

commUNITY

Vol. 34, No. 9

Unity Church–Unitarian

May 2011

Peace

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 May theme is Peace.

The Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh once noted that given the many threats our planet now faces, “We are about to panic because our situation is no better than the situation of a small boat in the sea.” If we are to stay afloat, he suggested, “We need people who can sit still and be able to smile, who can walk peacefully. We need people like that in order to save us.”

It sounds desirable enough – more people smiling and walking peacefully – but it’s hardly where we seem to be headed. Instead, as the briefest exposure to talk radio or television makes clear, we are actually turning up the volume on those who prefer to stand in the dark theater of the world recklessly shouting “Fire!” Or to stay with Nhat Hanh’s metaphor, if it’s a small boat we’re all in together, we have an awful lot of people rocking it right now, and not to any decipherable advantage to the boat or those of us in it.

So where and how do we define and find peace in the midst of the rough seas

we are in today? As wars slog on for decades and environmental destruction threatens planetary extinction and the nuclear meltdown in Japan reminds us of unanswered questions we would rather ignore, how can we possibly cultivate the kind of peace needed to sit still in this wildly tipping boat and smile at one another? Indeed, one might ask, should we?

A growing number of arguments on both ends of the political spectrum say this is not the time for sitting still. Rather, many declare it is high time we let our adrenaline kick in and move us into action. One key to understanding peace theologically, though, lies in recognizing that these two approaches are not as much at odds as we sometimes make them out to be.

Peace, in other words, is not inaction, nor is it the absence of concern or conflict. Conflict is a fact of our existence. In a world made not only beautiful but possible by diversity, conflict is as necessary to life as waves

are to the sea. True peace emerges not from the avoidance of conflict but in how we respond to it and whether we are able to take it in.

Can we widen our hearts and minds to make room for conflict within? Can we similarly open our relationships, our communities, our personal and civic dialogue to make room for difference and conflict without engaging violence? Can we extend our capacity for love to make room for those with whom we disagree, even our so-called enemies? These are the questions we might ask in cultivating peace, a practice that requires not only love but also time and great strength and discipline. It is also a practice that begins so close to home we often cannot see it, as the first and sometimes most difficult peace we are called to make is peace with ourselves.

“In the dictionary of nonviolent action,” Mohandas Gandhi pointed out, “there is no such thing as an ‘external enemy.’”

This may be another way of saying that when you’re in a little boat close to capsizing on a big, rough sea, it matters how you resolve your differences. The simple rules of family canoe trips through the Boundary Waters might be of some help here. For when sparring siblings in the same canoe cross a wide and windy lake, wisdom says: First, sit down. Consider the needs of the only paddling partner you have. Smile, if you can; at the very least, avoid insulting one another. Then, dip your paddles in the water together – and on opposing sides. It’s the only way you’ll reach the shore, against the wind and waves.

~ Karen Hering,
Consulting Literary Minister

Worship Theme Resources

BOOKS

Being Peace by Thich Nhat Hanh, a collection of talks by the poet and Zen master delivered to American peace activists and students of meditation about the importance of being peace in order to make peace.

Bone to Pick by Ellis Cose, a thoughtful and global exploration by a Newsweek contributing editor of the broad spectrum of possible responses to personal violence and national tragedy.

Let Me Stand Alone by Rachel Corrie, the journal writings, poetry and drawings of a 23-year-old American killed in 2003 by a bulldozer while trying to block the demolition of a Palestinian family’s home in the Gaza Strip.

FILM

Amazing Grace and Chuck a family movie about a little league pitcher from Montana who takes a stand against nuclear weapons and war.

Star Wars, any in the series...

JUST WORDS / WHEEL OF LIFE

Just Words

On Sunday, March 20, 225 members of Unity Church gathered for a Special Meeting of the Congregation. After a background presentation on the *Unity Tomorrow* process the Board of Trustees placed a formal resolution before the congregation. The resolution directs the staff to conduct a capital campaign with a minimum goal of four million dollars. The money will go to repair and replace the infrastructure of the church building, bring it into compliance with building codes, enhance accessibility, and begin to equip the building to serve the needs of a growing 21st century congregation. Those in attendance voted unanimously to support the campaign. The Board, the Executive Team and the many volunteers involved were touched and thrilled by the vote and by the sustained standing ovation that followed.

Now we're hard at work. Our architects are completing the schematic design phase helping to narrow the scope and clarify the costs of the project. Campaign materials are being produced, early commitments are being secured, the Communications Team is gearing up to insure that the congregation is well-informed. Over the course of the spring the Capital Campaign Team, with help from the staff, will be in conversation with those we hope will become lead donors. The Team itself has already committed well over a million dollars. We're off to an excellent beginning.

Come fall we plan to conduct a consolidated campaign asking each and all of us to maintain or increase our commitment to the operating budget while also making a pledge in support of the capital campaign. This is time to stretch, a time when in order for the church to thrive, those of us who love it will have to say yes to both fundraising efforts. Your pledge to the operating budget helps to fund Unity today. Your pledge to *Unity Tomorrow* will help restore and expand our beloved church home not only to our benefit but also to the benefit of future generations.

Yours in Faith,

Rob Eller-Isaacs

for the Unity Church Executive Team

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Olive Marcella Goff

Born one more redeemer

March 3, 2011

daughter of

Kevin Ward and Jessica Goff

Raymond Robert Moore

Born one more redeemer

March 14, 2011

son of Peter and Lisa Moore

Grandson of Betsy and Jim Moore

Alex Howard Haresch

Born one more redeemer

January 10, 2009

and officially joined parents
Patty and John Haresch and big
brother Will on March 22, 2011

Grandson of

Betsy and Howard Guthmann

Walker Andrew Darst Rice

Born one more redeemer

April 10, 2011

son of Brooke and Mark Darst Rice

In Memoriam

Karen Hanson

July 21, 1942 – April 17, 2011

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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MAY WORSHIP CALENDAR

Beginning Sunday, May 29, and continuing throughout the summer, Sunday services will be held each week at 10:00 a.m. 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.

May Worship Calendar

May 1: *Arthur Foote Music Sunday*

Featuring Artaria String Quartet, Unity Singers, and Unity Choir.

May 8: *Peace, Peace, and More Peace* — Janne Eller-Isaacs

Julia Ward Howe tirelessly pushed for a holiday that promoted peace for the nation. She thought it had the best chance of catching on if she connected it to a celebration of mothers. Janne and Worship Associate Katy Taylor will explore the meaning of a mother's peace and its importance in our daily efforts to find and claim inner peace.

May 15: *What Really Happened Here* — Rob Eller-Isaacs

Peacemaking is a stern discipline. Conflicts of values are not easily subject to compromise and when conflict turns violent, reconciliation can be excruciatingly difficult. Rob and Worship Associate Hal Freshley will discuss the art and discipline of making peace.

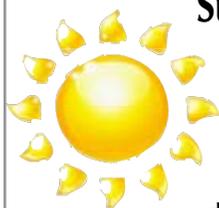
May 22: *Our Sure Blossoming*

Come celebrate the affirming, uniquely Unitarian Universalist ritual of Flower Communion. Developed by Czech Unitarian minister Norbert Capek who died a martyr at Dachau, the ritual celebrates the intrinsic beauty of each and every soul. **BRING A FLOWER FOR THE ARCH.** This is a celebration for the entire church family. Each service will include a dedication ceremony for older children.

May 29: ONE SERVICE AT 10:00 a.m.

"...for Peace and a New Hope" — Rob Eller-Isaacs

Archibald MacLeish asks "Whether our lives and deaths were for peace and a new hope or for nothing we cannot say; it is you who must say this." Each year on the Sunday before Memorial Day we invite the congregation to honor those who have died and those whose lives have been forever changed by war. Rob and a Worship Associate drawn from among our many veterans will offer a poignant, powerful service to close our series on Peace.



Summer Worship

From Memorial Day through the Sunday after Labor Day, there is just one service each week at 10:00 a.m. Lay-led worship services begin July 3. Religious Education ends on May 15, but starting May 29 and continuing through the summer, children and adult volunteers will be in our Children's Garden during the 10:00 a.m. summer services.

Flowers for Summer Worship

If you would like to bring flowers from your garden for a 10:00 a.m. summer worship service, please contact Julie at the Church Office at julieh@unityunitarian.org. The available dates are June 12 through August 28. The flowers need to be arranged in a vase and placed in the chancel by 9:15 a.m. on the Sunday you select.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, May 14

9:30 a.m.-Noon

Meal Ritual and Chalice Making Workshop



As a Unitarian Universalist (UU) parent, have you ever wished for a uniquely UU ritual you could practice with your children at home? So have we! Join us on Saturday, May 14, from 9:30 a.m. until noon and learn the meal ritual created by the Young Unitarian Universalist Families Initiative. We'll share the ritual and our experiences and challenges when practicing it in our own homes. Families will have the chance to practice the ritual over lunch and your children will make their very own chalices!

Reminder!

Flower Communion is
Sunday, May 22.

Remember to bring
flowers for the arch!



Sunday, June 5 • 10:00 a.m.

Senior Bridging Ceremony

High school seniors are warmly invited to join us at 10:00 a.m. worship on Sunday, June 5, for our annual Bridging ceremony in which their achievements are honored and their plans for the future blessed and celebrated. Participants are also invited to a brunch at the ministers' home following worship. Check your postal mailbox for an invitation. Parents will also receive an invitation to a gathering for families sending their youth into the world. RSVP for the weekend's events by contacting Kerri at the Church Office.

OFFERING RECIPIENTS / HERITAGE SOCIETY

May Offering Recipients

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

May 1: Foote Music Fund

Arthur Foote was minister at Unity Church from 1945-1970. Upon his death in 1999 the Arthur Foote Music Fund was created as a permanent endowment to provide an annual music Sunday in his memory. Currently the endowment supports a portion of Foote Music Sunday expenses. Your gifts to grow this endowment are gratefully accepted!

May 8: Affordable Housing Team Habitat for Humanity Build

The Unity Church Affordable Housing Ministry team is cosponsoring a Habitat for Humanity 'green' build as a partner in Faith Builders during the last two weeks in June. The other neighborhood churches involved in this partnership are Assumption Catholic Church, the Cathedral of St. Paul, St. Clement's Episcopal, and House of Hope Presbyterian. A Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity 'green' build integrates building practices that reduce detrimental impacts on the natural environment, promote healthy indoor air quality for occupants, and reduce energy costs while increasing the long-term affordability of homes. This offering will go towards Unity Church's share of the cost of renovating a home on the east side of St. Paul.

May 15: Teenwise Minnesota

Formerly known as Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting (MOAPPP)

Teenwise Minnesota is the statewide leader in promoting adolescent sexual health, preventing adolescent pregnancy and gaining support for adolescent parents. This is achieved by developing, strengthening, and advancing science-based policies and programs. The Teenwise Minnesota vision is that all youth grow to be sexually healthy adults and Minnesota teen parent families thrive. Teenwise Minnesota works closely aligns with the Our Whole Lives (OWL) programming at Unity Church. In the last year, they provided training to over 400 professionals working with youth and sponsored the 19th annual two day workshop that was attended by over 300 people. They helped to shape public opinion about adolescent sexual health by providing information to over 35 media outlets in Minnesota and recently worked to bring program development for teen fathers to community organizations. Unity Church member Rob Fulton is a member of the Teenwise Minnesota Board, and church member Grit Youngquist is a past board member.

May 22: Unitarian Universalist Association

Association Sunday supports the Unitarian Universalist Association which represents 117,000 Unitarian Universalists in 560 congregations. Funds raised this year will be used for outreach for Unitarian Universalist ministers of color and the congregations they serve, and for grants to congregations for growth outreach projects.

May 29: Veterans for Peace Minnesota

Veterans for Peace Minnesota works with others to increase public awareness of the cost of war; restrain the government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations; end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons; seek justice for veterans and victims of war; and to abolish war as an instrument of national policy. To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace. Unity Church members Barry Riesch and Michael Orange actively participate in the work of Veterans for Peace Minnesota.

Heritage Society

Welcomes

Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman



By making a planned gift to Unity Church, you would be joining almost 200 others who have committed to supporting our programs and outreach into the future. Our annual Heritage Society Dinner on Friday, May 13, is the church's way of thanking those individuals who have made planned gifts. Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman, long time member of Unity Church and Minister Emerita at First Unitarian Church of Dallas, will be the guest speaker.

Planned giving is an intentional act that leaves a lasting legacy in your name and sustains the powerful work of this church for generations to come.

A planned gift is a designation from your estate to a charitable organization. Your "estate" is the sum of your assets, including property you own, insurance policies, retirement accounts, cash on hand, etc.

If you have already made a planned gift to Unity Church (but haven't told us!), if you are in the process of making a planned gift, or if you would like more information about planned giving, contact Barbara Hubbard at the Church Office.

2012 PLEDGE TEAM / HALLMAN MINISTERIAL INTERN

From Mary Baremore, Pledge Team Member

What?!

**An article about the Annual Pledge Drive, already?
It's only May!!**

Hold on! Hold on! We know it's only May, but we just wanted to remind you that the Pledge Team is still around.

It's a busy year for us here at Unity Church. We stand on the precipice of a Capital Campaign that will allow us to make necessary improvements to the church infrastructure. But we still need to pay our outstanding staff and keep the lights on. The Annual Operating Pledge Drive and the Capital Campaign are two separate animals. Both are critical to the continued life and growth of our church.

I've been invited to join the Annual Operating Pledge Team this year. While considering my commitment to the Team and the work that needs to be done, I considered first my commitment to this church and this way of life.

Why do I love this church and its people so much? There are many reasons, but what speaks most profoundly to me came from my experience as a Worship Associate (WA). I had been attending church regularly prior to joining the WA Team, and had my children enrolled in Religious Education. But it was during my time as a Worship Associate that I learned what Unitarian Universalism, and more specifically this church, had to offer. Here is a place I can come with my rough edges and tattered religious background to explore and refine my relationship to the divine.

The extraordinary ministers, the music, the incredible religious education for both children and young adults, opportunities for service and work in social justice, the work of the ministry teams. We work hard around here to make our world a better place!

But there's more to do. If the lights are not on and the staff goes away because we can't pay them, the work of this congregation will undoubtedly continue, but it will move forward without the community we have here.

Unity Church was the answer to a question I didn't realize I was asking. The opportunities for spiritual growth, building community and doing service are things I find invaluable, and I hope you do too. Please consider getting involved in our fall Annual Operations Pledge Drive as we move forward together!

**www.unityunitarian.org
is getting a makeover!**

**Check the website in May for
improved navigation, current information,
and enhanced integration of services.**

Jason Seymour

2010-11 Hallman Ministerial Intern

I am not a pacifist. To some of you this may come as a surprise. I believe that peace is the most compassionate and just pattern of relations between living beings, an ideal worthy of the highest human aspirations and strivings. But I do *not* believe that it is the *only* way that beings should relate. To believe this would be to strip from those who are oppressed the sometimes necessary tool of a violent defense to violence. For example, if you attack my family, I will defend them, violently if need be. I cannot accept pacifism on strategic grounds; however, I can and do defend the merit of a peaceful ideal.

"Just war" theory entered the news cycle again a little over a year ago, following President Obama's Nobel acceptance speech. I heard several people at the time offer their support to Obama's embrace of "realism," for his triumph over "pacifist idealism". This language makes me angry because I think it does a disservice to the very real value of a peaceful ideal. Of any ideal, really. The debate is set up as follows: "(militaristic) realism" versus "pacifist idealism." Thus, the only path forward that is *realistic* – that is, not an idealistic pipe dream – is one of violence and military force.

But are realism and idealism really mutually exclusive opposites? Must we really choose just one or the other? I don't think so. But this assumption is at the very heart of so many modern political debates, debates that obscure a basic fact of human life: we are always real and yet we are always rendering ourselves with a little bit of fantasy, a little bit of some ideal. To claim a completely "realistic" viewpoint is to be false to the facts of a shared life in which everyone is to some extent biased and shaped by personal experience. What if we all for a moment decided to be perfectly "realistic"... would the "reality" that emerged from each of us be uniform and identical? Absolutely not!

Reinhold Niebuhr is heralded as the progenitor of American religious realism. However, he was also a pacifist... then a militant Socialist, and then an anti-communist who eventually defended communism from its own zealots. Niebuhr's realism referred not to a static political perspective but to the consistent, critical interrogation of the egotistical view that any ideological pole is an end itself. He chided churches for their moralism, claiming that human images of God are always somewhat self-serving. This same criticism he applied to America with regard to its militaristic foreign policy: "We are tempted to the fanatic dogma that our form of community is not only more valid than any other but that it is more feasible for all communities on all continents." (*The Structures of Nations and Empires*, 1959)

As political debates continue (about the economy and American foreign policy, in particular), let us do something truly Niebuhrian: let us call out false dichotomies and moralisms for the self-serving dangers that they are. We all must work to make the ideal real. Neither is much good without the other.

FELLOWSHIP / SPIRITUAL PRACTICE / COMMUNITY

Fellowship Groups

These fellowship groups are open to all. Please contact the person listed for more information.

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, May 9 and 23, 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. or starting on May 29, after the 10:00 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, May 10, at 7:00 p.m. *One River, Many Wells* by Matthew Fox

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

Sangha Meditation: Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Ames Chapel

Openings at Camp UniStar

Camp UniStar, a camp for Unitarian Universalist individuals and families located on Star Island in Cass Lake, still has openings for this summer! Please visit www.campuniSTAR.org for details.

Work Week: June 4

Music Jam: July 2

Scoundrels and Scandals: July 9

Miniature Worlds: July 30

Fiber Optics: August 27

Job Transition/Networking Group

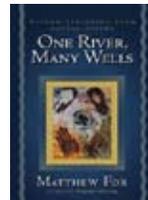
Meets every Monday • 9:30-11:30 a.m.

The Job Transition Networking Group was created to offer support, encouragement, information, and skill-building resources to Unity Church members who are unemployed or underemployed. Contact Rachel Holtzer, Facilitator, at erholtzer@gmail.com.

Unity Sangha

Tuesdays • 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Find renewal and grounding each week in a supportive group setting. Strengthen a private practice by sitting in community. 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.



Unity Church Book Club

The Unity Church Book Club will meet from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10. The book they will be discussing is *One River, Many Wells* by Matthew Fox. Tuesday, June 14, the Book Club will be discussing *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky* by Heidi Durrow. **Everyone is welcome — even if you haven't read the book!**

Caregivers Group

Thursday, May 19 • Third Thursday of the month • Noon-2:00 p.m.

Join Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and Pastoral Care Team member Cynthia Orange for an informal support group for caregivers. This month's Caregivers' Group invites participants to reflect on the challenge of "finding and keeping our balance" as caregivers responding to our loved ones' often shifting needs. Literary Minister Karen Hering will lead the caregivers' group in an afternoon of guided writing, a chance to listen to one's own voice and needs in the role of caring for another in ill health. No writing experience needed. Newcomers welcome. Please RSVP to Janne Eller-Isaacs by email at janne@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x106.

Elders' Circle Group

Tuesday, May 24 • 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 Jason Seymour via email (jason@unityunitarian.org) or via phone through the Church Office. Refreshments will be served.

Call for Artists

If you or someone you know would like to be considered for the 2011-2012 Parish Hall art exhibit calendar, please download an application from our website at www.unityunitarian.org. Applications are also available by contacting the Church Office. Applications must be received by Thursday, May 26.

LITERARY MINISTRY / UNITY LIBRARIES

OPEN PAGE: reflecting with pens in hand

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

**Sunday, May 8 • 2:00-4:00 p.m. • Reflection Topic: Peace
Unity Church • Free; RSVP karen@unityunitarian.org**

“Peace is people talking together with a heart in between them.” So says a wise eight-year-old, reminding us that peace is less about the absence of conflict than our ability to respond to one another with hearts engaged and held open in conversation and relationship. This session explores the inner and outer dimensions of peace and how one affects the other. Registration not required, but an e-mail to karen@unityunitarian.org is requested to help in planning space and handouts.

Thursday, May 19 • Noon-2:00 p.m.

Caregivers’ Support Group

Reflection Topic: A Shifting Balance

Unity Church • Free; RSVP janne@unityunitarian.org

This month’s caregivers’ group at Unity Church invites participants to reflect on the challenge of “finding and keeping our balance” as caregivers responding to our loved ones’ often shifting needs. Literary Minister Karen Hering will lead the caregivers’ group in an afternoon of guided writing, a chance to listen to one’s own voice and needs in the role of caring for another in ill health. No writing experience needed. Newcomers welcome. Please RSVP to Janne Eller-Isaacs by email at janne@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x106.

Thursday, May 26 • 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Reflection Topic: Belonging

Wisdom Ways, Carondelet Center

1890 Randolph Ave., St. Paul

Registration and information at: www.wisdomwayscenter.org

“The bird belongs to the sky, even though it cannot sleep there; the egg belongs to the nest even though it will not stay there.” To whom and to what do you belong? Join us for an exploration of the many forms of belonging, some of the ways we find it in our lives and what is gained and lost when we give ourselves to it.

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



What’s New
in the
Library and Bookstall
from Shelley Butler, Library Team

Peace is in the Whitman Children’s Library

We know it when we have it, we definitely know it when we don’t have it, but what really is peace? Peace is not the absence of violence or war; that describes a nonentity. Dictionary.com defines peace as, “a state or condition conducive to, proceeding from, or characterized by tranquility.” Try to say that three times real fast while explaining it to a child.

Better yet, read what children from the Ambrint International School in Rome think about peace:

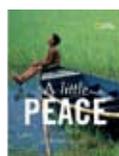
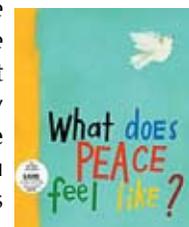
Peace sounds like everyone’s heart beating, making one big sound together. Marco, age 9

Peace looks like a cloud high up in the sky that just happens to be there giving happiness to everybody, white and fluffy. Bruno, age 8

Peace smells like wind that comes in your nose when you are sleeping. Finbar, age 9

Peace feels like someone stroking your back; you shiver a little, but it’s a wonderful feeling. Irene, age 8

When asked what peace tastes like, over 100 boys and girls said: *like vanilla ice cream, chocolate ice cream, strawberry ice cream, banana ice cream...* These and more thoughts about peace are paired with the vibrant and wacky illustrations of Vladimir Radunsky (whose characters look like stuffed toys that you want to hug) in the new classic children’s book, *What Does Peace Feel Like?*



In *A Little Peace* by Barbara Kerley (National Geographic), magnificent photographs of children and families from around the world illustrate: *All it takes is one hand, one smile, a single voice... to spread a little peace.*

There’ll Be Peace in The Valley Bookstall for You

Take a look in The Bookstall at featured books on peace. Remember, if you don’t see the book you want there, we can order it for you; be sure to ask our great volunteers. FYI—A portion of the proceeds from *What Does Peace Feel Like?* will be donated by Simon & Schuster to CARE, a leading humanitarian organization fighting world hunger.

Your Bookstall purchases support Unity Libraries. The proceeds from The Bookstall are used not only to keep the Anderson and Whitman Children’s library collections current, but also for literary events, like **Café Unity**, which just happens to be coming up on **Friday, May 6, at 7:00 p.m.** **See the back cover for details.**

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Support St. Paul Youth Walking the AIDS Walk!

The Interweave group at Unity Church continues to explore ways to actively partner with LGBTQ youth, because we don't want them to have to wait for it to get better! We want it to be better, now; we want the youth to know that this community cares for them every day.

HIV/AIDS infection rates among youth are on the rise, and it's important that we support education in schools, the community and ourselves. Out for Equity, a program within the St. Paul Public Schools, is leading the youth of the City's schools in participating in the AIDS walk. Students from each of St. Paul's Gay Straight Alliance clubs will come together and participate.

In 2009, the number of new infections in our state hit a seventeen year high. HIV prevention is essential right now to stop the rapid increase in new infections and address misperceptions about the disease.

Support the Students by donating to the AIDS Walk Pledge Fund! Interweave will be in the Parish Hall on several Sundays in the next few weeks. Stop by the table, donate to the AIDS Walk Pledge Fund and we will pool all the donations to make a pledge to each of the St. Paul Public School students participating in the AIDS Walk.

Why? Here are the words of one student:

"I am walking because of my uncle and his partner who died of AIDS, as well as for every person at risk I've ever met. This is very important to me because of how life changing and life threatening this is and how I hope someday this can be changed."



Amicus One to One Information Sessions Coming Soon

One to One trains and supports volunteers as they develop positive and affirming friendships with motivated inmates. Such friendships are an important part of an ex-offender's successful transition from prison back into the community. For their part, volunteers often call their One to One service one of the most meaningful volunteer experiences of their lives.

Please join us at an upcoming One to One information and training session. The training is free and meals are provided. Sessions are held from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at either at the Amicus office conference room (15 South Fifth Street, Suite 1100, Minneapolis) or at Unity Church. Next trainings are April 26 at Amicus, May 9 at Amicus and June 13 at Unity Church.

To register, please contact Chris Doege by email at chris@amicususa.org or by phone at 612-348-8570 x22. Amicus is the community partner to Unity Church Unitarian's Restorative Justice Ministry Team.

Reflections from Project Home

Every year we ask Project Home volunteers to reflect upon this experience. Elizabeth Newton agreed to share her thoughts....

"How do we play?" they asked me with inquisitive eyes. I stood there for a second, taken aback by my own assumptions. Of course, it was perfectly logical that these two African American children, who did not even have a consistent address or room to call their own, would not be familiar with the rules of Foosball. However, it still startled me that something so familiar to me that I had taken for granted was so foreign to someone else. Quickly I recovered and explained the rules, and we played and laughed for the next hour.

I was happy to take the children for a while and give the parents some reprieve. In many of the adults you could see very clearly the stress and worry they went through on a daily basis for their families. However this was completely absent in the children. Regardless of their home situation or poverty level, they laughed and played like any other child their age. They played together seamlessly, ignoring the differences in skin color, culture, and even language. With the exception of not being familiar with some games, you could completely forget the fact that they were homeless. In fact, I found that chivalry is still alive in the heart of an adorable 4 year old that waltzed with me at an imaginary ball and called me his princess. Despite all the hardships that come with the instability of homelessness, the children persevere.

These experiences made me question any assumptions I had based on my own circumstances and reevaluate the way I saw people around me. I learned a lot, and will continue to do so. I plan to help out with Project Home again this spring, when I return from college. Won't you join me?

The need for volunteers is great. To sign up, please contact Erika Dinkel-Smith by email at unityprojecthome@gmail.com or Pat Haff at the Church Office.

Unity Church and Habitat for Humanity: Summer Building!

Unity's Affordable Housing Outreach Ministry Team is organizing a summer building opportunity in partnership with a group of neighboring churches called Faith Builders. There are many opportunities and whatever your skill level, you can contribute to this important work! Monetary donations are also greatly needed. To sign up or make a donation, please visit the Affordable Housing team table in the Parish Hall after most services in May, or contact Chuck Griggs at griggs@msn.com.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

UUSC Update

from David Byfield and Marty Rossmann, UUSC Local Representatives

Where there are crises in the world, you'll likely find UUSC.

- In Japan – The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) partnered to raise more than \$200,000 to aid in the recovery efforts. Rissho Kosei-kai (RRK) one of the UUA's religious partners, is providing shelter, food and clothing to people who are homeless. A UUA emissary to Japan reported severe devastation among RRK congregations. Contributions are needed to alleviate the suffering. Go to UUA/UUSC Japan Relief Fund. Identify Unity as your home church.
- In Haiti – During mid-April, 7 medical professionals from around the U.S. were on the ground in Haiti – working with UUSC's Haitian partners to deliver vital health care.
- In Grand Bayou, LA – With partners in the community, three boats, badly damaged by Hurricane Katrina, were repaired in time for the start of the shrimping season.
- In Tanzania – A team of students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are working with partners to solve pressing water and sanitation problems.
- In Kenya – Alliances have been formed among street vendors.
- In Peru – With partners, UUSC has fought the tide of water privatization.
- In Uganda – UUSC is looking for medical personnel to volunteer to join a team going to northern Uganda from July 25 to August 4. Working with UUSC's partner, Caritas Pader, the team will provide health checkups, vaccinations, and advice on nutritional needs.

UUSC does its work with grassroots groups already serving their communities.

UUSC staff look for groups that work in unique and innovative ways, but lack the resources needed to propel their work forward. UUSC seeks groups that approach human rights with sensitivity to issues of gender, class and race. Here are some statistics about UUSC's current partners:

- Rights in Human Crisis – Involved in six countries (plus the U.S.) with 18 partners
- Environmental Justice – Involved in 10 countries (plus the U.S.) with 12 partners
- Civil Liberties – Involved in four countries (plus the U.S.) with nine partners
- Economic Justice – Involved in three countries (plus the U.S.) with eight partners

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. **May 15 suggested items: diapers, wipes, and baby food.**



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, May 11. Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, May 18.



ZINDABAD!

AN EVENING IN INDIA

Saturday, May 7 • 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Unity Church Parish Hall

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

The evening is a celebration of solidarity with Vidayak Sansad, an organization that works to promote human rights and education among the most exploited and oppressed of peoples in the state of Maharashtra, India. "Zindabad!" means "long live" in Marathi.

The issues are serious, but our evening will be joyous, colorful and festive. Enjoy selections from a sumptuous vegetarian buffet of central Indian dishes and desserts, while listening to classical Indian music. Shop a bazaar of beautiful crafts. Indigenous art, traditional dress, and multi-media displays will add to the ambiance and entertainment.

The event, while not a fundraiser, will support the work of Vidayak Sansad, which Unity has informally supported for years. In March 2012, Unity members will be traveling to Mumbai, India, to learn more about the organization and especially its school for tribal girls. For more information, contact Laney Ohmans at dolores.ohmans@gmail.com or Wendy Harris at worldsigner@gmail.com.

Tickets for Zindabad! are \$10 per person, and are on sale in the Parish Hall after 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services. You can reserve a ticket by calling Pat Haff at 651-228-1456, x126. Childcare can be reserved by contacting Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Rice, Playlists, Energy, and Community

from Deborah Carter McCoy

Unity Church offers a robust social justice and community outreach ministry for adults. Raise your hand if you know that there is an active, age-appropriate youth component connected to these very ministries. Meet the Junior High Social Justice Youth Group (JYSJYG)!

Competition for the time of 11-13 year olds is fierce so every effort is made to ensure the outreach ministry activities are fun, involve movement and provide an opportunity to learn - without losing sight of the gravity of the work. For instance, your JHSJYG overcame severe sewing machine malfunctions to prepare 30 **rice** bags for victims of torture. The youth were introduced to the very serious nature of the issue but enjoyed laughs and conversations as they cut fleece, ~~made a mess with rice~~, stuffed socks with rice, hand sewed socks and fleece tubes, and prepped the final product for delivery to the Center for Victims of Torture. I arrived at CVT on a snowy day before Thanksgiving, was warmly greeted, and informed that the last of the rice bags had just been given away. The gift was a blessing and a wonderful Thanksgiving message for the youth.

The youth created cards for people in military service and those within our congregation. In addition, one of our youth shared her idea to create art to frame and sell. Proceeds would be donated to a cause the group supported. The project is called "Art Made by a Bunch of Kids to Promote Change." During these activities **playlists** were a huge topic of conversation as iPods were docked. What a treat to listen to the whole group singing along to show tunes or Michael Jackson.

In the deepest winter the youth volunteered at Mano a Mano. It was crystal clear that they shared an abundance of pent-up **energy** in January. Twenty-five hundred brochures folded. Cases of school supplies sorted. Boxes of crafts counted. Bags of baby clothes organized. It had been a month since they had last volunteered at the Santa Pause, so maybe that was it.

Spring has brought us back to the earth's awakening and the revelation of trash in our common spaces. We collected 1 boom box, 1,837 cigarette butts, 43 tissues, 1 dead bird, 1 dime and other random trash in our clean-up of Unity's parking lots.

The youth are nominating two offerings. They will be welcoming families to our church through Project Home for the second year in a row. They want to participate in planting projects, feeding families, hanging with children, and raising awareness about bullying – especially for GLBT youth. They want to do more than we have time to do. Doesn't that make your heart burst?

These youth are creating **community** with each other. They are being given an opportunity by their parents and their congregation to act out their values. They are probably having a little fun. And, they are absolutely going to be wonderful adults. We are blessed by them and reminded that our work – even the serious work – can be made fun.

Mark Your Calendar

Teacher Appreciation:

Sunday, May 22

Our Religious Education teachers will be honored during worship and feted with a reception following worship on Sunday, May 22. All Sunday School teachers are warmly invited to attend worship and to be celebrated for their ministry. Parents, please consider helping your child write a thank you note to their Spirit Play teachers, Journey Guides, Workshop Teachers and Junior High teachers – Kerri is happy to remind you who your child's teachers have been this past year. May 15 is the last day of R.E. of the 2009-10 program year.

Dedication of Older Children:

Sunday, May 22

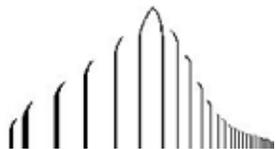
On May 22, the annual litany of the Dedication of Older Children will be celebrated at all three services, offering a ritual of welcome and promise to families with children who have become part of our community after their infancy. The celebration involves each child processing up to the chancel on his or her own, speaking a litany aloud, and receiving a certificate and a chalice for the family. Children ages 4 and up will find this meaningful. **Contact Kerri by May 8 if you would like your child to participate in this dedication.**

Summer Sundays in the Garden Begin Memorial Day Weekend!

Religious Education ends on May 15, but starting May 29 and continuing through the summer, children and adult volunteers will be in our Children's Garden during the 10:00 a.m. summer services. Each summer, our kids raise vegetables and flowers for the clients of the Summit-University Living at Home/Block Nurse program. Registration for summer Sunday gardening is not necessary, but Safe Church ratios of adult volunteers to children will limit the number of kids we can take with us into the garden. If you'd like to volunteer to help tend the garden between Sundays, contact Kerri in the Church Office.

Missed Spring R.E. Registration? Save the Date: September 7, 2011!

If your family missed our four Spring sessions of registration for R.E. 2011-12, please plan on joining us for the September session on Wednesday, September 7, at 7:00 p.m. Many classes and volunteer roles have already been filled, so please come with an open mind and flexible spirit. R.E. begins on Sunday, September 18, next fall.



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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ZINDABAD!



AN EVENING IN INDIA

Saturday, May 7 • 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Unity Church Parish Hall
See page 9 for details.

www.unityunitarian.org
is getting a makeover!

Check the website in May for
improved navigation, current information,
and enhanced integration of services...
... and FUN, a lot more fun!

Openings
at Camp UniStar!



See page 6 for details.



Reminder!

Flower Communion is Sunday, May 22.
Remember to bring flowers for the arch!

the unity library & bookstall team present

Café Unity Poetry & Music Salon



Friday, May 6
7:00 p.m.

Free

For Child Care, call Christy Randall at Unity by May 1, 2011: 651-228-1456