

Hope

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

*“Hope’ is the thing with feathers —
That perches in the soul...”*

— Emily Dickinson

Hope is both delicate and powerful. It can be salvific. But in the face of deep suffering and despair, where can we find this tender thing with feathers?

As Unitarian Universalists we can look to our faith in something larger than ourselves, our belief in some reality that is bigger than the immediate pain of the present moment. For humanists, this might be the innate courage of the human spirit. Martin Luther King expressed his belief that though the arc of the universe is long, it bends towards justice. Buddhists and process theologians express their faith in the oneness of all being. Regardless of the immediate circumstances we face, what do we believe is the ultimate reality that holds the present moment? Against what larger belief are you experiencing the here and now?

Hope is also alive in the present moment. The becoming, that larger thing in which we believe, is present even in the moment of pain. The wanting of the larger beauty, the knowing its existence, is the kernel of its being born. The seeds of the dream are present here and now in the form of our imagining that dream. This moment is not separate from the

thing we are imagining, because the imagining of that thing is happening now. Our practice is to open ourselves to realizing the wholeness—how now includes the dream—because we are experiencing it in our longing for it. Hope is the feeling-state of that present experience of the dream. We must reveal what already exists and is connected. In that way, hope does not shift reality, but in broadens our understanding and perceiving of reality to include the power of our dreams and belief in the larger good.

But there is something else in that present moment: pain. While the feathered thing, the connection to our dream and our larger understanding of reality, is there to give us hope, we are still experiencing difficulty in the present. How do we balance the need for human consolation with the ability to look at the truth of the moment that includes suffering? Can we look at suffering and see something working there, in the midst of it? What might come from facing the worst thing we can imagine and still being able to stand?

Hope includes a sense of possibility within mystery. Humility is connected to the not knowing: we can hope because we don’t know what will happen. We return to our faith in the larger reality

when we open ourselves to our own humble not-knowing. In trust, we walk towards the horizon beyond which we cannot see. According to Walter Brueggemann, to be utterly hopeless is to be idolatrous, because you reduce the ultimate mystery to a single rational moment in history.

— Jennifer Nordstrom, with this month’s theme team: Lisa Friedman, K.P. Hong, Pat Haff, and Ruth Palmer

Hope Resources

BOOKS

Man's Search for Meaning by Victor Frankl

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

CHILDREN’S BOOKS

Harvesting Hope: the story of Cesar Chavez by Kathleen Krull

On That Day: A Book of Hope for Children by Andrea Patel

MOVIES

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

Remember the Titans

Akeelah and the Bee

Field of Dreams

Just Words



What's in a name? Our names tell the world something about ourselves. We are given our names when we first come into this world, but how we claim or alter them tells others something about who we are, and even who we are still becoming.

The same is true with congregations. I recently returned from the Mid-America regional assembly in Wausau, WI, hosted by the First Universalist Unitarian Church — a congregation clearly proud of its Universalist roots. Many of our congregations enter into significant conversations about whether or not to call themselves a church, a congregation, a fellowship or a society. What reflects the heart of the community? What name communicates most clearly the mission and welcome of our Unitarian Universalist faith?

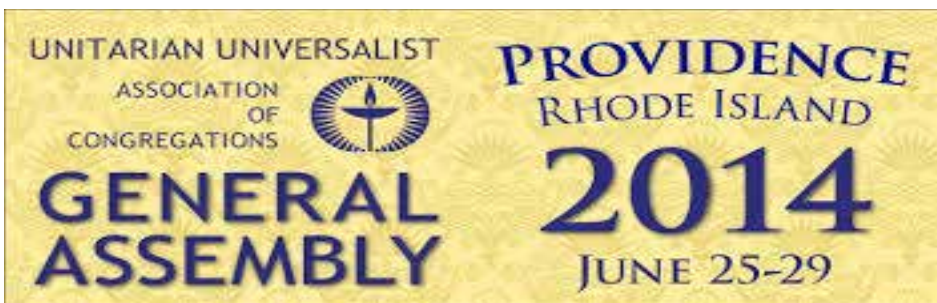
Unity Church-Unitarian. It is significant to me that we are not the First Unitarian Church of St. Paul or All Souls or any of the other fine names that might apply to a congregation with our long history. Historically, the Unity in our name draws upon our transcendentalist roots and our affirmation of the presence of the Sacred in all the great religious traditions of the world. Unity Church formally chartered in 1872 with a bold statement of its liberal religious values on the Minnesota frontier.

Unity Church. It is a name that still implies a broad, bold vision and a wide, open embrace. It is a name that still speaks with hope and challenge to the larger oneness of the Holy and our shared humanity. I was reminded of this recently as I worshipped with other Unity Church members and the members of Above Every Name during their Palm Sunday service. In his sermon, Pastor Danny Givens lifted up the name Unity and projected an image of it surrounded by many hands of different hues reaching to connect with one another. He preached about the importance of building relationships and the power of living out our unity right here at home in the emerging friendship of these two vibrant congregations. As we shared this sacred time, I was reminded that unity is also an act of faith and hope.

Almost a full century ago, the Rev. Richard Wilson Boynton, then minister of Unity Church, observed: "You, the people, have been the real Unity Church, and are so still." It remains true today. May we continue to live into the Unity that we have proudly proclaimed for so many years. What's in a name? The hope and dreams of the religious community that we are today, and the congregation we are still becoming.

Blessings,
Lisa

Rev. Lisa Friedman, Director of Congregational Life
lisa@unityunitarian.org • 651-228-1456 x107



Volunteer Coordinator

Position Opening at Unity

Unity Church is seeking to hire a half-time Volunteer Coordinator to begin work July 15, 2014. The Volunteer Coordinator will facilitate, support, and manage volunteers in the Membership, Community Outreach, and Adult Program ministries of Unity Church and report directly to the Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement (see page 4). Successful applicants will have strong organizational skills and the ability to communicate with, supervise, and empower volunteers, and to relate volunteer opportunities to the Ends and mission of Unity Church. A complete job description is available at www.unityunitarian.org. Resume with cover letter should be submitted by May 28, 2014, to Rev. Lisa Friedman, Unity Church, 732 Holly Ave, St. Paul, MN 55104 or lisa@unityunitarian.org.

From the Archives...

The Archives Team has completed its preliminary inventory and has created a spreadsheet that will allow us to begin sorting and arranging the papers, pamphlets and AV materials. The work continues!

For more information or to offer support for this ongoing project, please contact Louise Merriam at 612-242-8772 or machias1@gmail.com.

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MAY WORSHIP AND OFFERING RECIPIENTS

May Worship Calendar

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

PLEASE NOTE! The summer worship schedule of one service at 10:00 a.m. begins on May 25.

May 4: Arthur Foote Music Sunday

Music presented by the Children's Choir, Women's Ensemble, Unity Singers, Unity Choir and Unity Percussion Ensemble; Laura Sewell and Teresa and Will Richardson, cello, and Andrea Stern, harp; also welcoming special guest Dr. Arthur Jones, *The Spirituals Project*. Turn to pages 8-9 for details about *The Spirituals Project* Workshop that will be offered on Saturday, May 3.

May 11: Hoping for Connection—Jennifer Nordstrom
Hope is a moving thing with feathery wings. It is alive in the personal connections among us. What happens when we are so hurt we cannot hope? Where does hope live then? Where does hope live in families? In between mothers and their children? In communities? Worship leader Jennifer Nordstrom and worship associate Mary-Margaret Zindren will reflect on the interpersonal nature of hope during this Mother's Day service.

May 18: 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. **PLEASE BRING A FLOWER FOR THE ARCH.** This celebration for the entire church family will be led by Lisa Friedman, Jennifer Nordstrom, and worship associate Jen Welsh. Each service will include a dedication ceremony for older children (see page 15 for details).



On Family Sundays, children experience the entire worship together with their families in the Sanctuary. A children's message and activity books related to the stories and sermon help children to engage in the experience of worship. Regular religious education programming does not take place on Family Sundays; however, the nursery is open for children under three years of age.

May 25: ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 10:00 a.m.

For Peace and a New Hope — Rev. Rob Eller-Issacs

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 worship series on hope.

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 4: Arthur Foote Music 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 11: Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity

The Unity Church Affordable Housing Outreach Ministry Team is co-sponsoring a June Habitat for Humanity build as an interfaith partner in Faith Builders. The other neighborhood churches involved in the Faith Builders 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 in a St. Paul neighborhood.

May 18: Unity Church Chalice Camp

Chalice Camp is designed to provide a unique opportunity for children in grades one through six to deepen their connections to Unity Church, Unitarian Universalism and the wider community. This summer, week one will focus on our Unitarian Universalist heritage and seven principles and how they affect our relationship to the larger community. Week two will focus on how we put our faith into action as we interact with the world around us. Both weeks will include worship, small and large group activities, and time for fun. This offering will support scholarship opportunities for church families and help provide another great year of Chalice Camp! Unity Church member Hannah Eller-Isaacs is Chalice Camp Director.

May 25: Veterans for Peace

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.

ANNOUNCING: Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement



From Marg Walker, Trustee

I am excited to announce the decision by the Board of Trustees to elevate the position of Director of Congregational Life to a new position: Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement. This will be an Executive Team position, hired by and reportable to the board. We are thrilled that the Rev. Lisa Friedman, who is an ordained Unitarian Universalist Associate (UUA) minister with 18 years experience, will fill this role beginning in July 2014.

The Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement (let's call it MCCE) will have three areas of responsibility: adult faith formation, membership, and community outreach. Notice how these three areas correspond to within, among, and beyond. The position will encompass the work formerly done by Lisa as Director of Congregational Life (DCL), and by Pat Haff as Coordinator of Community Outreach Ministries. (See page five for official notice of Pat Haff's retirement from Unity.) A volunteer coordinator position will be created to support the administrative duties that both Lisa and Pat have handled.

What led us to make this change?

Several streams converged to result in this decision. Two years ago the board made a commitment to evaluate how the DCL position might evolve to best serve the church. Last year's Executive Team Composition study affirmed that work of developing congregational life belongs at the ET level. Then, Pat Haff's retirement announcement this past fall triggered the opportunity to re-imagine how community outreach could be done, building on Pat's strong vision and leadership, and integrating community outreach more fully into all aspects of church life. Unity is growing — in membership and in volunteer opportunities. The new Ends Statements provide the within-among-beyond framework.

Why have a third minister at Unity Church?

We looked to the UUA for some guidance on this matter. Having a third minister is consistent with best practices for congregations of our size, which typically have multiple ministers. In truth, the position of DCL at Unity has included faith development and other ministerial components since 2007. The presence of a third minister has consistently demonstrated its value to Unity Church, by providing additional pastoral care, leadership in worship services, and coverage during sabbatical absences.

What are the implications for our structure and budget?

These staffing changes are well suited to Unity's stage of growth and development. It will be accomplished with minimal impact on the operating budget, by essentially transferring salary among positions and leaving the number of staff stable. It is important to note that the position of MCCE is not designed as a transitional or assumed career path to the position of Senior Minister, whether for Lisa or other future incumbents. It is designed to be a terrific opportunity to solidify the importance of community outreach in the life of the church, to nurture the growth and empower the leadership of volunteers, and to weave together our collective work within, among, and beyond.

To read Lisa's thoughts on the new position, please see the box at right. We hope you will take time to congratulate Lisa, and to offer her, and trustees, your ideas.

Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement Reflections on the New Ministerial Position

From Rev. Lisa Friedman

What opportunities do you see for the church in this new structure?

Unity's community outreach program is a groundbreaking model for social justice ministry. From the beginning, it has recognized the profound connection between justice work and personal spiritual growth. Our new Ends recognize that within, among, and beyond are deeply interconnected. I believe that community outreach, adult faith formation, and meaningful membership involvement can work together to empower people to live out their values in their lives.

As the first incumbent of this position, what will be your priorities?

My two priorities in the first year will be to make sure that the Community Outreach teams continue to have the excellent support that they have had from Pat Haff and to continue the development of our membership program. Over time, I look forward to developing a comprehensive approach to Adult Faith Formation, like we have in Religious Education for children and youth. Ideally, over the long term, I would hope to evenly split my time between these three areas of responsibility, with the support of a strong Volunteer Coordinator.

What excites you about taking on this new role?

I am a collaborative leader, who enjoys team ministry. I look forward to working more closely with the dedicated volunteer leadership of the congregation in all these areas of congregational life and am deeply grateful for the chance to work with Pat this summer for a smooth transition. I am also excited to bring my previous experience in social justice work into my ministry here at Unity Church.



Jennifer Nordstrom 2013-14 Hallman Ministerial Intern

Every month, Unity's program staff comes together to discuss the monthly theme. At this month's meeting, KP Hong shared the idea that hope is alive in the present moment through the seeds of our dreams (I discuss this in more detail in the monthly theme cover article). Since the meeting, that seed of an idea has been taking root in me, transforming me as it grows. My own hopes have become more real and powerful for me because I have a greater sense of their tangibility, their existence in the present. I have developed a stronger understanding that my ideas and dreams are not just fanciful imaginings, but powerful seeds that exist now, not just sometime in the imagined future.

This has consequences in my life. I find myself respecting my dreams more because I have a deeper understanding of their power. I realize their potential by feeding and watering them daily. I also recognize that circumstances in my life have enabled me to dream these dreams of beauty, love, connection, and justice, so I know the seeds of those dreams exist in the world around me as well as within me. Hope for the future is helping me see the present in a different way. It is directing my vision to those seeds so that I might pay them more attention, and nourish them.

This new way of seeing has become medicine to me: medicine for cynicism, medicine for anger, medicine for despair. In the past, I have been turned off by false, cheap hope. This way of perceiving the dream embedded in the present offers real sustenance to me. It is truly transformative.

A Reflection on Beloved Conversations From Jill Hendricksen, Anti-Racism Leadership Team

Unity's Beloved Conversations mini retreat was anything but mini. I couldn't have imagined how one weekend could be so transformative until I experienced it. I came on Friday evening, feeling tired and skeptical. I left Saturday feeling overcome with hope and love. The weekend was the perfect blend of emotional moments and practical learning. We shared our individual family cultures and discussed how reducing others to a single stereotype perpetuates oppression, making us all small.

The truth is that racism and oppression have deeply hurt so many people in our community. It's a pain that most of us struggle to understand, yet, trying to understand is imperative in creating a healthy, equitable community. As Unitarian Universalists, Beloved Conversations moves us to confront our role in racism and oppression. I believe that white people and people of color need to work in communion in order for real healing to begin. From there we can move toward the anti-racist and anti-oppressive community we desperately want to be.

Race and ethnicity often divide us, but our common humanity must bring us together. Beloved Conversations inspires us to see each and every one of us as unique, multi-faceted beings. We must dismantle broad generalizations and stereotypes in order to build intimate connections with one another.

We are so appreciative of Above Every Name's collaboration with us in offering Beloved Conversations, our social experiment in humanity. Saturday ended with all of us in a circle, holding hands singing "I'll pray for you, you'll pray for me..." My heart opened and my faith in humanity soared.

Unity Church honors Pat Haff and her founding leadership of the Community Outreach Ministry

In 2002, Unity Church decided to create and formalize a community outreach ministry. We were awarded a grant from the Furness Fund of The Saint Paul Foundation and many Unity Church members provided matching "Program Initiative" funds to get the program launched. How lucky we were that Pat Haff, who has a lifetime of commitment to social justice work, applied for the position! Pat has guided the development of the community outreach ministry and has overseen the creation of many community outreach teams at Unity Church. Her dedicated and steadfast leadership has helped to establish Unity Church as a credible partner in social justice advocacy both locally and internationally.

Last September, Pat went to part-time in her position in anticipation of retirement from her work at Unity Church in the summer of 2014. Pat's last Sunday will be July 27, 2014. Mark your calendars and watch for upcoming details about how we plan to thank and honor Pat Haff for her dedicated and effective work at Unity Church.



New Orleans! Pat Haff has coordinated eight annual trips to New Orleans since the city was ravaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Here she is pictured (front-center, with hat and beautiful smile) with the group from 2009.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS / PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP

Fellowship Groups

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

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (May 8) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528.

Afterthoughts: This group meets after the 9:00 a.m. service. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528 for more information.

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (May 15) from Noon–2:00 p.m.

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (May 13) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (May 24) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760 for more information.

Job Transitions/Networking Group: Every Monday at 9:00 a.m. in the Anderson Library. This group will NOT meet on Monday, May 26 (Memorial Day).

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (May 20) from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, May 5 and 19, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578 for more information.

Unitots!: A drop-in playgroup for families (parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles) with kids through preschool age. Every Monday, from 9:30 a.m.-noon, in the nursery. Contact Christy Randall at christy@unityunitarian.org for more information. This group will NOT meet on Monday, May 26 (Memorial Day).

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday (May 13) of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. In May the group will discuss *Under a Wing* by Reeve Lindbergh. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net for more information.

Unity Bridge Club: First Friday of the month (May 2) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209.

Women's Retirement Group: Second and Fourth Thursday of the month (May 8 and 22) from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Leah Doherty at doher001@umn.edu.

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



Welcome Words

Call me a history geek, but I love to tell the story of Unitarian Universalism. Many assume that we are a modern religion and are pleasantly surprised to hear about our ancient roots. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Transcendentalist and Unitarian minister, articulated his understanding of religion with the image of a tall, broad, and deeply-rooted tree. The solid trunk represents what he called "pure religion" — that mystery and spirit that is a part of all the great world religions, but which no one tradition can exclusively claim. Out of that trunk grows many strong branches — Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Taoism, Judaism and more. Each is distinct, yet connected to a greater reality. As spring slowly emerges and the trees awaken around us, may we take notice and honor the larger mystery of which we are a part.

Rev. Lisa Friedman, Director of Congregational Life

Pathway to Membership

Sign up for Pathway to Membership classes at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Rev. Lisa Friedman, Director of Congregational Life, at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. She is also happy to meet with you personally to answer questions and to welcome you into the congregation. Childcare is available by contacting Christy Randall at 651-228-1456 x127 or christy@unityunitarian.org at least one week in advance.

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers

Wednesday, May 7, 7:15–8:30 p.m. ~also offered~
Sunday, June 1, 11:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

If you have been visiting Unity and would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and our congregation, we invite you to join us for a *Welcome to Unity* class.

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Exploration

Saturday, May 3, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

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

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Wednesday, June 4, 7:15–8:30 p.m.

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



Back row (L to R: Megan Casselman-Condon, Kit Eastman, Ray Wilson, Jim Johnson, Mary Knatterud, Roxanne Kibben, Therissa Libby, Jeff Digre, Monica Digre, Layla Digre, Susan Skach-Bejarano. Front row: Sara Testen, Emily Wallace, Susan Schafer, Tim Power, Phyllis Sherman, Jen Sherman, Nancy Evert.

Jeff and Monica Digre: We started coming to Unity in early 2013 and love the welcoming and open-minded culture of the church. We have backgrounds in science, art and music, and are drawn to the Unitarian principle of searching for truth and meaning. Our children, Leif (4) and Layla (1) love coming here, too!

Susan Huehn: I have been a member of the Unitarian Fellowship in Northfield for many years. Following my husband's death, I found myself unable to attend the Fellowship we had so fondly attended together. A friend brought me to Unity in early 2012 and I was immediately drawn in. The services and grief group have been a tremendous support in my journey. I live in Northfield and teach nursing at St. Olaf. I live on a small hobby and currently tend chickens in addition to my three children: Peter (23), Sonja (20), and Alex (17).

Jim Johnson: I am in sales management at a large automotive recycling company. Together with my wife, Mary Knatterud, I enjoy the great outdoors, travel, tennis, history, learning in general. We were drawn here by Unity's openness, caring on social issues, and especially the connection with Mano a Mano.

Mary Knatterud: I'm a telecommuting associate professor and editor (University of Arizona surgery department, Tucson). My husband, Jim Johnson, and I live on Newell Park near the Fairgrounds. My three grown kids — Josh, Nate, and Emma — suggested Unity as someplace to nourish and expand our liberal, nonsexist, non-homophobic Christian faith.

Nancy Evert: I am thankful that my move from SW Minneapolis to Highland makes it easier to regularly find myself at Unity. I am enjoying singing in the Unity Choir. I am a food and flower gardener, caretaker of two large cats, and for this year, host to a delightful adult niece named Sarah.

Therissa Libby and Roxanne Kibben: Libby (13) and her moms moved back here after nine years in Annapolis, MD, where they first became UUs. Therissa and Roxanne, both in long-term addiction recovery, devote their work to addiction at Metro State and UMN. Fun loving Libby misses grandma and MD but is adjusting.

Susan Schafer: I am currently retired and a wife to Brad, a mother of three, and a grandma to six. I moved to Minnesota 14 years ago to help care for my first two grandkids. We've been in all our grandkids lives since they were all little and it's been a joy. Our daughter Emily brought me to Unity Church and it's been so fulfilling to have it in my life. Everyone here makes me feel welcome.

Jen Sherman: I'm an ELL teacher at a Somali charter school in St. Paul. I teach science to newly arrived immigrants. I love to read, knit, and travel. I'm heavily involved in DFL party politics. Unity Church's passion for social justice is why I joined.

Phyllis Sherman: I've been married for 42 years to John, my life-long partner and best friend. Our family includes daughters Jennifer Sherman, Katherine Sherman-Hoehn, son-in-law Fitz Hoehn, and granddaughter Sophia Sherman-

Hoehn. I sing with the Oratorio Society of Minnesota, read, garden, and engage in partisan politics. I came to Unity because my family is here and also because it's a good match for my personal beliefs.

Susan Skach-Bejarano: I have recently relocated to St. Paul after growing up here and living in other places for many years. I have two grown daughters. I'm bilingual in Spanish. I seek beauty in nature, written word, art, music, and community. I am delighted to become part of such a vibrant faith community where there are many paths to continue on the spiritual journey.

Emily Wallace: I live on the east side of St. Paul with my husband Ben and kids Henry (8) and Tulla (3). I am looking forward in being more involved with Unity Church and meeting more families here. I have been attending Unity for a couple of years now and am ready to officially be part of this wonderful community.

Raymond Wilson: I have been a pilot in the U.S. Army and an instructor/pilot at NWA and for local hospitals. I'm retired from all. The great opportunities to become involved with the larger community, while following my spiritual path, has led me to join Unity.

Kit Eastman: Ray and I have two grown children (one is married), and a two-year-old granddaughter. I am an artist exploring katazome (Japanese stencil dyeing) and printmaking. The welcoming, inclusive community, inspiring services, and opportunities for deeper involvement are the reasons I have joined Unity.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Leave a Legacy for Future Generations

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

A legacy 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. Wealthy people may have large estates, but even people who aren't wealthy often have the resources to make a legacy gift.

There are many gift possibilities. Each of these gifts allows flexibility, though some requirements apply, and you always retain the right to amend your estate plans.

- A charitable **bequest** in your last will and testament can be a specific amount or a percentage of what remains after providing for your heirs
- A **life insurance** designation names Unity Church of St. Paul as owner or beneficiary of the policy
- **Retirement plan** assets name the church as a beneficiary of an IRA, 401(k), 403(b), profit sharing or other retirement plan
- Other types of legacy gifts include **gift annuities, life-estate agreements** and **charitable remainder trusts**

By making a legacy gift to Unity Church, you would be joining 200 others who have committed to supporting our ministry and programs into the future. Our annual **Heritage Society Dinner on Friday, May 9**, is the church's way of thanking those individuals who have made legacy gifts. **Rev. Dr. Barbara Holmes, President of United Theological Seminary, will be our guest speaker.**

For more information contact Barbara Hubbard at the church office.

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministry



There is in each of us an unprotected place that beauty can always reach out and touch.

From *Beauty, The Invisible Embrace* — John O'Donohue

For me, there will always be hope in this world when one can hear the sound of voices singing together. As Foote Music Sunday begins our theme month of "hope," I am reminded of so many moments of strife, turmoil, despair and darkness in the human condition, moments that have been survived, or at the least raised, by the help of song. Come and celebrate with us as we sing songs from Walden Pond to South Africa, songs that speak to generations connected through song, songs that speak to that "unprotected place" in us. How can we keep from singing?

Come and join with us and many of our neighbors for a wonderful workshop from the Spirituals Project, Saturday, May 3, here at Unity Church!

SATURDAY, MAY 3

Noon–2:00: Workshop on the African-American Spiritual with Dr. Arthur Jones

2:00–3:00: A community sing featuring gathered choirs and Dr. Arthur Jones

We are very excited about welcoming our guest, Dr. Jones, to be with us and many of our neighboring churches and all those who wish to come and experience this wonderful workshop. No better description could articulate the passion and dedicated work of Dr. Jones and the Spirituals Project than their own words which I share below. Please consider joining us for this wonderful beginning to our Arthur Foote Music Sunday Weekend! This is free and open to the public.

We seek to tear down the walls that hinder young people in learning from elders, and hinder elders in trusting young people to assume the mantles of leadership. We seek to draw from the wisdom of the ancestors, whose embrace of the twin forces of Spirit and Hope defied all odds. We seek to rejoice in the genuine social progress that we have made as a society, while also working to tear down the remaining walls that impede our efforts to build the kind of world in which we want our children and our grandchildren to live. Musically and poetically, our aim is for all to experience the infinite power of the soul that delivers a genuine inter-generational and interracial dialogue as it symbolically works its way through those strands. If we accomplish that aim, then we will know that the women and men who created and first sang the spirituals will be pleased. — Dr. Arthur Jones, Founder and Chair Emeritus, Psychologist and Educator, The Spirituals Project

SUNDAY, MAY 4

Arthur Foote Music Sunday • Services at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 4:30 p.m.

Music presented in the Sanctuary by the Children's Choir, Women's Ensemble, Unity Singers, Unity Choir and Unity Percussion Ensemble; Laura Sewell and Teresa and Will Richardson, cello, and Andrea Stern, harp; also welcoming special guest Dr. Arthur Jones, The Spirituals Project.

Unity Church—Unitarian warmly invites you to participate in Arthur Foote Music Weekend

The Spirituals Project



with
Dr. Arthur Jones

SATURDAY, MAY 3

The Spirituals Project Workshop • Noon-2PM • SANCTUARY

The mission of *The Spirituals Project* is to preserve and revitalize the music and teachings of the sacred songs called “spirituals,” created and first sung by enslaved Africans in America in the 18th and 19th centuries. *The Spirituals Project* is a broad-based initiative to explore the many, varied dimensions of African American spirituals as art form, tradition and tool; and to invite all people to experience the joy and power of this dynamic music and gift from African Americans to the world.

Community Sing • 2-3PM • SANCTUARY

SUNDAY, MAY 4

Arthur Foote Music Sunday • Services at 9AM, 11AM, 4:30PM

Music presented in the Sanctuary by the Children’s Choir, Women’s Ensemble, Unity Singers, Unity Choir and Unity Percussion Ensemble; Laura Sewell and Teresa and Will Richardson, cello, and Andrea Stern, harp; also welcoming special guest Dr. Arthur Jones, *The Spirituals Project*.

☉→ These events are free and all are welcome! No RSVP required. ←☉

Unity Church • 733 Portland Avenue, St. Paul, MN • 651-228-1456 • www.unityunitarian.org

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY / DENOMINATIONAL LIFE

Wellspring Wednesday

Wellspring Wednesday is a multi-generational opportunity to gather together midweek at church for food, fellowship, and learning. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship at 6:45 p.m., and an evening of rich programming beginning at 7:10 p.m. Childcare is available and you do not have to sign up in advance. The cost for dinner is: \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4 (children under age 2 are free), and \$20/family, and can be paid by cash or check. Financial assistance is available to cover the cost of dinners; contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107.

May 7

Dinner menu: TBA

Why Bolivia? Travelers' Tales of Wonder and Discovery

(at 12,000 feet above sea level)

Free-ranging llamas, dancing children, terraced mountaintops and fresh-dug potatoes: just a few of the wonders experienced by a dozen intrepid Unity travelers this past March in Cochabamba, Bolivia. If you've considered a trip, but asked yourself "Why Bolivia?" here's your chance to find out! Presented by Unity's Mano a Mano Community Outreach Team.



Open Writing Page Session

What Hope Asks of Us: Cultivating Hope — Rev. Karen Hering

"Hope is not merely an emotion that comes and goes. It is a virtue, resulting from a conscious, deliberate choice and long practice," says Mary McDermott Shideler. Where do we find hope today, and how might we cultivate it? Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

Tween Group (grades 5-8)

Welcome to Unity — Rev. Lisa Friedman

May 14

Dinner menu: Picnic! Hot dogs, bratwurst, baked beans, coleslaw, homemade ice cream sandwiches

All Church Talent Show

Do you have a talent or hobby you'd like to share with the congregation? Join us for our annual picnic followed by the Unity Talent Show. We'll enjoy music, dance, jokes, readings and more... it's a fun evening for all ages! Performers of every age are welcome and acts should be appropriate for a family event. The performance is held in the Sanctuary. Sign up for a slot at the Welcome Table in the Parish Hall or email kp@unityunitarian.org.

May 14 marks the last Wellspring Wednesday of the church year. Programming will resume on September 10, 2014.

General Assembly Meets in Providence, RI

June 25-29, 2014

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. The



theme for General Assembly 2014 is *Love Reaches Out*. Religious life in America is changing dramatically and rapidly. Fewer people are identifying with specific denominations and most mainline religions are losing members in droves. Current studies of faith in America show that there is a movement toward a liberal, fluid kind of faith that doesn't fit with traditional denominational identity and structure. We already know that for every adult member of Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations, there are at least three non-members who also consider themselves to be Unitarian Universalist.

We believe that our faith provides a path for each of us to unlock our transformational capacity to serve the world with love. We want to expand our faith not just to grow Unitarian Universalism, but also to better achieve this transformational purpose. The 2014 General Assembly will help our association live into a future where our "Love Reaches Out" to share our faith both within and beyond our congregations' walls. Anyone may attend. Contact Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org, if you would like to serve as a delegate from Unity Church.

Become a MidAmerica UU Chalice Lighter

The MidAmerica Chalice Lighters program is a highly successful fundraising program that has existed in all three of our former districts for about 20 years. The idea behind it is simple and effective: Unitarian Universalists who are interested in supporting other congregations in their efforts to grow can make small donations three times a year, generally in the \$20-\$100 range. That money gets pooled together to make a grant to a congregation's growth-oriented endeavor.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been raised to support over 100 congregations across the Midwest since Chalice Lighters started in the 1990s. Chalice Lighter committees or teams have solicited grant proposals from congregations, evaluated them and selected one application to be the recipient of a Chalice Lighter call. These growth-oriented proposals have typically fallen into one of these areas: hire new staff or increase hours of existing professional staff members; purchase new facilities or make improvements to existing facilities; initiate outreach programs such as advertising, social justice or Young Adult/Campus Ministry to increase visibility in their community; or support the founding of a new congregation. If you would like to support the growth of Midwest Unitarian Universalism, sign up today at: <http://bit.ly/machalice>

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Book Reading

Local author Judith Sullivan will read from her new book, *The Terrifying Wind: Seeking Shelter Following the Death of a Child* Monday, May 5 • 7:00 p.m. • Common Good Books 38 South Snelling Avenue, St. Paul

It took only one phone call to change a family's life forever. When twenty-five-year-old Melissa Sullivan arrived at the hospital, she was already in a coma. Several days went by as Judith Sullivan, her husband, and her son and his wife held vigil in the hospital waiting room. Holding on to hope, the family clung to each other and to friends who offered their support. But Melissa would not survive the cardiac arrest. Judith and her family then went on a journey. They struggled to understand how Melissa could have died. They realized that their family would have to be redefined. And they learned the value of good friends—life supporters—who walked with them on their journey.

Open Page Writing Session

Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing sessions are for writers and nonwriters alike – opportunities to correspond with the "still, small voice within." Using stories, poetry, images and objects as well as wisdom from religious teachings, science and history, participants reflect on the month's theme in their own words and on their own pages. No writing experience is necessary.

What Hope Asks of Us: Cultivating Hope

Wednesday, May 7 • 7:00–9:00 p.m. • Unity Church

Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

"Hope is not merely an emotion that comes and goes. It is a virtue, resulting from a conscious, deliberate choice and long practice," says Mary McDermott Shideler. Where do we find hope today, and how might we cultivate it?

Writing Green: Nature Poetry and Ecology

Saturday, May 10 • 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. • Unity Church

Join master poet Thomas R. Smith as we survey the world of nature poetry with masters such as Wordsworth, Thoreau, Mary Oliver, and Wendell Berry. Along the way, we'll look at some Minnesota poets who have written notably of nature, and borrow liberally from the British "ecopoetics" scholar Jonathan Bate and French poet Francis Ponge. Taking time for enjoyment and discussion of great nature poetry, while staying aware of serious threats to our environment, we'll use writing exercises to hone our ability to create poems celebrating and advocating for the natural world. Cost: \$59 for Unity Members, \$79 for non-members. Register online at <http://bit.ly/WritingGreen>.

Thomas R. Smith is the author of six books of poems, and has had poems featured in Garrison Keillor's public radio program *The Writer's Almanac*, *The Best American Poetry 1999*, and elsewhere. He lives in River Falls, Wisconsin, where he is able to write about and observe the natural world, and teaches poetry at the Loft Literary Center.

Writer's Workshop

Making the Earth Tremble with Juliet S. Kono

Monday, May 19 • 7:00-9:00 p.m. • Unity Church

How can writers make the earth tremble? By being ORIGINAL. Originality (a distinct voice), the force behind your creativity, is what distinguishes you and your work from others. Come and learn how to transform your "feelings into virtues." (From *Teaching Poetry Writing*, by Joseph I. Tsujimoto.)

Juliet S. Kono has written two books of poetry, *Hilo Rains* and *Tsunami Years*; a collaborative work of poems called *No Choice But to Follow*; a collection of short stories, *Ho'olulu Park and the Pepsodent Smile*; and a novel, *Anshuu: Dark Sorrow*. She has won many awards including the Elliot Cades Award for Literature, the American Japanese National Literary Award, and the Ka Palapala Po'okela Award for Excellence in Literature.

Elders Circle Group

End of the year potluck!

Tuesday, May 27 • 1:00-2:30 p.m. • Unity Church

The Elders' Circle is a group of church elders (self-identified) who get together monthly for fellowship, reflection, and fun. This month, we will gather around food for our fellowship and fun, and say farewell to the church year and to Hallman Ministerial Intern Jennifer Nordstrom. Jennifer will bring a main dish; please bring a dish to share. For more information, please contact Jennifer at jennifer@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x 129.

Young Adult Group

Unity's young adult group seeks to build community and make connections between people ages 18-35 in our congregation. Join us for our monthly 4th Tuesday potlucks at 6:30 p.m. in the Center Room and add your name to our email list to hear about other meet-up opportunities. Contact Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org for more information.



A big thanks everyone that came out to dance (bunny hop!) into spring! A special thanks to Buddy and the Blue Dogs for the amazing music!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

May Means Project Home

Everything you want to know that we forgot to tell you!

From Ann Russell, Project Home Team

- 1. It touches your heart.** "I live at 835 Bush and my school is right across the street. My brothers and I have bunk beds and we play soccer in the yard. But then we had to go to my uncle's house and then he couldn't have us there anymore. I sure hope I can get back to 835 Bush." Eight year old Henry repeated this to everyone that night, sharing his hope for his family and a life he cherishes that seemed safe and happy. This is Project Home... young children who live with uncertainty but still have thoughts of a real home.
- 2. This is a huge project for Unity Church.** This project needs 150 volunteers!! We are well on our way to that number but we need your help. We hope to have every slot filled by May first, so we can focus our efforts on making this a good experience for everyone. If you have previously volunteered but can't commit right now... consider signing up a substitute.
- 3. This commitment is time limited and there is a choice.** There are two easy ways to participate. Three volunteers are needed each evening from 5:30-9:00 p.m. This shift offers the most opportunity for interaction with parents and children. If the evening is warm, families may wish to go to the park across the street for much needed fun and exercise. There are games and books to share. We prepare a healthy snack for families. They are on their way to bed at 9:00 p.m. Unless the number of families is larger than usual, each family has a classroom to themselves. Two more volunteers arrive for the night shift at 8:30 p.m. and once everyone is settled they can retire for the night. Families rise at 6:00 a.m. and we serve a simple breakfast before they depart at 7:00 a.m. for The Family Place to begin their day which can include work, training or school.
- 4. You will have training and support.** If you have not participated in the past you will have a brief training session between services. If you have not volunteered since the renovation it is useful to go through the training again as the space and location of supplies has changed. Each evening a staff person from the St. Paul Area Council of Churches greets you and the families. You work with a team. You will be paired with an experienced volunteer. There is professional staff available by phone and written instructions for almost any situation or emergency.
- 5. This is a great way to get to know other Unity folks.** We have been told that this is a wonderful way to get to know other members of the community. People who have volunteered often return together year after year.
- 6. You can volunteer as a couple or a family.** Children and parents who have volunteered together tell us this is a meaningful experience. We have learned that spending time with families managing homelessness becomes the subject of important conversations about gratitude and the meaning of living and contributing to the community.
- 7. Signing up is easy.** Stop by the Project Home table in the Parish Hall after morning services or visit <http://bit.ly/ProjectHome2014>. We look forward to working with you.

Sustainable Agriculture Group at Unity Church

Help Unity Church Stay Green Over the Summer!

Want to know more about Unity's attempts to green its systems? Join the Sustainable Agriculture Group's "Compost Bucket Brigade!" Our church food system includes compost that we use in our children's garden. We sustain this system through volunteers and need people to sign up to maintain the system over the summer. We empty the buckets into our garden's compost bins once a week. If you sign up, you can either choose to be paired with a regular, who will walk you through the process, or sign up on your own and follow the directions in the kitchen. According to previous volunteers, these directions are very clear and specific. We need volunteers throughout the summer, so sign up as many times as you like, and help keep Unity green and sustainable over the summer months! You can sign up here: <http://bit.ly/compostbucketbrigade>.

Sustainable Agriculture Group Meeting

Thursday, May 8 • 5:30-7:30 p.m.
DeCramer Room

The Sustainable Agriculture Group is going to explore sustainable meals at its meeting this month. We will use our usual potluck as an opportunity to educate ourselves and the group. Everyone will try to bring their definition of a "sustainable" dish to the potluck, and as we share food, we will explain what is sustainable about the dish we brought to the group, sharing our understanding of sustainable food. This could be everything from organic growing techniques, to local sourcing, to seasonality, to water use. Come join us for a lively discussion and healthy sustainable food!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Freedom School

From Jane Thomson, member of the Unity Church Racial and Restorative Justice Team

In 2013, I volunteered at St. Paul Children's Defense Fund Freedom School, a six-week summer enrichment program for children of color. Of the 361 children (ages 6-14) enrolled last year, the majority were African American.

Each day of the program began with "Harambee," a powerful rally with deep cultural and spiritual aspects. As the Hallelujah Chorus was played over a loudspeaker, the children stood, sang, and clapped intricate rhythms to accompany the song. The children sang with passion, reverence and enjoyment. This was followed by a song about affirmation and strength that went, "Something inside so strong! I know that I can make it..." Respect for oneself, the leaders, and fellow students was a recurring theme at Freedom School.

After the morning rally we gathered in small classes with about ten students that were taught by a trained teacher who often began by reading a short book to the class followed by a spirited discussion. All the books were about men and women of color, real or fictional, famous or not, who had made a positive difference. Math lessons took place after lunch and outdoor recess. Afternoons were a time for special activities such as an art or music lesson, often presented by volunteers. Students were also given the opportunity to participate in weekly field trips.

Freedom School takes place at Capitol Hill Magnet School, in the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood from mid-July through the third week in August. The timing of the school and its enthusiastic reception by students (and their parents) carried over to their studies in the fall. Of the 361 students who participated in Freedom School last summer, 91 percent have maintained or improved reading levels this year and are on the path to scoring higher on standardized tests.

Other members of Unity Church who have participated as volunteers include Rob Fulton, Ginny Martin, Priscilla Morton, Ron Prieve, and Judy Rieke. For more information about the 2014 Freedom School contact Jane Thomson at thoms028@tc.umn.edu or Pat Haff at pat@unityunitarian.org.

Habitat for Humanity Summer Build

Unity Church members will be working a home building project with Habitat For Humanity again this year. As before, we will do this with other neighborhood churches as a group called Faith Builders. Watch for sign up in the Parish Hall after morning services during May and also online. This will be new construction in the Midway area of St. Paul. Work weeks are July 14-18 and 21-25. You may contact Chuck Griggs at griggscb@msn.com or 612-408-0486 with questions.

Safe Schools for All: Thank you!

The Unity Church Rainbow Chalice Alliance Outreach Ministry Team is excited to report that after 11 hours of debate, the House of Representatives passed the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act! We want to thank Jim Davnie (Unity member and member of the House of Representatives) and all the people who worked to support the bill. Thanks to all who signed the Safe Schools petition, called and/or wrote their legislators, and participated in discussions about bullying. Thanks to you, Minnesota will move from having one of the weakest laws on record toward working to develop safe and support learning environments for all students. Hats off to all who got involved to make our schools a better and safer place.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Haiti: Surviving to Thriving

From Ruth Kirkland, Denominational Relations Ministry Team

Many survivors of the 2010 earthquake that rocked Port-au-Prince are still struggling to build new lives amidst many challenges. But contrary to what you may hear (if you hear anything at all) in mainstream dialogue, there is hope in Haiti. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is cultivating that hope every day as part of a long-term commitment to supporting a recovery in Haiti that is grounded in justice.

UUSC is dedicated to a Haitian-led recovery that respects the people and the land — and cultivates prosperity and sustainability for all Haitians. UUSC's work addresses the particular needs of the following people:

- Earthquake survivors relocated in rural areas
- Women and youth in disadvantaged neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince
- Women and children in temporary camps for displaced people
- Survivors of gender-based violence

Featured projects

- Creating and expanding models of recovery, like the eco-village, that promote environmental stewardship, self-sufficiency, food sovereignty, and empowerment
- Helping survivors reconstruct and develop viable livelihoods
- Keeping Haiti on the radar of U.S. policy makers and ensuring that Haitians are included in reconstruction and recovery
- Preventing gender-based violence and supporting survivors
- Developing child-protection committees in camps for displaced people
- Training Haitian community leaders to teach trauma treatment and alternative healing practices

For more information go to the UUSC web site www.uusc.org

What's New in the Library and Bookstall!

From Louise Merriam, Libraries and Bookstall Team

Did you ever wonder how the books and AV materials get on the shelves in the Unity libraries? Items are chosen by the Library Team leaders from a wide array of sources. We look at Bookstall bestsellers, resources that support monthly worship themes, titles mentioned in Sunday sermons, requests from church staff and suggestions from church members. We review catalogs from Skinner House, the publishing arm of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Beacon Press and Quaker Books. Searching Amazon using terms such as Unitarian, Liberal Religion and Social Justice identifies relevant titles from other publishers. And of course, we receive donations.

What are we looking for? Items that support the values and programs of our church community. We have a few practical criteria that we use to help us choose from among many possible titles. First, we try to select items that might not be readily available at local libraries and chain bookstores. Second, we don't usually buy adult fiction. Third, we avoid very expensive academic books.

What happens next? Once the items have arrived at Unity Church (we usually purchase online), they are added to the catalog and processed with ownership stamps, date due slips, and checkout cards. Then we put the items on the shelves. The members of the team do this on Sundays and during quarterly meetings. Once on the shelves, the materials are available for members and friends to borrow on Sundays or any other time the libraries are open. We invite you to see the results of our work for yourself.

Return your library books!

A gentle reminder: Please return your library materials before the church year ends. There is a return basket in the Anderson Library and a wooden book return outside the Whitman Children's Library.

May Parish Hall Artist

Lucy Rose Fischer

This exhibit by Lucy Rose Fischer features original illustrations from her colorful and fanciful book, *I'm New at Being Old*, along with examples of her whimsical glass art on the theme of aging. Before launching her art career Fischer had a distinguished 25-year career as a researcher specializing in the study of aging and was honored as a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America for "outstanding achievement and exemplary contributions to the field of aging."

Her art has been shown in over 50 exhibits and is on permanent display in public institutions and private collections. She is especially known for her fanciful designs on glass—she paints upside down, inside out and backwards on hand-blown glass bowls and vases (www.lucyrodesigns.com).

I'm New at Being Old received a Midwest Book Award and an Independent Publishers Gold Award. This picture book for adults captures the essence of what it feels like to be "new at being old." Her vibrantly whimsical art portrays the hazards of growing older—the "breakdown of movable parts" and the "sisterhood of sleeplessness." But her story also celebrates the vitality, creativity, and richness of later years.

Fischer and her art are featured on the Twin Cities Public Television programs *The Creative Power of Aging* and *Life Changing Art*, which received a regional Emmy.

Are you an artist or an art lover?

Ever wonder how the art work is selected for the Parish Hall exhibitions? Would you like to help select it? Do you want to meet other artists at Unity Church and beyond our walls?

Join the team!

The team that chooses, schedules, and installs the art in the Parish Hall is looking for new members. As a member, you would help select the art that we see at coffee and events. Duties include helping to hang or place the art, looking at artist applications with the team and helping to choose the artists for the year, coordinating the exhibition calendar, and serving as an artist "liaison" with exhibiting artists.

You will get to know the artists and work with church staff and other team members. The Art Gallery Team meets only a few times a year, usually before and after artist applications are due in May.

You do not need to be an artist or an art expert to be on the team. Your interest qualifies you.

To learn more, contact Jane Thomson at thoms028@tc.umn.edu or 651 290-2549, or Cynthia Starkweather-Nelson at starkweathernelson@cstarnel.com.

Attention Artists!

Applications to be a Parish Hall artist now being accepted!

Unity Church-Unitarian is now accepting applications for exhibits during the exhibit calendar year 2014/2015. Exhibits run monthly from September 2014 through August of 2015. The deadline for application submissions is May 15. More information and an application form is available online at www.unityunitarian.org/parish-hall-artists.html.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Pitter-pattering Questions

From K.P. Hong, Director of Religious Education

As in optics, the transparency and precise angles of certain conversations serve as a prism that helps clarify and discern constituent elements of a larger experience for me. One such recent conversation and moment of confession goes something like this: "What scares me about religious education with children? They're so noisy and messy, too candid, often inappropriate. And

children can be so vulnerable in ways that may require more than I am willing to give. Those are all things I come to church to escape, and you're asking if I would be interested in working with children!?" When someone speaks from such clarity of heart, what else is there to do but to bow my head in gratitude for such candor?

That revelatory moment brought to mind, though, a very familiar Zen story which I shared with our R.E. teachers: A young monk lived in an old temple, taking care of his old teacher and tending the temple's garden. One day, with esteemed visitors coming from afar to admire the garden, he worked meticulously to rake the garden and gather up all the stray leaves. Finally done after hours of hard work, he noticed his old master looking over the garden wall. "Very nice... but there's one thing missing," the master said. And taking hold of a tree branch, the old master gave it a good shake, sending autumn leaves cascading everywhere onto the pristinely raked garden. "There," said the old master, "Now it's perfect."

Given popular notions of all things "Zen" and whatever attraction "spiritual practice" may have, the point of the story is too easily understood as one of maintaining equanimity, poise, our inner calm whatever interruptions may come. Children running around—spilling and bumping and hurting and needing—and there we are meticulously and mindfully calm, centered in the midst of it all. *Nonsense! Don't you believe it!* was what my own teacher used to comment. But don't we (secretly) hold to some hope that spiritual practice *should* confer an inner serenity and beauty, a transcendent calmness that culminates from all the raking and manicuring of our lives? Shouldn't our faith journey accommodate for some such hope?

But what if the story has little to do with raking leaves and perfect gardens? Even more, what if the point of spiritual practice is *not* about inner calm or the psychology of equanimity, with no disrespect to either? What if spiritual practice, and the story, is about where we locate the garden walls? About where leaves are supposed to fall naturally and where they're not-at-all allowed to fall? About where we draw lines of what we accept or reject and what is "perfect"? About the size of our hearts in the only practice worthy of being called spiritual practice—love? What is the size of *that* garden? From what I recall of those ancient stories of faith, what is messy, noisy, too candid, often inappropriate, and vulnerable in ways that ask for more than we may be willing to give is unmistakably nothing other than Love itself. Interested in working in that garden?

Smiling at the gifts our children offer us, each time they shake our tree...

Helpful Reminders!

With the month of May, we step into the remaining religious education Sundays and opportunities to celebrate the many gifts, contributions, and adventures of this year's beloved R.E. community! Even as we continue to celebrate the culmination of youths' faith journeys on Coming of Age Sunday, we celebrate teachers, guides, nursery care staff, families and more who have blessed our shared ministry. Please note a few items for your attention:

- Last R.E. Sunday and recognition of our fabulous teachers: Sunday, May 11
- All-Church talent show and barbeque: Wednesday, May 14
- Flower Communion and dedication of older children, Sunday: May 18
- High School Senior Bridging, Sunday: June 1

COA and OWL Enrollment 2014-15

New and returning families wishing to enroll in Coming of Age (9th grade) and Our Whole Lives for 2014-15 should watch for information forthcoming from Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries at drew@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x112.

Missed R.E. enrollment for 2014-15?

For anyone who may have missed R.E. Enrollment for 2014-15, please watch for an early-September enrollment opportunity. Please contact K.P. Hong for more information at kp@unityunitarian.org.

Summer Camp at Unity Church

This year Unity Church is offering two summer camps! Get all the details and register online...

Chalice Camp

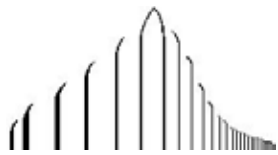
unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html

Arts Camp

unityunitarian.org/arts-camp.html

Dedication of Older Children: May 18

Families who would like their children ages 4-12 to participate in our annual Dedication should contact K.P. Hong (kp@unityunitarian.org). This ritual provides the church an opportunity to commit itself to raising up children who have come into our community as "big kids." The children process to the chancel (unaccompanied by a parent), receive a chalice and a certificate and read a responsive litany of dedication with the congregation. This dedication is appropriate for families who have joined Unity Church as members or who are on the pathway to membership.



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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Business Entrance: 732 Holly Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456 • fax: 651-228-0927 • www.unityunitarian.org • unity@unityunitarian.org

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SUMMER CAMP AT UNITY CHURCH

Friends Fun Crafts
ARTS Singing GAMES

CHALICE CAMP Week 1: July 7-11
CHALICE CAMP Week 2: July 21-25

More information and registration for Chalice Camp is online at
<http://www.unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html>

ARTS CAMP Week 1: June 23-27
ARTS CAMP Week 2: July 14-18

More information and registration for Arts Camp is online at
<http://www.unityunitarian.org/arts-camp.html>

Unity Church is offering many weeks of summer day camp! Share in summer fun and Unitarian Universalist values with Unity Church friends entering grades 1-6. Our camps run Monday-Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. Early-bird tuition \$200/week/child if paid by May 1. After May 1, \$250.

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 June 29. Religious Education ends on May 11, but starting May 25, Summer Sundays in the garden (an outdoor program for children and youth) will be offered 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 Marcy at the Church Office at marcy@unityunitarian.org. The available dates are June 15 through August 31. The flowers need to be arranged in a vase and placed in the chancel by 9:15 a.m. on the Sunday you select.