

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.

When I consider how best and briefly to describe our times, the word that keeps returning to my page is “heavy.” There’s the weighty matter of mortality in the pandemic and its attendant losses. There’s the hefty and horrifying legacy of racial oppression hoisted into the public square by repeated state-sanctioned racialized violence. And there’s the freight of grief we carry from both of these, and also from personal losses and so much more.

Where, given the drag of reality’s millstone, is transcendence today?

By definition, transcendence is not contained within the bounds of reality. The dictionary tells us it resides beyond the normal or the physical. Theologically, it often refers to the holy as being beyond our human experience, senses, comprehension and language (thus the challenge of this reflection). But does this mean the transcendent is not embedded here, within, among and all around us, possibly even in some way tucked into a few inadequate words intended to point toward it?

Thanks to our Transcendentalist forebearers, the theological root system of Unitarian Universalism insists that transcendence is not an otherworldly phenomenon but one that prevails within this world and our encounters with it. In listing the wisdom sources from which our faith draws, the first one named is the “Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder... which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.” It’s what Ralph Waldo Emerson called “an original relation to the universe.”

Perhaps you’ve known something like that — experiencing the knee-buckling sound of the choir’s last

note followed by silence; or the jaw-dropping sight of the northern lights on a clear autumn night; or the breathtaking turn of a poem from the particular to the universal; or the heartwarming gratitude an act of kindness can bring. Each of these is an embodied reaction to being lifted toward something beyond our selves. Each is an invitation to let go of self-consciousness and ego, to encounter the “something more” that mystery and faith both point toward and to open our awareness to possibilities not yet conceived much less apprehended.

This is not as abstract as it seems. Like the poets, whose work is said to begin with describing the material world with attentive care and then, at a certain point in the poem, to lift the eyes to a wider horizon, we are all invited to notice the world around us. To witness its beauty *and* its brokenness, its generosity *and* its losses, its pain *and* tenderness *and* resilience. Then, like the poets, we lift our eyes to a wider horizon, a greater wholeness, a more dimensional truth with possibilities for healing. This is transcendence I have noticed even now, in such a time as this, with all its heaviness and suffering.

Recently, I heard theologian and activist Ruby Sales, speaking in the Healing Our City Interfaith Prayer Tent, say “The ritualization of truth is the only pathway to healing.” Referring to the repeated instances of institutionalized racial violence across the nation, she said, “We must use this time we are in together as an opportunity to speak the truth to look at life for what it is, always believe the possibility of redemption, the possibility to make a new story for ourselves and others.” It is, she noted, what sustained her own African American ancestors through the terrors of slavery and the

systemic racism that has followed it. It is, she said, the power of the inner spirit, which has survived and been passed down through generations of oppression. It is, she said, what will keep us all going today as we stand up and work for change.

As I heard Ruby Sales’ words, they moved through the heaviness of this time, lifting the eyes of my heart to a wider horizon and a longer arc; opening the ears of my heart to the spirit’s call to keep journeying toward justice; pointing beyond reach of my experience, comprehension, and language, toward the Beloved Community, both shimmering and real.

This is the gift of transcendence. Whether it takes us up to the sky, down to the earth, or open to all people and all beings around us — or to all of these at once — it releases us from the weight of ego and the alienation of pride and cynicism. Awakening us to the realities of our day — harsh and beautiful as reality always is — it unlocks our hearts to the wholeness and holiness of life itself. Surely, *now* is a time to welcome the power of transcendence and the promise and possibilities that spring from it.

*By Karen Hering on behalf of this month's theme team:
Ahmed Anzaldúa, Drew Danielson,
Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Ray Hommeyer, KP Hong,
Ruth MacKenzie, and Laura Park*

Transcendence Theme Resources

For further reflection on this theme, a variety of resources are listed in this month’s Chalice Circle packet available at www.unityunitarian.org/chalice-circles.html and by request from karen@unityunitarian.org.

Just Words



There are a number of ways that redwood trees reproduce. Some come from seeds, but often the most successful source of new life is regeneration from dead or dying trees. I have always loved the redwoods, the coastal trees that populate the parks of the west coast and of course the mighty Sequoias are inspiring in their majesty. I have spent many hours of my life hiking among the redwoods, encouraging children to join me in what our family referred to as the “forced march.” When we have

returned to the Bay Area to visit family and friends Rob knows that at some point we will take time to walk among the redwoods. It is a requirement of every trip.

So often in standing in a circle of redwoods, the grandparent tree is no longer visible, but their death made new life possible. The grandparent tree is referred to as the crown root or the root crown. Both terms are used. The decaying tree becomes the rich loam that sustains new life. The younger trees feed off of the nutrients left behind. Their roots are intertwined, supporting one another. Their branches touch one another with their high connections.

Some trees are more resilient than others. Some share nutrients to help support their neighboring trees. For centuries, the understanding of the ecology of a forest was based entirely on a “survival of the fittest” framework. We now know that the systems are much more complex and more interconnected and communicative than we could have ever imagined. They exist in an interdependent network of mutual exchange.

The forest’s resilience reflects and is dependent upon diversity. Any one tree relies not just on its own roots, but on an interwoven fabric of roots. And while it is good to put down roots, it is also liberating to know that even in the falling, the tree will be part of the whole. It is the way of the forest.

Obviously this last “Just Words” is not just about a rich and fertile forest, but is also about the nature of a rich and diverse religious community. The fertile relationship that you have offered us will continue with others. The nutrients will continue to be exchanged and transformed into life sustaining and refreshing air. You will sing new songs and speak new words. You will find new ways of being. Your future is full of promise and new life. I have absolutely no doubt of this.

The future flows from an alchemy of body and spirit, of a group of people doing the next best thing within their grasp. This alchemy is a complex magic always moving toward transformation, always moving toward life. Though we face much pain and sorrow in the larger world of inequity and injustice, we have learned from our shared resilience and the sharing of our stories and our truths. In our different spheres, we will proceed to face the challenges before us. Blessed Be.

Janne Eller-Isaacs

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Ellis Parker Heilbronn

born one more redeemer

March 15, 2021

to parents Louise Parker and Louis Heilbronn, and grandparents Anne and Bill Parker.

Jonah Virgil Barnes

born one more redeemer

March 19, 2021

to parents Emily and Aaron Barnes, and siblings Lucia, Oliver, and Rowan.

Michael Funck and Pam Satre

celebrate their 30th anniversary in May.

In Memoriam

Susan “Suzie” Jane (Bovre) Schafer

May 21, 1945 – March 18, 2021

A Gentle Reminder

If you borrowed a book from Janne or Rob please return it to them by the end of May.

commUNITY is the newsletter of Unity Church–Unitarian. It is published monthly, except the month of July. Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Subscriptions are free to those who make pledges to Unity Church and are available to others for \$30 per year.

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Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
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www.unityunitarian.org

2021 UUA Virtual General Assembly

June 23-27 • uua.org/ga

2021 Ware Lecture: Stacey Abrams and Desmond Meade

Email Laura Park, laura@unityunitarian.org, if you would like to serve as a delegate.



MAY SERVICES

May Sunday Services and Coffee Hour

While our building remains closed, multigenerational Sunday Services are being live-streamed from the Sanctuary at 10:00 a.m., followed by a virtual coffee hour on Zoom. Details and links, including access to past services, are available online at www.unityunitarian.org.

May 2 • *We Give Thanks for Being Here Together*

Arthur Foote Music Sunday

Livestream: https://youtu.be/K_4az38oAfw

Led by worship associate Marg Walker and director of music ministries Ahmed Anzaldúa, Unity's annual music Sunday will be a celebration of the many ways we've found to be together this past year. We will also look ahead with hope to what is yet to come. This service will include world premieres of music commissioned for the occasion as well as performances by Unity's ensembles, musicians, and guest artists. Marcus Young, Unity's current artist in residence, will lead an outdoor session during the service open to participants in the sessions of "Don't You Feel It Too" and "Listen With Love" that he led during his residency.

Offering recipient: Arthur Foote Music Sunday Fund

May 9 • *Birthing a New Way*

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/iHAAi0ZCHcQ>

Mother's Day was originally conceived as day to celebrate the role of mothers in creating peace and a lack of violence at home and in the larger community. Most every parent knows how they ache to protect their children from harm, but what if they can't? Worship associate Erika Sanders and Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs will wrestle with this difficult issue.

Offering recipient: Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition

May 16 • *Holding On and Letting Go*

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/Z5kdIJYtAF0>

At the end of her poem "In Blackwater Woods" Mary Oliver writes: To live in this world, you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go. In the 21 years of the Eller-Isaacs ministry among us, we have worked to learn all three. Now the time for parting is close at hand. Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs will be joined by worship associate Rebecca Flood. The service will include a ritual of relinquishment.

Offering recipient: Unity Church Sanctuary Fund

May 23 • *Come Down, O Love Divine*

Flower Communion Sunday

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/RDSTbWTaoaE>

This year the uniquely Unitarian Universalist ritual of Flower Communion and the Christian Holy Day of Pentecost, the day that best reflects the priest and prophethood of all believers, fall on the same day. The Blessing of the Flowers and the descent of the Spirit among us are powerfully interrelated. Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs will sing their farewell blessing to the Bridging high school graduates. With any luck, the Holy Spirit will take hold as we commit ourselves again to see and know each other in the full glory of our blossoming. See page 8 for details about how to participate in the communion ritual on Saturday, May 22.

Offering recipient: Holdeen India Program

May 30 • *The Light at the Tip of the Candle*

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/SJi0ZOXXyxo>

Buddhist teacher and activist Thich Nhat Hanh has called veterans "the light at the tip of the candle," illuminating our shared search for peace through their own efforts to transform the painful realities of war into awareness, understanding and compassion. On the Sunday before Memorial Day, Rev. Karen Hering and Unity Church member and veteran Michael Orange will consider the healing and hope and the promise of peace that can be discovered by the light of that candle. The service will include a candle lighting naming those we've loved and lost to war, as well as loved ones whose lives have been uprooted by war. Please share the names you wish to honor here: www.unityunitarian.org/memorial-day-service.html.

Offering recipient: Veterans for Peace Minnesota

Sunday Coffee Hour

After the service you are invited to participate in a virtual Zoom coffee hour, where we share a bit of our lives with each other and get to know one another more deeply.

Join on Sundays after the 10:00 a.m. service here:

<https://bit.ly/unitycoffeehour>.

Offering Recipients

For details about our May offering recipients, along with information about how to nominate an organization, please turn to page 10.

Flowers for Sunday Service

If you would like to dedicate flowers for a Sunday service, please email Martha Tilton at martha@unityunitarian.org.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / LEGACY GIVING



Why I Joined the Board

Kevin Harris, Trustee

I believe we have all found moving through the day, while navigating the 24/7 television coverage of the Chauvin trial, extraordinarily difficult. The death of George Floyd, and the recent, seemingly daily murder of black men, has deeply affected both me and my family. I've been on a roller coaster of emotions, sometimes overcome with sadness, other times outwardly expressing anger, and even rage. At times it feels absolutely hopeless to think we will ever escape the deadly outcomes formed by the deep pit of racism in our community. While difficult to write, as a Black man I've found it frustrating and uneasy to be around white people at this time. This is coming from someone who's been married to a white woman for nearly 35 years, parented three children and three grandchildren, and who counts three white men among my closest friends.

Over the years, I've had an up and down relationship with the church, pulling away at times, only to be drawn back by the compassion of its people, and the emotional safety, intellectual challenge and loving comfort Unity offers. Today I find myself fully engaged in the future work of the church as a member of the board. I serve as a trustee in part because I believe our church, and our community, is at a critical turning point. I am proud to bring my lens as a Black man who was born and raised in this community to the work of church governance. I've told myself that if I can speak my truth, even though it includes words that are difficult to say aloud, and at times difficult for others to hear, then Unity Church will continue to stay engaged in the movement for racial justice for all.

As we experience the injustice in our midst, I believe the church's antiracism work, tangibly underway for over 20 years, puts us at the forefront of the change that is needed. At the same time, the 21 year tenure of Rob and Janne is coming to an end. Like you, I find myself grieving the loss of their ministry. A ministry rooted in compassion and social justice. Yet I feel we are ready. Ready to continue moving forward.

As the church navigates a transition to a new minister, I believe the fragile and difficult antiracism work must continue. Doing so will help us remember where we've been, and recommit to where we want to go together. For me this means a community that exemplifies antiracist, inclusive practices while remaining deeply connected to our greater Saint Paul community. It means engaging in the struggle, and it is a struggle, to learn how to talk to one another about the racial injustices we find ourselves at the center of. I've always been told how we spend our time demonstrates our values. For me, committing to this work is not only what's best for us as a congregation, but is a show of gratitude for the leaders in our church who have worked tirelessly for change. Their legacy and this movement for racial justice has been entrusted to each of us.

Join the Heritage Society

Leave a Legacy for Future Generations at Unity Church

Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director

Legacy giving is an intentional act that leaves a lasting legacy in your name and sustains the powerful work of this church for generations to come. A 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 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 will be joining over 200 others who have committed to supporting the church into the future. Our annual Heritage Society event on May 7 is the church's way of thanking those individuals who have made legacy gifts. This year the program will feature a panel discussion via Zoom, "The Permanent and the Transient at Unity Church." Guest panelists are two former Unity Church ministerial interns, the Reverends Jim Foti, Assistant Minister of First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis, and Jennifer Nordstrom, Senior Minister of First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee.

If you have already made a legacy gift to Unity Church (but haven't told us!), if you are in the process of making a gift, or if you would like more information about legacy gift possibilities, please contact Barbara Hubbard at the church office, barbara@unityunitarian.org. We have individuals on our Legacy Team who would be happy to advise you in your considerations.

We would love to have you join our Heritage Society!

BELOVED COMMUNITY STAFF TEAM

Reparations Now

Jane Prince

Several years ago, I immersed myself in reading I should have done decades earlier to be better informed about slavery in America, its aftermath, and Black history. I experienced horror and shame, not only for my country, but for my own complicity as a white middle class American who had enjoyed the privilege of ignorance.

Until then, I had somehow failed to make the connection between our nation's ability to compete in the world economy and our willingness to conspire in our nation's original sin of the brutal, inhuman, immoral institution of slavery of Black Americans.

Had President Lincoln lived, had Reconstruction fulfilled its promise, had 40 acres and a mule been deeded to freed slaves as the damages they were owed, the playing field might have been levelled between Blacks and whites. But instead, our nation reimbursed slaveholders for the human "property" taken from them through emancipation. The abandonment by the federal government of Reconstruction efforts in the South thrust former enslaved people into a new social order, with Jim Crow laws and terroristic actions that cemented their inability to succeed in America.

For Blacks who fled the South, Minnesota "welcomed" them with systemic discrimination perpetrated through real estate redlining and racial covenants that blocked access to housing. As if that was not enough, this city allowed the plowing-under of the Rondo neighborhood — the center of Saint Paul's African American business, residential, spiritual and cultural life — for the construction of Interstate 94.

A few years ago Trahern Crews, a nationally known reparations organizer from Saint Paul, shared his idea for an ordinance. He had drafted it as a model for a municipal government program of reparations. I signed on with Trahern to help bring it to reality. As a St. Paul City Council member, I

believe local government can and must serve as a means for advancing social change. We were encouraged by the news that the City of Evanston had passed an ordinance in August 2019 to create a process to address reparations, with a dedicated funding source from the city's new municipal tax on recreational cannabis.

In partnership with the East Side Freedom Library, we launched the St. Paul Recovery Act Reparations Reading Group (bit.ly/freelibrep) in February 2020. The monthly sessions offered history lessons on the development of systemic racism and its effects. The goal was to build public understanding and support for a reparations initiative. At the same time, Trahern was organizing a steering committee that spent 2020 working within the African American community and among allies to build support and momentum.

By late fall, and in the wake of George Floyd's murder, the committee lobbied the Saint Paul City Council to pass a resolution as the first step in creating a different future. The resolution included an apology for the City's role in the institutional and structural racism that has denied Saint Paul's African American community access to housing, jobs, education, and health care.

It also called for the creation of a Legislative Advisory Committee to create a framework for a permanent commission, to be known as the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission. The commission will be empowered to make recommendations to specifically address the creation of generational wealth for the American descendants of chattel slavery and to boost economic mobility and opportunity in the Black community. On January 13, 2021, St. Paul City Council passed the resolution unanimously.

The language in this resolution lays out bold expectations for a different kind of future for Saint Paul. This is the beginning of a process that will put reparations on the city's agenda. Ta-Nehisi Coates has described the

fulfillment of reparations as "a world not where the black race and white race live in harmony, but a world in which the terms black and white have no real political meaning." With all my might, I hope that our City of Saint Paul is worthy of the love, dedication and confidence invested in this resolution. Our commitment must be fervent and enduring. Reparations to right the wrongs of racial injustice must happen here, now.

Jane Prince, jane.prince@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Unity Church Member, Saint Paul
Ward 7 City Councilmember

Trahern Crews, traherncrews@gmail.com
National Green Party Reparations
Working Group, Minnesota Green
Party Chair, and Lead Organizer for
Black Lives Matter Minnesota

Through the work of the Mapping Prejudice project (mappingprejudice.umn.edu), homeowners in the Armatage neighborhood of Minneapolis learned that they all had racial covenants on their homes. The neighbors sought out Just Deeds (justdeeds.org), a coalition of eight cities that offers legal help to renounce the covenants.

The neighbors made lawn signs that say, "This home renounced its racial covenant," to share the message and spark conversations. Through Armatage Reparations & Equity Action (area1946.com), they are planning ways to support initiatives to close the homeownership gap, back reparations legislation, and make micro-reparation payments directly to Black Minnesotans.

As we learn about the ways in which racism has been systematic, we discover how we can work to disrupt the system and undo some of the damage. Learn more about the St. Paul City Council action at bit.ly/replegad. If you're asking why reparations are needed, please read: *The Case for Reparations* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS



Welcome Words

Laura Park, Acting Director of Membership and Hospitality

At my house, there is a large forsythia bush on the front lawn. Every year it grows bigger and blooms more abundantly, the first sign in our yard that spring is

returning. As I write this, it looks like a sunrise on the corner. By the time you read this, we'll be moving on to tulips and lilacs and crab apple blossoms and dandelions and maybe even the first poppies. A promise that beauty is still all around us.

It is that promise of beauty in the diversity of blossom that we celebrate every spring with our Flower Communion ritual. If you're a newcomer to Unity Church, I encourage you to participate Saturday May 22. Bring a bloom to the flower arch at church and experience the wonder that is our congregation together emerge in the diversity of flowers placed in the arch. All are welcome, all are worthy, all of us together create beauty that none of us can alone.

If you're becoming part of the Unity Church community, my virtual door is always open for conversation, information, and consideration of the pathways to deeper connection to the life of the church. The best way to contact me right now is email, if possible, laura@unityunitarian.org. Or call the church office and leave a message: 651-228-1456 x110.

I look forward to getting to know you!

Mentoring at Unity

A Path to Deeper Connection

Would you welcome having a guide to congregational life at Unity Church? Request a mentor!

Your mentor will meet with you at least once a month face-to-face and be available for ongoing questions and advice. You can decide together what connection would be most helpful. You might attend Sunday services together or meet to discuss Unitarian Universalism and your spiritual journeys, or attend a church event together, or find another way to connect. Each pair makes a commitment to work together for at least six months.

If you have questions, or would like to request a mentor, please email Laura Park, Acting Director of Membership and Hospitality, laura@unityunitarian.org.

Pathway to Membership Classes

These offerings invite you to explore a deeper connection to Unity Church and the commitments and opportunities of membership. If you have questions or would like one-on-one conversation about getting connected or about membership, please contact Laura Park, Acting Director of Membership and Hospitality, laura@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110.

Finding Yourself at Unity

Sundays • 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Finding Yourself at Unity includes eight classes that you can attend in any order to better understand how Unity Church supports our faith journeys, our work to build Beloved Community, and our efforts to bless the world. Sunday morning emails include the class topic and a Zoom link to get connected.

- **May 2: Worship and Liturgical Year:** Explore the worship life of the congregation, including the worship themes, holidays, and other special celebrations. Come hear more about how worship invites you into depth and meaning.
- **May 9: Religious Education for Children, Youth, and Adults:** As faith seeks understanding, consider how religious education offers practices, language, and a community to illumine the sacred mystery at the heart of our faith journey.
- **May 16: Social Justice and Community Outreach:** Explore how Unity Church works with our community partners to bless the world and bend the arc of the universe towards justice.
- **May 23: Membership 101:** Explore the opportunities and commitments of membership at Unity Church and the many ways congregants connect with one another.
- **May 30: UU History:** A brief introduction to the historical figures and events that shape our theology and practices today.

Committing to Unity

Dates to be determined, fall 2021

- *Develop a personal practice to help you find and keep your balance.*
- *Develop the skills of small-group intimacy that allow you to go deep quickly with strangers.*
- *Use the compassion that rises from doing the first two and use it to bless the world.*

This is how Unity Church talks about its expectations of membership. Does the invitation into this ongoing work resonate with you? Are you ready to make the membership commitment? This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book and officially join the church!

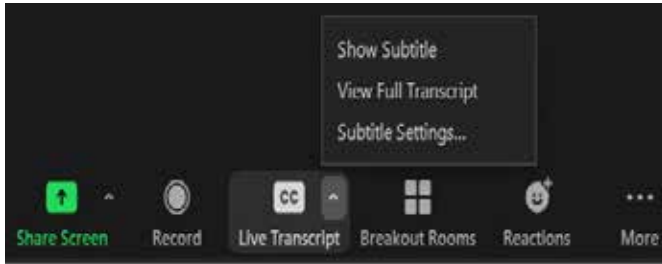
STAYING CONNECTED

Accessibility in Zoom

Closed Captioning Subtitles

Madeline Summer, Acting Hospitality and Outreach Coordinator

In April, we updated our Zoom platform to include closed captioning on all Zoom meetings. To access the captions, you'll need to navigate to the "Show Subtitle" button. You can find that by clicking the carrot (^) to the right of the Live Transcript button at the bottom of your Zoom window (shown below). Then click "Show Subtitle." To turn off subtitles, follow the same path above, but the button to look for is "Hide Subtitle."



Many people now have access to this feature on their personal paid Zoom accounts. To learn how to turn on closed captioning in your personal Zoom account so others may access captions, visit <https://bit.ly/cczoomsupport>.

If you are unable to access the subtitles or you would like additional resources to make Zoom accessible to you, please contact Madeline Summers at madeline@unityunitarian.org.

Pastoral Care

If you have a joy or sorrow, life-cycle event, or concern you would like to share with the ministers and Pastoral Care Team, or have shared in the embracing meditation during Sunday service, please complete the online form at www.unityunitarian.org/pastoral-care.html or send an email to janne@unityunitarian.org and a minister will contact you.

Church Calendar

All church programming can be found on our calendar at www.unityunitarian.org/calendar1.html.

Ongoing Group Meetings

Afterthoughts offers time to discuss the service. Contact Paul Gade, 651-253-1493

Caregivers Group meets on the third Thursday of the month. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs, janne@unityunitarian.org

Connecting with Ourselves and Others: Relationships and Sexuality meets Thursday, May 27, 7:00-8:30 p.m.: <http://bit.ly/connectingselfandother>. Contact Mike Huber, mikehuberece@gmail.com

Evergreen Quilters: This quilting group meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month. Contact Peggy Wright, 651-698-2760

Families Living with Mental Health Challenges meets the first Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs, janne@unityunitarian.org

Five Animal Kung Fu meets Saturdays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Contact Barney Kujawski, barney.kujawski@gmail.com

Living With Grief Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs, janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Breakfast Group meets on Saturday mornings at 8:30 a.m. Contact Tom Zell, tomzell@me.com

Men's Coffee Group meets every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. for light-hearted conversation. Contact Tom Zell, tomzell@me.com

Men's Conversation Group meets Monday, May 3, 17, 31, from 7:00-9:00 p.m., to discuss a wide range of topics. Contact Terry McDanel, tmcdanel@gmail.com

Men's Retirement Circle: Monday, May 10 and 24, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Tom Zell, tomzell@me.com

Music Ministry: All choirs are meeting and singing virtually. Contact Ahmed Anzaldúa, ahmed@unityunitarian.org.

New Look at the Bible meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade, 651-253-1493

Recovery from White Conditioning meets Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Contact Dayna Kennedy, daynamelissa@icloud.com

Single Parenthood Support Group meets every other Wednesday, May 12 and 26, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Contact Laura Park, laura@unityunitarian.org

Textile Arts Group meets every other Wednesday, May 12 and 26, from 7:15-8:30 p.m. Bring your knitting, embroidery, etc. Contact Johanna Stammeier-Toole, johanna2le@gmail.com

Unity Book Club meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne, jack.hawthorne@centurylink.net. On May 11 the group will discuss *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes.

Women In Retirement meets the second and fourth Thursday of the month, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Laura Park, laura@unityunitarian.org

Young Adult Group (ages 18-35): To join the YA email list, email kp@unityunitarian.org.

HONORING, CELEBRATING, SAYING GOODBYE

Honoring, Celebrating, and Saying Goodbye to Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs

SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2021

Unity Church congregation grants status as Minister Emerita/Emeritus to Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs.

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2021
Litany of Relinquishment

10:00 AM

A ritual to bless the ministers' departure during our livestream Sunday service.
bit.ly/litanyofrelinquishment

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2021
Flower Communion Ritual and Picnic

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Bring a flower to church (main entrance) to place in the Flower Communion arch and (optionally) a message of farewell for the ministers' mailboxes. Janne and Rob will greet you at the arch during this time.

1:00-3:00 PM

Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy visiting outdoors with Janne and Rob, celebrating and saying goodbye.

SUNDAY, MAY 23, 2021
**Flower Communion and
Livestream Farewell Celebration**

10:00 AM

The livestream Flower Communion Sunday service is the Eller-Isaacs' final worship service as Senior Co-Ministers.

bit.ly/flowercommunion

2:00 PM

Join us for a livestream farewell celebration.

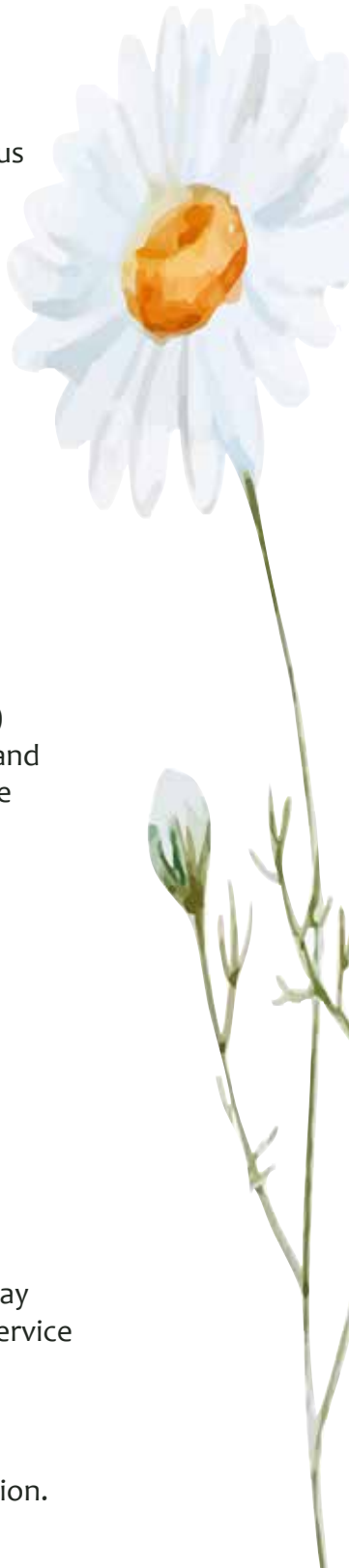
bit.ly/robandjannefarewell

Make a Gift to the Minister Emeriti Fund

On Sunday, April 18, 2021, the gathered congregation of Unity Church-Unitarian voted to grant status as Minister Emerita/Emeritus to Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs.

Please visit bit.ly/emeritifund to make a donation to the Minister Emeriti Fund established in their honor.

Read the resolution from the Board of Trustees of Unity Church-Unitarian at bit.ly/emeritiresolution.



WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Unity Church's Wellspring Wednesday has long been a multi-generational opportunity to gather midweek at church for food, fellowship, and fun. While the church building remains closed due to the pandemic, we continue to gather online for programming. If you haven't yet participated in an online program using Zoom, church staff can help you get started. Unless otherwise noted, you can use the registration link right up until the program starts to participate.

May 5 • 7:00-8:30 PM

What is the Meaning of This?

Behavior and Spirit with Artist-in-Residence Marcus Young

Register: <http://bit.ly/behaviorandspirit>

Marcus Young approached his residency with Unity Church very differently from a typical artist engagement. The last six months, together, we have explored how "art is not separate." The artist and the participant are not that different from each other. How we make and how we perceive are not two separate things. Art and life can be inspiringly intertwined. Join Marcus and members of Unity's Artist in Residence Team in a reflection of the last six months of collaboration. What did we make with our dancing on Zoom and sharing of our favorite songs? What was transformed by altering how we attended Foote Music Sunday? What is the meaning of this behavior, and where do we go from here?



May 12 • 7:00-8:30 PM

Open Page Writing: A Daring Leap into Transcendence

Register: <http://bit.ly/OpenPageWritingMay>

The poet Adrienne Rich reminds us life's invitations into transcendence are "already sounding as we are born" — beckoning us beyond our limitations and our ego. Writers and nonwriters alike are welcome in this online guided writing session led by Rev. Karen Hering, as we lift our eyes to a wider horizon.



May 19 • 7:00-8:30 PM

Act for the Earth • Extinction: Our Role, Our Responsibility

Register: <http://bit.ly/AFESopExtinction>

Join us as we explore connections between the catastrophic mass extinction event now underway and human population. We approach this sensitive but important subject with compassion and attention to justice. Can trends be reversed? The event will feature presentations by an international team of panelists including Dr. Sofia Pineda Ochoa, environmentalist and filmmaker; Nandita Bajaj, environmental educator; and Joe Bish, sustainability expert and representative of Population Media Center. Q&A session will follow.

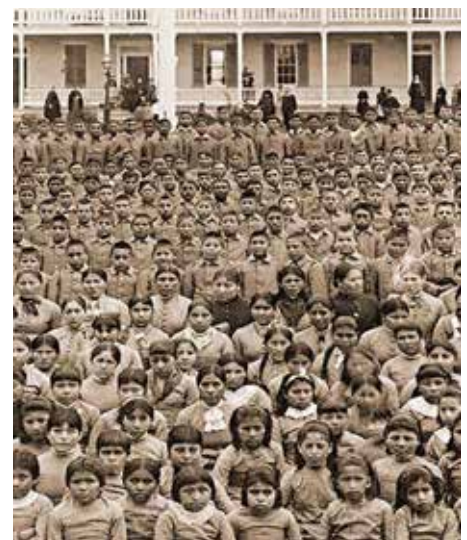


May 26 • 7:00-8:30 PM

The History of Native American Boarding Schools: Truth Telling as a Path to Healing

Register: <http://bit.ly/BoardingSchoolHealing>

More than 300 Native American boarding schools run by the U.S. government and churches robbed Native American children of their voices and culture for several generations. Unitarians were among those responsible. Today, the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) is working to help survivors heal from the trauma they and their families experienced. At the same time, NABS wishes to partner with church denominations involved in committing these atrocities and help them heal as well by working together to raise awareness nationwide of the impact of boarding schools on Native American children. Join us for a conversation with Vance Blackfox (Cherokee) of NABS who will share history related to Indian boarding schools and discuss the Native American/church partnership and efforts to create a national truth and healing commission. Visit boardingschoolhealing.org to prepare for an evening of listening and learning.



LIBRARY-BOOKSTALL / QIGONG



The Library-Bookstall Team

New in the Library and Bookstall this Month

Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019

Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain, editors

One World, 2021.

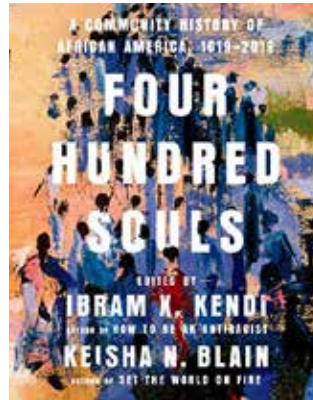
Four Hundred Souls, edited by Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain, is a remarkable book; the subtitle of the book reveals the subject: *A Community History of African America, 1619-2019*. The title itself refers to a “soul for each year of history,” mirroring the 400 years since the first Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619. The other “souls” in the book are the 80 writers and 10 poets — the community — who contributed to the volume and are “immigrants or descendants of immigrants from Africa and the African diaspora.”

The structure of the book is important, because it allows the reader to take small bites or make a full meal, to browse or dig deep. Either way works, rewarding us with a diversity of topics that make up what Kendi calls a “choir” of different but unified voices. These voices tell the seldom-told stories of Africans in America since they arrived more than 400 years ago.

For example, Part Five in the book, covering the period 1779-1819, gives the reader a wider view of history and includes essays about slavery in Savannah, Georgia; the Fugitive Slave Act that made aiding a runaway slave a federal crime; the role of slaves in the expansion of higher education; a Louisiana slave rebellion of 1811; and queerness among the Africans shipped to North America. It is a rich tapestry, topped off with a poem by Ishmael Reed about the Albany 3, slaves executed for allegedly starting a fire in Albany, New York, in 1794.

The book’s final essay is Blain’s meditation on the saying, “I am my ancestors’ wildest dreams.” She concludes that the stories in *Four Hundred Souls* are a “testament to how much we have overcome.” But she is not convinced that “we are our ancestors’ wildest dreams. At least not yet.” Ending on a note of hope, she adds, “but we can be.” These stories of tragedy and resilience show how that could happen. — Louise Merriam, Library-Bookstall Team

Find this and many other great titles in the Unity Church Online Bookstall:
unitybookstall.square.site



Welcoming Change with Qigong

Tuesday, May 18

10:30-11:30 a.m.

Register: <http://bit.ly/qigongbodysoul>



Be the season; welcome change!

Life is all about change: flowers, spring and great weather.

Trees come to life, flowers bloom and all of nature comes alive. And so should we.

We are made of the same five elements as everything else on this planet—wood, fire, water, metal and earth.

Let’s rise, flow, connect and expand, to the natural world with Qigong movements and metaphors. Welcome this wonderful moment.

All are invited to join Qigong teacher Lisa Schlingerman online in guided movements, stretches and meditation, entering the present moment of change and new life. No experience necessary. Everything can be done standing or sitting.

In the Justice Database

All My Relations: A podcast series focuses on the reality of being an Indigenous person living in the U.S.

bit.ly/JusticeData



OFFERING RECIPIENTS

Offering Recipients

Each Sunday, thirty percent of the offering goes to support the Community Outreach Ministry at Unity Church and seventy percent is given to a chosen community non-profit recipient. Donations are gratefully accepted online at <https://bit.ly/sundayoffering>. Offering checks, payable to Unity Church, should be sent "Attn. Song Thao."

May 2: Foote Music Sunday Fund

Arthur Foote was minister at Unity Church from 1945-1970. Upon his death in 1999, the Arthur Foote Music Fund was created as a permanent endowment to provide an annual music Sunday in his memory. The offering will be used to continue to fund Unity's Foote Music Sunday.

May 9: Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition

Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABSHC) provides resources to assist those impacted by the trauma endured by forced enrollment of Indigenous children in church-run boarding schools. This organization partners with church denominations involved in these schools to educate and help both sides heal from the generational impact of stripping native children of their identity and voice. This collection will launch Unity's partnership with NABSHC and support its May 26 Wellspring Wednesday presentation (see page 9).

May 16: Unity Church Sanctuary Fund

Consistent with the Unitarian Universalist principles affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person with justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, Unity Church—Unitarian stands in solidarity with asylum-seekers whose requests for sanctuary have yet to be processed. Unity Church is currently offering sanctuary to a Ghanaian family of five. This collection will provide urgent resources to support the everyday expenses involved in supporting and sheltering Unity's guest family.

May 23: Holdeen India Program

The Unitarian Universalist Association Holdeen India Program, founded in 1984, provides aid for humanitarian service adventures and social enterprises with a focus on education and livelihood development initiatives. This collection will support Holdeen's around the clock efforts to respond to India's COVID-19 crisis, providing urgent relief to families struggling to survive amid a near complete economic standstill. Holdeen has been nominated by Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs.

May 30: Veterans for Peace Minnesota

Veterans for Peace works 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; reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons; seek justice for veterans and victims of war; and to abolish war as an instrument of national policy. Unity Church members Barry Riesch, Mike McDonald, and Michael Orange actively participate in the work of Veterans for Peace.

Nominate an Offering Recipient

Each Sunday, seventy percent of our collective offering is given to small community organizations whose values we share and mission we support. Anyone can nominate any organization! Complete the nomination form at www.unityunitarian.org/generosity-ministry.html.

All nominations are considered!

Congregational Database Sign in today!

Members are invited to log in to ShelbyNext, the online congregational database that includes the ability to update and review your own membership and giving account, access the membership directory, and view the calendar.

To access from your PC:

- Open a browser (Chrome works best) and navigate to this URL: <https://unityunitarian.shelbynextchms.com/>
- Choose "Forgot Password?"
- Enter the email address you use to communicate with Unity Church
- You should receive an email with your username and password
- Log in, **upload a photo to your account**, and explore!

To download the App:

- Go to your App store: Google Play for Droid and App Store for iPhone/iPad (iPad users make sure to choose iPhone app)
- Download ShelbyNext Membership
- Enter the domain: unityunitarian (full domain: unityunitarian.shelbynextchms.com)
- Choose "Forgot Password?" if it is your first time accessing ShelbyNext Membership (or just log in if you have already accessed it on your PC)
- Enter the email address you use to communicate with Unity Church
- You should receive an email with your username and password
- Log in and explore!

Questions? Contact Martha Tilton at martha@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x105.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Act for the Earth Update

Extinction: From Loss to Responsible Change

Anna Newton, Act for the Earth Team

The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans any more than black people were made for white, or women created for men. — Alice Walker

Unitarian Universalists “respect the interdependent web of all existence.” But what does that pledge of respect really ask of us? Aren’t we complicit in a global economic system that tears at that interdependent web every single day? How do we turn things around while also respecting the inherent worth and dignity of every person?

Most of us have witnessed habitat destruction on a small scale: a nearby wetland filled in, a field graded for townhouses, frogs and meadowlarks silenced, mushrooms, ferns, and wildflowers we found as children, gone. We grieve the loss of wild spaces and the life they supported.

Habitat loss globally is happening on an unimaginable scale. Consider:

- Our human population has doubled since 1970, requiring conversion of ever more habitat for resource extraction and food production
- We destroy an area of forest the size of South Dakota every three years
- 150 - 200 plant and animal species disappear every single day (1000 times the natural extinction rate)

Humans are causing broad-scale mass extinction of other species, a catastrophe that has occurred only five times before in millions of years of life on earth.

How do we transform grief, anger, and despair into action? Alice Walker’s words protest the status quo, where environmental degradation, racism and sexism are tools to maximize profit. This month, Act for the Earth programming explores our role in extinction, with a focus on managing humanity’s footprint humanely. Please join us!

To join an Act for the Earth action team, contact:

Stop Climate Change (including tree planting and individual action): Priscilla Morton, prismorton@comcast.net

Stop Extinction (including pollinator gardens and agriculture): Anna Newton, asnewton3@gmail.com

Ensure Justice (including Line 3): Jean Hammink, jhammink@earthlink.net

May Act for the Earth Programs

Act for the Earth Film Discussion: A Life on Our Planet

Friday, May 14 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Register: <https://bit.ly/afefilmmay>

Filled with the remarkable film footage we have come to expect from David Attenborough, this is his powerful “witness statement”, and his prescription for setting things right. How do we move from being apart from nature, to becoming allied with it? Film is available for viewing on Netflix.

Wellspring Wednesday • Extinction: Our Role, Our Responsibility

Wednesday, May 19 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Register: <http://bit.ly/AFEStopExtinction>

Join us as we explore connections between the catastrophic mass extinction event now underway and human population. We approach this sensitive but important subject with compassion and attention to justice. Can trends be reversed? Details about this program are available on page 9.

Habitat for Humanity Summer Construction



With the pandemic’s effect on livelihoods, and a very tight housing market, supporting Twin Cities Habitat For Humanity is as important as ever. Whether you can work on the construction or not, please watch for the Sunday offering for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity and give generously.

For summer construction, Unity Church members will be participating again as part of the “Faith Builders” team with neighboring churches. We hope to work through a week in June. The dates and location have not been confirmed. Watch future church communications for those details, and sign up for a day or a string of days. Construction experience is not needed, though if you have it, it is helpful.

A Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity “green” build increases the long-term

affordability of homes and improves the neighborhood housing stock, while integrating building practices that reduce detrimental impacts on the natural environment, promote healthy indoor air quality for occupants and reduce energy costs.

Questions? Please contact Chuck Griggs at griggscb@msn.com or 612-408-0486.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Sanctuary Congregation Update

Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs, Senior Co-Minister

During the pandemic the Unity Church staff and the Sanctuary Team have welcomed three different groups or individuals into the safe harbor of our sanctuary space. Our first guest needed a place to safely quarantine after being released from detention. She tested free of COVID-19 after two weeks and successfully moved to Minneapolis where she is supported by the Sanctuary Team at First Universalist.

Then, through the St. Paul Sanctuary Coalition, we were asked to house a family in danger of deportation who had been living at the Powderhorn Encampment. They stayed at the church for some weeks. Working through the Coalition, we were able to secure Section 8 housing for them and amazingly (through your generosity) furnish a two bedroom apartment. They moved out with the help of a church staff and volunteer crew.

Once again, a request from the Coalition came about a Ghanaian family facing homelessness and deportation. Again, we said yes. It was clear in saying yes to them that we needed to invite more members onto the Unity Sanctuary Team. Barbara Hubbard, Scott Charlesworth, Teresa Connor and I were joined by Libby, Meg, and Don Arnosti, Andrea Bond, Pat Haff, and Susie Macpherson. (If you have interest in joining the Unity Sanctuary Team, we would love to have you join us. Please contact Janne via email at janne@unityunitarian.org.)

Our new guests are an extended family from Ghana. Sherifatu and Gawusu are a married couple. They have two sons, Wali who is six and attending school in Shoreview and Ganiyu who is two. Sherifatu is pregnant and is expecting a little girl at the end of June. In addition, their friend Sani has joined them. Sani is an English speaker and having an interpreter has been most helpful. They are wonderful people and have great hopes for their future. Sani has been working with the Center for Victims of Torture and they are all trying to find ways to learn English and develop job skills. Unfortunately, the hearings concerning their asylum status have been delayed, which is far too common. They cannot be issued work permits until they have those hearings. So, this puts them in a position where they are completely financially dependent on Unity Church and the resources that we are able to secure through the Coalition. (White Bear UU, for instance, has been very generous.) The church and our team have been providing food, rides to the grocery store and doctor appointments, help with medical insurance, finding ESL classes, and getting them signed up for soccer. We are looking for a crib, a stroller, a car seat, baby clothes, and diapers. Everyone in the family needs shoes and clothes.

We will be dedicating the Sunday offering to the Unity Sanctuary Fund on May 16, so please consider giving as generously as you are able.

Obama School Ministry Team Update

Nancy Heege, Obama School Ministry Team

And so we approach the end of another school year. Although our volunteers have not been able to work in person with Obama scholars this year, we want you to know that our Unity team is still working in support of the children, staff, and administrators of the school.



Highlights from the past school year:

- Last fall, we collected enough money to give each of the 75 Obama school staff a \$10 Starbucks gift card. These were much appreciated!
- Six volunteers spent a few hours at school, unpacking boxes and repackaging sets of school supplies which were then distributed to families.
- In November, our volunteers gathered enough money to purchase 96 pies which were given to families as an incentive to drop by the school and pick up more school supplies.
- A Sunday offering at Unity Church provided financial support for a collaboration with Walker West Music Academy for music enrichment for the classes, which were produced during the winter and rolled out to families this spring.
- Several Obama volunteers and other church members helped to deliver more than 500 desks, built by Minnesota Tool Library volunteers, to local school children.
- Our leader team has met virtually with the principal and assistant principal several times, offering our support in what has been a very challenging year.
- And we've sent letters to Superintendent Joe Gothard and Saint Paul School Board members, reiterating our support of, and advocacy for, the scholars and the school.

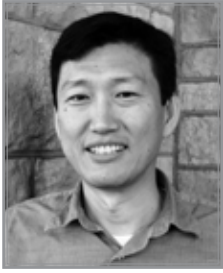
We've had some transition in our leadership team this year. We thank Marty Rossmann for her many contributions as she leaves the team, and we welcome Diane Grasse and Mike Carls, who have joined us in the work. Ongoing members include Karen Abraham, Pat and John Christiansen, Nancy Heege, and David Smith.

Our message to you: we're still here! Stay tuned. We'll update you through the summer as we learn more about how we might be involved with the school community next year.

Hallie Q. Brown food shelf needs your donations!

Make a donation to their virtual food drive online at <http://bit.ly/hqbfooddrive>.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Pitter-pattering Questions

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

Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation

Following a long line of thinkers, especially Jewish thinkers from Martin Buber to Emmanuel Levinas, theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer expanded upon the assertion that modernity attacks personhood. Accordingly, he offered an uncompromising theological assertion that the form of the church in the world was fundamentally its personhood. He goes to great length in his dissertation become first book, *Sanctorum Communio*, to describe the shape of personhood and the church as a community of persons who encounter the transcendent in their very sharing of friendship, care, and love. He contrasts the church as a *volunteer-society* from its sacred character as a *life-community*, the former a poor surrogate for the living community where personhood is shared. For in volunteer-societies, people's belonging and commitment rest largely on what they can receive from the collective storehouse of resources, material and immaterial, and where relationships are instrumentalized toward productivity and accruing more resources. A volunteer-society views persons as largely what they are interested in as individuals, with the congregation existing to meet people's interests. At face value, nothing seems wrong about a volunteer-society, except as a collective of potentially alienated people, except when it is mistaken for the life-community we know as family and friendship and church.

How do we know if a congregation is a volunteer-society or a life-community? We will know, says Bonhoeffer, by the way we carry our children. A life-community is one where children are valued not for their potential promise as future members, laborers, consumers, voters, or any other instrument of progress but as revelations of sacred personhood, now, here, just as they are in their precarious and transcendent contingency. Children who gather time and the mystery of being. Life-community understands how instrumentalized people finally become alienated people, how meeting people's individual interests is a poor substitute for sharing personhood and the revelation of a deeper humanity. Perhaps the mark of any community as a life-community will be seen in the way children are carried as sacraments of dignity and care.

If we can, as a people, bear the imprint of this moment, the heartache and terrible burden all around us may reveal truths we have long denied: that life is profaned when we forfeit our sense of personhood. When personhood is racialized, criminalized, instrumentalized and our faces blurred by countless relational abstractions. When personhood is cancelled in the reduction of communication to information. When courageous and complex discourse is flattened to moralism and sentimentality. When mass media creates a mass audience but leaves us wanting more, a life-community. Each time we gather with children, even through the attenuated presence of technology, we reach for something "more" not enumerated but felt in our intimate presence with one another. Something "more" that promises *personal availability* with and for one another in which we touch our very own personhood. Something "more" we pray that our children will touch and come to cherish as constitutive of their and our collective personhood. Isn't this reach for something "more," this transcending shape of personhood, the unfinished dream of God who is Change?

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

Hello, Religious Education families!

Please watch for information about Unity's Summer in the Garden program. Typically for children ages 4-13 but the whole family is welcome to come out and help.



Planning for the 2021-22 Religious Education program year, set to begin in September, is well underway. Please watch for details and information about how to enroll children and youth.



MUSIC MINISTRY



Music Notes: Foote Music Sunday

Ahmed Anzaldúa
Director of Music Ministries

This has been an extraordinary year. All of us have had to find new ways to be together, to connect with one another. This is especially true of musicians, and more so in the case of choral musicians. This year's Foote Music Sunday will attempt to weave together in gratitude and hope several different threads, all connected to the idea of how we come together.

We will explore the idea of how we are present in worship through the work of Marcus Young, Unity's artist in residence. Through his "Listen With Love" sessions we have created a congregational playlist, beloved music shared by members of our congregation together with their thoughts about their connection to this music. This playlist is available for all of us to enjoy and it influenced several of the music choices in the service. During the service, Marcus will be leading an outdoor session with people present physically and on Zoom where they experience the service in a different way, listening and moving together as a culmination of his "Don't You Feel It Too?" sessions and as a pilot for a larger event to be carried out when it is safe for all of us to gather in person later this year.

In the service there will be several live performances, ranging from large classical works for piano and strings, almost symphonic in quality, to duets and intimate solos. There will also be several virtual ensemble performances and prerecorded segments, where the choirs at Unity Church painstakingly used technology to create choral performances for the service. We will also acknowledge Ruth Palmer's extraordinary work by honoring her with the title of Music Director Emerita as part of this special day.

Two highlights of this service are world premieres of music by Abbie Betinis and Elizabeth Alexander. After having to cancel most of what was planned for last year's Foote Music Sunday, we used some of those funds to commission new music from two extraordinary composers. Elizabeth has written a new anthem and hymn, "We Give Thanks" for us to sing when we are back together in person again. We have created a virtual choir premiere of this wonderful contribution to Unitarian Universalist music. Abbie has created a playful new work for the Unity Singers, "What If You Slept," a setting of a poem by our very own Marg Walker. This piece is unique in that it was written specifically to be rehearsed and assembled using Zoom and the digital resources we are working with today. This truly makes it a piece for our times, and I am very excited to share it with the world!

In an extraordinary year, it is my hope that the music for this celebration of music is also extraordinary. The effort involved in creating this service, on the part of all of the staff and musicians involved has been beyond extraordinary, and every single person in our choirs has been pushed to the limits of their comfort zones. We offer this to our community in the hope that it inspires us to greater gratitude and hope.

Sing with a Unity Choir

Unity's choirs (adult and children) are meeting virtually every week! In addition to learning new music, we are also meeting to sing familiar songs and maintain our connection to each other and to the church. All newcomers are welcome! If you are interested, contact Ahmed at ahmed@unityunitarian.org.

Marcus Young 楊墨

Artist-in-Residence Event

What is the Meaning of This? Behavior and Spirit

Wednesday, May 5 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Register: <http://bit.ly/behaviorandspirit>

Marcus Young approached his residency with Unity Church very differently from a typical artist engagement. The last six months, together, we have explored how "art is not separate." The artist and the participant are not that different from each other. How we make and how we perceive are not two separate things. Art and life can be inspiringly intertwined. Join Marcus and members of Unity's Artist in Residence Team in a reflection of the last six months of collaboration. What did we make with our dancing on Zoom and sharing of our favorite songs? What was transformed by altering how we attended Foote Music Sunday? What is the meaning of this behavior, and where do we go from here?

One Voice Mixed Chorus Introduces New Podcast

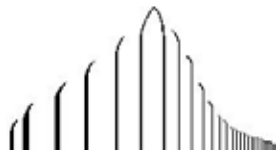


Seven months in the making.
Six original episodes. One
groundbreaking new podcast.

Introducing Sound Mind, an original podcast produced by One Voice Mixed Chorus, where queer voices across Minnesota explore mental health through art.

Each episode features a different LGBTQ artist sharing their deeply personal and inspiring story and takes listeners on a journey through the intersections of identity, adversity, and self-expression.

Listen and learn more by visiting www.OneVoiceMN.org/Sound-Mind.



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

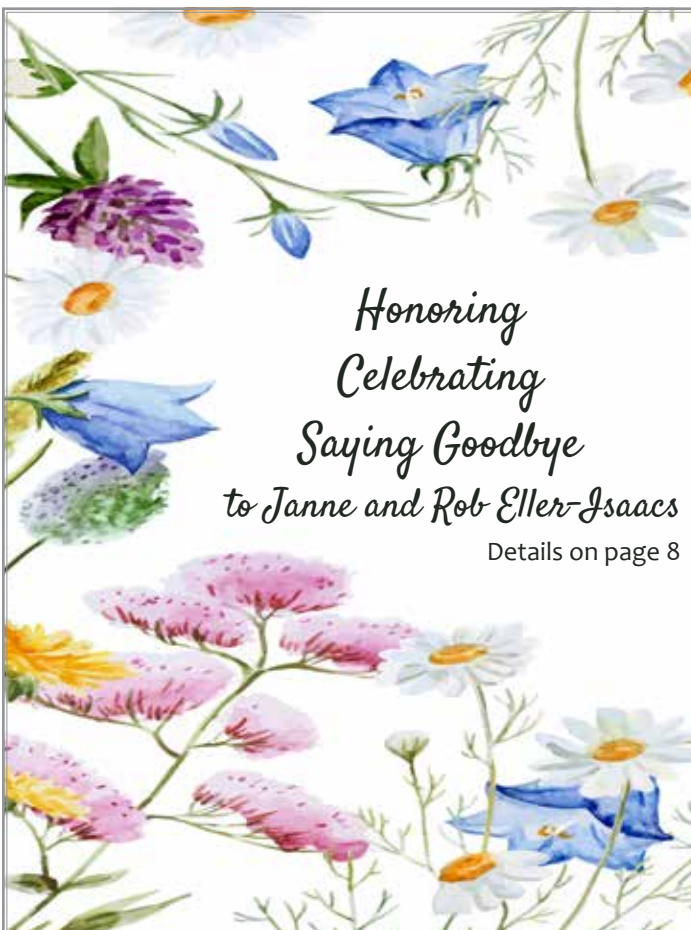
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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**



We give thanks for being here together.

Arthur Foote Music Sunday

May 2, 2021

Livestream service at 10:00 AM

Read "Music Notes" on page 15 from Ahmed Anzaldúa for all the details.

**Act for the Earth
Film Discussion**

A Life on Our Planet

Friday, May 14 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Register: <https://bit.ly/afefilmmay>

Details on page 12.

