

Wisdom

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

It isn't just knowledge. It's more than experience. It goes beyond intuition or intelligence. Yet wisdom incorporates all of these things and uses them in figuring out how to handle a decision or dilemma. Sometimes that means asking further questions, because the wise person also recognizes that we can't know everything.

Wisdom both expands and winnows, invites and discerns. It acts as a center of gravity around which complexities, ambiguities, and nuance can float without dissipating. Its treasure lies in recognizing a plethora of doorways into possibility *and* in selecting the right one(s) to open.

The wisdom literature in the Hebrew scriptures (such as Proverbs and Ecclesiastes) parallels similar sources from Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Canaan. According to biblical scholar Brennan Breed, "wisdom literature was [likely] a widespread mode of discourse in the ancient Near East that emphasized generally available knowledge and downplayed cultural particularities and nationalistic narratives." Although the Israelite texts mention Yahweh, it isn't in the context of a warrior or protector against foes. "Rather, wisdom literature speaks of Yahweh as primarily active and available in the realm of creation and the ongoing process of the natural world. Regardless of national or creedal affiliation, wisdom literature claims that perceptive individuals may discern Yahweh's desires by observing the universal manner in which the world is ordered. In this way, divine teaching is open to all people."

In observing the world as it is, we can also ask whether wisdom resides beyond humanity. Is nature wise? Are the stars wise? Should we read anything into that slow blink that cats do? If figuring

out which path to take is one hallmark of wisdom, then (as K.P. Hong notes) the Colorado River discerns which way to go as it carves slowly through stone, and we call its discernment the Grand Canyon. Whether or not this strikes you as too anthropomorphic, there is certainly a kind of wisdom in how a river minimizes the energy it needs to flow back to the ocean, conserving resources by taking the path of least resistance.

Many indigenous teachings recognize the different kinds of wisdom present in rivers, stones, mountains, trees, animals, and insects. Trees take a longer view than most humans. Stones and mountains measure their pace in millenia, stretching back to the early days of the earth itself. Power animals and clan totems lend their unique gifts to the people with whom they ally. The meaning of a particular type of medicine (Bear, Owl, etc.) might vary from one culture to another, but an underlying assumption is that we humans can learn from its wisdom. Shamanistic traditions—the most ancient form of human spirituality, found in cultures all over the world—use drumming, rattling, dancing, entheogens, or other means to contact these beings and ask for their help.

Young children instinctively understand that they can be in conversation with the world around them. They greet birds and flowers and the moon. They're fascinated by the resistance of water against moving fingers. They want to take home every rock and leaf for display on a windowsill. Their wisdom is to see the world as it is, without the filters that eventually separate us from the direct experience of those divine teachings.

At the other end of life, wisdom is more often rooted in the breadth of what an elder has lived through and

made meaning from, which makes it easier to recognize the gaps. What don't we know yet? Is this a time to stay disciplined or a time to release into flow? Which direction serves our highest purpose? Wisdom knows that there's no one-size-fits-all solution.

Of course, people of any age may be wise or foolish; we're usually a mix of both. But if we can find ways to access that center of gravity—whose calmness makes room for the puzzle pieces to fall into place—then our flashes of insight might transform themselves into a sustained beacon guiding us to an unseen shore.

— Hallman Ministerial Intern
Lindasusan Ulrich

with this month's theme team:
Drew Danielson, Janne Eller-Isaacs,
Rob Eller-Isaacs, Lisa Friedman,
K.P. Hong, Ruth Palmer, and Ben Pettee

Worship Theme Resources

BOOKS

Kitchen Table Wisdom by Rachel Naomi Remen (Riverhead, 1996)

The Book of Proverbs (various translations)

Tao Te Ching by Lao-tzu (trans. Stephen Mitchell, Harper Perennial, 1992)

The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (trans. Katherine Woods, Harcourt, 1943)

All Our Relations by Winona LaDuke (South End, 1999)

Mama Made the Difference by T.D. Jakes (Penguin, 2006)

FILMS

Good Will Hunting (1997)

The Great Debaters (2007)

Simon Birch (1998)

Just Words



I have been thinking about leadership. Unity is a teaching church. Unity Consulting is one of the lead advisory teams working with progressive congregations. So we are often asked how we recruit and train our leaders. The simple answer is, we don't. At least not in the usual sense. Rather than teaching "leadership skills" we provide opportunities for those who participate in congregational life to find their gifts and bring them to bear in the world.

The purpose of the church is not self-perpetuation. The church is in the world to serve purposes far larger than itself and so, my friends, are we. The church is in the world to inspire and sustain leaders who understand and practice the obligations of compassion. Christian evangelicals use the word "discipling" to describe their leadership expectations. I take the term to refer to those who fully embody and consciously live into the teachings of the church.

We have no creedal formula by which to judge the kind of leadership I'm trying to describe. I do know we want leaders who are wise. Wisdom is not about what you know as much as it is about who you are. Wise people listen well. They have a sixth sense that helps them hear what is really being said, they listen for the deeper truth behind the words. They cultivate humility and calm. Though they strive to tell the truth their primary impulse is to be kind.

Unity Church is made up of leaders. They don't necessarily take leadership at church (though many do). The leadership I see you practice is as much a way of being as of doing. You lead in the way you raise your children and care for your aging parents. You lead in the ethics you practice and foster at work. You lead in the wide array of organizations for social good you carve out time to serve. And at your best, you lead in the way that you set the work aside now and then. May summer inspire you to slow down and set all that good strong striving aside for a time. Taking time for rest and renewal can also be wise leadership.

With every blessing,
Rob Eller-Isaacs

Ordination of Ashley Horan



During a special meeting held on Sunday, May 17, the congregation of Unity Church unanimously approved a motion to ordain Ashley Horan into the Unitarian Universalist ministry. Ashley's ordination will be held in the sanctuary at Unity Church on Saturday, October 3, 2015. Watch for details and an invitation later this summer!



Grand Old Day Parking Alert

Be aware that on Sunday, June 7, street parking will be limited due to the Grand Old Day street festival. The parking lots will be managed by Unity Church youth and adults so that worshippers can park while fair-goers contribute money toward our youth and community outreach ministries.

commUNITY is the newsletter of Unity Church—Unitarian. It is published monthly, except the month of July. Deadlines are the 15th 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
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Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456
www.unityunitarian.org

Wellspring: A Year of Spiritual Deepening

Do you yearn for deeper connection to your faith and to the people here? Do you wish you had a better grasp of our traditions, history, and theology? Do you dream of a day when you have the time to create a daily spiritual practice? Then you might want to know more about Wellspring, a year-long curriculum designed with spiritual deepening as the goal.

Created by the Rev. Jen Crow, Wellspring responds to the need for spiritual grounding in our own tradition and offers a five-spoke model of spiritual deepening. The five spokes are: daily spiritual practice, regular meetings of the Wellspring group, engagement with Unitarian Universalist history and theology, meeting monthly with a one-on-one spiritual director, and discerning our unique call in life to bless the world.

Unity's Wellspring group this year is being co-facilitated by Janne Eller-Isaacs and church member Sherry Essen. The group will begin in September with a retreat and will meet two evenings a month through June 2016. Each session will have reading assignments that support our exploration and engagement of the topics and themes. To register, contact Song Thao at song@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x115. Questions? Please contact Janne at janne@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x106.

JUNE AND JULY SUNDAY WORSHIP

June and July Worship Calendar

FROM MAY 24 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 6 THERE IS JUST ONE SERVICE EACH WEEK AT 10:00 A.M.

Lay-led worship services begin June 28. Religious Education Summer Sundays in the Garden will be offered during the 10:00 a.m. service. Sermon podcasts and archives are available online at www.unityunitarian.org.

June 7: *Many Ways to Wisdom* — Rob Eller-Isaacs

To Rumi's glad claim that "there are many ways to kneel and kiss the ground" we might add, and there is one ground. Unitarian Universalist theology asserts the centrality of a personal experience of the holy. As we lean toward the slower pace of summer Rob and worship associate Heidi Mastrud explore the many paths that help us to lead loving, effective, and satisfying lives. The service will include a bridging ceremony for our graduating high school seniors.

June 14: *Wisdom of the Elders* — Janne Eller-Isaacs

In this world where elders are either invisible or shut away, how do we promote a counter-cultural attitude adjustment that truly honors and illuminates the wisdom that is only achieved through years of living? Janne will be joined by worship associate Phil Lowry to explore this significant challenge.

June 21: *Dandelion Wisdom* — Lindasusan Ulrich

Because they are so ubiquitous, it's easy to look past dandelions and their gifts of simplicity, tenacity, and nourishment. What other forms of wisdom do we also overlook in our everyday lives? In her final worship service of the year, Hallman Ministerial Intern Lindasusan Ulrich and worship associate Heidi Mastrud will explore how we can use our own gifts to bless the world. *Following the service, all are invited to stay for a celebration honoring Lindasusan Ulrich's internship.*

June 28: *Radical Acceptance* — Katy Taylor

Accepting ourselves and how our lives are unfolding, regardless of circumstances, is the key to true contentment and, paradoxically, to the ability to make conscious change. Katy Taylor will explore the deeper meaning of acceptance as well as practices to cultivate it in our everyday lives. *A pancake brunch in the Parish Hall will follow this service – all are welcome!*

July 5: *If Only We Were Free* — Danny Givens

Life has presented many of us with opportunities to invite, receive, and embody freedom within a world of infinite restraints and possibilities. Join Rev. Danny Givens and worship associate Helen Pohlig in daring to be free enough to explore the facets of such restraints and possibilities during this thought provoking message.

July 12: *To Be Awake* — Terri Burnor

The Buddha was asked, "Are you a god?" and other such questions since he was recognized as an extraordinary being. "No," the Buddha replied to each. "I am awake." Join Terri Burnor and worship associate Jen Welsh as they explore how awakening is to learn the art of living.

July 19: *The Habit of Keeping Faith* — Sherry Essen

Flannery O'Connor once said, "It is much harder to believe than not to believe." What does it mean to "keep the faith?" And what does this require of us... attitudinally, physically, and emotionally? Inspired by a recent near miss event, Sherry Essen will talk of how confronting the very thing she feared most led to a deepened commitment to simple ways of being that are fostering faith and freedom in her life. Sherry will be joined by worship associate Nicole Lynskey. *A pancake brunch in the Parish Hall will follow this service – all are welcome!*

July 26: *Born-Again Universalism: An Altar Call for Love* — Ashley Horan

The language, emotion and theology of Pentecostalism tends to be well outside of our often-intellectual Unitarian Universalist comfort zone. But our Pentecostal siblings and friends have much to teach us about the transformational capacity of the Spirit and the power of Testimony.

Contemplative Nature Walk

Saturday, June 20 • 9:00–10:00 a.m.

Are you one of those people who most deeply connects with Self and the Beyond out in nature? Come outside and join Spiritual Director Sarah Cledwyn for a Contemplative Walk on Saturday, June 20, at 9:00 a.m. There will be a short introduction followed by a quiet walk through the Hidden Falls Regional Park in St. Paul. We will practice being attentive to our setting and what stirs within us as we walk with one another, ending with a short group process. This event is free and open to all. Please RSVP to Sarah Cledwyn at sarahcledwyn@gmail.com for directions and more information.

Flowers for Summer Worship

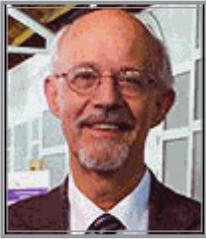
If you would like to bring flowers from your garden for a summer service, please contact Marcy Mann-Anderson at 651-228-1456 x110 or marcy@unityunitarian.org for available dates (June 7-August 30) and details. Flowers should be arranged in a vase and placed in the Sanctuary by 9:30 a.m. on the Sunday for which you have volunteered.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

We May Be Missing Something

From Hal Freshley, Trustee



A few weeks ago, at a meeting of persons who have gone to Transylvania over the years, I heard an interesting exchange. The group was discussing the ways that our experiences as pilgrims to this historic region in Romania have changed over the years, and how our partnership with the village and church there has changed —

from feeling like we could (and should) be helping them — to feeling like they can help us.

Fifteen years ago, Romania and the ethnic minority Hungarian Unitarians were still reeling at the end of the infamous Ceaucescu regime. As I write these words, I realize that I can't really understand what that era of persecution meant to them, their interpersonal relationships, and to their community life. When the regime was finally over, the economy and much of the social structure were in shambles. Visitors from St. Paul got to know people directly affected, those who were literally in the process of rebuilding their own economic lives as well as their village.

And we St. Paul Unitarians were able to help. We helped them with the things that they felt they needed: some financial aid for community re-building, scholarships, agricultural support, infrastructure repair, travel subsidies — and our own presence and sincere commitment to them as friends. And maybe even some Midwestern "can-do" attitude.

Over the years however, visitors from St. Paul have noted a change in our relationship. Several in the group were struck by our emerging *similarities*: we both belong to a liberal religious faith in the XXI century and are both religious minorities in an increasingly secular world. A world where the primary growth is among conservative religious groups.

And what is amazing to us is that they are *optimistic* about the opportunities this presents! They have the "can-do" attitude. Earlier this year we were visited by Dr. Sandor Kovacs, a Unitarian history professor from the University of Kolosvar in Romania who was spending the spring semester as a resident Balazs professor at Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, California. In one of his talks he explained that a lot of people are yearning to discover a religion that reconciles their personal spirituality with their expanded and expanding understanding of the world.

One of the questions in the congregational survey is: ***How likely would you be to recommend Unity Church-Unitarian to a friend or relative?*** Think about your answer. It's perhaps not a part of our culture to proselytize. Maybe we're too polite. We don't want to come across as having some unique insight that others may need. But if we can learn a lesson from our Transylvanian partners, perhaps we do.

15th Anniversary Celebration and Surprise



Photo by Deborah Carter McCoy

May was a month of celebration and milestones. On Flower Communion Sunday we celebrated a very special anniversary — 15 years of Janne's and Rob's ministry at Unity Church. We decided we could not let this milestone pass without due recognition. At the offertory, Board Chair Ginny Allen and Music Director Ruth Palmer surprised Rob and Janne with a musical piece especially commissioned and arranged in their honor. The song, "It's Not Far," was written by Peter Mayer and arranged for choir by Unity's own Bob Peskin.

Janne and Rob were presented with a framed score, which bears the following dedication:

Commissioned by Unity Church–Unitarian, St. Paul, MN, in loving gratitude to Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs for 15 years of inspirational ministry to this congregation, the St. Paul community, and the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Two more musical compositions, from Jake Runstad and Elizabeth Alexander, have been commissioned for this anniversary and will be presented in the coming year.

In honor of this special anniversary, the offering was also in tribute to Rob's and Janne's dedicated and visionary service to Unity Church. With their leadership, this congregation has dared to take risks, to explore new ministry, to be more courageous and vulnerable in the world. The Flower Communion offering was dedicated to Unity's new Innovation Fund, created in Rob's and Janne's honor, which will support new initiatives and creative efforts in Unity's ministry that are not always able to be supported fully in our operating budget. The fund will also be responsive to new opportunities that come up in the moment, such the Selma pilgrimage, allowing us to be more agile. If you were not at church on May 17 but would like to contribute to the Innovation Fund, you can still do so. Checks can be made to Unity Church with "Innovation Fund" in the memo.

We invite the whole congregation to join the Board in recognizing 15 years of amazing leadership!

Ill-equipped and Doing It Anyway

From Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth & Campus Ministries



I've worked in urban schools for 20 years with African American bosses, colleagues, and best friends. I've been in countless diversity trainings. I'm still ill-equipped for the work of anti-racism. Yet while shame, embarrassment, and sorrow have come from failed, missed, or botched attempts at meaningful cross cultural relationships, I can also say those same efforts have been the source of great joy and satisfaction.

I was reticent to take three Unity Church high school juniors on the St. Paul to Selma pilgrimage. I didn't ask to be part of the group — felt I was too busy — but Rob asked if I thought some kids should go. I worried we wouldn't be prepared. We did it anyway. Maya Black, Caswell Burr, and Nelson Moroukian, all leaders of Tower Club, never hesitated when I asked them to come. Nor did their families. They were given no itinerary and little explanation: "We're doing a month of Beloved Conversations with a diverse community group, then were going to cross that bridge."

How did these ill-prepared young people and their nervous chaperone do?

"Selma was life changing for me," claims Caswell. "It opened my eyes to major flaws in our society. My favorite moments were from the voter rights memorial service at Tabernacle. The words of William Barber, that 'the Blood' demands justice, vividly describes how this work is of the highest moral and spiritual priority. Mark Morrison Reed asking us who we love, and if we will come when called... and of course crossing the bridge. Words can't really describe it!"

Maya agrees. "I try to tell people, it's hard to describe the community that was formed on every step of the trip. Now we have those strong relationships driving us to go and change what needs to be fixed. I want to go back, to be with everyone again as we were at the service in the gym before we went to the bridge, all singing 'We Shall Overcome' — I loved it!"

Nelson... "It was such a blessing. Things I heard and experiences I had changed the way I see the world. Most beneficial was the Beloved Conversations work that built a community to share with. Knowing all these people creates opportunity to be involved and to stand up for what I believe. It has shaped me."

Fifty feet from the bridge, after watching Jesse Jackson pass, I wondered if I should have been there at all, if my presence was an insult to the descendents of the Civil Rights struggles surrounding me. But then Allen Giles gave me a smile. I saw Danny Givens put his arms around Maya, Nelson, and Cas. My friend Kedar Hickman lined us up for a selfie. I felt the love as our ill prepared mass stood before the bridge.

Thank God we did it anyway.

2014-15 Hallman Ministerial Intern

Lindasusan Ulrich



The trees outside my office window have been faithful companions to me during my time at Unity Church. When I began, they stood heavy with the leafy fullness of summer, doing their best to hold the heat at bay. Soon, they were painted in shades of crimson and gold that blazed in the autumn sunlight. Then began the months of starkness and silhouettes, detailed branch patterns etching the grey winter skies. And with spring's arrival, a tender green lace now flutters in each passing breeze, delicate wings that emerged from the previous week's buds.

You, too, have allowed me to be part of your lives over the last ten months. You've shared your struggles and transitions, the changing patterns that shape your days. You've offered thoughtful critiques, raised insightful questions, and shared heartfelt appreciation. You became part of my emerging ministry.

I think I've learned even more, though, in watching how you are with each other. Do you realize what a spiritually generous community you've built? From the unfailing encouragement for each performer at the talent show, to the deep pastoral care for elders with dementia, to the vulnerability risked during Beloved Conversations, to the spontaneity brought out in teaching, to the loving preparations of the cooking teams, to the good cheer of volunteers greeting newcomers... truly, the list is endless. That spirit is worth tending with intentionality, because complacency and authentic giving move in opposite directions.

As I embark on whatever comes next, I'll be starting anew, but not from scratch—your love and encouragement will go with me. All I can offer in return are my profound gratitude and cascades of blessings.

May this congregation—which has seen more years than even those trees outside my window—continue to grow in wisdom, in depth, in faithfulness, in joy, and in vision that surpasses the sky.

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

A Celebration for Lindasusan Ulrich

Join us in celebrating Lindasusan Ulrich during her final worship service as Hallman Ministerial Intern on Sunday, June 21, at 10:00 a.m. Gratitude, well-wishes, and treats will be shared in the Parish Hall following the service.



PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP / ONGOING GROUPS

Welcome Words



The sweet June days are come again and what a delight it will be to play in the sun! Here at church our congregational life will relax, but will still be going strong with many opportunities for worship and connection. Come and hear the reflections of our wonderful lay preachers. Take a contemplative spiritual walk in community. Enjoy a St. Paul Saints game at the new ballpark with Unity Church. Sign up to tutor at the Freedom School or to help with our summer Habitat for Humanity build. Make new friends tending the Children's Garden and growing produce for our local food shelves. The summer season is a glorious time to tend to our spirits and to savor its gifts together — there is so much coming into bloom. See you in church!

Rev. Lisa Friedman

Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement

Pathway to Membership Classes

Sign up at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. Lisa is happy to meet with you personally to answer questions and welcome you into the congregation. Childcare is available by contacting Michelle Hill at 651-228-1456 x127 or michelle@unityunitarian.org at least one week in advance.

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers

Sunday, June 7: 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. ~ also offered ~

Sunday, July 26: 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. ~ also offered ~

Sunday, August 30: 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

If you have been visiting and would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and Unity Church.

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Exploration

Three Tuesdays, June 2, 9, and 16: 6:30-8:30 p.m. (light dinner provided each night). Additional classes will be offered in the fall. Stop by the Welcome Table for the 2015-16 class schedule.

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

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Classes will resume in the fall. Stop by the Welcome Table for the 2015-16 class schedule.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can discover the places in your life where the world's needs meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book.

Ongoing Groups at Unity Church

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

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (June 11 and July 9) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

Afterthoughts: This group meets after the 10:00 a.m. service. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528.

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (June 18) from Noon-2:00 p.m. The Caregivers Group will not meet during July. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (June 9 and July 14) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (June 27 and July 25) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760.

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (June 16) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. The Grief Group will not meet during July. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, June 1, 15, 29; and July 13 and 27, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

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

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net. **June 9** discussion: *Salvage the Bones* by Jesmyn Ward

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

Women's Retirement Group: The Women's Retirement group meets on the second and fourth Thursday (June 11 and 25 / July 9 and 23) of each month from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Young Adult Group: Potluck suppers on Tuesday, June 23, July 28, and August 25, at 6:30 p.m., in the Center Room. Bring your favorite dish to a relaxed evening of good company and conversation. Contact: Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org

Sangha Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction is offered on the first Tuesday (June 2 and July 7) beginning at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kford5@comcast.net

Open Page Writing Session

Wisdom's Crossroads

Wednesday, June 3, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

"At the crossroads, Wisdom takes her stand." At the crossroads of our own times, this writing session explores the proverbial wisdom, old and new, that is needed today and where we might find it, in the world and within ourselves.

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.

Help to Cook or Eat a Pancake Brunch

Sunday, June 28, and July 19 • Following the 10:00 a.m. service!

We'll have fresh pancakes after Sunday worship with made-from-scratch syrups and jams. Volunteers should contact Madeline Summers, Volunteer Coordinator at madeline@unityunitarian.org.

Take Unity Church Out to the Ball Game at the New Ballpark!

Saint Paul Saints vs. Winnipeg Goldeyes

Tuesday, July 21 • 7:05 p.m. • CHS Field

Join other Unity Church members and friends at the new St. Paul Saints CHS Field! We have pre-purchased a block of seats together. You can reserve your tickets at the Summer Opportunities Table in Parish Hall or by contacting Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. RSVP by June 24. All are welcome!

Stone Soup Planning Committee

We are planning a 24-hour soup cook-a-thon in October. If you'd like to be a part of planning the first ever Unity Church Stone Soup and Fall Festival contact Madeline Summers at madeline@unityunitarian.org.

Heart to Heart: A Couples' Enrichment Weekend

Friday, November 6, to Sunday, November 8, 2015

Koinonia Retreat Center • Annandale, MN

Heart to Heart is a program led by three experienced couples and is designed to enrich communication and intimacy in your relationship. All committed couples are welcome — same-sex and opposite-sex, married and unmarried. More information is available online at <http://heart.mn.cx> or by calling 651-300-4119.

Marital First Responders Workshop



Saturday, June 20

9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Parish Hall at Unity Church

Marital First Responders, created by Unity Church member Bill Doherty and first held at Unity, is a training program for natural confidants who want to get better at helping friends and family members who confide in them about relationship problems.

Marital First Responders are people who find themselves in conversations with people in troubled marriages and committed relationships. People open up to them. But they are sometimes unsure about how to be helpful, how to avoid taking sides, and how to steer friends and family members to the right resources.

Five percent of Unity Church members have already been trained, and the goal is ten percent! In addition, a number of trained marital first responders have listed their names on the pastoral care section of the Unity website in case anyone who knows them is interested in a conversation about a relationship concern. They are willing to listen and be supportive. They are not counselors but fellow travelers on the sometimes confusing road of intimate relationships.

Training topics for the June 20 workshop include:

- Listening and empathizing without taking sides
- Offering helpful perspectives on relationships
- Keeping good boundaries
- Challenging when needed
- Helping people find the right kind of help

The training is for marrieds, singles, divorced, widowed — anyone who opens up to about relationship concerns. Registration is \$10 to cover costs: <http://bit.ly/mfrJUNE2015>

Welcome New Members!

Cole Velders is a junior at Perpich Center for the Arts where he studies literary arts. He is an active member of Unity's Tower Club, fences at the Minneapolis Sword Club, and enjoys movies, pizza, video games, and coffee shops. He lives in Saint Paul.

Kathryn Kysar lives in St. Paul and has been attending Unity Church since 2004. She has volunteered as a journey guide, an R.E. instructor, and a Christmas Pageant parent. She chairs the creative writing program at Anoka-Ramsey Community College and serves on the board of directors for Rain Taxi.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Circle of Peace Food Ministry Needed

As part of its commitment to achieving racial reconciliation and dismantling racism within the St. Paul community, Unity Church supports the Circle of Peace Movement, a restorative justice process that brings people together to address issues of violence, marginalization, and incarceration in communities of color. The Circle has expanded and new groups are now meeting on Wednesdays and Thursdays, in addition to the original group which meets on Monday. Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Community Outreach Ministry Team is asking that the church community support, through the gift of homemade nutritious meals, the growth of the circle meetings. Sign up online to help with a meal: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050a4faea72ca46-monday>

For more information please contact Ellen Green at ebgedit@qwest.net or 651-224-1403.

Be a SUUperhero in the Pride Parade!

The Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) has secured a spot for all Unitarian Universalists who wish to march in this year's Pride Parade. The theme for marching UUs is "SUUperheroes." Folks are encouraged to march, sing, and drum. Please note: superhero costumes are preferred! Puppet construction times will be scheduled, so watch for details and updates from Unity Church. The parade is Sunday, June 28. Unity Church will also host a light rail tail gate that morning for group travel downtown. Details to follow! Contact Kevin Ely at kevin.m.ely@gmail.com or Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org with questions and to let us know you'd like to march.

2015 Freedom School

Connect to children and families in our community!

From Jane Thomson, Freedom School Volunteer

For the past two summers, approximately 20 people from Unity Church have volunteered at Freedom School, a summer enrichment and empowerment program primarily serving African American children entering kindergarten through 8th grade. The main location is the Rondo Education Complex on Concordia Avenue in St. Paul.

Many of the volunteers have been as enthusiastic as the children during *Harambee*, the school's powerful morning rally. We sang and moved with them through the *Hallelujah Chorus* and an anthem with a chorus of "Something inside so strong... I know that I can make it — make it!"

After the rally, the scholars joined small classes where they read books about men and women of color who have risen above adversity and made a positive difference in their own lives and in the lives of others. Then they wrote and drew pictures about the subjects of the books and other related matters. Math was studied in the afternoons. Breakfast and lunch were provided. There were weekly field trips for fun and education. It has been shown that Freedom School alumni do better during the regular school year.

This year, the school will run July 13 through August 21. Volunteers will be needed to register the children, to help teachers, and to serve (not cook) suppers on the weekly parents' night. Prior to the beginning of the school term, help will be needed with sorting books and supplies.

On Sundays during June there will be a table in the Parish Hall where you can learn more about Freedom School, sign up to volunteer, and make donations of school supplies (lined notebooks, graph paper, pencils, construction paper, dry-erase markers, and glue stick will all be gratefully accepted).

If you have questions, please email Jane Thomson at thoms028@tc.umn.edu, Judy Rieke at jlrieke2@gmail.com, or Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

Habitat for Humanity Summer Build

Work weeks: June 22-26 and July 6-10 • Sign up online: <http://bit.ly/faithbuilders2015>

Unity Church is again participating in a Habitat For Humanity construction project with other area churches as a team called "Faith Builders." There are many opportunities to participate as a Construction Volunteer and Lunch Helper. A Construction Volunteer covers everything from being a knowledgeable leader to being a gofer at the build site. Lunch Helpers provide snacks and lunch for the construction volunteers with the help of a coordinator who will guide you.

We are using an on-line sign-up system this year. To sign up follow these steps:

1. Go to <http://bit.ly/faithbuilders2015>
2. For each day that you want to sign up, put a check in the box for the role you want to do.
3. Click "Submit and Sign Up" at the bottom of the screen.

After you sign up for the shift(s) you want, please go to <https://volunteering.tchabitat.org> to complete the Volunteer Waiver. It will ask for a group type (faith group) and affiliation (Faith Builders). If under 18, a parent or guardian will have to sign. Print out the confirmation page and bring it with you when you work. If you are unable to fill out the online forms, contact the church and we can do it for you. Thank you for your participation and support! Questions? Contact Chuck Griggs of Unity's Affordable Housing Outreach Team: griggscb@msn.com or 612-408-0486.

OFFERING RECIPIENTS / LIBRARIES AND BOOKSTALL

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.**

June 7: St. Paul Almanac

St. Paul Almanac is a people's meeting space for sharing stories about St. Paul's diversity. Its mission is to promote dialogue that creates greater understanding, appreciation, and relationships between our city's individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Funds collected will be used to finish transcribing African American activist Kofi Bobby Hickman's recorded memories. Unity's Metric Giles is the board chair of St. Paul Almanac.

June 14: Freedom School

Freedom School is a summer enrichment program for St. Paul elementary students located in the Rondo Education Complex. After rousing morning rallies kids attend small classes and read stories about outstanding people of color in U.S. and local history, as well as fictional people who have prevailed over great adversity. Students retell the stories in art and writing. The day is capped off with afternoon math classes. Over 20 Unity Church members have volunteered each summer for the past two years.

June 21: Camp Tamarack

Camp Tamarack is a non-profit, non-denominational, overnight summer camp for boys and girls in the Twin Cities. The camp was founded in 1970 with the purpose of giving urban children the opportunity to experience a rural environment and to learn positive life lessons. Camp Tamarack prides itself on being an affordable, exciting, and memorable experience for our young campers. Unity Church member Dick Buggs supports Camp Tamarack.

June 28: Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity

The Unity Church Affordable Housing Outreach Ministry Team is co-sponsoring a Habitat for Humanity build as an interfaith partner in Faith Builders. This offering will go towards Unity Church's share of the cost of building this home.

July 5: Cycles for Change

St. Paul's Cycles for Change empowers local youth through paid apprenticeships teaching bike mechanics and public service leadership skills. Its free University Avenue Frogtown shop pulsates with hospitality inviting anyone to drop by and fix a bike with assistance from trained mechanics. Unity Church member John Faley can't stop talking about Cycles for Change.

July 12: Chalice Camp

Chalice Camp is designed to provide a unique opportunity for children in grades one through six to deepen their connections to Unity Church, Unitarian Universalism and the wider community. Both weeks of camp this summer will include worship, small and large group activities, and time for fun. This offering will support scholarship opportunities for church families. Unity Church member Hannah Eller-Isaacs is Chalice Camp Director.

July 19: Pillsbury United Communities Fully Cycle

Full Cycle is a nonprofit bike shop in south Minneapolis offering a six-month, paid internship program for homeless youth ages 16-23. Participants learn bike repair, customer service, and sales along with hands-on business skills including job keeping behaviors, resume writing, and interviewing protocol. Full Cycle's integrated neighborhood strategies include street-based outreach and a youth-run food shelf. Funds collected will directly support the summer internship program. Unity Church member Jim Davnie is a big supporter of Full Cycle.

July 26: St. Paul Almanac (see June 7)



Happy Summer From the Unity Library & Bookstall Team!

Looking for some good summer reading? The Anderson Library, Whitman Children's Library, and The Bookstall will be open all summer. Check out a few of our new titles.

In the Whitman Children's Library: **Where Are My Books?**

by Debbie Ridpath Ohi
What is happening to Spencer's books? When he finds out, Spencer devises a surprising solution that will delight readers (and librarians) everywhere.

In the Anderson Library: **Southern Witness: Unitarians and Universalists in the Civil Rights Era**

by Gordon D. Gibson
Author Gordon Gibson witnessed some of this history first hand as the only UU minister in Mississippi between 1969 and 1984. His interviews with dozens of other activists from the 1950s and 60s has produced many stories, some never before recorded.

In The Bookstall: **The Empathy Exams: Essays**

by Leslie Jamison
From personal loss to phantom diseases, *The Empathy Exams* is a bold and brilliant collection, winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize.

A Note from the Cairns Staff

Don't forget that you can submit your work to *Cairns* Vol. 7 anytime over the summer; email your work to us or contact us with questions: cairns@unityunitarian.org.

CAIRNS IIII 2015
COMING DECEMBER 2015

Art Team Seeks Members and Art

The Unity Church Art Team needs volunteers. The Art Team is primarily responsible for recruiting, selecting, and installing art exhibits in the Parish Hall. In addition, the team makes recommendations about all of the art in the church building and reviews the art that is currently in storage. The team is guided by the charge to enhance the mission and values of the church and to select art that broadens art appreciation, provides spiritual enrichment, and creates reflection.

You do not need to be an artist to join the Art Team! Please consider this invitation and join in time to help to select the shows for next year. For information and to volunteer contact Marty Rossmann at rossm001@umn.edu.

In addition to team members, the Art Team is calling for artists to submit their work for consideration. Submit your own work or encourage your artist friends to apply.

The deadline for submitting applications for the 2015-16 church year is June 20, 2015. Exhibit guidelines, policies and procedures, and application instructions are available online at www.unityunitarian.org/parish-hall-artists.html.

Please address questions about submissions to Cynthia Starkweather-Nelson at starkweathernelson@cstarnel.com.

June/July Parish Hall Artist

Richard Nelson: *Guatemalan Rainbows*

This vibrant and informative exhibit provides a window into the world of the indigenous Maya of highland Guatemala and their weaving traditions. The photography is an ethnographic and aesthetic documentation of 40 years of travel, research and collecting of textiles and traditional clothing in the highlands of Guatemala. Like so much else in the Maya world, back-strap weaving is not simply a relic from the past but a living skill, responding to new ideas and recreated with each generation.

Richard is an artist, photographer, collector of Maya textiles, and graduate of graphic design. His passion for back-strap woven textiles began in 1973 while studying photography in Tlaxiaco, Mexico, through the University of Minnesota studio arts program. At a Saturday market in a small village he saw Mixtec women dressed in the same brightly brocaded clothing they had worn for centuries. He was amazed at the comparatively simple technology of the back-strap loom that produced the remarkably complex fabrics. During the following winters, Richard traveled to Guatemala where the indigenous culture and weaving traditions are even more prevalent. He collected textiles and took photos of the people producing the fabrics.

www.richardnelsondesign.com

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministry



Life is hard, battles of all kinds continue to rage around us, and disappointments accumulate. But singing is the one thing in my life that never fails to take me to where disenchantment is almost nonexistent and feeling good is pretty much guaranteed.

— Stacy Horn from *Imperfect Harmony: Finding Happiness Singing With Others*

I am currently reading this book, recommended to me by one of my choir members. Finally there is time to catch up and delight in chasing down all the lovely books and scores that friends and colleagues have suggested throughout this year. And, right away, I find the exact quote that matches my sense of gratitude to all the wonderful singers and volunteer musicians I get to work with here at Unity Church.

Yes, the quote above is from the highly recommended book written by a long time chorister in New York. It brings to mind the amazing gathering of complex lives, joys, sorrows, challenges, range of life experiences and... all to sing together. It has been noted in studies of choirs that not only is it a centering activity, but hearts and pulse have literally found a common beat. Now, I haven't checked that out, stopping rehearsal and asking everyone to check their pulse. However, I have felt that powerful sense of "together" created by a unified gift of purpose and intention.

I have been witness to "disenchantment becoming nonexistent" and that "feeling pretty good" stuff. I am exceedingly grateful to each and every unique person who joins with us in song. Each unique member of each choir, of parents and families who support and cheer them on, of a congregation that appreciates their efforts and joins with us in singing.

I am so grateful for this wonderful community. Keep singing throughout the summer. Who knows, maybe you will want to join us in the fall.

Walk on, teach on, sing on!

Mark your Calendar! First Fall Choir Rehearsals

Unity Singers: Tuesday, September 8

Unity Choir: Thursday, September 10

Women's Ensemble: Sunday, September 13

Children's Choir: Sunday, September 13

WANTED! Summer Musicians

Summer is a great time to share your musical gifts with Unity Church members and friends. Summer lay-led services begin on June 28 and continue through September 6. If you are interested in participating as a musician during a summer service, please contact Kathleen Bartholomay at kathleenbartholomay297@gmail.com or 651-343-4764.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Pitter-pattering Questions

[...like raindrops on the window, and little feet running through the house]

From KP Hong, Director of Religious Education



When it concerns wisdom, we may not see her very well without stories. Stories that work along the borders of our minds and refuse any easy assimilation. Trojan horse stories that smuggle into our hearts contraband perspectives, past the checkpoints of propriety and the safety of familiar standpoints. Stories that originate from wisdom traditions as allegories and parables and foolish tales of Nasrudin and Kokopelli. But it was the story of Noah and the flood that was on my mind while visiting a friend

at Children's Hospital, and half-remembered rabbinic *midrash*, or interpretation on difficult (and dangerous) stories, that was wrestling for wisdom in the presence of suffering children. How do we keep our children safe from acute leukemia and muscular dystrophy and poverty and violence and all such deadly storms?

The image of the beloved community as Noah's ark, with children and animals safely sheltered from the threatening waters, easily comes to mind for me. Noah and his family ride out the storm, while the ills and wrongs and contaminants of the world are washed away clean. What parent has not prayed for such protection and reassurance? But in the rabbinic *midrashim*, there is a wrestling with another parallel story about boats, sea journeys, and dangerous waters that moves in a disturbingly incongruous direction from the Noah story: for Jonah does not long enjoy safe shelter aboard the ship but is thrown overboard to be swallowed up by the sea monster, and is spit up on foreign shores to go to work on the wrongs and contaminants of the world. With so many narrative parallels (the "dove" sent out by Noah is "yonah" in Hebrew), one cannot help question whether the Jonah story presents a *dissenting* voice of wisdom, deliberately commenting on the Noah story to question, unsettle, dismantle, and subvert it.

Jonah as a "subversive sequel" to Noah? A subversive wisdom that holds suspect privileged beliefs and prejudices veiled as conventional wisdom? If it is, then our own *midrash* on our ministry with children and youth asks us to see something greater than successfully accommodating our children to a tenuous conventional world, something more than floating above troubled waters. Such wisdom asks, how are we at being thrown overboard, swallowed into the belly of the fish, and spit out onto shores we did not plan on? How are we at providing our children with wisdom to live beyond predictable lives toward prophetic lives? If that is not spiritual practice, I am not sure what is. If that is not love for our children, I am not sure what is.

For all our teachers and spiritual guides dripping wet and drenched from diving in and spit out on new shores, my deep bow of gratitude.

Sharing questions that pitter-patter across our sacred journeys...

SUMMER CAMP AT UNITY CHURCH

ARTS CAMP WEEK 1: JULY 6-10 // ARTS CAMP WEEK 2: JULY 13-17
CHALICE CAMP WEEK 1: JULY 20-24 // CHALICE CAMP WEEK 2: JULY 27-31

Lots of ways to connect — for people of all ages!

Camps are for kids entering grades 1-6

Registration: www.unityunitarian.org/summer-camps.html

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. • \$250/week, scholarships available

Arts Camp Director: Rene Meyer-Grimberg, unityartscamp@gmail.com

Chalice Camp Director: Hannah Eller-Isaacs, chalicecamp@unityunitarian.org

Updates and Reminders

Religious Education steps into summer with our Summer Sundays in the Garden program, weekly at 10:00 a.m. For more information, please see: <http://www.unityunitarian.org/summer-sundays-in-the-garden.html>

Senior Bridging is Sunday, June 7: Families of graduating seniors are receiving invitations to participate in this tradition that acknowledges our graduates and blesses them in their ongoing journey. Please contact Drew Danielson with questions/comments: drew@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x112.

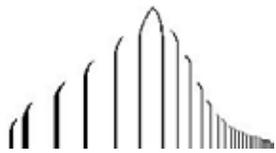
Register for summer camps: Information for Chalice Camp and Arts Camp can be found at: <http://www.unityunitarian.org/summer-camps.html>

For anyone who missed R.E. enrollment for 2015-16, we have two summer enrollment/orientation sessions: Sunday, June 14, at 11:30 a.m., and Sunday, July 12, at 11:30 a.m. Families will have a chance to enroll children, sign up for a volunteer roll, and share in orientation to next year's R.E. RSVP to: kp@unityunitarian.org

Coming of Age and Our Whole Lives

- Enrollment for Coming of Age 2015-16 is online: <http://www.unityunitarian.org/grade-9-coming-of-age.html>
- Pre-enrollment for Our Whole Lives 2015-16 is online: <http://www.unityunitarian.org/our-whole-lives.html>

Contact Drew Danielson: drew@unityunitarian.org/651-228-1456 x112



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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

Congregational Survey

Deadline is June 3!

Complete the survey online:
<http://bit.ly/2015ucuSurvey>



Please complete the survey which is designed as an opportunity for you to tell the Board of Trustees how you feel about this religious community, the work we are doing, and its impact on your life and the lives of others. Your feedback is essential. The survey is our board's best tool to measure our progress on our mission and toward our collective vision. We need to hear from everyone! Paper copies are available in Parish Hall after services or by contacting the church office.

10th Annual Unity Church Pilgrimage to New Orleans

Information Session on Sunday, June 28, 11:30 a.m., in the Center Room

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and the 10th pilgrimage of Unity Church members and friends who have gone to respond. Join the 2015 pilgrimage this fall, from October 24-31, and help Unity Church continue to make a difference.

This is an opportunity to participate in a service and educational pilgrimage to the city of New Orleans where many of its citizens are still rebuilding their homes and communities a decade later. The week-long trip includes hands-on service projects for participants, meetings with community leaders who are working to rebuild the city, connections with new and old friends, and opportunities to explore the rich and unique culture of the Crescent City. Each pilgrimage also offers time for reflecting on major themes of racial and economic justice in New Orleans related to our communities back in St. Paul. For more information come to the June 28 information session or contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

One Voice Mixed Chorus
presents: **gender UNCHECKED!**
AT THE NEW ORDOY CONCERT HALL
SMASHING THE BOXES OF GENDER WITH SONGS PLAYFUL AND PROFOUND
Tickets: \$15-\$40

June 13, 2015 3:00 & 7:30 pm
ONE VOICE MINNESOTA'S LGBT+ MIXED CHORUS
Building community and creating social change by raising our voices in song.
Ordway Concert Hall
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or 651-298-1954