

Transcendence

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, Wednesday evening programming; and in our community outreach ministries, literary journal and programs, and many other opportunities. The May theme is transcendence.

Transcendence is slippery. When we think we are close to understanding what it means, it seems to move away from us again. At the basic level of its Latin origins, “transcendence” means “climbing beyond.” In theology, transcendence is one way of answering the question “where is God?”

Transcendence is the opposite of immanence. If something is transcendent, it exists *beyond* experience and the knowable, material world, while immanent means present throughout the universe. Classical theology, in a kind of shorthand, would describe transcendence as “God beyond the world” and immanence as “God in the world.”

(A point of information: Because “imminent” is a much more common word in daily life than “immanent” and they share a pronunciation, it’s perhaps helpful to mention that they are not related, etymologically or otherwise. And we’ll get to the relationship between “transcendence” and “Transcendentalism” in a bit.)

Transcendence can be thought of as the dwelling place of the universal. For many religious people, the way to the universal is through the particular, through aspects of our lived experience. Studying the intricate patterns in a leaf or pondering the number of grains of sand on a lakeshore are ways of connecting to the transcendent divine mystery. The life of Norbert Čapek, the Czech Unitarian minister who created the Flower Communion ritual, provides us with another example.

When Čapek was held by the Nazis, he still managed to inspire those around him with his optimism and compassion, and he continued to write hymns and letters. Those particular actions allowed

him to transcend the hellish reality of his surroundings and losses, and allowed him to connect to the larger forces of love that had guided him through his life and his ministry. What are the things in our lives that help us to transcend our circumstances and focus on the larger truth?

Transcendence can be disorienting. If you’re in relationship with something transcendent, you are no longer at the center. In fact, the universe as you know it, despite its vastness, may seem tiny compared with all that may be beyond it. An automatic stance of humility may be required.

“Poetry is the perfect source for transcendence because it’s all about pointing,” says the Rev. Karen Hering, a Unitarian Universalist literary minister who has worked with many Unity Church congregants. Artistic expression in a range of forms — beautifully crafted writing, sublime paintings or photographs, music that makes the heart soar — all can be seen as attempts to capture something ineffable, and can be seen as pointing to the beyond.

Perhaps paradoxically, however, art also might be held up to support the idea of immanence, that God is right here in the particulars. What is God if not the beauty right before us?

Or maybe we don’t have to choose. Panentheism is a belief system that combines transcendence and immanence. Panentheism both finds God in the world and sees God as beyond the world. It differs from pantheism, which finds God in all things and is focused on what may be beyond.

And what about those Transcendentalists? How was this 19th century movement with the similar name related to the idea of transcendence? What were Ralph

Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker, two icons in Unitarian Universalist history, transcending?

They were transcending experience, moving beyond religion based on what could be sensed or learned externally and looking instead to intuition. But God, for them, was not transcendent, not something beyond. Rather, God was immanent and within. As the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy explains it, “‘Transcendental’ does not mean ‘transcendent’ or beyond human experience altogether, but something through which experience is made possible.”

May our experiences this month help us climb closer to an understanding of transcendence.

— Jim Foti, Rachel Lonberg, and this month’s cover essay “theme team”

Transcendence Resources

BOOKS

The God Gene: How Faith Is Hardwired into Our Genes, by geneticist Dean Hamer, explores connections between human biology and belief.

The Only Dance There Is, by the spiritual teacher Ram Dass, looks at the nature of consciousness.

The Little Prince, by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, is the classic French story that celebrates enlightenment through exploration.

POETRY

The works of Rumi, Rainer Maria Rilke, Louise Glück, and Walt Whitman

FILM

Beautiful Dreamers is a 1990 drama starring Rip Torn as Walt Whitman.

Up is a 2009 animated feature about a widower whose house floats into the sky with a young scout aboard.

JUST WORDS / WHEEL OF LIFE

Just Words

The City Limits — A. R. Ammons

When you consider the radiance, that it does not withhold itself but pours its abundance without selection into every nook and cranny not overhung or hidden; when you consider

that birds' bones make no awful noise against the light but lie low in the light as in a high testimony; when you consider the radiance, that it will look into the guiltiest

swervings of the weaving heart and bear itself upon them, not flinching into disguise or darkening; when you consider the abundance of such resource as illuminates the glow-blue

bodies and gold-skeined wings of flies swarming the dumped guts of a natural slaughter or the coil of s*** and in no way winces from its storms of generosity; when you consider

that air or vacuum, snow or shale, squid or wolf, rose or lichen, each is accepted into as much light as it will take, then the heart moves roomier, the man stands and looks about, the

leaf does not increase itself above the grass, and the dark work of the deepest cells is of a tune with May bushes and fear lit by the breadth of such calmly turns to praise.

There are moments when only great poems will do. As we prepare to break ground for *Unity Tomorrow* I want us each and all to pause, take a deep breath and realize how far we've come. We have reason to be grateful not only to those who have pledged (as of today) more than \$6.2 million dollars to the capital campaign but also to those whose legitimate concerns have caused us to stop and reconsider. I want to thank those who said, "slow down a little and think." Think about sustainability. Think about how the money we're investing in the building might help strengthen and expand minority owned businesses. Think about the implications of transforming parts of the building which some have held sacred. Think about the implications of going into debt.

In each case the challenge to slow down a bit and consider more deeply has made for a better project. Though "green values" were a significant factor from the beginning, when a thoughtful group of environmental activists became intimately involved with the planning process the project was significantly improved. Incorporating the concerns of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team has led to a 31% hiring requirement for women and minority owned businesses and inspired new policy incorporating like commitments into our day-to-day purchasing decisions. Heartfelt concerns about the new courtyard and entrance disturbing sacred ground have inspired a new memorial fountain and garden. And concerns about debt have pushed us to redouble our efforts to raise the funds we need in order to reduce or even eliminate the need for long term financing.

In the heat of debate it's easy to lose track of the fact that in the words of early Unitarian Francis David "we need not think alike to love alike." As we head into the churn and tumult of construction I, for one, am grateful to serve a congregation which welcomes disagreement as an essential aspect of the creative process. It isn't easy. Sometimes friendships can be strained. But in the end "fear lit by the breadth of such calmly turns to praise."

—Rob

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Madeline Claire Schicker

Born one more redeemer

April 18, 2012

daughter of

Teresa and Nick Schicker

In Memoriam

Irving E. Lipove

October 20, 1923 – March 19, 2012

Heritage Society

Friday, May 4 • Parish Hall

Rev. Marlin Lavanhar

The 2012 Heritage Society program will be held on the evening of May 4. The Reverend Marlin Lavanhar of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa will be our guest speaker.

If you are interested in making a planned gift to the church and becoming a member of the Heritage Society, contact Barbara Hubbard at the Church Office.

Rev. Lavanhar will lead a Samuel Morgan Community Forum on Saturday, May 5. All are welcome, please see page 6 for details.

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MAY SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sunday Worship Calendar

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

May 6: *Rethinking Heaven* — Rev. Marlin Lavanhar

Even though my mind cannot possibly imagine a place like heaven that we go to after we die, I have found myself occasionally saying to people who are dying, "When you make it to the 'other side,' if you see my little girl Sienna, will you give her a big hug for me and tell her that her mother, brother and I and are doing well and we love her." So far each person I have asked has said yes. If there really is a heaven, my little girl has no shortage of hugs by now. The traditional idea of a heavenly afterlife is comforting and compelling, even if it is completely improbable. If heaven is the reward for a life well lived, is there a way to reimagine heaven that makes sense?

May 13: Arthur Foote Music Sunday

Songs of transcendence... of time, of place, of imagination!
9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services: Unity Choir; Unity Singers; Sarah Carmack, oboe. 4:30 p.m. service: Unity Singers; Sarah Carmack, oboe.

May 20: Services at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. only!

Consider the Radiance

Flower Communion Family Sunday

Come celebrate the affirming, uniquely Unitarian Universalist ritual of Flower Communion. Developed by Czech Unitarian minister Norbert Čapek 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 27 • One service at 10:00 a.m.

Circle Round for Freedom — Rob Eller-Isaacs

Memorial Day is a time to honor those who died and those whose lives have been forever changed by war. It is also a time to ask how we can transcend the grief and rage and foster a more loving and more peaceful world. Come light a candle of remembrance. Come pray for peace, work for peace and be at peace as Rob and worship associate Steve Harper lead us in solemn observance.

10:00 a.m. Sunday Services begin May 27!

Beginning May 27, and continuing throughout the summer, Sunday services will be held each week at 10:00 a.m.

Unity Tomorrow construction begins May 20! Please visit www.unityunitarian.org or www.unitytomorrow.org for up-to-date information about meeting locations, where to park, building access, and more.

Unity Tomorrow

Groundbreaking Ceremony and Celebration Sunday, May 20, at 12:30 p.m.

Grotto Street between Portland and Holly Avenues

On Sunday, May 20, everyone is invited to gather on Grotto Street for a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the beginning of the *Unity Tomorrow* construction at Unity Church. The celebration will include a ceremonial blessing of the building and workers, music, and refreshments.

If you would like to bake (or buy) treats or help with set-up or clean-up, or serve lemonade, please contact Martha Tilton by email at martha@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456. Don't forget your camera and umbrella! This event will take place rain or shine!



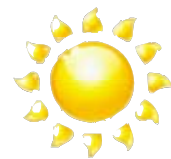
**Flower Communion is
Sunday, May 20.
Remember to bring flowers for the arch!**

Dedication of Older Children

Sunday, May 20 • 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services only

On May 20, the annual litany of the Dedication of Older Children will be celebrated at worship 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 Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org by May 6 if you would like your child to participate in this dedication.

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 1. Religious Education ends on May 13, but starting May 27 an outdoor program will be offered for children during the 10:00 a.m. summer service.

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 May 27 through September 2. The flowers need to be arranged in a vase and placed in the chancel by 9:15 a.m. on the Sunday you select.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / ARLT / PLEDGE TEAM / GOVERNANCE

Letter from the Board of Trustees

From Bob Peskin, Chair

Unity's Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) was established in 2003 to advise the church leadership in the creation of policies pertaining to institutional practices that will further Unity's efforts to live out its commitment to anti-racism and racial healing, and to support the implementation of these practices and related programming. The team meets monthly throughout the year; team members serve three-year terms.

The Board of Trustees appoints individuals to the ARLT, based on recommendations from a nominating committee that is comprised of board members, ARLT members, and other members of the church.

Right now, the board is seeking individuals who are willing to commit to serving Unity Church as members of the ARLT.

Team members must be voting members of Unity Church, and must be willing to work collaboratively within the team, with the leadership of the church, and with the congregation. Unity Church values a diversity of knowledge, skills, and abilities. No experience is necessary, but an openness and willingness to learn is essential.

For more information about the work of the ARLT, or to express your interest in being considered for membership on the team, please contact me at bpeskin42@gmail.com.

Anti-Racism Leadership Team is seeking new members!

Are you interested in thinking big and long term while visioning for Unity's journey to develop an intentionally anti-racist institution? What do YOU think that might look like? The Anti-racism Leadership Team (ARLT) is looking for a few more souls to further navigate these uncharted waters. Qualities that would serve this team well are having a passion for racial justice, willingness to raise tough questions, an ability to live with discomfort, and an ability to work collaboratively with team and church leadership.

The ARLT has focus on the institutional life of Unity Church unlike the Racial Justice Ministry Team which directs its efforts outside our walls. We use our anti-racist lens to look at the institutional policies and practices of Unity Church and make recommendations for change. We also promote opportunities for congregants to understand the systemic nature of racism and engage in the work of racial healing.

The time commitment is a three-year term with monthly meetings during the full calendar year, as well as projects done outside of meeting time. You would have been to, or plan to attend, the 2 ½ day anti-racism analysis training.

If you think you might be interested, you can contact any of the current ARLT members: Pauline Eichten, Drew Danielson, Alana Howey (alana.howey@gmail.com), or Sarah Pradt for further information. The Board of Trustees is forming a nominating team to fill these positions. This important work needs the spirit and body of many to do its best work!

It Takes a Community

2012 Operating Pledge Drive

From Mary Baremore, Chair, Operating Pledge Team

It's been a great year. The work of the *Unity Tomorrow* team still moves forward. It is a wonderful and exciting time to be part of this congregation and to watch the changes that are coming.

Through all of the excitement about the future, our bedrock remains intact. The day-to-day work of the staff and ministers is our constant. We attend worship services and participate in programs, trusting one another, the ministers and the staff to tend and nurture our individual and collective growth. This is supported by our operating budget.

We are still wrapping up the 2012 canvass. To those of you who have already pledged, thank you! However, some of us who are actively participating in the life of the church haven't yet made pledges. We need your help. If you haven't made your pledge, please do so. We need every pledge, no matter how small or large, to meet our target for this canvass. Do not be deterred if you are unable to make a 3-year commitment. We will gladly accept one-year pledges.

Your Pledge Team is already looking ahead to the 2013 canvass with excitement. It will be different than other years, in large part due to your 3-year sustaining pledges. Stay tuned...

Minority Hiring at Unity Church

From Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director

Our values, both individually and as a community, include an articulated commitment to racial healing and to making a positive impact in the world by advocating in the public arena for liberal religious values in response to prejudice, injustice and oppression.

We have been successful at expressing our values in relation to the *Unity Tomorrow* project. Minority hiring has been one of our most prominent criteria in choosing our construction company and we have clear evidence that the goals are being met with sub-contractors as well.

We are also looking at our own policies around the selection of vendors that the church engages on a regular basis. We have developed steps toward ensuring vendor diversity, and the Executive Team and Board of Trustees are discussing these steps, recognizing that the key to vendor-diversity success is leadership commitment. The Board is considering revisions in Policy language, and the Executive Team will be developing goals and metrics, followed by an audit of our vendor contracts in the fall and written criteria for the selection of new vendors.



Visit www.unityunitarian.org or www.unitytomorrow.org or call the church office at 651-228-1456 to get up-to-date information about building use and building progress during the *Unity Tomorrow* summer construction schedule.

MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Rachel Lonberg: 2011-12 Hallman Ministerial Intern



I don't come from a praying family or a praying church. Praying out loud always intimidated me. It was not until my second year of seminary that I felt like I could pray aloud with any skill or grace. Now, when I am asked for impromptu prayers—grace at a dinner party, on an

airplane when the person sitting next to me learns what I do—I follow a simple formula for prayer. It is God-We-So. You can learn it without enrolling in seminary.

God: who are you praying to? This is like the salutation at the beginning of a letter. Around Unity Church, prayers often begin with "Holy One," "Source of Reason and Radiance," and "God of Many Names and Beyond All Naming." In other traditions, prayers begin with "Our Father Who Art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name" and "In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful." If you hear words that sound good, use them. Experiment. Figure out what works for you.

We: Who is joining you in this prayer? This is a moment to gauge the group you are praying for. What brings you together? What is your shared experience? Are you grateful for the meal you're about to eat? Hoping for someone's speedy recovery from illness or injury? Name this.

So: So what? This is the big question. What do you want from God—or whoever you addressed your prayer to? Do you want guidance and protection? Peace and clarity? A safe airplane journey? Spell it out.

Once you put all of these pieces together, you'll have a prayer:

Holy one, source of reason and radiance, (God)

We are embarking on a construction project that will transform our church community. (We)

We ask you to guide the hands of all who work on this project. (So #1)

And we ask that our new church home be a place where all are welcome, where we all are inspired to live loving lives of integrity service and joy. (So #2)

Amen.

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

Jim Foti: 2011-12 Ministerial Intern



Last month's book sale was just one more sign that Unity Church is big on reading. I read a lot, too, but instead of browsing for books on my own, I get my reading lists from my seminary professors. The lists are short on breezy summer novels, but the good news is that theology is not

just about ancient scrolls. In fact, for my most recent class, which was about process and liberation theology, many of the required texts were written in the past 10 years by very smart people who wish to be understood by non-scholars. Emergent, radical thinking is becoming more accessible and relevant to a wider audience – an audience that might include you. Here are a few texts I've appreciated:

Process-Relational Philosophy, by C. Robert Mesle (2008). If you enjoyed Rob's February sermon on process theology but were (rightly) wary of Alfred North Whitehead's prose, this highly readable book might be for you. One of my favorite thoughts: God's omniscience does not include the future, because the future does not yet exist, and even an all-knowing being can know only what already exists. (Toss that out the next time there's a lull at the dinner table.)

Race and the Cosmos: An Invitation to View the World Differently, by Barbara A. Holmes (2002). Holmes, who was just named president of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, looks to science and the universe for clues to healing the rifts among human communities and makes some fascinating connections.

On the Mystery: Discerning Divinity in Process, by Catherine Keller (2008). Keller is a lively writer who believes that truth is a process, not a set of facts. She's an incisive interpreter of Christian scripture who, among other things, views supernaturalism as a "spiritual disease" that disconnects spirit from matter.

So consider adding these to your bedside table – after you get through the works of Mark Morrison-Reed (see back cover) and those book-sale purchases.

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



General Assembly will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, from June 20-24, 2012. If you are interested in attending, online registration is available here: <http://www.uua.org/ga/registration/index.shtml>. If you would like to serve as a delegate, please contact Jim Foti by phone at 651-228-1456 x212 or by email at jim@unityunitarian.org.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAYS / SAMUEL MORGAN FORUM

Wellspring Wednesday

A weeknight at church.

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

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

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

May 2

Writing Workshop

Cairns is sponsoring a Writing Workshop for beginners, procrastinators, and anybody even mildly interested or stuck on a writing project. Our motive is to help get people writing. Many think about it, but don't actually get started or get bogged down along the way. We'll provide ideas for those who want to get started and help for those who already have a project going. We do have an ulterior motive—we'd love to recruit contributors to *Cairns*. The workshop will be led by Anna Martignacco and Bob Steller.

Bob Steller taught writing of many kinds for over 40 years—over 30 years at Century College. He has gained important insights from workshops with writers, from working on writing with teachers from many other disciplines, and from helping to edit *Cairns*.

Anna Martignacco earned her MFA in Creative Writing from Hamline University. For the past eleven years she has been teaching academic and creative writing full time at the college level, and is currently part of the editorial team for *Cairns*.

May 9

Unity Church Talent Show!

Join us for the return of the all-church talent show hosted by our very own 7th and 8th grade youth. Adults and children and those in between are all welcome in the show as are funny talents, serious talents, musical talents, dancing talents... whatever the talent is, we want to see it! Contact Mary Blouin Auffert at the Church Office or stop by the Welcome Table in the Parish Hall on Sundays to sign up.

A Samuel Morgan Community Forum

Saturday, May 5 • 9:00 a.m.-noon • Unity Church—Unitarian

Rev. Marlin Lavanhar from All Souls Tulsa

The Sacred and Profane in Music and Ministry

How can Unitarian Universalism become a multiracial, multicultural worldwide faith?

"When an Atheist, successful civil-rights lawyer and 30 year member of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa admitted to me that he still speaks in tongues on occasion, I nearly fell over! He is the epitome of the rational, intellectual Humanist in my congregation, who happened to grow up Pentecostal. He has had a secret that he said he never felt comfortable talking about at his Unitarian Universalist church because he felt he would be ridiculed and misunderstood. His explanation of his experience of speaking in tongues is completely compelling and insightful.

His admission came four years ago when All Souls in Tulsa welcomed a congregation of mostly African American Pentecostal Universalists into its membership. The collaboration and community that has ensued raises many questions about the possibilities for a truly multiracial, multicultural and worldwide expression of Unitarian Universalism that has eluded us so far. Even if the future does not include a rapidly growing charismatic wing of the UU Church, this commingling of liturgical expressions offers a number of important considerations and even critiques of our current concept of covenantal community.

Please join me for a multimedia exploration of the boundaries of the tradition we call Unitarian Universalism. Why is it that most UU's feel completely comfortable clapping and raising their hands in the air and waving them at a rock concert, but would never think of doing the same at church? Whereas, many Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians will dance and clap and wave hands high at church, but would never consider attending and doing the same at a rock concert? The presentation will also look at the relationship between the sacred and profane in music and ministry."



Marlin Lavanhar grew up in Highland Park, a suburb north of Chicago. His father is Jewish, his mother a Catholic, and he was raised Unitarian Universalist. When he was 18 he entered Tulane University where he received a BA in Sociology. He received his Masters in Divinity from the Divinity School at Harvard University. He was ordained by the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1999 and went on to serve the historic First Church in Boston where he created an alternative worship style known as Soulful Sundown.

In 2000, at the age of 32, Marlin was called to All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa as their Senior Minister. All Souls is one of the largest Unitarian churches in the United States with almost 2000 members. In his 12 years in Tulsa, Marlin has built strong relationships with the city leadership. In 2008, All Souls welcomed into its church a congregation of mostly African American Pentecostals who had become universalists theologically. Since that time All Souls has become one of the most racially diverse institutions in Tulsa. Each week they hold four distinct worship services and have seven different styles of corporate worship each month. Three of the services are strongly influenced by Pentecostal Christianity and raise significant questions about what is possible within the American Unitarian Universalist tradition.

Marlin is married to Anitra Lavanhar and they have a son Elias, and daughter Lyla. Their daughter Sienna died at the age of three in 2006.

UNITY LIBRARIES & BOOKSTALL / ONGOING GROUPS

What's New in the Library and Bookstall

From Louise Merriam, Library Team

So long, farewell ... for now

The Unity libraries will close for renovation after the services on Sunday, May 13, and will reopen in the fall. During that time, the spaces will be renovated according to the *Unity Tomorrow* plan. Users of the libraries will be especially pleased to learn that the heating and air conditioning will be improved so that they will be neither too hot nor too cold, but always just right.

May 13 is the last day to return library materials until the fall re-opening. If you wish to keep books and other library items until the fall, please notify the library team by sending an email to library@unityunitarian.org, listing the items that you have checked out.

The Bookstall will also close during construction. However, you can still support the libraries with your book purchases by going to Amazon.com through the Unity web site at www.unityunitarian.org/library-and-bookstall.html. When you click through to Amazon from any of the Amazon boxes, icons, or links on Unity's website and then make a purchase - any purchase at all! - Unity Church receives a small portion of the proceeds.

Stay tuned for announcements about the Library and Bookstall Team's fall programming. Look for the annual library Open House, author readings, special pricing in the Bookstall and other events.

See you in the fall.



Ongoing Groups at Unity Church

With few exceptions, all Unity Church groups have been asked to find alternative meeting spaces (or discontinue meeting) beginning May 20 and continuing throughout the Unity Tomorrow summer construction schedule. If you are a group leader and are holding meetings off-site, please contact the Church Office with the date, time, and location of the meeting. If you are looking to connect with a group, please visit the church website at www.unityunitarian.org for meeting information or call the church office at 651-228-1456.

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

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (May 10) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

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

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (May 17) from Noon-2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (May 8) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (May 26) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760

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

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

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (May 15) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org.

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, May 7 and 21, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

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

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. On May 8 they will discuss *The Hundred Secret Senses* by Amy Tan.

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, May 4, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209

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

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

Elders' Circle: Tuesday, May 8 • 2:00-3:30 p.m. • New date and time!

The Elders' Circle is a group of church elders (self-identified) who gather monthly for fellowship, learning, and fun. For our final get-together of the church year, we'll be talking about the Minnesota Marriage Amendment from both theological and social-action perspectives. Refreshments involving chocolate will be served. For more info, or to inquire about a ride, contact Ministerial Intern Jim Foti by e-mail at jim@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x212.

UNITY TOMORROW

Unity Tomorrow Churn Planning

From Lorelee Wederstrom, Unity's Owner Representative

Webster's definition of the word "churn" is not very comforting as we approach the next phase of the Unity Tomorrow Project.

Churn - v

to be in a state of violent rolling motion <a *churning* sea made getting to the island a risky undertaking>

Synonyms BOIL, CHURN, MOIL, ROIL

Related Words REEL, SPIN, SWIRL, WHIRL; AGITATE, STIR

Not only will our beloved church home be under construction, but the activities that we have come to routinely expect to occur in one room or another at a certain time may, for awhile, experience the same "reeling, spinning, swirling and whirling."

Unity staff, along with the *Unity Tomorrow* delivery team, have started meeting weekly to plan out these changes and to imagine how they will impact church life. These changes will continuously be posted in the weekly "This Week at Unity" and on the *Unity Tomorrow* and Unity Church websites. One of our greatest challenges throughout construction will be to help manage the expectations of this community.

So, here are a few points about what you can expect for the immediate future of the *Unity Tomorrow* project. Please stay tuned for more details as these plans unfold and change daily.

Site Construction

- In mid May, we will begin to see construction fencing going up around the property to secure the construction site. See site map on page 9.
- There will be a fence along Grotto and around the Portland Avenue corner to secure the area of construction for the new entrance and the restroom addition.
- There will also be a fence around

the green space. This area will serve as the construction staging area and will have a site personnel trailer on it.

- Once construction begins on June 1, there will be large earth-moving equipment on site during the week. This equipment will be stored, when not in use, in the green space.
- The area along the east wall of the current sanctuary will be excavated to create a below grade construction entrance to the lower level. This will allow for delivery of the air handling equipment and ductwork.
- The parking lot, during the week, will have construction activity as we prepare for the new chiller building (where Rob and Janne park their cars!) and the chilled water lines that will be buried below this parking lot. Our electrical feeder utility poles will also be updated on the parking lot site.
- Unity's gardeners are hard at work moving many plants for future garden use.
- At all times during construction, McGough will maintain required access in and out of Unity Church.

Interior Renovation

- **In order to make way for renovation, much of Unity Church with the primary exception of the Sanctuary, will need to be emptied. Yes, emptied.** Right now the Churn Team is developing a schedule of purging, packing and moving out of scheduled areas so that we can sync the availability of these areas with the construction schedule. Areas in the new addition and below the Sanctuary will take the full seven month construction schedule. Other areas, such as the religious education rooms in the Elliot Wing, will be available by fall.
- All items will need to be moved out of

the lower level by the time hazardous material abatement begins on May 15. Purging, packing and moving schedules are being developed; staff are busy getting rid of materials that are no longer needed. The schedule for abatement will precede each area of construction by two weeks. Abatement is not necessary in all areas of construction.

- Construction will start on the exterior additions and on the interior lower level renovations the first week of June. Upper level Eliot Wing renovations will begin toward the middle of June. The only area that will lag behind this intense summer schedule will be the kitchen remodel. This schedule adjustment is needed so that we can keep some restrooms in working order until the new ones are complete.

What happens to all our "stuff" during construction?

- Furniture, files, supplies, etc. will be stored in locked trailers. Once full, these trailers will be relocated to a secure storage area.
- Arrangements have been made to relocate eight pianos and all artwork to tempered, secured storage areas during construction. The organ will be "wrapped" to prevent any construction dust from entering the pipes or console.

What happens during hazardous material abatement?

- Unity has hazardous material (asbestos) in the materials used to wrap some existing ductwork and in the flooring materials of certain areas of the church—most especially, the lower level. We also have lead paint on the Sanctuary windows. All of this material will be removed during the Unity tomorrow project. Hazardous material abatement is a highly regulated process and

continued on page 9

UNITY TOMORROW

continued from page 8

procedures are strictly enforced. We have hired both a monitoring and management firm as well as an abatement contractor to comply with these regulations and to ensure safe abatement procedures. All areas undergoing abatement will be contained and will be inaccessible during the abatement process. Once the materials are removed, the area is monitored for particulate levels and not opened until those levels are deemed safe by law.

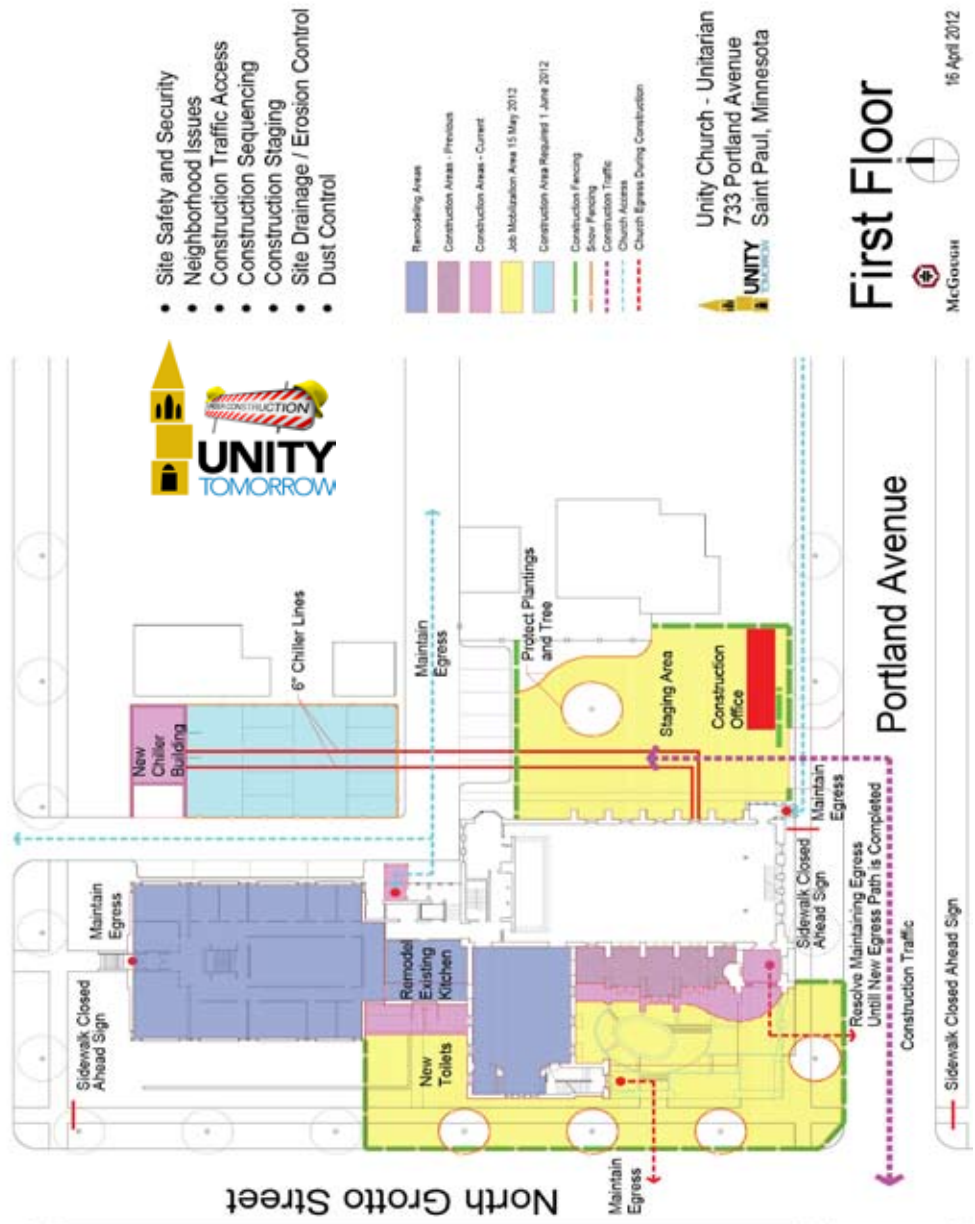
When will we move back in?

- With the exception of landscaping and plantings, the *Unity Tomorrow* project is expected to be 100% complete by December 14... just in time for the holidays! There will be certain areas ready for access and our use before then, such as:
 - Lower Level Eliot Wing, complete September 3
 - Lower level (green hallway) below the Parish Hall, complete September 3
 - Parish Hall, complete September 3
 - New restroom addition, complete October 1
 - Main level Eliot Wing offices, complete October 1
 - Upper level Eliot Wing offices and meeting rooms, complete October 1
 - Ames Chapel, complete July 23

So, while we have somewhat limited access... we will have access and will work with Unity Staff and the Project Delivery Team to minimize the “churn” level with respect to church activities.

We recognize that there will be many questions as the *Unity Tomorrow* project enters the construction phase and, most especially next fall, as we begin to overlap church activities with construction progress. Up-to-date building usage and construction progress will be available online at unitytomorrow.org and unityunitarian.org. Questions are welcome via email to unitytomorrow@unityunitarian.org.

Site Plan



Meet (some of) the crew...



Shannon Kelly
Project Manager
McGough Construction



Scott Steinberger
Site Superintendant
McGough Construction



Brian Meyer
NOVA Consulting Group
(abatement specialists)

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Voter ID to keep felons from voting? Not likely.

By Steve Nelson, Restorative Justice Ministry Team Member

Many supporters of the proposed Voter ID constitutional amendment drag a group of people into the issue whose reluctance to get involved in the debate is both real and understandable: those with criminal records.

In their efforts to make the case that voter fraud is a big enough problem to warrant changing our constitution, supporters of the Voter ID amendment have told Minnesotans that felons are voting regularly in our broken system, possibly skewing the results of close elections. These statements are at best misleading, and more often, downright wrong.

First let's set the record straight about Minnesota law. Minnesota denies the right to vote for anyone convicted of a felony and on probation, supervised release (parole) or is incarcerated. A person's civil rights are automatically reinstated when he or she has completed all parole, probation, and any other terms of their sentence. This is also known as being "off-paper." Once a person completes their sentence they have the right to vote. Currently that means about 70,000 Minnesotans, a group larger than the population of St. Cloud, are denied representation in their state government. Minnesota has one of the country's highest rates of people on probation or parole, so about 60,000 of those residents are passing you on the street each day, going to work, trying to bring home a paycheck for their families and paying their taxes. When it's been proven that those who feel a stronger attachment to their community are more likely to be positive and law abiding members of that community, it's confusing as to what purpose denying the vote to those with criminal records serves.

I remember speaking with "Carolyn," a woman who was paying the price for a felony-level DWI conviction, a few days before the 2010 general election. Carolyn had stopped drinking several years ago and was working hard and doing well on the outside, but still on probation. We discussed the candidates and the major issues and in so doing Carolyn proved herself a real student of politics, offering thoughtful, balanced ideas, speaking with a deep knowledge of who's who in state government and from the perspective of someone who once owned a small family business. At the end of our conversation I said I was looking forward to casting my ballot and remembered only after the sad expression came up on her face that she wouldn't be voting this year. So when someone tells me that lack of Voter ID would allow felons to vote, I think of Carolyn and wonder why that would be such a bad thing.

Accepting for the moment that Carolyn's voting is a legal impossibility right now, I suspect that the last thing Carolyn or anyone "on paper" would do intentionally is commit another crime by voting illegally. A person on parole or probation is living in near-constant fear of being "violated" by their Parole or Probation Agent and sent to prison. The smartest strategy for those seeking to stay out is to stay away from any temptation and live as quiet a life as possible. If they do mess up, it's a good bet that they're not going to risk going to prison for something like voting illegally. That kind of mistake is just that, a mistake, and it isn't likely to happen very often.

There is talk of legislation which would empower the Secretary of State's office to send out notification to those with felony records when they are eligible to vote again. That's a step in the right direction – helping people to not make a mistake.

Requiring Voter ID to keep felons from voting? That doesn't make sense.

Thanks For Your Generosity in the Winter Warm-up Drive

The Restorative Justice Ministry Team and Amicus wish to thank everyone who participated in this year's Winter Warm-up Drive. Drive organizers collected warm clothing and hygiene items for those who were leaving correctional facilities and hoping for a new start in the community. Amicus, the Restorative Justice Team's Community Partner who organized and distributed the items to their clients, reports that **this year's drive brought in over 2,000 items** and about 90 percent of that number came from donors affiliated with Unity. The goal for the drive was 1,000 items.

Thank you to everyone who made the Warm-Up Drive such a success. Your generosity means that many of those reentering society after a prison sentence had warm coats, warm hats and warm hearts.

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

Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food Drive Sunday. Donations can be brought anytime and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances. Suggested items for May 20: diapers and baby food.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

UUSC Bulletin

Catalyzing Justice!

That's the renewed capacity that will come from a formal collaboration of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.



UUA and UUSC announced in April the establishment of the UU College of Social Justice (CSJ). The CSJ will build on several years of successful UUA-UUSC partnerships, especially in the area of disaster response. The combined resources of both organizations will offer current leaders and future activists service-learning and justice-education experiences.

The vision is to provide transformative learning experiences with firsthand understanding of the roots of injustice, direct experience in successful social change and a deeper grounding in Unitarian Universalism. The goal is to encourage participants to put their own call to justice into action. The college is intended to be an enduring educational institution that transforms lives and shapes shared ministry for years to come.

Rev. Kathleen McTigue will lead the start-up of this new venture. McTigue has studied fascism in Spain, researched and written about economic strategies to end apartheid in southern Africa, and witnessed for peace through years of work in the U.S. and Central America. She has served for the last 21 years as senior minister of the Unitarian Society of New Haven, Connecticut.

For a Q and A about the new UU College of Social Justice, visit uusuc.org or uua.org.

Membership: Become a member of UUSC by making a membership gift. Your contribution will support UUSC's work to advance human rights and promote social justice. You can join online at www.uusuc.org/uusuc-membership. Dues are: \$40 General; \$75 General (dual); \$10 student/youth; \$20 senior; and \$40 senior (dual.)

Unity Church currently has about 50 UUSC members.

Moving Hearts: The Minnesota Anti-Marriage Amendment From Dick Buggs



The man who picked up the phone told me he had not thought much about how he would vote on the anti-marriage amendment in November. When asked if he felt LGBT people should have the right to marry, he responded that "marriage" is for a man and a women. His calm demeanor prompted me to dig more deeply.

I asked if he was married and, if so, why he got married. Of course, he married for love. Following some conversation about loving relationships of same-sex couples he said that he had met several gay men in recent years. A moment of silence lapsed. Then he said, "It never occurred to me that two men could ever love each other, much less want to marry." Putting "gay" and "love" together was a whole new territory for him. I could feel the movement as he said, "You know, I never looked at the amendment this way."

When you phone bank with Minnesotans United for All Families Campaign, you are not asking people to vote NO in November. You are inviting them to begin a journey into their personal thoughts and feelings about the ballot initiative to change the MN constitution.

On my phone data sheet, I marked the man as "undecided." He will be called again as the election approaches. Phoning with the campaign is about moving hearts. Many we call will not answer the phone. Some will not be moved. Some will be moved and they will begin to see the Marriage Amendment for what it is— an attempt to limit the legitimacy of love and discount LGBT relationships and families. Moved hearts vote NO.

Phone Bank at Minnesotans United for All Families

Unity is joining with other Unitarian Universalist churches to be much-needed phone bank volunteers. The training is outstanding and callers have a chance to practice and reflect on the experience. UUs are phoning together on the 2nd Monday of the month (May 14, June 11, July 9 and August 13). Send your name, email, phone number, and congregation to Lena Gardner at lenakatherine@gmail.com to sign up AND register on line at mnunited.org, select volunteer and then "click here to sign up for individual phone banks" which is embedded in the opening paragraph on the volunteer page.

Going Beyond the Yellow Ribbon



Unity Church is one of several faith organizations contributing to St. Paul's efforts to be recognized as a "Beyond the Yellow Ribbon" city. The BTYR program creates awareness for how military service members and their families can get connected with community support, training, services and resources (see btyr.org for details).

We've started work on how we can extend some of Unity's existing programming to reach, acknowledge and support military families. Now, we'd love your thoughts and reflections on this initiative. If you are interested, please attend an informational meeting at Unity Church on Thursday, May 3, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Terri Burnor at 651-324-2343 or tburnor@comcast.net.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Family Circles Offered

"Through the use of a family circle I was able to detangle the threads of a relationship in my family that had turned sour, scary, and uncomfortable, due to a conflict that escalated over some real estate my brother and I had purchased together. I came to the family circle very resentful over issues that I didn't have courage to speak about directly with my beloved family member and adversary. The circle was a safe place to explore my relationship to a hurtful event and all the surprising ways I was stirred by it. There was enough time in between the sessions to let all of what went on in our family circle to settle in my consciousness. It allowed me to then talk about my experience of some specific painful and unresolved issues. The family circle simply let my family and me de-clutter our relationship so that we could move forward and allow each other to be our different selves together." — a participant

Family Circles provide a way of talking together where everyone is respected, gets a chance to speak without interruption, finds ways for each to tell his/her own story, and is equal in authority to everyone else in the circle. The circle process is based in Native American wisdom, relying on a talking piece, honest sharing and attentive listening. Trust and mutual respect, the cornerstones of circle process, seem to develop effortlessly early on, allowing participants to feel safe to speak their truth and to hear and be open to understanding perspectives different from their own.

Some Unity members have used Family Circles to address differences within their own families. They found the process to be so effective at resolving entrenched problems that they determined to find a way for other families to have access to the circle approach. The Peacemaking Circle process, distinctly different from therapy, counseling, or conflict resolution mediation, has not previously been formally structured and made accessible for use by families. A group of Unity members and friends formed around this initiative, and the Unity Church Executive Team agreed to a pilot program by which Family Circles are made available to members of the congregation.

More info? Visit www.unityunitarian.org/family-circles.html.

Reminder!

Unity Church is NOT hosting Project Home in May.

Due to the *Unity Tomorrow* construction schedule Unity Church is not hosting Project Home in May. If you still wish to fill a shift, please contact Anna Newton at newtona@comcast.net or 651-483-2986 and she will get you connected with another host congregation that needs volunteers.

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 6: Night on the Street

Night on the Street, an annual event sponsored by the Plymouth Neighborhood Church 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 Parking lot in cardboard boxes and engage in conversations with other youth about poverty and homelessness. Unity Church youth participated in the Night on the Street on April 20, 2012, so this offering will go towards the PNCF efforts to provide more affordable housing for homeless youth in several areas of Minneapolis.

May 13: Foote Sunday

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 20: Faith Builders 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 in July this year. 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 here in St. Paul.

May 27: 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.

UU SUMMER CAMPS / JOB OPENING / PARISH HALL ARTIST

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 or contact Chris Bremer, Registrar at 612-399-6116.



Work Week: June 2-9
Graceful Energy: June 30 - July 7
Assembling Minnesota: July 7-14
You, Me, & Us: July 14-21
Winds of Change: July 28-Aug 4
What Moves Us: August 4-11
Food, Glorious Food: August 25-Sept 1

Summer Spirituality and Fun at Camp StarTrail

July 29 - August 3, 2012

"Camp Star Trail is food for the mind, spirit, and body. It is a safe and loving community full of fun and insightful people who will provoke your thoughts, warm your heart, and make you laugh out loud! I can't wait until next year!"

— Ben W.

Wondering what a camper at Camp StarTrail might experience? Then ask one of the recent campers from our church (pictured here). At Camp StarTrail in Ashland, Nebraska, UUs of all ages explore nature, share meals, sing songs, worship together, create art and get to know other UUs from the Prairie Star District. Photos and further details are available at www.psdoua.org/Camps/CampStarTrail.

"It's REALLY fun. We had a great time hanging out Unitarian kids from all over. We still keep in touch and are planning to see each other again this summer."

— Meredith E. (teen camper)



Camp Star Trail campers: Peter and Nancy Heege with their grandsons and Phil Lund with his son.

Campers also have the unique opportunity to learn from and interact closely with a nationally acclaimed UU speaker. This year, the speaker is Rev. Nate Walker of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia. He will serve as a personal spiritual trainer and will challenge participants to strengthen their ethical core while increasing their ability to care for those perceived to be the enemy. For more information and about Rev. Walker, please visit www.natewalker.com

"Camp Star Trail is a UUtopia. It's just what you need to recharge your spirit and refresh your mind. Once you go to camp, you can't imagine NOT going to camp again next year." — Maria W.

Job Opening Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries

Unity Church is seeking qualified candidates for a position in Religious Education. A complete job description is available at <http://www.unityunitarian.org/employment.html>

Responsibilities include planning and implementing programming for members of the Unity community in junior high, high school and college, including the Unity's Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education program and Coming of Age program, as well as Tower Club, the annual youth pilgrimage to Boston, and the Unitarian Universalist group at Macalester College. This position is part-time, 25 hours per week.

Qualified candidates will have experience working with youth and/or young adults, knowledge of faith development, strong communication and computer skills, and a commitment to liberal religion. Candidates must be available to work evenings, some overnights, and Sundays.

Interested parties should submit a letter of interest, resume, and three references, at least one of whom is a youth or young adult, to Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs, Co-Minister, 732 Holly Ave. St. Paul, MN 55104. The application deadline is May 15.

May Parish Hall Artist

Elizabeth Paper
Images of Peace

My work consists of paper cuttings, collage, and photography. I have been working with these mediums for approximately eight years. I try to convey my feelings for our time.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Teacher Appreciation

Sunday, May 6 • During all three worship services

Our Religious Education teachers will be honored during worship and feted with a reception following worship on Sunday, May 6. 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. Mary is happy to remind you who your child's teachers have been this past year. May 13 is the last day of religious education for the 2011-12 program year.

Dedication of Older Children

Sunday, May 20 • 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services only

On May 20, the annual litany of the Dedication of Older Children will be celebrated at worship 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 Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org by May 6 if you would like your child to participate in this dedication.

Senior Bridging Ceremony

Sunday, June 3 • 10:00 a.m.

High school seniors are warmly invited to join us at 10:00 a.m. worship on Sunday, June 3, 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 Luke at the Church Office.

Summer Sundays for Youth

Due to construction, Summer Sundays in the Garden will not be available this coming summer 2012. However, the religious education staff is currently formulating a plan for the youth. Details of the final plan will be emailed to families as well as posted on the Unity website. Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Missed Spring Religious Education Registration?

Save the Date: September 5, 2012!

If your family missed our four spring sessions of registration for Religious Education 2012-13, please plan on joining us for the September session on Wednesday, September 5, 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 16.

TWO! Opportunities for Young Families

Family Sharing Saturday

Saturday, May 5 • 8:30-11:30 a.m. • Foote Room

Come to Family Sharing Saturday and enjoy breakfast with Unity families and then connect, learn, and share ideas with other parents about how to raise kids religiously in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. A kid-friendly breakfast (\$3/person, \$10/family) will be served from 8:30-9:30 a.m. in the Foote Room and the consultation and sharing group will take place from 9:30-11:00 a.m. Childcare is available, please contact Louise Livesay at 651-434-3045 or louiselivesay@yahoo.com to sign up.

Parents Invited to a Workshop

It Takes a Community: Transforming the way we think about raising our children in the UU Tradition

Saturday, May 19 • 9:00 a.m.-noon • Foote Room

Tongue-tied when your children ask about God and heaven? More confident about what Unitarian Universalists do not believe than about what we do believe? Everyone agrees that religion is taught—or caught—mainly in the home, yet we think of religious education as something occurring for an hour on Sunday mornings. Family therapist Bill Doherty will lead a workshop on the challenges and possibilities for Unitarian-Universalist families trying to pass on our liberal religious heritage to our children. At Unity, we now have 30 families building an intentional community to carry out a mission of raising our children religiously in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. This workshop will be both a learning opportunity for parents and a way to become part of this growing community. We aim to transform the way we think about raising our children in the Unitarian Universalist tradition.

Childcare will be provided, please contact Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org to sign up for childcare. Please contact Pamela Johnson at pjohnso@comcast.net to RSVP for the date and number of children (by May 14).



MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries

"As long as we sing, the pain of the world cannot claim our lives."

— Mark Nepo (from *The Book of Awakening*)

As I look at the accelerated close to this season's program year, I find it hard to separate the May theme of "transcendence" and the June theme of "awakening." And, as I usually do not write an article for the June *commUNITY*, this may seem a bit of a blend of the two ideas. In short, *singing* is the gift that both takes us beyond the norm of the moment while also tapping moments of inner renewal that can be reached in no other way.

So often, I am fortunate to receive wonderful words, reactions and thoughts given in response to music, to the music we share here at Unity Church. There are so many that I wish to share with you. At this moment, the following seems to be the perspective and one that might be most needed.

From *The Book of Awakening* — Mark Nepo

Through cancer, through growing up in America, through learning about the innumerable struggles for freedom around the world, all different but the same, through being with the people of South Africa, it has become very clear that giving voice to what is inner is essential to surviving what is outer. No matter where we live or whom we love, no matter what we want or what we can't have, this is the lesson I can't repeat or learn enough.

When everything in life presses from outside of us, we have no choice but to sing like scared children relying on their song to stop the pain, the way that fire stalls the cold. This is the secret of all spirit, why it cannot stay inside, but must be brought from within us into the world. For it is the song from within that keeps the pain of living from snuffing our lives. It is the song from within ignited, again and again, that keeps the world going. When we do this for ourselves, we do it for every child not yet born.

As night and day take turns on this massive Earth spinning nowhere, the song we share within takes turns with the catastrophes of living. When we go silent, the age goes dark.

Sing, then, in whatever tongue your pain has taught you. Sing, though you have no training and never went to school. Sing, because the cry from all the places you have kept quiet will stall the cold, will soften the danger, will keep the world possible for one more turn...

As a suggested meditation practice:

- *Deeply and simply, close your eyes and let whatever is inside you begin to rise.*
- *Exhale everything that seems in the way, and give voice to the piece of the infinite that dwells within you.*
- *Release a cry or gasp or sigh, and feel the world continue.*

Arthur Foote Music Sunday

*Songs of transcendence...
of time
of place
of imagination!*

May 13, 2012

9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Unity Choir

Unity Singers

Sarah Carmack, oboe

4:30 p.m.

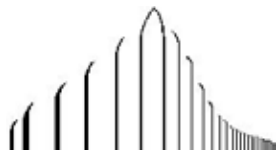
Unity Singers

Sarah Carmack, oboe



CDs for a "Dollar or Donation"

As a moving and packing special, all music CDs that are still in stock from previous years will be on sale for a "Dollar or Donation" on Foote Music Sunday. This includes the full 2002, 2005 and 2008 Unity Music CDs of "In This Still Room" (2002), "I Dream A World" (2005) and "Journey" (2008) along with other miscellaneous recordings from previous events.



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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651-228-1456 • FAX: 651-228-0927 • WWW.UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG • UNITY@UNITYUNITARIAN.ORG

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

Book Reading

Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed
Sunday, May 6 • 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Unity Church



Come hear Mark Morrison-Reed read excerpts from the books *In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby*, *Darkening the Doorways: Black Trailblazers*, *Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism* and the brand new meditation manual *Voices from the Margins* which is full of reflections from contemporary UU ministers of color. This book reading will include a presentation on African-American Unitarian Universalists, Rev. Morrison-Reed's own story of growing up UU, and an exploration of why Unitarian Universalism finds becoming more diverse such a struggle.

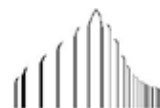
*A Samuel Morgan
Community Forum*

Saturday, May 5
9:00 a.m.-noon
Unity Church-Unitarian

Rev. Marlin Lavanhar
from All Souls, Tulsa

***The Sacred and Profane
in Music and Ministry***
***How can Unitarian Universalism
become a multiracial,
multicultural worldwide faith?***

See page 6



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