a young adult science fiction novel in which the government holds a survival contest among teenagers.

Parable of the Sower, by Octavia Butler, is set in a violent and anarchic future, and the 18-year-old protagonist dreams of a better world.

MOVIES

Stranger Than Fiction, a 2006 feature in which the main character of the film discovers he's the main character in a novel that's still being written.

As It Is in Heaven, a 2004 Swedish film in which a man finds a new beginning in the hometown where he was bullied.

ONLINE

The Cambridge Platform, written in 1648 by the Puritan forebears of American Unitarians. <http://www.americanphilosophy.net/cambridgeplatform.htm>

Authority can be especially complicated in Unitarian Universalist congregations, which attract more than a few people who didn't like the sources or structures of authority of their previous religions. They may have started off questioning authority and ended up fleeing it, or fleeing a certain kind of it.

There is authority in UU congregations, of course. It's sitting right next to you in the pews, it's up in the pulpit, it's in your own mind and heart.

That's because we have our roots in congregationalism, the idea that it is up to the members to decide how a parish is best served, and by which minister. When some Christian groups started seeking greater freedom in the United States four centuries ago, they left the bishops behind and found more authority in the community, its chosen clergy, and scripture.

And scripture, as even the ancient Christians knew, is a complicated source of authority. Which books are allowed in the canon? What kind of meaning is changed in translation, and whose translations are authoritative? Should lay people be allowed to read scripture in their own language?

In a Christian context, the scriptural debates are countless and without end. In a UU context, where the Bible is one among many sources of written inspiration, no one person or body has the authority to decide which writings have authority for all. So there is no canon — except perhaps, as we like to joke, the poetry of Mary Oliver. There may be no final say on the interpretation of a particular text, even within a church community.

Authority itself is a tricky word. Authority differs from power, which can be seized and is related to ability; authority has to be granted and is more relational. Did Jesus grant authority to his disciples, or did they claim it? When Norbert Čapek, the Czech Unitarian who gave us flower communion, was imprisoned by the Nazis, the Nazis did so with power, but not with authority. They had the ability to capture him, but he granted them no authority over his heart.

Religious liberals don't allow others to think our theology for us. Revelation is always being tested, and our theological conversation goes beyond saying yes to sources of authority that have been selected by someone else.

Perceptions of authority also affect how we learn and how we teach each other. Sometimes, the teacher is the authority who conveys information to the student. But the teacher may instead frame the conversation in a way that kindles the student's own authority, and answers come from within. A belief that we all have gifts waiting to be tapped is a part of our collective identity.

Long ago, ministers were the only formally educated people in town and were expected to have concrete answers to the big questions. Literacy was rare, and books were hard to come by. Today, people can access vast amounts of information on their own, and there are countless ways to look for answers, within and without. Those of us in the liberal church benefit from a wide range of authority — not only reason, experience, literature, and revelation, but also clergy, tradition, and the fundamental authority of the gathered community.

– Compiled by Ministerial Intern Jim Foti

JUST WORDS / PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP

Just Words

Who inspired you to do the work you love? What were their core values? How have those values taken root and grown in you? These are the opening questions we ask in our workshops on vocation and spiritual practice. We've offered the workshop three times so far. The first was called "Spiritual Practice for Activists." Then we offered it for teachers and for health care professionals. On Saturday, January 21, we will be holding "Spiritual Practice for IT Professionals." (See page 4.) The workshop begins with an invitation to rekindle each participant's passion for their calling by remembering who passed the torch and why.

Dan McKanan, who serves as the Emerson Professor at Harvard Divinity School, has recently brought out *Prophetic Encounters: Religion and the American Radical Tradition*. McKanan shows with strong scholarship and evident affection for his subject how social change always grows out of human relationships. Sometimes the inspiration for courageous, creative commitment comes from longtime friendships. Sometimes a chance encounter leads to unanticipated opportunities. Fredrick Douglas gave his first public speech on August 11, 1841, at an anti-slavery society convention in Nantucket. William Lloyd Garrison was there. Douglas wrote in his autobiography, "I spoke but a few moments when I felt a degree of freedom." Garrison reported that "I think I never hated slavery so intensely as at that moment. Certainly my perception of the enormous outrage which is inflicted by it, on the godlike nature of its victims, was rendered far more clear than ever." McKanan assures us that "For both men, their meeting was an encounter with the divine, and they retained a sense of its religious power long after their personal paths diverged."

When I think about authority, when I think about that which gives me the permission and the strength to carry on, I recall the faces of those men and women who have showed the way. I think of my early mentors Christopher Moore, a Unitarian Universalist minister who founded the Chicago Children's Choir; Mwalimu Imara, another minister, activist and hospice pioneer who supervised my intern year at Arlington Street Church in Boston; Til Evans, a mid-wife and religious educator who knows more than anyone I know about intimate justice. I visit with them most mornings as part of my practice. I call their faces to mind and ask myself how their gifts are continuing to grow in me. May I suggest you make such a list as the new year begins.

Happy New Year! See you in church.

Rob Eller-Isaacs

From the Church Office

The Church Office will be closed on January 2, for the New Year holiday.

The Church Office will be closed on January 16, for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Pathway to Membership: A Series of Three Classes

Contact Julie Handberg at the Church Office (julieh@unityunitarian.org) to sign up for these classes. Free childcare is provided with at least one week advance request to christy@unityunitarian.org.

Welcome to Unity is geared to newcomers and those seeking to learn more about Unitarian Universalists and Unity Church. Upcoming classes include Sunday, January 22, from 12:15-1:45 p.m.

Finding Yourself at Unity includes 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. The January class will be held on Saturday, January 21, from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., and includes a potluck lunch.

Committing to Unity is designed for those who are ready to make the membership commitment. This class explores the deeper meanings of membership and shared ministry. The next class will be held on Saturday, February 4, from 9:30-11:30 a.m.

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.

Unity Church–Unitarian
732 Holly Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

phone: 651-228-1456
fax: 651-228-0927

www.unityunitarian.org
unity@unityunitarian.org

JANUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sunday Worship Calendar

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

January 1, 2012: One service only at 10:00 a.m.

A Year for Authority – Jim Foti

Start the new year off right – at church! In 2012, each of us will have options for asserting our personal authority in a public way. Join Ministerial Intern Jim Foti and Worship Associate Amy Kujawski for a look back and a look ahead.

January 8: *Tolling of Bells*

We begin each new year with a memorial service for those who have died in the previous year. Rob and Janne will each eulogize men and women whose lives have shaped the world of art or politics, literature or science. Everyone will have an opportunity to acknowledge those they've loved and lost.

January 15: *Prophetic Encounters – Rob Eller-Isaacs*

We celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. with a service based on Harvard Emerson Professor, Dan McKanan's new book, *Prophetic Encounters*. What relationships inspire and sustain us? How might friendship foster empowered leadership? Rob and worship associate Bob Stellar will conduct the service. The offering in its entirety will go to the Unitarian Universalist Association to support excellence in ministry. Please consider a special contribution to our larger Association.

January 22: *The Gospel According to Twin Pines – Mark Ritchie, Minnesota Secretary of State*

Come mark the centenary of the Cooperative Movement in America. The Honorable Mark Ritchie, Minnesota Secretary of State, past-president of the Institute for Agricultural and Trade Policy and one of the architects of the Nestle Boycott brings his passion for the story to our pulpit. He will be joined by worship associate Mike Huber.

January 29: *By What Authority? – Janne Eller-Isaacs*

Historically religious authority comes from scripture and tradition. Unitarian Universalists have drawn authority from world scripture, the gathered community and personal revelation. These sources can feel removed from everyday life until we ask ourselves the question, "How do I know what I know?" Janne and worship associate Patricia Ohmans will explore sources of authority and its relevance in our world today.

Adult Learning and Spiritual Practice –see page 4!

Offerings include:

- Spiritual Practice for IT Professionals
- Skeletons in oUUr Closet: Hidden UU History
- Integrating Your Catholic Past
- And more...

Offering Recipients

Each Sunday, thirty percent of the offering goes to support the Community Outreach Ministry at Unity Church and seventy percent is given to the chosen community non-profit recipient. **Please make checks payable to Unity Church.**

January 1: Project for Pride in Living Emergency Repair

Project for Pride in Living (PPL) Emergency Repair Program provides grants to help homeowners afford critical repairs which, if left unattended, would render their homes uninhabitable. During 2011, PPL's capacity to provide this important program was threatened by diminished resources. One hundred percent of contributions to the Emergency Repair Program is used to pay for program costs, including labor and materials.

January 8: One Voice Mixed Chorus

For over twenty years One Voice, Mixed Chorus has been Minnesota's GLBTA chorus committed to opening minds and hearts to social change, one song at a time. One Voice is dedicated to the mission of wrapping the stories of marginalized people in song and taking its repertoire of narration, liberation and hope to rural areas throughout the midwest. The chorus is housed here at Unity Church where it has many dedicated supporters who proudly nominate One Voice as yet another agency making the dream of a more inclusive society happen.

January 15: Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)

On Sunday, January 15, the whole of the offering will go to support the Unitarian Universalist Association. Grants from Association Sunday 2011 funds will help religious professionals get ongoing training to support thriving congregations. More information is available on the back cover of this newsletter.

January 22: Southern Minnesota Legal Services (SMRLS)

SMRLS provides legal services to low income people to give them access to the justice system. In poor economic times, the need for civil legal services to prevent eviction and homelessness, to assure access to education and health care, to address increased domestic violence, and help people manage debt and job loss rises as funding sources diminish. Unity Church members Bruce Beneke and Martha Eaves are staff attorneys for SMRLS, and other church members serve as current and former board members and supporters including Sally Scoggins and Beverly Heydinger.

January 29: UUA Holdeen India Program

Vidhayak Sansad and its sister union Shramajeen Sanghatana work to ensure minimum wages through union organization, basic human rights, and dignity for people on the bottom rungs of India society. They also run a variety of educational programs including a residential school for 170 tribal girls. Both the founder Vivek Pandit and the current Director Amol Namjoshi have visited Unity Church in recent years. Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs visited the school in their sabbatical year and church members, Laney Ohmans and Wendy Harris, have volunteered as summer English teachers at the school.

ADULT LEARNING & SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Clarity, Force, and Grace with Rick Koyle

Tuesdays, January 17-April 3 • 7:00-9:00 p.m.

This is a 12-week course in how to write. If you like to write, you can have some fun with it. If you're self-conscious about your writing, this course can boost your confidence.

It will take commitment. There's a two-page paper every week. We'll spend class time critiquing our work, so it's also a course in learning how to give and take criticism, lovingly. We'll try to cultivate an awareness of spiritual values in prose. Class size is limited, so attendance is important.

Our initial text is Section X of *Roe v. Wade*. A good resource is *Strunk & White's Elements of Style*, any edition. The course title comes from Edmund Wilson, who considered "clarity, force, and grace" the hallmarks of good writing. Rick Koyle has taught 1,000 law and seminary students how to write and nearly 100 how to pass the bar exam.

The course is free, but it might make a nice Christmas gift for a younger person who'd like to work on their prose, or for someone who could use some encouragement to offer a contribution to our literary journal, *Cairns*. To sign up, please contact Rick Koyle by email at rickenkoyle@aol.com.

Skeletons in oUUr Closet: Hidden UU History

Tuesdays, January 17-February 28 • Two sessions: 2:00-4:00 p.m. and 7:00-9:00 p.m.

This class will explore the hidden histories of Unitarian, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism with regards to race and class. We often tell denominational history as a series of individuals choosing to stand on the right side of history. That is not the full story. Unitarians, Universalists, and Unitarian Universalists have always been deeply engaged in the world – and as such have been complicit with or have promoted systems of oppression. In this course, we will explore these episodes in our history, recognizing the imperfection of our denominational past.

For more information or to sign up, contact Rachel Lonberg, Hallman Ministerial Intern at rachel@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x129.

Save the Date! Saturday, January 28

The fourth annual Gathering, is a one-day women's spiritual retreat celebrating each woman's voice with invitations for expression and being heard, and for deep listening. See page 7 for details.

Save the date!

Integrating Your Catholic Past

Saturday, February 11 • 9:00 a.m.-noon

Everyone who has made the transition from Roman Catholicism to Unitarian Universalism has a story. Join us for a morning of theological, cultural, and personal exploration of the gifts and challenges we bring with us. For more info or to volunteer, contact Ministerial Intern Jim Foti at jim@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 ext. 212. Free childcare available by request.

Heart to Heart: A Couples' Enrichment Weekend

Heart to Heart is a program designed to enrich communication and deepen intimacy in your relationship. This year's 17th annual retreat will be held February 10-12, 2012. All couples committed to their partners and to their relationships are welcome—same-sex and opposite-sex, married and unmarried. Space is limited, so register early. For more information, go to: Heart to Heart at <http://heart.mn.cx> or call Cheri at 612-722-3304.

Spiritual Practice for IT Professionals

**Saturday, January 21
9:00–Noon • Parish Hall**

"If you don't want to be replaced by a computer, don't act like one."

— Arno Penzias

Working with computers can be isolating work. Sometimes one can feel a lack of nourishment. It can be difficult to make meaning when one relates primarily to machines however fascinating they may be. It's hard not to take the pressures—and work—home at night. So how do IT professionals find inspiration, time for reflection, and a deeper connection to what can be truly significant work? Spiritual practice can be genuinely helpful. Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs are offering a three-hour workshop designed especially for IT professionals. Registration is required. Please contact Martha Tilton by email at martha@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x105 to register.

Cost: Pledging: Free // Non Pledging: \$50.00

Hot Coffee

Free movie screening of *Hot Coffee* at the Klas Center of Hamline Law School, Thursday, January 19 at 11am. Everyone knows the McDonald's coffee case. But do you know the facts? Informative and balanced, *Hot Coffee*, challenges the popular belief that our courts are flooded with frivolous lawsuits, and, ultimately, questions the effectiveness of a civil justice system under the influence of corporations more interested in the bottom line than in protecting consumers and workers. Following the showing, filmmaker Susan Saladoff will lead a panel discussion. Limited Seating. Reservations Required. RSVP hamline@mnaj.org.

DEFEAT THE MINNESOTA MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

Rachel Lonberg: 2011-12 Hallman Ministerial Intern



Six months ago, we were returning our rental truck after driving ourselves, our cat, and our belonging from New York City to Saint Paul. The man working at the truck rental shop was friendly and helpful. He asked us what brought us to Minnesota, recommended his favorite

St. Paul restaurants, and warned us away from a few streets where parking tickets were plentiful. This sort of interaction is probably familiar to you, but as someone only a few days distant from New York City, I was surprised, unnerved, suspicious. *Why is he telling us this? What does he want from us? Is he going to ask us for money?* Later, my Minnesotan husband explained that the man didn't want anything from us. He was just being nice. Minnesotans are friendly, helpful, and concerned about their neighbors' wellbeing.

In the months since this interaction, I have seen this characteristic care and concern again and again. Out shopping, people help strangers get hard-to-reach items off high shelves. I have experienced this care and concern at Unity Church, as members and friends care for one another and are quick to offer me helpful advice about how to make it through the daunting Minnesota winter. The words 'there is no bad weather, only bad clothing' echo in my head as I approach the New Year.

As we move into 2012, these core Minnesotan values will be challenged. As we approach the November vote on the state constitutional amendment to restrict marriage to one man and one woman, we will all be asked how far Minnesotan care and concern extend. Is our care limited to objects on high shelves and restaurant recommendations? Or does our concern for others extend to civil rights and marriage equality? My hopes are high that Minnesotans will rise to this challenge.

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

Jim Foti: 2011-12 Ministerial Intern



A year from now, we'll know how it all went. We'll know whether Minnesota became the first state to turn back a marriage discrimination amendment. And we'll know how this struggle over basic rights, this conflict we did not choose, challenged our Unity community to act, reflect, listen, and love.

It'll be particularly interesting to watch this unfold in St. Paul, a place with its own history of putting GLBT rights — human rights — up for a public vote. In 1978, the City Council extended basic protections to gays and lesbians. But then a referendum was held, and the citizens of St. Paul voted overwhelming to repeal the protections. Even a decade later, as a newly out 19-year-old who moved here for a summer job, I was very aware of that vote, and wondered just what sort of climate I'd find.

Gay folks, I quickly learned, had a high level of acceptance in St. Paul, at least among the people I met. And a few years later, when the City Council again approved an ordinance calling for basic rights for gays and lesbians, there was another citywide vote to try to repeal it — and the repeal overwhelmingly failed. In barely a dozen years, hearts grew and minds opened up to the idea of GLBT equality. Not all hearts and minds, but enough for fairness to prevail. Similarly, we are part of a congregation that has gone from near-silence on GLBT issues to one that is at the forefront of the mission for equality.

It is those sorts of transformations, that possibility for broader love, that belief in fear receding and inclusion rising — those are what will keep me going through the difficulties we will experience in 2012. Transformation happened at Unity Church and in St. Paul; may it happen across our beloved state.

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

Defeat the Marriage Amendment at Unity Church

Five Unity Church committees are now working to defeat the Minnesota Marriage Amendment and are looking for more people to help with a variety of tasks in their efforts. The committees are:

Training • Interfaith • Campaign Related Fundraising • Supporting the Congregation • Youth Initiative

For more information or to connect with one of these committees, please contact Pat Haff by phone at 651-228-1465 x126 or by email at pat@unityunitarian.org.

Concerts with a Cause: Proceeds benefit Minnesotans United for All Families • Three Sundays at 3:00 p.m.

Come and hear wonderful musicians who are donating their time so that we can support Minnesotans United for All Families in their efforts to defeat the Minnesota Marriage Amendment in 2012. A minimum suggested donation of \$10.00 is appreciated. However, all concerts are free and open to the public. Details on page 15.

Sunday, January 22, at 3:00 p.m.: Pavia Winds

Sunday, February 19, at 3:00 p.m.: Waltz Your Way Through Winter

Featuring our Unity Vocal Quartet and four-hands piano team, Kathy Kraulik and Ruth Palmer.

Sunday, March 4 at 3:00 p.m.: Piano Recital

Featuring Catherine Kautsky

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Wellspring Wednesdays

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

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

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

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

January 11

Dinner: roasted chicken, salad, dessert

The League of Women Voters and Voter Identification

Voting is every American's constitutional right. However, this basic right is in danger. A proposal has been made to require every voter in Minnesota to show a photo ID on Election Day. — "Democracy for All? The Barriers of Voter ID "

Unity's own Sherri Knuth is the Public Policy Coordinator for the League of Women Voters Minnesota. She will present an informational video and lead a conversation about the proposal to require specific Voter Identification in the state of Minnesota. The League of Women Voters has developed a toolkit which will empower those who attend with information enough to be knowledgeable on this issue. Come learn about how age, disability, mobility, minority status and income level intersect and weaken the practice of democracy.

January 11, 18 and 25

The Artaria String Quartet-The Shostakovich Seminars

The Artaria String Quartet will perform music from the cycle of string quartets by Dmitri Shostakovich. Having been invited to do this prestigious project by the Schubert Club, Artaria will offer performances on three, successive Wednesdays in January. Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich was a Soviet Russian composer, one of the most celebrated of the 20th century. The string quartets are coupled with commentary about Shostakovich, his troubled existence as an artist in the Soviet Union, his tempestuous relationship with Stalin, and the music in general.

Homelessness Series

January 18

Homelessness Series Part 1, Homeless People from 16 to 76: Who are these young people, families and single adults? Why are they homeless? Speakers from organizations serving homeless people and those who have been homeless will help us understand the scope and the reasons for this crisis in our community.

January 25

Homelessness Series Part 2, The Community Response: How local government and faith communities are addressing the issues and needs. Representatives of Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul and members of churches actively involved will describe their efforts to meet the needs of homeless people and break the cycles of homelessness.

February 1

Homelessness Series Part 3, Help and Hope for Homeless People: A moderated discussion about opportunities where we live, where we work, and here at Unity Church to offer help and hope and to try and end homelessness in our community.

Series on Homelessness

With winter weather, it is difficult for most of us to imagine the plight of the many homeless people in our community.

Some survive by couch hopping, hanging out on the streets and skyways, riding the bus, or, if they are among the small number of fortunate individuals, getting an air mattress on the floor or a cot in an emergency shelter.

We know that 13,000 people are homeless in Minnesota on any given night with many of them here in the Twin Cities. December's Project Homeless Connect event at the Minneapolis Convention Center was a sobering reminder that misery and need comes in all sizes, ages and colors. Two thousand people poured like a river through the doors when they opened for families, youth, and single adults seeking housing, medical care, dental work, mental health counseling, employment tips and all kinds of assistance from the several hundred providers donating their time.

Half of all homeless people in Minnesota are under age 21. The teens are on the street for many reasons, half of them fleeing homes where they were physically or sexually abused. Forty percent of these youth have lived in foster care, and many are now homeless because they "age out" of care at age 18 with nowhere to go next.

The number of homeless adults is growing rapidly despite the fact that twenty percent of them are working. (You would have to work more than 80 hours/week at minimum wage to afford an apartment in Minneapolis/St. Paul.)

Nineteen percent of all homeless men are veterans, and thirty percent of homeless women are victims of domestic violence.

To learn more about this tragedy, to hear from individuals who have been homeless, and to be inspired by speakers who serve the homeless population every day, mark your calendar for the Wellspring Wednesday programs (see dates at left). If you can only attend one program do come!

Wellspring Wednesday Ongoing Offerings

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

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

UU Families Dinner Table Talk: Monthly, watch for details.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Ongoing groups at Unity Church

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. On January 10 they will discuss *Tinkers* by Paul Harding. On February 14 they will discuss *Colonel Roosevelt* by Edmund Morris.

Unity Bridge Club: First Friday of the month (January 6) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209

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

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

Elders' Circle: Tuesday, January 24 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

The Elders' Circle is a group of church elders (self-identified) who gather monthly for fellowship, learning, and fun. This month's presenter is Kerri Meyer, Director of Religious Education, who will give us a taste of Unity's amazing programs for children and youth. Refreshments will be served. For more info, or to inquire about a ride, contact Ministerial Intern Rachel Lonberg by e-mail at rachel@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x129.

The Gathering Saturday, January 28, 2012

The Gathering is a one-day women's spiritual retreat celebrating each woman's voice with invitations for expression, for being heard and for deep listening through art, movement, drumming, writing, conversation and contemplation.

Registration is limited to 125 women from ages 18 to 108.

The cost is \$40.

Register at www.unityunitarian.org or in the Parish Hall on Sundays.

Gift certificates are available.

Scholarships and childcare are available upon request.

The Gathering Keynote *How to be Outrageous!*

Pegg Lonquist

Women's Center Director, University of Minnesota

Outrageous = exceeding the bounds of the expected, unconventional, violating accepted standards, boldly courageous.

You are already outrageous — you are UU women -- and we love you for it! [And yes, even introverts can be outrageous!]

In this interactive presentation we will:

- Explore how we are already outrageous
- Gain ideas for increasing our confidence and those of others
- Commit to taking action for continued positive change and outrageousness in our lives

Come on, you know you deserve a standing ovation!

Peg Lonquist serves as Women's Center Director at the University of Minnesota. Working to increase social justice, transformational leadership, and effective education for over 35 years, she has worked for International Girl Guides/Scouts, International Women's Rights Action Watch, and as a graduate education professor. On campus, Peg works to achieve equity through advocacy, leadership programs and strategic planning and collaborations.

UNITY TOMORROW

On November 19, 281 voting members gathered for the annual meeting of the congregation. During this meeting, the Board presented a resolution to continue with the *Unity Tomorrow* facilities planning process and the capital campaign (visit <http://www.unitytomorrow.org/document-archive.html> to see the entire resolution). The concerns raised before and during the meeting include the removal of the cloister walls and the respectful disposition of ashes scattered in the courtyard. The resolution passed with only 26 opposing votes. The *Unity Tomorrow* leadership continues to keep an open dialogue with those most concerned with the changes to the courtyard and the pending construction. For more information or to offer feedback and share comments or concerns visit www.unitytomorrow.org or send an email to unitytomorrow@unityunitarian.org.

Milestone Dates

Since the *Unity Tomorrow* newsletter was published in November, design and planning for the project continues. Here is a brief timeline of important activities and events:

November 17, December 1, 8 and 15: Design Development teams are completing their work so that our plans can be turned over to McGough for updated pricing.

December 11: Open Forum on Sustainable Design. Visit www.unitytomorrow.org for details about topics covered.

December 15-30: Interim Pricing by McGough Construction

January 12, 2012: All teams meeting to discuss alignment strategies: Project Scope = Capital Campaign outcomes.

February-May: Guaranteed Maximum Pricing, Construction Documents and Planning for Construction ("churn").

May 20: *Unity Tomorrow* Groundbreaking

Review and Comment Sessions

The Second Sunday *Unity Tomorrow* Sessions have become a good time to catch up with the progress of the *Unity Tomorrow* project. The proposed schedule for upcoming sessions includes:

January 8: Tolling of Bells

February 12: Alignment Process

March 11: Guaranteed Maximum Price "What's in/What's not"

April 8: Churn Planning

May 13: TBD

During the November Review and Comment Session, several elements of the exterior courtyard sidewalk were discussed and questions have arisen about the slope of the sidewalk, length of the entry approach and amount of overhead protection being developed in the design. The design team has heard these concerns and extends this additional information in response.

Slope of the sidewalk:

There is approximately 36 inches of height change between the level of the Sanctuary floor and the level of the sidewalk on the corner of Grotto and Portland. For the entry access to be fully accessible this height change needs to be resolved through the use of a sloped sidewalk. Stairs and mechanical lifts do not qualify as accessible means. The maximum slope of the sidewalk is 5%, or 1 foot of rise for every 20 feet of length. This slope is similar to the slope of the garden along the east side of the sanctuary. This slope change of 3 feet requires, by city code, a minimum of 36 feet of sidewalk length. The curved portion of the entry sidewalk is slightly less than this slope. Other areas of the entry design have slopes that are much less than the maximum allowed (about 3%). The slopes being proposed are similar to the slope of the current alley behind Unity, and the slope of Portland Avenue (see below).

Handrails along the entry sidewalk:

Handrails are not required by city code to be placed along the entry sidewalk path, except for at the stairs. There are handrails at each stair throughout the outside (and inside) of the building. Along sloped sidewalks, railings are generally not provided when the slopes are minimal. There are times when railings are added to help define the edge of the sidewalk, but this is not necessary with the current design, since there is a seating wall at one edge of the sidewalk, and a curb and planting garden along the other side. Sometimes a handrail is desired to provide additional stability for those who are mobility challenged. This is not a code issue, but more of an issue of accommodation and greater convenience. This will be explored and discussed among the Unity team as the current design moves forward.

continued on page 9 ▶



3% Grade



5% Grade

UNITY TOMORROW

Unity Tomorrow continued from page 8

Length of the entry sidewalk:

The minimum length of the sidewalk is 36 feet, as noted previously, based upon the height change between the level of the sanctuary floor and the level of the street sidewalk. In addition to the length needed to accommodate the change in height, level landings are required by City Code to be placed at the beginning and end of the sloped sidewalk, and around the entry doors. There are also level landings placed along the entry sidewalk to be additional places for members to pause, gather and enjoy the garden spaces. These areas also increase the length of the sidewalk. The current design has a sidewalk length of approximately 75 feet from Portland curb to the front door. This is less than the length of the current sanctuary and less than the current distance from any exterior accessible entrance into the sanctuary.

Exposed (unprotected) sidewalk:

Several comments have been made to minimize the amount of uncovered sidewalk within the entry paths, primarily for elderly or those not wanting to be exposed to the weather elements of our Minnesota climate. The new entry design does not offer the same “quick covered entry” as provided with the current cloister configuration. That does not mean that the entry path is any less safe or difficult for the reasons mentioned above. The overall project design does accommodate options for quick covered entry at the East Elevator entry with a new covered canopy at this accessible entry. Another quick access is available at the Parish Hall, using a short 3 step exterior stair (with railing) for access into the Parish Hall stair enclosure off Grotto.



Unity Tomorrow: Operating Pledge Drive and Capital Campaign From Chris Crosby-Schmidt, Pledge Team

As a recovering Catholic, I am well-acquainted with the motivational power of guilt. So I recognize that guilt played a large part in my decision-making process when I was asked for the second time to serve on the pledge team in 2009. I had begged off the first time, and I didn't feel I could do so again in good conscience. So I (reluctantly) said yes.

Now I'm about to finish up my three-year hitch, and I'm sad to see it end. It's been a meaningful, rewarding, and surprisingly fun experience. I think everyone should do it at least once – I learned tons about what it takes to make everything that goes on at Unity Church possible. So, what did I learn during my tenure?

Man, do we love this place. In my three years, I met scores of people who really, truly believe in and care about the church and what it does. From the insanely talented staff to the volunteers who do so much, there are hundreds of folks working hard to make sure this place runs and will continue to run.

Sometimes we need a little wallop upside the head. In my first year on the committee, we talked about the “fair share,” a term used by the UUA and many of our fellow UU churches. A “fair share” giver is someone who gives 5% of their annual income to the church. I was shocked to realize how far under our fair share my wife's and my pledge was. I'd never given it a lot of consideration before. We started rectifying that in the first year. I think that if the majority of pledging households did the math for their own situations, they might receive a similar wallop.

We have a hard time talking about money. I don't know if this is a Minnesota/midwestern thing, a UU thing, or something particular to Unity Church–Unitarian, but we feel a great reluctance to talk about the nuts and bolts of supporting the church financially. It shouldn't come as a big surprise: *of course* it takes a lot of money to do all the stuff we do, and to compensate the people whose job it is to make it all happen. (Did I mention our staff is insanely talented?) That money has to come from somewhere (did you know that about 83% of Unity's annual operating budget comes from your pledges?). But even though we know this, for some reason, we don't like talking about dollars and cents. I think we need to get over that.

It's easier to talk about money when it's fun. One of the coolest new things we did this year was Unity Tonight. We had music, information, some good snacks, and some inspiration, all designed to let people make their operating pledge and capital campaign commitments in a fun setting. I hope these type of events become a fixture of future pledge drives. (Suggestion for next year's team: Think wine!)

It's hard to prod without sometimes poking. One question came up year after year, and I think we'll always struggle with it: How do you exhort the people who could be doing more to do more without demeaning the people who can't do as much, but who are already doing everything they can? How do you prod the complacent in the *tuchas* without poking the earnest in the eye? Marketing is harder than it looks.

OK, I learned some other things, too, but you can ask me about them when you see me in the Parish Hall. For now, I'd like to thank my pledge teammates, both past (Marianne Davis and Lia Rivamonte) and present (Mary Baremore and Dan Huelster); and Barbara Hubbard, who represents the executive team on the committee. You're all better gardeners than I am, and I thank you for helping me learn how to tend this community garden of ours. I am pleased to call you my friends and proud to have worked with you.

And don't think you've heard the last of me! Once you work on the pledge team, you realize just how important the work is. So when next year's team starts looking for people to help, I'll happily raise my hand. No guilt required.

SOURCES SUPPER / PARISH HALL ARTISTS

Attend a Sources Supper in February

In a Home or — NEW THIS YEAR! — at Unity Church February 11, 12, 18

This year we are continuing the Sources Supper tradition where we come together to tell the story of Unitarian Universalism and apply it to our lives today. It's an opportunity for community building and spiritual deepening. It's also a way the church is act on its "end" statement of deepening our sense of UU heritage and history. **This year there will be two options: in one another's homes on February 12 and 18, and at the church on February 11.**

Few of us, even those raised Unitarian Universalists, can describe our history fluently and connect it with our current challenges and opportunities as a religious people. But this is changing here at Unity as we address questions in the Sources Supper 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 practice our faith and live our lives today?

The Sources Supper ritual 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. The conversations are based on questions following each story. An informal meal takes place in the middle. The whole event, including gathering, ritual, and dinner takes about 3.5 hours. The time goes fast.

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. **We are glad to report that the children's version is now ready for piloting this winter and spring.**

Now the logistics: There will be sign-up opportunities beginning in mid-January to host and participate in a Sources Supper. The Saturday, February 11, ritual at church will begin at 5:00 p.m. and end by 8:30 p.m., with child care provided. The in-home rituals on Sunday, February 12, and Saturday, February 18, will be from 6:00-9:30 p.m. Hosting is not burdensome: you just need a table that seats 8-12 people. Everyone shares the reading of the stories. The church provides the scripts and guidelines for the ritual. Simple is the rule of the land for the potluck 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 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.

Not everyone knows that the Sources Supper originated here in the Twin Cities, at First Universalist and Unity. 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.



Parish Hall Artist

You are invited to a reception on Friday, January 20, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., for *Pretend the World*, an exhibit of artwork that responds to Unity member Kathryn Kysar's book of poems. The show, which includes videos, installations, sculpture, paintings, and watercolors by artists Jan Elftmann, Jes Lee, Philip Noyed, and David Malcolm Scott, will be in the Parish Hall for the month of January. There will be refreshments and viewing the art at 6:30, a musical reading/performance by Kysar and clarinetist Sean Egan at 7:00 p.m., followed by a panel discussion with the artists about this collaborative project. More information is available at www.kathrynkysar.com.

Kathryn Kysar is the author of two books of poetry, *Dark Lake* and *Pretend the World*, and editor of *Riding Shotgun: Women Write About Their Mothers*, a collection of essays.

Jan Elftmann has been a professional artist and educator since 1986 and an Arts Board roster artist since 1989. She is the curator of the annual ArtCar Parade in Minneapolis.

Jes Lee is a visual artist and has exhibited at many venues, including Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts, Bloomington Art Center, and Minnesota Center for Book Arts, with an upcoming show at Anoka Ramsey Community College.

Painter, photographer, and mixed media artist Philip Noyed creates original artwork marked by bold colors and high-voltage compositions.

David Malcolm Scott has received many awards, including several residencies at the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Arts.

Clarinetist Sean Egan has collaborated with a variety of Twin Cities artists and his compositions have been performed by many including the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra's CONNECT concerts.

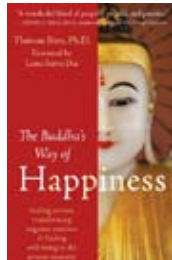
LIBRARIES AND BOOKSTALL / LITERARY MINISTRY



What's New in the Library and Bookstall

from Louise Merriam, Library Team

One of the most popular books in the Bookstall is *The Buddha's Way of Happiness: Healing Sorrow, Transforming Negative Emotion, and Finding Well-Being in the Present* by Thomas Bien Ph.D., Lama Surya Das. Issued in paperback in January 2011, this book has consistently sold out, requiring frequent purchases of extra copies.



Real happiness is simple, according to Thomas Bien. The present moment is the only way to be alive, says Bien. The book describes methods of staying in the moment and returning to the present. Anyone, whatever his or her religious beliefs, can practice mindfulness, using breathing and other techniques. This helpful book is not only available in the Bookstall, but can be found in the Anderson Adult Library in the Eliot wing.

All Congregation Book Read

Another title available in the Bookstall and Library is *Devil in the Blue Dress* by African-American mystery writer Walter Mosley. The Restorative Justice Team chose this novel for January's all-congregation book read. Discussions will be in February, so get your copy now.

Devil in a Blue Dress: 2012 Book Events

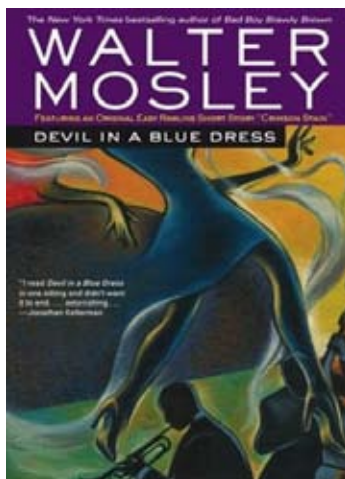
Guided discussion led by the Racial Justice Team at Unity Church

- Sunday, February 5, at 12:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 8, at 7:10 p.m.

Panel discussion sponsored by The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library

- Thursday, February 9, at 7:00 p.m., at the Rondo Community Library (461 N. Dale Street)

The book was made into a movie starring Denzel Washington. The New York Times said, "The role of Easy [the principal character] looks as tailor-made for Mr. Washington as his suit, and it shows off the full effect of this actor's movie-star dazzle."



Consulting Literary Ministry Branches Out

From Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs

Three years ago Karen Hering approached the staff of Unity Church about creating a new kind of ministry, a literary ministry devoted to encourage and engender opportunities to deepen spiritually and religiously through the written word. We were thrilled with her proposal and supported the effort to secure funding for the position. Karen wrote a grant to the Fund for Unitarian Universalism. They awarded her a grant for a year. That award then turned into three years of funding. Programs rarely receive three years of funding and their financial support of Karen's innovative ministry is testimony to their confidence in its possibility and promise.

Karen has served Unity Church members and friends through her written and spoken reflections. She has held monthly writing sessions to encourage deeper engagement with the monthly worship themes. These sessions have been inspiring for those who have attended them. She introduced Lectio Divina, a practice of reflecting on a particular piece of scripture or poetry, to the congregation and trained a lay team who now carry on the weekly practice. Karen also lent her time, expertise and editorial eye to the effort to create Cairns, Unity Church's literary and artistic journal.

Now Karen is taking her ministry out into the world. She is working with Wisdom Ways, other Unitarian Universalist congregations and congregations of other faiths to provide opportunities for deeper reflection and writing exercises. Her ministry has expanded to touch many different kinds of people from a variety of faiths. Unity Church can be proud of what began here.

Unity Church will continue to support Karen in a variety of ways. Her offerings will continue to be listed through a link on our website. Her future offerings will be sent to those who have signed up to be on her email lists. She will continue to stop by Unity and may worship with us on occasion. She will continue to have a mutually supportive relationship with the staff and members of Unity. She will be taking a break from offering writing sessions here at Unity, but that doesn't mean she will completely disappear and that our relationship is over completely. We will continue to support the concept of her ministry and will welcome her back to worship with us whenever she is able to join us.

The writing session may begin again next year on a fee for service basis. We will let you know if and when this occurs. For now, let us be grateful for all that Karen brought to us. The seeds that she helped plant here will continue to bear fruit.

If you would like to keep up-to-date with Karen and her offerings in the community please e-mail her at karen@unityunitarian.org and you will be added to her mailing list.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Update

- **Thanks for Welcoming the Guest at Your Table project.**
- Recently, Unity member Craig Stowell signed onto the monthly UUSC conference call for all congregations. After the call, Craig said this about UUSC: "I was glad to see that they were tackling issues related to what we call eco justice and to giving under-represented and oppressed people a voice. I continue to be impressed that this group is committed to long-term solutions through partnerships. That is not an easy road to walk, but it will pay big dividends in the long run."
- Apply to join UUSC-UUA for an April 28–May 5, 2012, JustWorks trip to **Haiti** to help the local Papaye Peasant Movement build an eco-village for displaced earthquake survivors. Fill out an application by February 5, 2012 on line or call 617-301-4326. The UUSC web page has a report from volunteers who went on this JustWorks trip earlier this year.
- UUSC joined NYU's Global Justice Law Clinic *amicus curiae* on the human right to water. In a case before the 11th circuit challenging **Alabama's** anti-immigrant law, HB 56. Municipalities are shutting off water and sanitation service to consumers without identification papers.
- UUSC staff and volunteers traveled to **Guatemala** to support UUSC's partner, COPAE, as they presented a report on the Marlin Gold mine's impacts on nearby communities to the Guatemalan government, the press, the European Union and the Norwegian embassy.
- UUSC is partnering with Kenyan organizations to provide practical assistance to **ethnic Somalis** who cannot access aid available to Somali refugees fleeing the famine, because they are Kenyan. Practical assistance, such as wells, schooling, keeping children safe from exploitation, and lessons on arid farming are part of the help being provided.
- Work in **Japan** continues with UUSC supporting our partner, Ijuren, to help an immigrant community who do not speak Japanese and have been marginalized by available services. Radiation is a big worry. UUSC's support includes Geiger counters and training for a community-run radiation detection program.
- The UUA's Faith Without Borders program and UUSC have jointly organized opportunities for service-learning trips to the **U.S./Mexico** border with UUSC's partner organization, Border Links. Trip dates are April 20-23 and May 25-28. The UUA website has more information.

BECOME A UUSC MEMBER:! Visit the website at www.uusc.org or contact Marty Rossmann for information rossm001@umn.edu.

Second Annual All-Congregation Book Read

Devil in a Blue Dress, a mystery novel by Walter Mosley is the 2012 All-Congregation Book Read. The Racial Justice and Library Ministry Teams invite the congregation to read the novel during January and join in discussion groups scheduled in February. Set in the post WWII Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, the mystery unfolds with unexpected twists and turns. The main character, "Easy," emerges from a life revolving around double shifts as an airplane factory mechanic to all the intrigue of a private detective. Copies of *Devil in a Blue Dress* are available at the Unity Bookstall.

Guided discussion led by the Racial Justice Team at Unity Church

- Sunday, February 5, at 12:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 8, at 7:10 p.m.

Panel discussion sponsored by The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library

- Thursday, February 9, at 7:00 p.m., at the Rondo Community Library (461 N. Dale Street)

Whole Farm Coop

Buy meat, cheese, produce and more from local, sustainable farms and pick it up at Unity Church! Order from www.wholefarmcoop.com or call 320-732-3023 by Wednesday, January 11. Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, January 18.

Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food Drive Sunday. Donations can be brought anytime and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances. Suggested items for January 15: canned or dry spaghetti, canned stews, pancake mix, and syrup.

Project Home 2012 Update: help needed in January and May

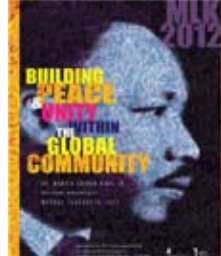
Unity Church-Unitarian has hosted homeless families in May for more than a decade. Due to delays in our construction schedule, we will be hosting at our regular time in May after all, rather than in January as originally announced. However, opportunities to serve in January remain: Unity's Project Home Team is seeking volunteers to join us in helping a partner church that accepted the January hosting slot. Both evening and overnight shifts are available; operating procedures are similar to ours, just at a different location (St Anthony Park United Methodist Church at Como and Raymond Avenues). Please contact Anna Newton to assist: 651-483-2986 or newtona@comcast.net.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

You're Invited! Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Breakfast

Building Peace and Unity within the Global Community is the theme of the 2012 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Breakfast sponsored by the St. Paul Council of Churches. Hosted by Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, located at 451 Central Ave, the MLK Community Breakfast is scheduled from 7:00-9:30 a.m. on Monday, January 16.

People from Unity Church will join with people in neighborhood communities in this celebration of the life and legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tickets are required and are available for a suggested donation of \$5 per person (children under 12 are free). Unity's Racial Justice Ministry Team will have a limited number of tickets for sale in the Parish Hall after Sunday morning services in January. Please contact Pat Haff by email at pat@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x126 for more information or to purchase a ticket.



¡ BAILE!

Winter blahs getting you down? Want to escape to a warm tropical place and mambo the night away? The Mano a Mano Community Outreach Ministry Team invites you to a night of latin dance in the Parish Hall on Saturday, January 14, from 7:00 - 10:30 p.m. Free dance instruction the first hour and a half. No pressure and no partner required! This event is free, but donations are gratefully accepted. For more information contact Robin Moede at robin@lagerquist.com. For child care contact Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org.

Tambien La Lluvia (Even the Rain) Monday, January 30 • 7:00 p.m. Unity Church

The movie's themes:

1. Spanish imperialism and the water wars, 500 years later.
2. Cast members playing the part of heroes, who fail to see their own cowardice as they flee Cochabamba while the Bolivians risk their lives opposing the multinational corporation for their rights to water.

The story: to save money when making a movie about Columbus and his maltreatment of the indigenous people of the Caribbean, a director chooses to film in Bolivia. During the filming, native cast members become embroiled in the "Cochabamba water wars," a series of protests in which Cochabamba residents successfully opposed the privatization of the municipal water supply in 2000. The Spanish (or Mexican) cast members playing the part of heroic priests who opposed Columbus' inhumanity, are cowards in the water wars. A brief discussion will follow the film.

Contemplate a world without second chances . . .

- You fail to pay your heating bill and find your gas permanently shut off
- Dad misses a doctor appointment and loses his right to health care
- Brother Bob goes five miles over the speed limit and loses his license forever
- Your children forget to do their homework and are expelled from grade school
- Sister Sue scores poorly on her SAT exam and has to give up on college
- Your partner bounces a check, giving you a bad credit record for life
- Bud, the new puppy, has an accident on the kitchen floor and ends up back at the Humane Society

We all make mistakes. We all depend on second chances... and third... and fourth...

One cannot think of a world faith in which justice does not require restitution when a wrong has been committed. But compassion demands that we forgive—and allow the one making the mistake to start anew. It's all about second chances.

Somewhere along the line, justice in America has come to require only punishment, true forgiveness has become problematic, and starting over is almost impossible. Second chances are rare.

The **Minnesota Second Chance Coalition** is a partnership of more than 50 organizations advocating for fair and responsible laws, policies, and practices allowing those who have committed crimes to redeem themselves, fully support themselves and their families, and contribute to their communities to their full potential.

The **Restorative Justice Team** at Unity Church supports its community partner **Amicus** and the work it does as part of the Minnesota Second Chance Coalition.

Be part of the Unity Church–Unitarian contingent attending the

Second Chance Day on the Hill 2012

Tuesday, January 31 • 10:00 a.m.

Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda

Bus transportation provided from Unity Church. Contact Pat Haff by phone at 651-228-1456 x126 or by email at pat@unityunitarian.org

Help us support real change... and second chances for everyone.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Director of Religious Education on Study Leave

The Executive Team has approved a four-month unpaid study leave for DRE Kerri Meyer from February through May of 2012. During her leave, Kerri will study at Starr King School for the Ministry and work with the education team on an urban Jewish farm. The Religious Education program will function efficiently during her absence, well-organized and supported by parents and congregants. Volunteer teachers will be provided the lessons and resources they need to carry out their ministry. Christy Randall and Luke Stevens-Royer will ensure that Sunday School and church events continue uninterrupted. Kerri will travel to St. Paul to participate in the 2012 Coming of Age weekend and will return to Unity in time for Flower Communion in late May.

Religious Education Volunteer Opportunities

The following roles need to be filled in order to carry out our ministry with children and youth here at Unity. Contact Kerri Meyer in the Church Office if you'd like more information about signing up for one of these positions and making teaching part of your spiritual practice.

High Feasts and Holy Days, 11:00

Three teaching slots open. Explore world religious holidays in this Junior High course. Join a team of teachers and choose which 6 Sundays you'll teach between January 22 and May 13. All lesson plans and materials are supplied. Come learn and share about Imbolc, St. Patrick, Nirvana Day, Lent, Easter and more. This class includes snacks and fun!

Extreme Religion, 4:30

Three teaching slots open. What happens when religious groups see themselves as being in conflict with society? Come explore cults and fundamentalism with our Junior High youth. We'll learn about both harmless and harmful religious isolation from society, including Jonestown, LDS fundamentalism, jihad, Orthodox Judaism and more. Join a team of teachers and choose which 6 Sundays you'll teach between January 22 and May 13. All lesson plans and materials are supplied. The course relies heavily on documentary film and class discussion.

Journey Guides, 4:30

Have you ever said to yourself, "Gee, I wish I could attend Unity's Sunday School!?" Well, you can! Journey Guides have no teaching responsibilities but instead are the "shepherd" for a group of 8-14 children who participate in our workshop rotation curriculum, Journey In: Toward the God-Shaped Hollow. Journey Guides at 4:30 attend Chapel with their class, take attendance, lead the group to their classroom, help manage behavior and encourage participation. It's an excellent way to familiarize oneself with the curriculum and share in the learning without having to read over any lesson plans each week. We need TWO Journey Guides at 4:30, one for the Green Group of 3rd and 4th graders and one for the Blue Group of 5th and 6th graders. Journey Guides volunteer on the 14 Sundays on which we have Religious Education (several Sundays off for holidays) from January 15 through May 13; substitutes are available in case of illness or travel. Be the face of Unity Church for a group of children!

Multigenerational D&D Tournament

Saturday, January 14 • Noon-2:00 p.m.

Love Dungeons & Dragons (now or in the past)? Enjoy the grandeur of fantasy fiction like Tolkien? Join us for an afternoon of multigenerational role-playing fun on the afternoon of Saturday, January 14. Pizza lunch and play will start at 12:00 noon and conclude at 2:30. Youth and adults, ages 10 and up welcome! Never played before? We'll teach you how. Experienced Dungeon Masters will lead the games. Contact Kerri in the Church Office to RSVP for this event.

January R.E. Calendar

Sunday, January 1: No R.E. Classes – Special activities for kids! One 10:00 a.m. service, childcare available for kids under 5

Sunday, January 8: regular R.E., New Workshop Cycle: Divine Within

Wednesday, January 11: New Family Orientation, OWL resumes, Tween Youth Group (Pastoral Care)

Saturday, January 14: Dungeons and Dragons Gaming

Sunday, January 15: Story Sunday Grades 1-6 (MLK); regular R.E.

Wednesday, January 18: Tween Youth group (Justice Arts)

Saturday, January 21: Parents' Night Out! 6:00-8:30 p.m. (RSVP)

Sunday, January 22: regular R.E., Junior High Winter Semester classes begin!

Wednesday, January 25: Tween Youth group (Pastoral Care)

Friday, January 27: Teachers' Night Out (RSVP)

Sunday, January 29: Regular R.E.

Interfaith Youth Day of Service!

Save the date for the this year's Interfaith Youth Day of Service: **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2012.** Youth in middle school and up are invited to spend the day working on inter-faith service-learning projects throughout the Twin Cities, and reflecting and acting on the common values of service, justice, and hospitality across all our traditions. The event includes speakers and entertainment, options for service projects in mixed faith groups, and workshops on interfaith understanding, social justice, and leadership. Transportation to and from service sites and lunches are provided. If you want to attend with the Unity group, you must register with Luke Stevens-Royer by February 13.

MUSIC MINISTRY / CHILDREN'S MUSICAL

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministry

"...the wonder of the Beautiful is its ability to surprise us. With swift, sheer grace, it is like a divine breath that blows the heart open." — John O'Donohue

Concerts with a Cause: Three Sundays at 3:00 p.m.

Come and hear wonderful musicians who are donating their time so that we might support an important cause that needs our help. Let their music 'blow open our hearts' as we gather this winter to enjoy the warmth of beautiful music while assisting valuable work in our community. A minimum suggested donation of \$10.00 is appreciated. However, all concerts are free and open to the public.

Please invite friends and family to hear this wonderful music. Plan to stay for the 4:30 p.m. service and soup supper to warm these winter evenings!

Sunday, January 22, at 3:00 p.m.: Pavia Winds

A woodwind quintet including our beloved Sarah Carmack, oboe, Duncan Baird's granddaughter. A favorite ensemble from last year's concerts, they come with new music featuring Stravinsky's "Rites of Spring."

Sunday, February 19, at 3:00 p.m.: Waltz Your Way Through Winter

Featuring our Unity Vocal Quartet and four-hands piano team, Kathy Kraulik and Ruth Palmer. Find your way through winter by listening to the four-hands waltzes of Johannes Brahms and his famous Liebeslieder Waltzes for Vocal Quartet and four-hands piano.

Sunday, March 4 at 3:00 p.m.: Piano Recital

Featuring Catherine Kautsky, Professor of Music; Chair, Keyboard Department, Lawrence University, Appleton, WI. This amazing pianist comes to us bringing wonderful music including "De Profundis," an amazing musical dramatic work for piano.

Proceed from the concerts will go to Minnesotans United for All Families in their efforts to defeat the Minnesota Marriage Amendment in 2012.



About our January 22 performers, Pavia Winds Woodwind Quintet

Pavia Winds is one of the Midwest's most exciting young chamber music ensembles. Formed in 2005 by musicians from area colleges and universities, the Twin Cities-based group is interested in exploring a variety of repertoire for wind soloists with an increasing focus on contemporary music. Active performers, Pavia Winds presents concerts and workshops throughout Minnesota and especially enjoys working with students to encourage enthusiasm for chamber music of all kinds. They return this year to present more wonderful music including Stravinsky's "Rites of Spring." Sarah Carmack, Pavia's oboe player, will be with us on January 8 in our Tolling of Bells services.

<http://www.unityunitarian.org/concerts-with-a-cause.html>

Unity Church

Children's Musical

Now in its 23rd year, the spectacularly special children's musical gives 5th and 6th graders a chance to be actively involved in a program performed in the sanctuary. Every year talented members of the community come together to write, compose, direct and choreograph a unique show for Unity Church.

This year Sandy Waterman returns with her fabulously catchy tunes, designed to expose the kids to many different styles of music – from ska to rock to jazz to traditional ballads and soft shoe. Every year she surprises and amazes us with her songs. In the director's chair is clowning specialist and seamstress extraordinaire, Mary Blouin Auffert with the assistance of co-conspirator playwright and former producer Rene Meyer-Grimberg.

Auditions and Parent Meeting

Sunday, January 8

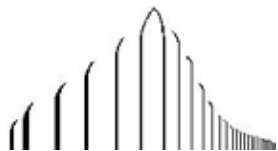
1:30-3:30 p.m.

Parents are needed to do costumes, sets and stage, props, cast party, audio/dvd, program, lights, sound – all the fun stuff that makes the show happen. A great opportunity to revisit talents from your past and get to know other parents at church. A true team effort.

Rehearsals: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00-8:30 p.m. and Sundays from 1:30 -3:30 p.m. until our tech week.

Shows: March 1, 2, and 3

Contact Cathy Crosby-Schmidt by email at crosbyschmidt@yahoo.com with questions.



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

732 HOLLY AVENUE • SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55104
651-228-1456 • FAX: 651-228-0927 • WWW.UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG • UNITY@UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG

BOB PESKIN, CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JANNE ELLER-ISAACS, CO-MINISTER
ROB ELLER-ISAACS, CO-MINISTER
BARBARA HUBBARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LEON DUNKLEY, DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO. 1141

**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Unity Tomorrow **Congregation Review and Comment Session**

Sunday, January 8 • 12:30 p.m. • Foote Room
Come for an update on the *Unity Tomorrow* facilities planning process with time for learning, questions, and comments. All are welcome and childcare will be provided.

Turn to pages 8 and 9 for an update on the facilities planning process and words from the capital campaign and operating pledge team.

All of the most recent renderings, floor plans, and design development details are available online at www.unitytomorrow.org

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) **Association Sunday**

On Sunday, January 15, the whole of the offering will go to support the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Founded in 1961 with the merger of the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association, the UUA serves to unite more than a thousand progressive congregations in the United States and increasingly around the world. Each year the UUA asks its member congregations to take a special offering to fund a particular aspect of its program. Donations to Association Sunday 2011 will support scholarships, continuing education, and a comprehensive assessment of our ministries and their needs for the future. Grants from Association Sunday 2011 funds will help religious professionals get ongoing training to support thriving congregations. We urge you to be as generous as possible in support of our Association. If you are unable to make your contribution on Sunday the 15th please go to www.unityunitarian.org and click "Association Sunday" or send a check to the Church Office. Make it out to Unity Church and write "Association Sunday" on the memo line.

In this issue of *commUNITY...*

January Worship.....	3
Adult Learning.....	4
Marriage Amendment.....	5
Wellspring Wednesday.....	6
Women's Retreat.....	7
<i>Unity Tomorrow</i>	8-9
Sources Supper.....	10
All-Congregation Book Read.....	11
Project Home.....	12
MLK Breakfast.....	13
Day on the Hill.....	13
Children and Youth.....	14
Concerts with a Cause.....	15
Children's Musical.....	15