

commUNITY

Vol. 34, No. 7

Unity Church–Unitarian

March 2011

Surrender

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 March theme is Surrender.

It was not a typical time or place for kneeling – a summer evening several years ago when I stood at the kitchen sink, hands immersed in the warm dishwater. But then it happened. After days of first denying and then fending off an illness as yet undiagnosed, my legs simply buckled. I sank down slowly, knees to the floor, hands gloved in soap suds and draped over the sink, eyes glancing up, lifted to a new skyward perspective through the open window. For all my fierce determination to keep going on my own, to continue my tasks at work and at home, in that moment on bended knee I acknowledged my limitations and surrendered, feeling a grateful connection to the sky beyond my windowsill. It was surprising how much it felt like prayer.

Worship Theme Resources

BOOKS

Learning to Fall: the blessings of an imperfect life, by Philip Simmons, essays by a gifted Unitarian Universalist writer, reflecting on his search for peace and wisdom while living with ALS for ten years before dying in 2002.

Reaching Out: the three movements of the spiritual life, by Henri Nouwen, a thoughtful discussion of the movement from loneliness to solitude, from hostility to hospitality and from illusion to prayer.

Peace Like a River, by Leif Enger, a story of family, faith and spirit set in Minnesota and exploring the surrender of the human heart.

Surrender, for many of us, does not have a very good name. In a culture that values individual accomplishment, strength and victory, surrender conjures up images of defeat, weakness and capitulation – a white flag feebly raised as one turns oneself over to the enemy.

But the white flag, initially recorded as an act of surrender almost 2,000 years ago, is first and foremost a commitment to disarmament and a request for parley. Recognized by the Geneva Convention, the white flag is a promise not to fire on others and a reciprocal request not to be fired upon while you enter into conversation. In the context of spiritual discipline, this kind of surrender suggests a dropping of our defenses just long enough to become open to another. It is a vulnerability we often resist in the name of independence and self-protection; and it is this resistance that can leave us in an ironically susceptible state of crushing perfectionism, isolation and despair.

As Carl Jung once observed, there appears to be in humankind a conscience that “severely punishes” those who do not “somehow and at some time, at whatever cost to (their) pride, cease to defend and assert (themselves), and instead confess (to being) fallible and human.”

But to what or to whom do we surrender in spiritual terms? And, importantly, how do we avoid the danger of surrendering to forces that would do harm, to us or to others? How do we know what is trustworthy of our surrender?

Consider, for a moment, the surrender that occurs in a healthy, loving relationship. How, when you love someone deeply – be it a child, parent, lover or friend – you set down your shield and let down your defenses, how you open and offer your heart. In this kind of love, it is less a surrender to the other person as it is a surrender to the relationship, to the partnership you have made and continue making together.

So too, in our spiritual practices, we are asked to surrender to a partnership with that which is sacred, with the ground of our Being, with our highest Truth. It is a partnership that begins when we yield to our own limitations and then lean into relationship with a larger possibility, a greater oneness, with the wider web of life. It is a partnership in which we turn ourselves over to that great demanding claim that we be nothing less than our fallible but whole and truest selves, healed and connected to one another.

D.H. Lawrence wrote, “Go down to your deep old heart, and lose sight of yourself. And lose sight of me, the me whom you turbulently love. Let us lose sight of ourselves,” he said, “and break the mirrors. For the fierce curve of our lives is moving again to the depths out of sight, in the deep living heart.”

So it begins on bended knee; then it lifts us up together, rising into the new day.

~ Karen Hering,
Consulting Literary Minister

JUST WORDS

Just Words

Adrienne Rich ends her great poem *Phantasia for Elvira Shatayev* with the following words:

What does love mean

what does it mean "to survive"

A cable of blue fire ropes our bodies

burning together in the snow

We will not live to settle for less

We have dreamed of this all of our lives

In a less dramatic but no less true sense we are bound together by a dream we have been dreaming all of our lives.

Over the past year we've been dreaming big. The *Unity Tomorrow* conversations fostered a bold vision for the future of our church and of our church facilities. That vision has a price tag, sixteen point five million dollars. At this point our vision is far bigger than our pocketbook. Over the past month or so, our fund raising counsel, Andy Currie, has been meeting with a select group, mostly made up of those who give the most money to the operating fund. He has met with twenty-nine households and with The St Paul Foundation. He has presented a case statement which suggests we need twelve million dollars to restore and expand our church home, two million to endow it's upkeep, two million to buy land on which to expand our ministry and half a million for campaign and financing costs. What he heard from those he interviewed is that they love their church and want to see it repaired, but that our plans for expansion, endowment and land acquisition will likely have to wait. Based on the study and on his broad experience he projects that we can raise four million dollars. Please read the recommendation from the Board on page 4.

Now the Board, the Executive Team and other key church leaders will come together to make some hard choices. Our architectural team assures us that we can address the key infrastructure issues and make significant progress toward our vision for four to five million dollars. But some important questions need to be answered before we move forward. The feasibility study is predicated upon the assumption that ten percent of the donors will provide eighty percent of the money. Is that a fair assumption? Suffice to say it is extremely difficult to raise sixteen point five million dollars without a number of gifts of one to three million. Just do the math.

That said, by phasing the project and slowing things down we may well be able to share responsibility for our church home and, ultimately share the vision of our ministry far more broadly. What we need now is you. We need everyone to join the conversation. We will be convening a number of sessions to do just that. After each service on Sunday, March 6, we will be presenting results of the feasibility study, and inviting each and every one of you to bring your ideas to the table. Then after the 11 o'clock service on Sunday, March 20, there will be a special congregational meeting to vote on the Board's recommendation to approve a capital drive with a minimum goal of four million dollars. Friends, we may have to settle for less, we certainly will need to phase the project, but remember in the end our ministry depends far less on our building than it does on our people and on our partners and on the dreams we share.

Yours in faith,
Rob Eller-Isaacs

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Frances Joan Thoreen

Born one more redeemer

February 9, 2011

to parents

Mary Hanrahan and Tim Thoreen

Congratulations to

Sonja Blackstone Kjerland

for being selected as one of the two
Augsburg College Nobel Peace
Prize Forum Peace Scholars.

In Memoriam

Mary Stringer Wilson

September 9, 1926–

February 14, 2011

In Remembrance

Hope Horner Henderson

beloved mother of

Sally Seiberlich

and grandmother of

Susan, Christine, and Erick

Maurice J. Schlatter

beloved father of

Ron Schlatter

and grandfather of

Emma and Eli

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



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MARCH WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sunday services are held at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., and 4:30 p.m. except where noted.

Sermon podcasts and archives are available online at www.unityunitarian.org.

March 6: *Surrender Dorothy* — Rob Eller-Isaacs

The Witch of the West writes it in the clouds, her broomstick belching out the letters while we shudder down below. What could be worse? And yet the capacity to surrender into faith is an essential aspect of spiritual maturity. Rob and Worship Associate Steve Harper will wrestle with what spiritual surrender might mean for us.

March 13: *Maşallah* — Kerri Meyer

In Arabic, the word for *surrender* and the word for *peace* spring from the same root. Spiritual surrender is at the core of many religious traditions. For Unitarian Universalists, though—peace-seeking people that we are—our question may be, “Surrender to *what*, exactly?” How might surrender—to beauty, to failure, to love, to pain—become a spiritual experience for us? Join Kerri Meyer, Unity’s Director of Religious Education and Worship Associate Marg Walker for an exploration of *giving up as opening up*.

March 20: *To Live Beyond the Fear* — Rev. Levent Lazar

We welcome the Rev. Levente Lazar, the 2010-11 Balazs Scholar. Each year an outstanding Transylvanian Unitarian minister is selected to spend a year at Starr King School in Berkeley. And each year we have the honor to welcome him or her to our pulpit. In light of this month’s theme Rev. Lazar has been asked to share his thoughts on surrendering the sense of victimhood. How do we find the strength to begin again after decades of oppression? Rob will help to frame the topic and serve as Worship Associate.

March 27:

When it Just Looks Like Surrender — Janne Eller-Isaacs

The martial art of aikido teaches the student to take the energy of an attack and not to resist it with force, but rather to transform it by meeting it and moving with it, therefore resisting more effectively. Janne and Worship Associate Laura Schlatter will explore the spiritual power of a chosen sense of surrender like those practicing nonviolent resistance.

Meditation in the Zen Tradition

Are you... interested in exploring a contemplative spiritual practice? ...curious about meditation? ...interested in deepening an existing Zen practice?

Ken Ford, lay teacher at Clouds in Water Zen Center (St. Paul), is coming to Unity Church on Saturday, March 19, from 9:00 a.m. until noon. Ken will offer instruction in Zen tradition and practice. Join us for friendly group practice and reflection, led by an experienced teacher and practitioner.

\$20 suggested donation includes lunch. No one will be turned away. Please RSVP to Jason Seymour via phone at 651-228-1456 x129 or by e-mail at jason@unityunitarian.org.

March 6: *Support Our Schools (SOS)*

Support Our Schools mission is to support public education in St. Paul by influencing district policies, building leadership capacity with a Candidate College for school board candidates and engaging the community in providing additional resources to help improve student achievement. SOS has helped build approximately 40 community partnerships between schools and faith communities, corporations, and nonprofits. In 2007, SOS helped Unity Church rekindle its long standing relationship with Obama Service Learning Elementary. Since then, 55 Unity Church volunteers have mentored 5th and 6th graders needing academic assistance and the support of another caring adult in their lives.

March 13: *Night on the Street* (Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation)

Night on the Street, an annual event sponsored by the Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation, raises awareness and financial support to work against systemic poverty, especially among youth in Minneapolis and Minnesota. Each year, youth from various religious traditions in the Twin Cities area spend a night in the Plymouth Congregational Church parking lot in cardboard boxes and engage in conversation with other youth about poverty and homelessness. Last year, along with over 400 youth from 33 congregations, Unity Church youth participated in this event and helped raise \$45,000 for the work of the foundation in providing affordable housing in several areas of Minneapolis.

March 20: *Balazs Scholar Program*

This offering supports the Balazs Scholar Program that brings a Unitarian Transylvanian minister to study in the U.S. at the Starr King School for the Ministry by providing fundraising, administrative assistance and tuition to each new scholar. This year’s scholar Rev. Levente Lazar, together with his wife Rev. Erika Demeter, serve five congregations. Rev. Lazar will be the pulpit guest at services on Sunday, March 20, and will be the guest of honor at a potluck lunch and discussion sponsored by the Partner Church Team on Saturday, March 19.

March 27: *Heart to Heart*

In 1994 Heart to Heart (H2H) began as, and continues to be, an “informal” group of volunteers whose mission is to strengthen and enrich relationships for all committed couples—married and unmarried, same-sex and opposite sex. H2H offers weekend retreats for couples and, following each retreat, guides the start-up of an ongoing group to provide a monthly opportunity for couples to nourish their relationship. H2H is patterned after the Marriage Encounter model, but has been redesigned from a liberal religious perspective. Church members Eric and Laurel Lein were among the founders of H2H and have led 16 annual retreats. Many participants, plus three of H2H’s seventeen lead couples, come from Unity Church.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / *UNITY TOMORROW*

Board of Trustees

from Beverly Heydinger, Trustee

As the *Unity Tomorrow* process moves into the next phase, we are excited and challenged by the possibilities. Many of you have submitted comments, some with enthusiasm, some advising caution, and some with clearly voiced skepticism. This is all for the better because when considering a decision with far-reaching implications, it is important to consider all of the pros and cons and to plan for both the best and worst case scenarios. This will assure that we come up with a proposal that opens opportunities for the future and does not foreclose them, and addresses our dreams while reflecting the reality of an uncertain future.

This is a good time to take a moment to remember that all participants in the conversation about Unity's future share the goal of building a strong and thriving Unity Church where we live out our values and our Ends Statements. Responsible minds can and do differ, sometimes quite vehemently, about how to reach those ends. Some of us can tolerate more risk than others. Some of us are more outspoken than others. Some of us see a vision of broad community engagement while others are more concerned that the physical space we inhabit serves our members. Some think that our physical space and the success of our broader ministry have little relationship, while others believe that a beautiful space for worship and education is the foundation for all that we do.

There are many other points of difference that will be illuminated by our conversation. Each point of view is valid; our best solution will not try to do all things for all people, but will try to find the common threads and weave them into a solution that positions Unity Church to move ahead.

As we move through the coming weeks, the temperature of the conversation may rise. The Board members will try to listen carefully to the concerns raised by others, search for the common threads and develop a plan that is respectful of many points of view, within our means, and takes Unity Church forward to meet the challenges as yet unknown. We urge you to help us in this process.

Please make every effort to attend one of the open meetings where the results of the feasibility study are discussed. The study is our best professional estimate of the money that Unity Church can realistically raise in a capital campaign to meet our dreams. It will guide our future as we develop architectural plans and resource allocations that are within our means.

Feasibility Study Open Discussions

Sunday, March 6, 2011 • Following all three services
(Approximately 10:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m., and 5:45 p.m.)

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, March 20, 2011 • 12:30 p.m.

Please contact a member of the Board if you would like to ask questions or share your views. We welcome your thoughts.

***Unity Tomorrow* Recommendation from the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees recommends that the congregation authorize a capital campaign with a minimum goal of \$4 million for infrastructure improvement, bringing our building up to code, and moving forward with the *Unity Tomorrow* vision. Following design development, a phase one plan will be presented to the congregation. We further recommend that the congregation limit debt in the project to the cost of short term construction financing.



Unity Tomorrow **Mark Your Calendar!**

Sunday, March 6
Following all three services
Open Discussion: Feasibility Study

Sunday, March 20 • 12:30 p.m.
Special Meeting
of the Congregation



Call to Meeting

Special Meeting
of the Congregation
Sunday, March 20
12:30 p.m.
Sanctuary

The Unity Church Board of Trustees has called a special meeting of the congregation. The Board will make a recommendation to the congregation concerning the next steps in the *Unity Tomorrow* process as well as a possible capital campaign. The congregation will then vote on the proposed recommendation. Eligible voting members of the congregation include those who have signed the membership book, made an identifiable pledge to the church for 2011 and a contribution towards that pledge.

From the Anti-Racism Leadership Team

Pauline Eichten, ARLT member

In June 2008, PBS aired a documentary called “Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North.” Katrina Brown, the filmmaker, had learned that her New England ancestors, the De Wolfs, were the largest slave-trading family in U.S. history. She and nine fellow descendants retraced the Triangle Trade, from Rhode Island to Ghana to Cuba, and filmed their journey.

In watching the film, I was struck by the realization that the buying and selling of captured Africans was not something that happened in isolation, perpetrated by a few bad people. There was an entire economy that developed around it. Shackles and barrels, and other necessary items, were made and sold. Supplies for the ship, the ship itself, goods and services, foodstuffs, clothing—everyone made a living off the trade, whether or not they were directly involved in dealing in slaves. Good people kept silent, went along to get along, and buried the knowledge of their complicity. Amnesia about the legacies of slavery is one of the ways that systemic racism works to keep white people oblivious to continuing racial disparities. And I wonder, in what ways am I—are we—complicit with injustice today?

Descendants of the De Wolf family have created a website and resources, based around the film, which people can use to learn more, have discussions, and take action. On the site, they note that Martin Luther King, Jr. articulated his vision of the beloved community in four steps:

- Learning our history, as painful as that may be;
- Developing a process by which discussion of these things can lead to mutual compassion;
- Crafting a vision for community where everyone has a seat at the table;
- Realizing sacrifice: what are we prepared to give up or lay down in order to form such a community?

Visit www.tracesofthetrade.org for more information.

12th Annual White Privilege Conference

April 13 – 16, 2011

Sheraton Bloomington, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The White Privilege Conference is an opportunity that shouldn't be missed! The keynote speakers are high caliber and the opportunity to meet and engage with other folks committed to undoing racism and oppression are unparalleled. — testimonial from a past participant

In addition to the conference there are one-day institutes, a concurrent Youth Leadership Conference, and opportunities for high school students. The basic rate for the conference is \$315 before March 15 (\$365 after). There are reduced rates for teachers, students, and groups. Visit www.whiteprivilegeconference.com for details. For questions or registration by phone contact Daryl Miller at 719-255-4764.



Jason Seymour

2010-11 Hallman Ministerial Intern

One of my favorite popular Zen teachers is Adyashanti. In his book, *The End of Your World: Straight Talk on the Nature of Enlightenment*, he reminds readers, “Make no mistake about it—enlightenment is a destructive process.” He continues, “It has nothing to do with becoming better or being happier. Enlightenment is the crumbling away of untruth.”

To practice Zen, therefore, is to practice non-attachment to our ideas... to experience our selves, however briefly, free from the bondage of ego... fluid, at ease, present, and with awakened compassion.

Christianity has within it a similar tradition of selflessness: *kenosis*. *Kenosis* is a Greek word for emptiness, or “to empty out.” Understood in a Christian context, it refers specifically to the moral nature of Jesus: Jesus emptied himself of his own will, thereby becoming more receptive to the love of God, as a vessel for God’s grace. Viewed through a Christian understanding of history, Jesus is the supreme exemplar of *kenosis*; his crucifixion, a selfless act of self-sacrifice, its ultimate expression. See Philippians 2:1-8 (NRSV):

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

A modern, familiar telling might sound like this: The voice of the Divine is within you. But to hear it... you must make room, and listen.

This is no easy task, especially in a society rife with individualism, coercion, and greed. It is no easy task either in a theological tradition like ours that has historically privileged individual conscience and critical intellectualism over submission or surrender.

But there is something worthy of our surrender. Something that fills me up as I empty myself, an embrace, something generative that remains after my critical thought strips away the husk.

Is it inner peace? Maybe. God? Maybe. Love? Maybe.

In truth, I’m not sure that it is important to identify. Only to feel its movement through me, like breath. Like breath...

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE / FELLOWSHIP / LEARNING

Fellowship Groups

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, March 14 and 28, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

Unity Singles: Contact: Bonnie Reiland at bonniereiland@aol.com

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month 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

Unity Men's Group: Third Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Nels Otto at 651-484-4590

Unitots!: A playgroup for families with kids through preschool age. Fridays at 9:30 a.m. Contact: Michelle Hill at 651-264-0884

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

Unity Bridge Club: First Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Mary Barrett at 651-225-9708

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

Unity Book Club: Tuesday, March 8, at 7:00 p.m. *The Battle for God*

Job Transition/Networking: Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Contact Rachel Holtzer, Facilitator, at erholtzer@gmail.com

U-knitarians: Wednesday, March 16, at 7:00 p.m.

Wellspring Wednesday

6:00 p.m. Dinner: \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4, and \$18/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.

March 2: Awakening the Dreamer (Part II)

Facilitators Karen Studders and Katheryn Schneider continue the work of The Pachamama Initiative. The Pachamama Initiative is an organization committed to protecting the indigenous people and the indigenous wisdom of the Amazonian Rainforest. Participation in Part I of this series is not required.

March 9: How Can We Surrender to Our Better Selves?

An act of surrender can make us stronger and kinder, more loving and compassionate. Join Bill Doherty and Leon Dunkley in an exploration of the possibility of surrendering to that which is beautiful in life—love and family, hope and possibility.

Bill Doherty is an educator, researcher, therapist, speaker, author, community organizer, and a Professor in the Department of Family Social Science and Director of the Citizen Professional Center at the University of Minnesota.

Dinner: roast chicken, salad, bread, chocolate cake

March 16: A Meditation in the Practice of Forgiveness

How difficult it is to forgive one another. How difficult it is to forgive ourselves. So often, we lack the patience that forgiveness requires of us. Unity member Laurel L'Allier, Luke Stephens-Royer and Leon Dunkley in a conversation about the possibilities of forgiveness.

March 23: Wizard of Oz

The Wizard of Oz ranks among the most important films of 1939, second only to *Gone With the Wind*. During spring break week, watch this American classic almost in its entirety. In 1900, author Frank Baum wrote a novel entitled *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Baum died twenty years before the film was released. Although it was a box office failure upon its release, over the years *The Wizard of Oz* has become one of the best-known of all films.

March 30: "Surrender Dorothy!!"

The Wizard of Oz has inspired musical, theatrical and cinematic interpretations, a slew of fantastic analyses, and the Oz Collection that is housed right here, at the University of Minnesota Library. All of these are known to Ruth Berman.

Ruth Berman blends a fan's enthusiasm with a scholar's learning. As a fan she was a founding member of the Minnesota Science Fiction Society, contributor of hundreds of letters to magazines devoted to science fiction (called "fanzines"), and editor of the outstanding Star Trek fanzine *T-Negative*. She has also been active in the International Wizard of Oz Club. Ruth has a PhD from the University of Minnesota and has taught freshman English at the Universities of Minnesota and Oklahoma.

Weekly Meditation

Tuesdays • 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Zen meditation is an accessible spiritual practice that offers awareness, clarity and peace. People of all experience levels are welcome. Please arrive promptly; newcomers are encouraged to arrive 10 minutes early.

Elders' Circle

Tuesday, March 22 • 1:00–2:30 p.m.

The Elders' Circle is a group of church elders (self-identified!) who convene monthly for worship, fellowship and fun. For more information, contact Hallman Ministerial Intern Jason Seymour at the Church Office. Refreshments will be served.

Women's Wisdom Circle

Thursday, March 3 • 1:30-3:00 p.m.

An afternoon group for women who would like to share life experiences and wisdom is being formed. The first meeting of the Women's Wisdom Circle will take place on Thursday, March 3, in the Anderson Library. Please contact Maryann McGuinn at 651-698-8467 with questions.

OPEN PAGE: reflecting with pens in hand

These guided writing sessions, led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, are invitations to the creative spirit, opportunities to correspond with “the still, small voice within.” No writing experience necessary; only an empty page and an open heart and mind. Check individual listings for location and registration requirements and fees.

Sunday, March 6 • 2-4 p.m.

Reflection Topic: Surrender • Unity Church

Free; RSVP karen@unityunitarian.org

“Adoration, as it more deeply possesses us, inevitably leads on to self-offering,” wrote Evelyn Underhill. To what sacred truth and presence do you offer yourself? What is the meaning of surrender in our spiritual journeys? What does it ask – and not ask – of us today? Registration not required, but an e-mail to karen@unityunitarian.org is requested to help in planning space and handouts.

Saturdays, March 19 and 26 • 9:00 a.m.-noon

Reflection Topic: Pilgrimage into Creativity

The Loft Literary Center: 1011 West Washington Avenue, Minneapolis

Registration and fee information at: www.loft.org

It has been said that “pilgrims are poets who create by taking journeys.” Perhaps it is also true that writers are pilgrims who journey by creating poetry and stories. This two-session class explores the writer’s pilgrimage into creativity. With poetry, stories, small objects, and visual images, we’ll use guided writing exercises to travel the unmapped landscape of creativity. For writers at all levels of experience, this session can be a tool for breaking down writer’s block, for considering the pilgrim’s journey involved in creative writing and creative living, or for engaging your writing as a spiritual practice.

Thursday, March 24 (first of three monthly sessions) • 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Reflection Topic: Love

Wisdom Ways, Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul

Registration and fee information at: www.wisdomwayscenter.org

“Love is our true destiny,” said Thomas Merton. “We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone – we find it with one another.” We’ll consider love’s many faces, its gifts and its many demands, asking what is dying and being born as we lay down our lives for one another.

Other Programming and Resources

For more information about the *Faithful Words* literary ministry and additional writing programs offered in other locations, visit www.unityunitarian.org/WritingMinistry.htm. These programs are supported by a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism and contributions from individual donors.

Inherent Worth:

A Brief History of UU Economic Thought

Mondays: March 7, 14, 21, 28; April 4, 11

Unitarians and Universalists have for years wrestled faithfully with conflicting views of economic justice, the role of government, growing social disparity, and personal financial ethics. In this six-part series, we will read and discuss some key contributions of UUs past and present, from Thomas Jefferson and Ralph Waldo Emerson to Chuck Collins. There will be ample time for questions and discussion of how the material relates to the present-day economic and political environment. The group may also culminate in the creation of an economic justice ministry team. For more information, and/or to reserve a place in the class, contact Jason Seymour by e-mail at jason@unityunitarian.org.



What’s New

in the

Library and Bookstall

In the Bookstall on This Month’s Worship Theme: Surrender

Taking Down the Defenses centers on personal disarmament—the need to stop defending one’s self. It is a beautiful winter tool for self-examination and quiet thinking by Arthur Foote, minister of Unity Church for twenty-five years. In his retirement he became a stoneware potter, surrendering to his creative spirit. Available in The Bookstall for \$5.00.

CELEBRATE!

Women’s History Month

Our congregation has the somewhat unique opportunity to read about women among us as they live and reflect on their experiences in *Cairns*, Vol. 2. In “History as a Spiritual Practice,” Rev. Sarah Barber-Braun tells about the path that led her there. Maura Williams reveals the power of sitting in a circle with incarcerated women in “Women’s Stories.” Ruth Stryker-Gordon (“A Little Girl and Her Minister”), Linnie Mae Siems (“Growing Up Above the Spot Bar”), Laura Schlatter (“Shifting Sands, Shifting Truths”), and the poetry of Henriette Johnson and the late Pat Argyros, are among those who inspire through authentic personal history.

Read the latest issue of *Cairns* for these remarkable pieces, and for the art and words of Unity men and women, as well. Find it in The Bookstall.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Partner Church Ministry Team

STOP!

Order Your Easter Plants at Unity Church

Order your Easter plants at Unity and support exchange visits between Unity members and our Partner Church friends in Transylvania.



Find the table with a flowered hat in the Parish Hall and/or the cloister to order your brightly colored blooming plants on Sunday, March 20, March 27, April 3, and April 10. Plants will be ready to be picked up on Palm Sunday, April 17.

Potluck and Discussion with Transylvanian Minister Saturday, March 19 • Noon



Want to learn more about Unitarians in Transylvania or catch up on recent developments there? Join members and friends of the Partner Church Team for a potluck lunch and presentation/discussion with current Balazs Scholar Levente Lazar.

Levente is in residence with his wife, Erika, and their children at Starr King School for the Ministry, the Unitarian Universalist seminary in Berkeley, and will preach at Unity Church on March 20. Levente and Erika minister to Unitarian churches in five Transylvania communities. He will talk to us about their ministries and current developments there.

Bring your greetings, questions, and a dish to share to this informative and fun event!

Restorative Justice Team Makes Minnesota Warmer

Unity's Restorative Justice Ministry Team is playing an active role in both the church and the outside community and we invite you to get involved.

The Restorative Justice Ministry Team, (RJ Team) work strives to move our response to crime from "getting even" through punishment to "getting well" through shared dialog and action.

On January 26, RJ Team members volunteered with the Minnesota Second Chance Coalition at Second Chance Day on the Hill, a day in which those organizations supporting opportunities for those who have committed crimes and paid the price to rejoin society through fair access to employment, housing and other needs. The RJ team members helped greet and register about 500 participants in a rally at the State Capitol Rotunda. Ex-offenders, county sheriffs, clergy, nonprofit staff and community volunteers all joined for the rally and visits with legislators. We spoke about issues such as banning the felony checkbox on initial job applications. We also spoke about ways we could help young men and women move on from mistakes they made as a juvenile in an age when arrest records can be found with a couple of mouse clicks. The day was both energizing and troubling as team members realized once again how many people are negatively impacted by unfair practices against ex-offenders.

The RJ Team has also joined with its community partner Amicus in holding a "Winter Warmup" clothing and hygiene drive. Thousands of people every year visit Amicus' offices in search of basic needs after leaving a correctional facility. These needs include warm winter clothing and hygiene items such as soap, deodorant and toothpaste. This year's drive is the most successful in recent memory, bringing in over 850 items, with over 350 coming from Unity members! Unity teen Keenan Rust was personally responsible for 80 items, as he and his family conducted a drive to collect items from his neighbors. Without any special help or encouragement from Amicus or the RJ Team, Keenan created a flyer promoting his drive and then distributed it by hand in snowy, cold weather. Through Keenan's efforts, dozens of men have a warm coat and gloves as they continue their search for permanent housing and employment.

RJ Team members recently attended a viewing of the documentary, "Me Facing Life: Cyntoia's Story." This is the story of a 16-year-old Tennessee girl, beaten, raped and forced into prostitution, who was given a life sentence after killing a man she thought was going to shoot her.

The RJ Team meets every month, generally on Thursday evenings. We share a simple soup supper and then discuss our many active projects and upcoming events. We welcome anyone who is interested in joining. Time commitment is only as much as you are able to give.

For more information about Restorative Justice or Unity's RJ Team, please contact Pat Haff by phone 651-228-1456 x126 or by e-mail at pat@unityunitarian.org.

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. **March 20 suggested items: peanut butter and jelly.**



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, March 9. Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, March 16.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

UUSC: What's Up?

from David Byfield and Marty Rossmann, UUSC Ministry Team

Standing in Solidarity with the People of Egypt: The Egyptian people deserve justice, participatory government and their full measure of human rights. Their peaceful, nonviolent protest demonstrations told the world of their commitment to their dreams. UUSC encourages the military to bring about a peaceful transition to a government that responds to the needs and respects the rights of the Egyptian people. UUSC's partner in Egypt is the American Islamic Congress.

Human Right to Water

- UUSC is concerned that more people are losing their access to clean, affordable water.
- UUSC's work led to PepsiCo becoming the first corporation to publicly acknowledge their obligations regarding right to water. Implementing their policy world-wide is being undertaken.
- Projects of UUSC's partner in Kenya, The SoilFarm Multi-Culture Group, are to teach children to plant trees (to preserve the rain forest) and to help adults find alternative forms of income that don't harm the forest.

Rights of Workers throughout the U.S. and the World: UUSC encourages support of living wage campaigns – to raise the poverty-level minimum wage. As with our Unity Church efforts to promote fair trade coffee, UUSC promotes chocolate companies that guarantee that abusive child labor has not been used to gather the cocoa.

Drumbeat for Darfur: This project raises voices urging the U.S. government and other influential institutions to make ending the genocide one of their highest priorities.

Haiti Volunteer Program: Currently medical volunteers are needed to respond to the cholera epidemic and basic health needs in Haiti. Future UUSC trips will offer opportunities for builders, teachers, gardeners and others who want to get involved.

UUSC Membership: Consider becoming a UUSC member. Membership costs are: \$40 Individual; \$75 Couple; \$10 Student/Youth; \$20 Senior; \$40 Senior Couple. The Membership form is on the UUSC web site.

Team members are needed! Please contact David Byfield at 612-374-4786 or DBYF@aol.com or Marty Rossmann at 651-690-4370 or rossm001@umn.edu.

ZINDABAD!

AN EVENING OF INDIAN DELIGHTS

Saturday, May 7 • 6:00-10:00 p.m.
Unity Church Parish Hall

Mark your calendar for Saturday, May 7, for an evening of Indian delicacies, music, dance and festivity!

An *Evening of Indian Delights* is sponsored by a group of Unity Church members who are in the process of developing a future Community Outreach Ministry Team.

"Zindabad!" means "long live" in Maharashtri. This event is a fundraiser for the Vidayak Sansad Project, an organization that works to promote human rights and education among the most exploited and oppressed of peoples in Maharashtra, India.

Unity Church has informally supported Vidayak Sansad for many years. In March 2012, a group of unity Church members will be traveling to Mumbai, India, to learn more about the organization and especially its school for tribal girls.

In the coming months, the group will be exploring other ways to support Vidayak Sansad, as well as learning more about India in general through readings and presentations. If you are interested in joining this effort, or in helping out with the Evening of Delights, please contact Wendy Harris by phone at 651-917-8880 or by e-mail at worldsigner@gmail.com or Laney Ohmans by phone at 651-270-2349 or by e-mail at dolores.ohmans@gmail.com.



Eklavya Parivartan Vidyalaya
(Residential School for Tribal Girls)

Is There A Paradise in Your Vegetable Patch?

Farming in our homes and communities is a rewarding, earthbound practice with tremendous spiritual resonance and rewards. Unity Church members are invited to a meeting to explore a possible new Community Outreach Ministry Team, with a focus on urban farming. We will explore this focus, as well as possible themes and projects and logistics at this first meeting—before deciding whether or not to form a team.

Join Audrey Matson and Patricia Ohmans for a no-commitment-necessary conversation on Thursday, March 10, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. If you can't make it but you are interested, contact Pat Haff at the Church Office.



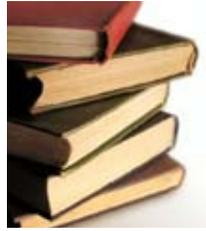
MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Annual Used Book Sale! April 2 and 3

Come stock up on good reads! Unity folks read the best stuff – benefit from our congregation's shared love of reading while supporting our Youth Ministries!

Dates and times:

- UNITY MEMBERS ONLY SNEAK PREVIEW:
Midnight to 1:00 am on Saturday, April 2, before the sale opens to the public! (Please – no booksellers!)
- Saturday, April 2: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., booksellers welcome!
- Sunday, April 3: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., plus \$5-FILL-A-BAG from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.!



Donations for the sale can be dropped off at church through Friday, April 1.

2011-12 Religious Education Registration

Families planning to enroll children and youth in next year's Sunday School program MUST attend an in-person registration session. Please mark these dates on your family's calendar and choose ONE to attend. Childcare provided at all sessions.

- Saturday, April 9, 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, April 13, 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, April 17, 1:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 19, 7:00 p.m.

Note that at all sessions, parents will sign up for their volunteer role in our shared ministry. At all sessions, pledging families will have priority registration, followed by returning teachers, followed by open enrollment. Classes are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Contact Kerri with questions.

Unity Youth: Spend a Night on the Street!

Raise funds and awareness to end the crisis of youth homelessness in our cities on Friday, April 15. Hundreds of Twin Cities youth of all faiths will sleep out in boxes in an expression of solidarity with the more than 1500 teenagers who have nowhere to sleep on any given night in Minnesota. A Night on the Street asks youth not just to learn about homelessness but to be part of the solution. Register by March 20, by printing a permission slip (link on Unity's webpage) and bringing it, signed, to church. Visit <http://nighthonthestreet.org> for details about this life-changing annual event.

Teachers Needed at All Three Services!

Our shared ministry with children requires many hands and hearts! Several Workshop Leaders are needed for our upcoming R.E. Unit on Endings. Teach the same lesson several Sundays to different groups of kids: April 10 and 17, May 1, 8 and 15. Lesson plans and materials provided. Our central idea is that everything in the known universe is impermanent. How does this bless and challenge us as human beings?

9:00: Music – Sing “Turn, Turn, Turn” and listen to Vivaldi’s Four Seasons!

11:00:

Music - Sing “Turn, Turn, Turn” and listen to Vivaldi’s Four Seasons!

Science – Explore compost as an example of nature’s cycles!

Drama – Use improvisation and a puppet show to explore impermanence!

Story – Share in stories about nature’s cycles and write haiku about changes!

4:30:

Music - Sing “Turn, Turn, Turn” and listen to Vivaldi’s Four Seasons!

Story - Share in stories about nature’s cycles and write haiku about changes!

Chalice Camp

CommUnity Kids:
Exploring Our Neighborhood!

Summer 2011
July 11-15 or July 18-22

New Program

This year's theme is exploring our church's neighborhood! We'll meet and help neighbors through Obama School, SULAH, River of Life and House of Hope. A balance of community service and summertime fun! Camp is still Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Multi-age group

Kids in grades 1-5 are encouraged to enroll. Chalice Camp will also enroll kindergarten and 6th grade siblings of campers in 1st-5th grades.

Enrollment starts March 1

Pick a week to attend (July 11-15 OR July 18-22) Mark your family calendar! Watch the church website for registration forms beginning March 1.

Tuition will stay at 2010 rates (\$200 Earlybird, \$250 after May 1).



Nursery Items Needed

The Unity Church nursery is in need of items to keep the youngest members of our community happy and healthy. The nursery is currently accepting donations of:

- gently used clothes (for all seasons and in all sizes, up to 3T)
- new underwear (size 2T and 3T)
- diapers and pull-ups
- baby wipes
- sanitizer

Donations should be brought to the nursery on Sunday mornings or left in Christy Randall's office if delivered during the week. Thank you!

MUSIC MINISTRY

March Parish Hall Artist

Katy Taylor
Winged Heart Collage



I've been collaging for about 15 years, and while people always like my collages, it was a surprise to be published in *The Vision Board* and now to be showing this body of work!

Whether I choose a topic consciously or not, I never know what will emerge when I begin a collage. I allow the images, words, colors, shapes, and textures to guide me. I let the materials call to me, to show me how they fit together, allowing the process to unfold until it feels complete.

I love working with lots of colors, textures, and found objects—including earrings, beads, jewelry, sticks or leaves, ribbon, photos, or poetry amidst the clipped images. Themes include the mystery of love, life, and death; spiritual practice; and explorations of parts of myself that I wish to understand and own.

The finished collage often holds new insight and meaning I wasn't aware of going into it. I love how the process unfolds—it's not about my conscious mind deciding what I want, but about a deeper wisdom of wholeness, heartfulness, and beauty coming through.

Artist Reception

Friday, March 11 • 5:00-7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Meet the Artist

Sunday, March 13 • After the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services in the Parish Hall

Concerts with a Cause: Two 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. A suggested donation of \$10.00-plus is appreciated. However, concerts are free and open to the public. All are welcome!

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, March 6 • 3:00 p.m. • *Pavia Winds*



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. Members include: Emily Sapa, flute; Sarah

Carmack, oboe; Ryan Golden, clarinet; Justin Windschitl, bassoon; Gina Monge, French horn. Unity's Director of Music Ministry, Ruth Palmer, guest pianist.

Sunday, March 27 • 3:00 p.m. • *Unity Singers*

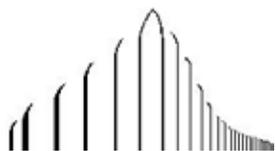
Yes, our very own Unity Singers in a program of favorites from years past and present.



About our "Cause": Circle of Peace

Circle of Peace is a neighborhood grassroots organization of peacemakers committed to breaking the cycle of inner city youth violence. This circle was started by Russel Balenger, an employee of Amicus, Inc., a Rondo neighborhood resident and a grandfather to youth living in the community. The Circle of Peace, composed of Totem Town juvenile offenders, parents, grandparents, and community members, has great potential for impacting the community by creating a different, more positive relationship with youth in trouble. After only a few months of meeting in the Circle of Peace, a number of parents have welcomed their incarcerated youth back home. The circle has met once a week at Unity Church since last March, providing dinner hour meals and writing materials to all youth participants for developing their plans for success. The Unity Church Restorative Justice Ministry Team and its community partner, Amicus, both support this exciting new community effort.

2011 Children's Musical: See back cover!



UNITY CHURCH–UNITARIAN

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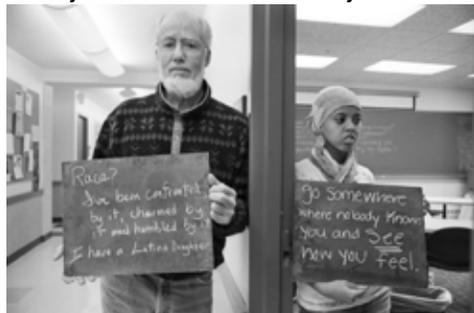
**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

To read the *Unity Tomorrow* recommendation from the Board of Trustees, please turn to page 4.

Wing Young Huie The University Avenue Project

Wednesday, March 9th at 7:10 p.m. ~
Robbins Parlor Reading & Slideshow
at Unity Unitarian Church ~ 732 Holly Avenue ~ St. Paul



A SIX MILE INQUIRY

In 2010 Wing Young Huie's **University Avenue Project: The Language of Urbanism, a Six-Mile Photographic Inquiry**, transformed University Avenue in Saint Paul into a public gallery of over 400 photographs

Wing, a native of Duluth, Minn., has received international acclaim for his projects documenting MN
Sponsored by the Unity Library & Bookstall Team. Wing Young Huie's books, *University Avenue Project, Volumes I & II*, are available for purchase in the Unity Bookstall on Sunday mornings and will also be offered at the Parlor Reading on March 9th.

Unity Church–Unitarian presents a new children's musical...



A play by Rene Meyer-Grimberg & Mary Blouin Auffert
Music by Sandy Waterman

Thursday, March 3, 2011 7:00 p.m.
Friday, March 4, 2011 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 5, 2011 5:00 p.m.

\$6 adults • \$3 children • \$15 family