

commUNITY

Vol. 34, No. 3

Unity Church—Unitarian

November 2010

Covenant

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

Covenant begins in longing. There, where the heart calls up our origins and oldest memories of oneness and belonging, we find a taproot that grows into covenant if given the right conditions, including our own willingness to acknowledge and oblige it. When we feel that tug beckoning us from our individual isolation into relationship with others, there is the germ of covenant already taken root.

It is tempting to consider covenant as we would a contract, in which two or more parties agree to specific terms of exchange. Indeed, the political and legal origins of covenant in the bible could point us in this direction. But in a religious context, and even in the larger biblical context, covenant is more akin to the sinewy fiber of relationship, a relationship operating at such a deep level that it affects the very core identities of those participating in it. Philosopher Fritz Kaufman called this quality of covenant “the pith and marrow of being.”

On a personal level, the vows exchanged in an intimate relationship offer one common example of covenant. When two people say “I do” to one another, it is not a contract in which each tries to gain the greatest benefit at the least cost. Rather, it is an aspiration in which both name their greatest hopes

for what can only be created together. The relationship itself becomes a new identity in which each partner summons in the other new possibilities not only of loving but of being. As Margaret Fuller, the 19th century Transcendentalist and early feminist, said, “Two persons love in one another the future good which they aid another to unfold.”

Embedded in covenant, then, is this creative inclination toward the future. As a response to the heart’s longing, it is a movement toward possibilities not present in our most basic human state of isolation.

Historically, sociologically, psychologically and physiologically, we know that human beings need one another. Our survival depends on our ability to cooperate, which neuroscience has now shown to be hardwired within us. But theologically, our willingness to enter covenantal relationship is something more. As the basis for congregational life, covenant only thrives when we know and name the deeper taproot of love and being that feeds it. The 20th century theologian James Luther Adams called this “the community-forming power of God.” Noting that this can be understood theistically, non-theistically or humanistically, Adams described it as “the orientation to something we cannot control but something upon which

we depend, even for our freedom.” In different words, we might say it acknowledges the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

In Unitarian Universalism, where no bond of creed unites us, this essential bond of being not only calls and holds us together in faith communities; it also calls us individually and institutionally into the world in ever widening relationships of inclusion. The democratic institutions we build as we follow this call embody our longing for justice and wholeness, bringing them into being (albeit imperfectly) in history and in the world. So the covenant we enter into in congregational life both draws from and opens into a much larger covenant with all that lives and with all of time – past, present and especially future.

Who could possibly live up to that? Of course, none of us can. But the humility in that confession and the forgiveness found in covenantal relations together make it possible to keep trying. This give and take of committed relationship becomes the breath and blood of the larger body which we create in covenant, what Adams called an “ecology of grace.” We are, in the words of John Bunyan, “like the several flowers in the garden that have upon each of them the dew of heaven, which, being shaken with the wind, they let fall their dew at each other’s roots, whereby they are jointly nourished and become nourished of one another.”

So may it be in this garden we are growing together.

~ Karen Hering,
Consulting Literary Minister

Worship Theme Resources

BOOKS

The Essential James Luther Adams, selected essays of Unitarian theologian James Luther Adams, edited by George Kimmich Beach

A House for Hope, The Promise of Progressive Religion for the 21st Century, by John Buehrens and Rebecca Parker

JUST WORDS / JOB POSTING

Just Words

Rummaging around for breakfast food this morning I suddenly realized that summer fruits were out of season. I love a perfect peach, an exquisite nectarine. Whitman thought summer fruit and sweet corn to be among the first of Nature's gifts. An hour later, having opted for oatmeal with apples and fresh cranberries I realized that it was fall. I looked up at an old oak tree that towers high above our house. Its leaves were almost gone. "Sometimes," a wise teacher once said, "the poets come."

*That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.*

Autumn is a wistful time. Harvest has come and gone. What seemed so sure in summer grows uncertain in the fall. And yet I love it. Many of you say you love it too. Though signs of death are everywhere there is certain sweetness in the fall. It borders on nostalgia but in the end it sings of gratitude. In Shakespeare's Sonnet (73) the aging poet sees himself reflected in the tree stripped bare. He uses the phrase "bare ruin'd choirs" as if he doesn't know the season's secrets. When almost all the leaves have fallen and the branches stand out stark against the sky one sees the tree's true strength, the bare bones of nature's lasting glory.

It's then that grief can blossom into gratitude. Yes, winter's on the way as if to say "slow down, pay attention." And yes, there's grief in letting go of summer. But grief becomes a gift when we learn how to turn it into gratitude. Every great tradition teaches its adherents to make their peace with dying. It's part of learning to love life. People who are spiritually mature love life no less for having overcome their fear of death. May these dear November days help each and all of us to count our blessings and give thanks for all our many gifts.

Consider the radiance,

Rob Eller-Isaacs



Black Friday at Church

Feeding the Spirit on the Feast Day of Consumption

Wanting What We Have

Friday, November 26, 2010 • 10:00 a.m.

Unity Church–Unitarian

More information on page 7.

Employment Opportunity

Unity Church is seeking a Development Assistant to coordinate scheduling and build the database in support of an anticipated Capital Campaign. This position will be .5 time and includes generous benefits.

Apply to the attention of Barbara Hubbard (barbarah@unityunitarian.org) include, resume, letter of interest and contact information for three references at least one of whom should be a former employer. Application deadline is November 15th. Start date is December 1st.

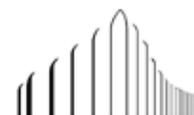


Daylight Saving Time Ends

Sunday, November 7 • 2:00 a.m.

Set your clocks back one hour.

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NOVEMBER SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

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

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

November Worship Calendar

November 7

***Freedom and Covenant* — Rev. John Buehrens**

Rev. John Buehrens' sermon will take off from Jonathan Franzen's new novel, *Freedom*, which is set in part in St. Paul. Rev. Buehrens will reflect on how covenantal relations—in family life, congregational life, and interfaith relations—are commonly misunderstood, and yet necessary to mature use of the freedoms that we cherish. Worship Associate Hal Freshley will help to conduct the service.



John Buehrens was Unitarian Universalist Association President from 1993 to 2001. He is now Minister of First Parish in Needham, MA, a congregation gathered in 1711. He teaches part-time at Harvard Divinity School and will be teaching a seminary for a day program for us on Saturday, November 6 (See page 12.) His most recent book, *A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion*, was co-authored with Dr. Rebecca Ann Parker. A book signing will follow each service.

November 14

***Pie Crust and Cement* — Janne Eller-Isaacs**

When I was a child one of our neighbors would often caution us about making promises too easily. She said, "Oh, that's just a pie crust promise, easily made, easily broken." How do promises frame our lives? Janne and Worship Associate Dutton Foster will explore the importance of promise making in creating a fulfilling spiritual life.

November 21

Giving Thanks Together

The whole church family will gather for Thanksgiving. Each year we celebrate our Transylvanian Partner Congregation at Thanksgiving. The service will feature a collage of grateful voices from both sides of the Atlantic. We'll also take a look at what the story of the First Thanksgiving can teach us about broken promises.

November 28

***Thanks Given: Coming To Awe* — Jason Seymour**

When we pause to give thanks, we consider not only the blessings and hardships that have occurred; we also consider our identity and experiences within a context of what might have been, for better or for worse. More than wishful thinking, this process of humble re-imagination fuels religious vitality by awakening our appreciation of beauty and by enabling our capacity for awe and reverence.

November Offering Recipients

November 7: Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans

MACV is a non-profit dedicated to helping Minnesota veterans by providing assistance to positively motivated veterans and their families who are homeless or experiencing another life crisis. These programs support all veterans towards self-sufficiency in key areas of housing, employment and civil legal services. MACV addresses the gaps in services that the Veterans Association and other government agencies are unable to cover. Veteran John Blackstone is a supporter of MACV.

<http://www.mac-v.org/>

November 14: The Family Place

Since 2001, the Family Place has provided a warm, safe, supportive daytime place for homeless families in a downtown St. Paul church where they also receive critical basic services such as meals, showers, enriched childcare, Ramsey County employment and housing services. Project Home families that stay here at Unity Church during the month of May are transported to the Family Place each day. Project Home is a joint project of the Unity Church Affordable Housing Ministry Team and the St. Paul Council of Churches.

<http://famplace.org/>

November 21: Partner Church Ministry Team

The intent of the Partner Church Ministry Team is to develop a mutually rewarding relationship between the Unity Church community and that of our sister church in Homorodszentpeter, Transylvania, in Romania. The offering will support village projects which in the past have included: heating the elementary school; cleaning, painting, and furnishing the health clinic; building parts of the parsonage; and roofing the church.

November 28: Artability

Artability is an annual community arts project of the APOLLO Resource Center, a People Incorporated Community Support Program for people recovering from mental illness. Artability provides an opportunity for artists with mental illness to learn about, create, exhibit and sell their art in a comfortable, safe, and accepting environment. During a seven-month period, over 50 artists receive free workshop instruction from experienced artists and then exhibit their work for the public in a juried art show and sale. People Inc. was founded in 1969 to provide help and support for an underserved population of men and women living in halfway house and shelters in the Twin Cities. It is recognized throughout the state by the mental health community for its "first" in the delivery of state-of-the-art, one-of-a-kind, mental health services. Unity Church member Elias LaVelle nominated Artability.

<http://www.peopleincorporated.org/get-involved/artability/>

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / *UNITY TOMORROW*

From the Board of Trustees Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) Seeks Members

from Craig Allen, Trustee and Drew Danielson, ARLT member

Since 2003, Unity Church-Unitarian and its Board of Trustees have made an explicit commitment, aligned with our principles and purposes, to actively engage in dismantling racism both internally and in the wider community in a manner accountable to the communities most hurt by it. This commitment is formally embodied in the Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT), whose mission is to lead the church in developing and living out an intentionally anti-racist identity.

By its efforts to involve the Unity Church community in the surrounding Rondo neighborhood, the ARLT seeks to establish meaningful partner relationships with communities of color. Through its anti-racism audit and its attention to our practices both in and out of worship, the ARLT continues to put right the culture and practices, usually unconscious but nevertheless real, at Unity Church that arise from the heritage of systemic racial division we all share but which prevent us from being as welcoming as possible to anyone who shares our commitment to liberal religion.

In 2008 the Unity Church Board of Trustees chartered the ARLT as a formal body advising, monitoring and reporting on church life through an anti-racism lens. The church Board establishes a nominating committee and solicits nominees for ARLT membership. Currently the ARLT is seeking three volunteers for a three year term on the team. Volunteers are expected to have attended (or plan to attend) anti-racism analysis training, have read the ARLT's historical audit of Unity Church and the most recent ARLT Annual Report (both available on the Unity Church web site), and actively participate in the meetings and work of the team. The team meets monthly (2nd Tuesday) with some additional subcommittee work. An interview process will be conducted with candidates.

The purpose of the position is to help envision, monitor and report on accomplishments of Unity Church in meeting the congregational End Statements addressing anti-racism and racial healing. The ARLT advises the Board on policy, and works with the Executive Team to support implementing Anti-racist initiatives. The team promotes and organizes opportunities for learning about and discussing systemic racism, and regularly scans institutions and entities for best practices regarding transformation.

If you have any interest in contributing to this important, influential, and ongoing work by being a member of the team, please contact Pauline Eichten at 651-874-9889 or pfeichten@yahoo.com or leave a note in the ARLT mail box in the Copy Room.

Unity Tomorrow • Predesign Phase

Already well underway, the predesign phase of the *Unity Tomorrow* process consists of retaining an architectural firm to determine expansion limits and building capacity, develop conceptual plans, and provide cost estimates.

After developing formal selection criteria, including experience working with religious institutions, historic renovation, minority hiring and capacity to complete the larger project, five pre-qualified architectural firms were selected and asked to bid. Three of the five firms chose to do so. An interview panel made up of the Unity Church Executive Team and lay leaders recruited for their experience met with teams from the three firms. At the end of the selection process Miller Dunwiddie Architecture emerged as the clear favorite. Their work thus far has been enthusiastically received by all involved.

During the week of September 6th, approximately 100 staff, church members, and representatives from our community partners met with architects Paul May and Laura Faucher of Miller Dunwiddie as part of the predesign phase of facilities planning. Nine groups were convened in the areas of worship, religious education, music, church administration, hospitality, community outreach, infrastructure, community facilities, and libraries. During these conversations, groups discussed details of how church space is currently used as well as hopes and dreams for future facilities.

Our team of architects and engineers have listened carefully and are now translating those hopes and dreams into square footage, analyzing "adjacencies", and gaining a good sense of what we hope to preserve and where we hope they will fully exercise their creativity. The Executive Team working side by side with members of the Current Site Team have received regular reports which are getting more and more exciting. A complete predesign report will be presented to the Board of Trustees on Saturday, November 13, and to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 20.

Next steps for the *Unity Tomorrow* process include convening the Second Site Team to explore a possible partnership to expand our ministry into the Central Corridor. Their job is to reach out to our neighbors to the north and to arts and service organizations active in Frogtown and other communities along the Corridor, get to know them and, if appropriate convene a formal partnership.

There are many ways for you to become more deeply involved in the *Unity Tomorrow* process. The four teams: Current Site, Second Site, Neighborhood Relations, and Communications are open to additional members; regular "Congregational Input and Q&A Sessions" will be held (the next session is Sunday, October 31 at 12:15 p.m. in the Foote Room); and there will be a variety of volunteer opportunities. Ideas and concerns regarding the *Unity Tomorrow* process can always be communicated via e-mail (unitytomorrow@unityunitarian.org). Please don't hesitate to be in touch!

PLEDGE DRIVE 2011 / HALLMAN MINISTERIAL INTERN

Pledge Drive 2011

Lia Rivamonte, Pledge Team

Thank you. Thank you. Thank YOU.

To those of you who:

- Said YES! to a pledge of support whether it is for the first time or the 50th;
- Reached down a little deeper, maybe even sacrificing something to accommodate a little more giving;
- Agreed to have a conversation about your giving;
- Agreed to go out and initiate those conversations, taking the time, energy and thoughtfulness, sharing your own deeply felt experiences and inspiring others to do the same for the purpose of making authentic connection;
- Were forthright in saying *"No, I'm really not able to pledge this year but when I get back on my feet I plan to include Unity Church in my budget."*

THANK YOU!

And to my fellow Pledge Team members, Chris and Dan, former teammates Bob and Marianne and, of course, to Barbara and to all of you who have made this sometimes challenging work joyful, interesting and truly enriching. Have you noticed that giving thanks makes you lighter? (The more thanks you give, the more turkey you can eat.)

Gratitude is a prayer that we can all share: Please join with me as I take a deep breath and exhale from the core, *t-h-a-n-k - y-o-u*. Feels good, doesn't it?



Jason Seymour

2010-11 Hallman Ministerial Intern

James Luther Adams, the eminent Unitarian theologian, based the bulk of his scholarship, ministry, and personal religious identity on the idea of covenant. For Adams, covenant was a specific political concept (i.e., in biblical times, between people) that was adeptly applied to theology (i.e., for all time, between people and God).

"The biblical idea of covenant is what I call a covenant of being. That is, the Old Testament asserts that the people's covenant is a covenant with the essential character and intention of reality. It is not merely a covenant between human beings; it is a covenant between human beings in the face of reality."

So, for Adams, covenant is (and was, and has always been) specific to real people with real needs. His interpretation of covenant transcends the individualism of personal religion, while still honoring the historical, and very personal reasons for the covenant to exist at all:

"The covenant of social responsibility, then, is one that is rooted in a historical conception of the meaning of human existence, and not merely in a conception of personal religion. Personal religion, though it may have its own uniqueness and insight, gains adequate meaning only in relationship to the larger context of existence. The concept of covenant is one of the greatest conceptual inventions of our ancient forebears for defining identity."

My interpretation of Adams is this: the process of defining one's identity, via covenant, is a constant and formative – and social – process. It requires of us a special kind of personal accountability, a regular and honest return to a consideration of our selves in the context of our relationships. If we are in relationship – if we choose to embrace the kind of deep sharing of circumstance that covenant compels – then we are called to change our selves... often. We are called to relinquish preferential ideas about our identities, to view our selves in the face of others' realities, and not just in our own.

Understood interpersonally, this principle of voluntary change is the basis of marriage; understood socially, it is the basis of a covenant of social responsibility. It is not enough that a box filled with one kind of person is in relationship with a box filled with some other kind. The boxes are precisely what must be dismantled, exposed in our consciousness as false securities and barriers to real covenantal relations and real shared circumstance.

Covenants (plural) can easily become polished, self-preferential statements of distinction and identity, whereas covenant (singular) espouses all of Creation in a single bond of equal claim and shared circumstance.

Put plainly, covenant already exists; it began with your creation, with all of Creation, and it binds you to all else that is, and was. It is bigger – so much bigger! – than an agreement between people (e.g., a contract). We must relate. We must keep it real. Such is our nature. Such is our bond.

Unity Church–Unitarian Annual Meeting

Saturday, November 20, 2010 • All are welcome!

Pancake Breakfast at 8:30 a.m. • Annual Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

COMMUNITY / FELLOWSHIP / LEARNING

Elders' Circle

Tuesday, November 23

1:00–2:30 p.m.

The Elder's Circle is a group of church elders (self-identified!) who convene monthly for worship, fellowship and fun. For more information, contact Hallman Ministerial Intern Jason Seymour via e-mail (jason@unityunitarian.org) or via phone through the Church Office. Refreshments will be served.

Fellowship Groups

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, November 8 and 22, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

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

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

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

Unity Men's Group: Events TBA. Contact: Nels Otto at 651-484-4590

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

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

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

Evergreen Quilt Group: Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760

Unity Book Club: Tuesday, November 9, at 7:00 p.m.

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

Unitarian Universalist History, Part 2

Unitarianism and Universalism in America

Five Mondays: November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 • 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Have you ever wondered about the history of our religious tradition? Have you wondered how Unitarianism or Universalism have helped to shape – and were in turn shaped by – the major trends and events of American history? Join Hallman Ministerial Intern Jason Seymour for the second of a three-part educational series that will explore enduring themes and major events in the evolution of our faith tradition. This second installment will cover the Unitarians and Universalists in America, from the late 18th century to the merger that formed the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1961. We will meet five times; each meeting will offer opportunities for fellowship, personal reflection and group discussion. (Participants need not have taken Part 1 to enjoy Part 2.) To reserve a space in the class and a reading packet, contact Jason Seymour via e-mail (jason@unityunitarian.org) or via phone through the Church Office.

Unity Sangha, A Weekly Meditation Community

Tuesdays • 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Find renewal and grounding each week in a supportive group setting. Strengthen a private practice by sitting in community. Zen meditation is an accessible spiritual practice that offers awareness, clarity and peace. People of all experience levels are welcome. Please arrive promptly; newcomers are encouraged to arrive 10 minutes early.

Caregivers Group

Thursday, November 18 • Noon–2:00 p.m.

Are you a part-time or full-time caretaker of loved ones in your life? Do you need support in order to sustain the care you are giving? Join Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and Pastoral Care Team member Cynthia Orange for an informal support group for caregivers. Contact Janne Eller-Isaacs if you would like to participate in this group.

Job Transition/Networking Group

Meets every Monday • 9:30–11:30 a.m.

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

2010 Thanksgiving Gatherings

Thanksgiving is a time for families and friends to gather to celebrate the harvest and cook and converse! It is also a perfect time to open our hearts and homes to new friends. Over the years, our family has invited many Unity Church guests to join us at our holiday table and found it to be great fun. Everyone brings a favorite dish

to share, and the conversation flows naturally. If you are among those without family nearby and would like to join other Unity Church members for Thanksgiving, or if you have extra space at your table and would like to host a Unity Church guest or two, please come to the sign-up table in the parish hall after services on November 14 and 21, or contact Anna Newton at newtona@comcast.net or 651-483-2986.



Don't Miss Black Friday at Church!

Feeding the Spirit on the Feast Day of Consumption

Friday, November 26, 2010 • 10:00 a.m. until 11:15 a.m.

This Year's Theme: *Wanting What We Have*



Join fellow Unity Church members, families, and neighbors on the Friday morning after Thanksgiving (Black Friday in the consumer world) in a worship service featuring cultural critique, spiritual depth, conversation, children's participation, wonderful music, and some fun. Our special guest speaker for this service is Sister Irene O'Neill, Executive Director at Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Ministries Foundation.

After the service, we'll share fellowship, warm drinks and conversation in the Parish Hall and, for those who would like, an opportunity to join in a reflective conversation about the service and how to integrate the theme "wanting what we have" into our personal lives. Activities for children and families, and child care will be provided.

For the "collage of voices" to be read during the service, we hope you will share your thoughts about this year's service theme. As the Black Friday service team planned for this year's service, we were moved by words written by UU minister Forrest Church. As he lived with terminal cancer, Forrest Church wrote, "I have a mantra that I've come to live with over the past few years, and it's served me very well. It is "Want what you have; do what you can; be who you are."

Our question for your reflection: How do the words "want what you have" speak to you? We invite you to e-mail your responses to this question to laurasues@earthlink.net. We will compile many of your responses and share them in the service. We look forward to seeing you there!

Pathway to Membership at Unity Church

A Series of Three Classes

Welcome to Unity is geared to newcomers, visitors, and those seeking to learn more about Unitarian Universalists and Unity Church. Upcoming classes:

Wednesday, November 10 • 7:10 – 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 8 • 7:10 – 8:30 p.m.

Finding Yourself at Unity includes Unitarian Universalist and Unity Church history (including a tour of the church), opportunities to share parts of your religious journey, and discussion of the expectations and benefits of membership. Upcoming classes:

Tuesday, November 16, 23, and 30 • 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Light supper provided

Committing to Unity is designed for those who are ready to make the membership commitment. This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. Upcoming class:

Saturday, December 4 • 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Contact Julie Handberg at the Church Office (julieh@unityunitarian.org) to sign up for these classes.

November Parish Hall Artist



Story Lines:

Prints and Photographs

by Linda Staats and Ellen Wold

Art is storytelling. These images represent our efforts at finding the essence of the story.

Ellen: Sometimes it's the intrigue in a person's face or a memory evoked; in print making it's finding the right marriage between color and line.

Linda: If I allow my eye to follow a line, there is usually a path and a story to be found. There's a railroad track that leads to the horizon and worlds beyond or the gentle arch of a tree that's been windswept for countless years.

We hope you enjoy our stories.

Linda Staats's photographs have been exhibited from Minnesota to Washington. She has served as an artist in residence through the National Parks System at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in West Branch, Iowa. Her website is www.lindastaatsphoto.com.

Ellen Wold exhibits in the Twin Cities Metro area and is a regular contributor to the Minnesota Weatherguide Calendar. She is currently a coop member of the Highpoint Center for Printmaking in Minneapolis.

There will be a reception on Friday, November 5, from 6:00-9:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to stop in and greet the artists.

NOVEMBER WELLSRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday at Unity Church

Each Wednesday evening, everyone is invited to gather for a night at Unity Church. This is a time to engage in religious community, a time to cultivate our values and beliefs.

Schedule for the Evening

6:00 p.m. Dinner. Menus are posted as available. The cost for dinner is: \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4, and \$18/family, and can be paid by cash or check. (Children under the age of 24 months are free.)

6:45 p.m. Everyone is invited to a short **worship service** in the Ames Chapel.

7:10 p.m. Classes and programs follow worship.

Childcare and Children's Programming

Each Wellspring Wednesday, preschool and school-aged children can join other Unity kids for fun and fellowship. Families should check their children in on the evening's sign-in sheet in the Parish Hall before heading to their program.

Regular Wellspring Wednesday Offerings

Yoga with Jen Seymour • \$10/class • Offered Every Wednesday

Jen Seymour began her yoga journey in 2000 and was certified to teach in April of 2009. Since then she has taught all levels of students in group and individual settings. Jen is thrilled to be teaching yoga at Unity Church. Yoga is appropriate for people of all levels of experience and all physical abilities. Wear comfortable clothing and bring water and a yoga mat. 75-minute yoga class cost: 10 classes for \$80 or a single class for \$10. First time participants are encouraged to try at no cost. For more information contact Jen at jenseymour@me.com.

Junior High Youth Group • Meets Every Wednesday

On 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, youth will bake with adult volunteer leaders. The baked goods (post-snacking!) will be packaged and given to Unity's pastoral care team for home visits as well as for church hospitality during memorials and family counseling. On 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, youth will work on Unity-related social justice projects.

R.E. Orientation • Offered the First Wednesday of the Month • November 3

For families new to Unity Church who are interested in Religious Education for their child(ren). Contact Kerri Meyer (kerri@unityunitarian.org) to attend.

U-Knitarians • November 10

Are you a knitter? Do you crochet? Love needlepoint or counted cross stitch? If you are a person who just has to have some needlework project going at all times, please come and join the U-Knitarians! We work on our projects and get to know one another. Beginners are welcome! Some of the knitters are making Caring Shawls for the Pastoral Care Team. Come and stitch with us!

UU Families Dinner Table Talk • Date TBA

Have you ever struggled with how to talk with your children about Unitarian Universalism? Look for tables at Wellspring Wednesday dinner marked "UU Family Table Talk" where adults and children of all ages will discuss Unitarian Universalist values that connect to Unity's monthly theme. (See article on page 9 for more information.)

Sharing Group for UU Parents • Date TBA

All are invited to a unique experience created by the Young UU Families Group. We will gather to share our challenges, struggles, and wisdom about raising our children religiously in the UU tradition. The structure will allow parents to share questions and dilemmas and learn from the experiences of other UU parents. (See article on page 9 for more information.)

November 3

Shock Waves

Unity Church member Cynthia Orange discusses her latest book.

In the United States, about 60 percent of men and 50 percent of women experience, witness, or are affected by a traumatic event in their lifetimes. Many may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—a life-altering anxiety disorder. Once connected mainly with veterans of war, PTSD is now being diagnosed in many situations that cause extreme trauma such as rape, physical attacks or abuse, accidents, terrorist incidents, or natural disasters. Not reflected in the statistics are the millions of family and friends who also suffer from the shock wave effects of a loved one's trauma. Feelings—for both trauma survivors and those who love them—can become intense and unpredictable.

November 10

Community Listening

Dinner is in honor of Unity's New Orleans Pilgrims! Red beans and rice, greens, and bourbon bread pudding

Chaka Mkali, lead organizer at Minneapolis Hope Community will present Hope Community's relational approach to organizing based on *Community Listening* sessions which gets diverse people to the table. The listening session approach supports "people to 'go deep' that is, that they share their hopes, dreams, fears, opinions, ideas and values about life in the community." These sessions do not seek answers but rather ask "people to share experiences and raise questions by telling stories and reflecting on their lives and their visions for the future."

As Unity Church moves more fully into building relationships with our diverse neighborhood communities, there is much we can learn from the success of this approach.

November 17:

To be announced.

Launching the Young Unitarian Universalist (UU) Families Initiative

After more than two years of development, the Young UU Families Initiative has initiated action with two Wellspring Wednesday offerings each month.

One is UU Family Table Talks, which are intergenerational conversations over dinner on the church theme of the month. The goal is to provide a venue for enriching family conversations about our faith, thereby integrating church and home and connecting families and generations. For September's theme of faith, parents and children responded to this question: "Is there something you believe in that you can't see, hear, or touch? If so, what it is?" After everyone had a chance to talk, the follow up question was: "How does what we have shared connect to the Unitarian Universalist tradition?" We had rich conversations at three Wellspring Wednesday tables. October's theme is "longing," and the question for October 27 will be: "What's something you long for that is not something you can buy?" Every month we will also ask the follow question of how our conversation relates to the Unitarian Universalist tradition.

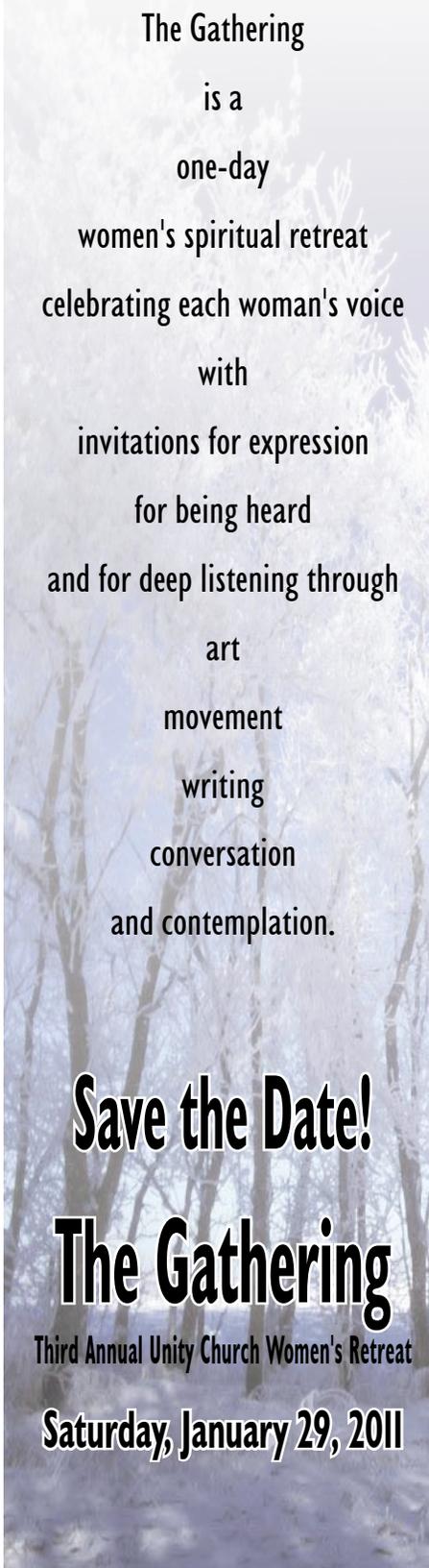
The second new offering is Sharing and Consultation Groups for UU Parents. These are conversations where we share our challenges, struggles and wisdom about raising our children religiously in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. The structure allows parents to raise questions and parenting dilemmas concerning values, spirituality or religion, and to learn from the experiences of other parents. We had a great kick off for these monthly sessions at a Wellspring Wednesday in September, and look forward to the next one on October 27.

The Young UU Families Initiative is an outgrowth of the Family Chalice, a democratic, family-centered approach to engaging parents as leaders in the spiritual development of their children. The mission is to generate shared principles and common practices for raising our children religiously in the Unitarian Universalist tradition, and to create a community of families raising our children religiously at Unity Church.

This winter and spring, look for other offerings from the Young UU Families Initiative, including a UU family meal ritual and "clumsy conversation groups" where, over a number of weeks, parents can deeply explore how to talk easily with their children about topics that previously made them uncomfortable (such as "Is there a God?" "What happens when we die?"). Together parents will develop the knowledge and confidence to talk with their children about difficult subjects. We have piloted this clumsy conversation process with the topic of talking with children about death and dying, and it's rich and fruitful.

Winter Solstice Celebration Facilitators Welcomed

Help create this contemplative, family-friendly, participatory, Celtic-inspired ritual to mark the turning of the year as the darkness gives way to the growing light. If you would like to participate as a ritual leader or in a facilitating capacity (greeter, set-up, etc.) for this December 21st ritual, please contact Katy at katy@katytaylor.com or 651-291-8551.



The Gathering
is a
one-day
women's spiritual retreat
celebrating each woman's voice
with
invitations for expression
for being heard
and for deep listening through
art
movement
writing
conversation
and contemplation.

Save the Date!
The Gathering
Third Annual Unity Church Women's Retreat
Saturday, January 29, 2011

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

UUSC: What's Up?

from David Byfield and Marty Rossmann, Unity Church UUSC Representatives

Did You Know? The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is financially independent from the Unitarian Universalist Association and the federal government. Member contributions make up about 60% of UUSC's annual budget.

UUSC Membership: Consider becoming a UUSC member – to fulfill your effort to go "beyond" in your outreach. Membership costs are: \$40 Individual; \$75 Couple; \$10 Student/Youth; \$20 Senior; \$40 Senior Couple. The Membership form is on the UUSC web site; or join as a part of the *Guest At Your Table* project.

Team members are needed! Are you looking for a way to "find yourself at Unity?" You're invited to join the newly forming UUSC team. As a member of the team, you could choose one of many ways to be a little or a lot.

Contacts: David Byfield at 612-374-4786 or DBYF@aol.com or Marty Rossmann at 651-690-4370 or rossm001@umn.edu.

Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table is the annual Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) financial campaign to support UUSC work for: rights in humanitarian crises, economic justice, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

You will be asked to take a special box to your home table. The gifts (money) placed in the box are a tangible way to invite the reality of human need into your home. It is a real way to be aware of the everyday struggle for basic human rights around the world.



How to participate:

- On Sunday, November 7 or 14, in the Parish Hall, pick up a *Guest at Your Table* box and a copy of *Stories of Hope*.
- Place your box where you share your meals during the season of thanksgiving.
- At mealtime, read one of the short stories from *Stories of Hope*. These stories will connect you to real people with hopes and dreams, who are involved in the daily struggle for human rights. These people are served by UUSC.
- Insert coins or bills into your *Guest* box. Think of your special guests and how you are showing concern for them.
- Decide how much to give as a total gift. You might set an amount that it would cost to feed one or two of the special guests at one or two meals.
- On or before January 9, return your box to the Parish Hall at Unity Church. **Convert coins and bills into a check made out to UUSC.**
- If you want the money in your box to earn you a UUSC membership, indicate your interest on your box and be sure there's enough contribution to cover the cost of membership (see dues above). Unity Church will send all contributions to the UUSC. Gifts not identified for memberships will be combined as a gift from Unity Church families to UUSC.

Guest at Your Table fosters understanding and awareness of UUSC's human-rights work and our shared belief in social justice.

WELCOME A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE!

Open Letter Outreach Ministry with the Vidayak Sansad/Eklavya School

Dear Unity Church members,

Two years ago, I had just returned from a three month stint as the guest English teacher at the Eklavya School for Girls in the tiny town of Usgaon, two hours outside of Mumbai, India. The Eklavya school is dedicated to the education of Katkari girls, and I had spent the summer moving between four classrooms in the concrete school building, struggling to engage 40 girls with ages ranging from 9-14 in the many verses of the "Hokey Pokey." The girls at Eklavya were some of the most inspiring teachers I have ever had. Their struggle to receive an education in a place where 90 percent of women of their parents' generation were illiterate was incredible. Their fight against the stigma of belonging to an ethnic group formally labeled as "tribal" and commonly described as backwards was simultaneously depressing and heartening. The respect and focus that they brought to the classroom—even in the monsoon rains!—was a sight to see.

Wendy Harris, also a member of Unity Church, spent a summer at Eklavya one year ago, and Amol Namjoshi, the director of the organization, Vidayak Sansad, that maintains the school, visited Unity Church in March of 2010. Vidayak Sansad is a UUA Holdeen Program Partner that works to free bonded laborers and was founded by Vidyullata and Vivek Pandit in 1979. Vivek Pandit visited and preached at Unity Church in 2007.

Wendy and I are interested in setting up a ministry group to strengthen this connection with Vidayak Sansad and the Eklavya School. If you'd like to be involved, please contact me at dolores.ohmans@gmail.com or Wendy at worldsigner@gmail.com, or come to our information session on Sunday, December 5, at 10:15 a.m. in the Gannett Room.

Sincerely, Laney Ohmans

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Supporting GLBTQ Youth

An Invitation From Interweave

from Laura Schlatter, Interweave Team

As I sat down to write this article, I turned to the tragic task of going onto the Internet to see how many suicides of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (GLBTQ) youth or young adults have been in the news lately. Five, said the Huffington Post. Advocate.com gave their names: Raymond Chase, Tyler Clementi, Asher Brown, Billy Lucas, and Seth Walsh. Of course, these are the young people whose names made headlines. There were quieter cases. There have been a number of suicides in Minnesota this year—in Anoka, at least one, maybe as many as four high school students took their own lives after being bullied because they were GLBTQ—or perceived to be.

My own children grew up in environments that were unusually accepting—home, church and high school all were clear about their embrace of my children, without regard to their sexual preferences. They truly were the lucky ones. My heart breaks as I think about those teens and young adults who feel so alone and hopeless that they take their own lives. My heart breaks for their parents, including those whose inability to move beyond their prejudices made it impossible for them to fully love their own children, even to the point of losing them.

My son recently told me that there is a GLBTQ organization that encourages young people to just hold on, because “it gets better” as they get older. While that may be true, I cannot believe that it is enough. Teens and young adults need more concrete hope than the thought that “it gets better.” I want to offer them more. Recently, I shared these thoughts with some of the Interweave Team people. The Interweave Team gathers to support GLBTQ people, within and outside our congregation. The members of the team agreed wholeheartedly that making a commitment to GLBTQ youth and young adults in the larger community was an idea well worth exploring.

So – the Interweave Team at Unity Church offers an invitation to the Unity community. We will meet on November 17, 2010 (a Wellspring Wednesday) at 7:15 p.m. to discuss the possibility of working to develop a relationship with an outside organization that serves GLBTQ youth and young adults, and then of working with that organization in a way that meaningfully contributes to and supports the lives of those youth and young adults. We ask people who attend this meeting to do so with an openness to making at least a one-year commitment to this work. After the meeting on November 17, we will assess whether we have enough committed people to move forward with this dream. We hope you will join us in this most concrete expression of our commitment to affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all people.

Thank You from Amicus

Thanks to all who donated to the Amicus Hygiene Item Drive. Many of the people Amicus works with through its Reconnect program have recently been released from a correctional facility and have very limited money to spend on food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. The Amicus Hygiene Item Drive provides clients with toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant and other basic necessities that they might not otherwise be able to afford.

Unity Church congregants contributed over 300 items to the drive this summer, allowing Amicus to provide hygiene kits to some of the over 2,000 Reconnect clients it works with each year. Thanks to Unity’s help in meeting an immediate needs like basic hygiene items, ex-offenders can then work with Amicus on their more challenging issues, such as stable housing and employment.

A Call to Service

Living at the intersection of spiritual development and social justice encourages members of Unity Church to reflect on how their spiritual lives inform the ways they serve, bless, and change the world. The Community Outreach Ministry Teams were created to further the ministry of Unity Church in service to the larger community.

For more information about Community Outreach Ministry Teams or for information about opportunities to participate in social justice work as part of your ministry to Unity Church, please contact Pat Haff, Coordinator of Community Outreach Ministries, by phone at 651-228-1456 x126 or by e-mail at pat@unityunitarian.org

Whole Farm Coop



Buy meat, cheese, produce and more from local, sustainable farms and pick it up at Unity Church!

Order from www.wholefarmcoop.com or call 320-732-3023 by Wednesday, November 10. Orders will be delivered to Unity Church on Wednesday, November 17.

Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food Drive Sunday. Donations can be brought anytime and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances.

**November 21
suggested items:
canned tuna or
meat, Hamburger
Helper, rice, dried
beans**



A Day in Seminary

with Rev. John Buehrens

Saturday, November 6

A Day in Seminary • Parish Hall at Unity Church

9:00–9:30 a.m. • Gathering

9:30 a.m.–Noon • How to Read the Bible

Learn the ways that the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, named as one of our wisdom sources, offer much inspiration and food for thought—even for skeptics.

Lunch

1:00–2:30 p.m. • Our Theological House

A look at ways that religious liberals can engage in deeper reflection and discussion about our faith tradition.

Break

**3:00–4:30 p.m. • A People's History:
Unitarians and Universalists in America**

A reflection on our democratic way of governing ourselves, known as "congregational polity," which is deeply rooted in the history and beginnings of our nation.

Sunday, November 7

Worship Services • Sanctuary at Unity Church

9:00 a.m. • 11:00 a.m. • 4:30 p.m.

Book signing following each service.

Freedom and Covenant

Rev. John Buehrens' sermon will take off from Jonathan Franzen's new novel, *Freedom*, which is set in part in St. Paul. Rev. Buehrens will reflect on how covenantal relations—in family life, congregational life, and interfaith relations—are commonly misunderstood, and yet necessary to mature use of the freedoms that we cherish. Worship Associate Hal Freshley will help to conduct the service.



About the Speaker

John Buehrens served as president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) from 1993 to 2001. He is now minister of First Parish in Needham, MA, and is a member of the adjunct faculty at Harvard Divinity School, from which he graduated in 1973. He serves as national co-chair of Freedom to Marry (www.freedomtomarry.org), as a member of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee board, and as chair of the UUA International Advisory Panel and of the UUA 50th Anniversary Task Force. He is the author of *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious Liberals*, and is coauthor (with Forrest Church) of *Our Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism* and (with Rebecca Parker) *A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-First Century*. The recipient of three honorary doctorates, he has served ministries in New Jersey, New York, Texas, and Tennessee, and has been active in interfaith cooperation for justice and peace.

Registration: To register for "A Day in Seminary," contact Martha Tilton at the Church Office by phone at 651-228-1456 x105 or by e-mail at martha@unityunitarian.org. Registration is also available at the door.

Childcare: Contact Christy Randall at the Church Office to reserve childcare by phone at 651-228-1456 x127 or by e-mail at christy@unityunitarian.org. Childcare reservations must be made by Wednesday, November 3. Childcare is free, but please bring a lunch for your child.

Fees: \$10 per class. Lunch is included if you register for all three classes. Copies of Rev. Buehrens' books will be available for purchase at the Unity Church Bookstall.

UNITY LIBRARIES / LITERARY MINISTRY



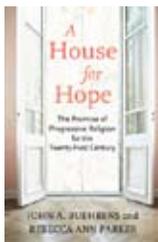
What's New at Unity Libraries?

Anderson Adult Library ◊ Bookstall ◊ Whitman Children's Library
Bookmobile ◊ Cairns Literary Journal

19th century English critic Charles Lamb once said, "A book reads the better which is our own, and has been so long known to us, that we know the topography of its blots, and dog's ears, and can trace the dirt in it to having read it at tea with buttered muffins." Of course he also said, "Asparagus inspires gentle thoughts," but that's beside the point.

The point is that there is a particularly large and good group of new books out this fall that you can find in the Bookstall, bring home, and enjoy with a buttered muffin or even some asparagus (roasted is my favorite), if you so wish.

Be sure to take a look at ***Shock Waves: A Practical Guide to Living with a Loved One's PTSD*** by our very own Cynthia Orange, who by the way, will be reading at Unity Church on Wellspring Wednesday November 3, 2010, at 7:10 p.m. *Shock Waves* is both a personal journey of love, and accessible, good information on the many facets and causes of PTSD—you won't want to miss this event.



Upcoming visiting minister and former Unitarian Universalist Association President Rev. John Buehrens, whose achievements and credits are too many to list here, and Rebecca Parker make the case for a liberal religious renaissance crossing faith traditions and based on an expansive love for life in ***A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-First Century and Understanding the Bible.***

It's not too late to catch up on authors who spoke at Unity Church this fall: ***She Looks Just Like You: A Memoir of (Nonbiological Lesbian) Motherhood*** by congregation member Amie Klemphauer Miller, ***Adam and Eve*** by Sena Jeter Naslund, and ***Did I Say That Out Loud*** by Meg Barnhouse.

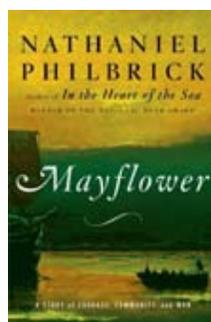
New in the Anderson Library, ***The Arc of the Universe is Long: Unitarian Universalists, Anti-Racism and the Journey from Calgary*** by Leslie Takahashi-Morris, et al, is said to be an "essential book, a brave and compelling account of the history that we must ponder and understand as we continue our work for racial justice, healing, and reconciliation." ***Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice*** is for everyone serving a congregation from one-time auction volunteers to RE teachers to the Board of Trustees. Author Erik Walker Wikstrom shows how "giving our time to our congregations can be spiritually transformative."

See you on Sunday in the Bookstall and Library!

Unity Church Book Club

The Unity Church Book Club will meet from 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 9. The book they will be discussing is *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War* by Nathaniel Philbrick.

Everyone is welcome — even if you haven't read the book!



OPEN PAGE:

reflecting with pens in hand

These guided writing sessions, led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, are invitations to the creative spirit, opportunities to correspond with "the still, small voice within." No writing experience necessary. Check individual listings for location, pre-registration requirements and registration fees.

OPEN PAGE Writing Session

Sunday, November 7 • 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Unity Church • Topic: Covenant

We "become human beings by making commitments, by making promises," said James Luther Adams. Like his fellow theologian Martin Buber, he called humans the "promise-making, promise-keeping, promise-breaking, promise-renewing creature." This writing session explores the notion of covenant and how it shapes our human identity, our communities of faith and our role in creating new realities in the world. This writing session is free and registration not required, but an e-mail to karen@unityunitarian.org is requested to help in planning space and handouts.

The Awakened Heart:

Monthly OPEN PAGE Sessions

Tuesday Evenings, 6:30–9:00 p.m.

November 23, topic: Pilgrimage

December 7, topic: Incarnation

Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Ave., St. Paul. For fees and registration, visit: www.wisdomwayscenter.org

On-line literary resources

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

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Teachers' Nights Out

In gratitude for your service to the community, Unity Church offers 2010-11 Religious Education teachers a monthly night of free childcare so that you can rest, recharge and have some fun.

We'll look after your kiddos from 6:00 until 8:30 p.m. (light snack provided) here at Unity Church. Upcoming dates include Saturday, November 3, and Friday, December 3. Pre-registration is necessary for staffing purposes; contact Christy Randall at 651-228-1456 x127 or christy@unityunitarian.org.

Parents' Night Out

To facilitate fellowship among Unity Church parents, we offer quarterly Parents' Nights Out, an evening of free childcare from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. (light snack included).

Childcare staff will play games and make crafts with your kiddos while you enjoy an evening out. The only stipulation is that you spend time with other parents from Unity Church!

Our next Parents' Night Out is Saturday, November 13. Pre-registration is necessary for staffing purposes and enrollment will be limited to 25 children; contact Christy Randall at 651-228-1456 x127 or christy@unityunitarian.org.

R.E. Supply Request!

Please save your plastic 20-oz. water and beverage bottles for use in our Science Lesson.

Bring them to church (only) on Sunday, November 7.

Thank you.



R.E. Dates for Your Family's Calendar

November 2010

Sunday, November 7: regular R.E. *Daylight Savings Time—fall back!*

Sunday, November 14: regular R.E.

Saturday, November 20: Annual Congregational Meeting, 10:00 a.m., childcare provided

Sunday, November 21: Family Sunday: Thanksgiving

Friday, November 26: Black Friday Family Worship

Sunday, November 28: No R.E. Classes – Special activities for kids

December 2010

Sunday, December 5: regular R.E., HS Cookie and Wreath sales begin; Celebration of New Lives - 11:00 service

Sunday, December 12: regular R.E.; Congregational Neighborhood Caroling

Sunday, December 19: Family Sunday - Carol Sing (9:00, 4:30) and Shout (11:00), childcare available for kids under 5

Friday, December 24 - Christmas Eve services: Pageants and Family Service

Sunday, December 26 - No R.E. Classes – Special activities for kids, one 10:00 a.m. service, childcare available for kids under 5

Junior High Youth!

Join Youth Group on Wednesday Nights!

Calling all 6th, 7th and 8th graders! Are you free on Wednesday evenings? Come hang out with church friends and get to know some cool youth and adults at Youth Group.

Youth Group meets from 7:15 to 8:30 p.m. most Wednesdays. On first and third Wednesdays, we bake treats for the Pastoral Care team and church hospitality (and we eat a fair share, ourselves!). On second and fourth Wednesdays, we learn about social justice projects and do some fun and helpful service work together.

Each Wednesday, dinner is served to church friends and families at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship in the Chapel. Feel free to join us before Youth Group!

On December 15, Junior High Youth Group hosts "Santa Pause", a night of free childcare for church members. We make crazy crafts and play fun games with a church full of little kids! Plan on joining us that evening.

We will NOT meet on 11/26, 12/22 or 12/29, due to the holidays.

Christmas Pageant News

All active families with 1st-12th grade children enrolled in R.E. will receive Pageant registration materials via e-mail the week following Thanksgiving. If your family doesn't get this e-mail but you're interested in being involved, contact Kerri in the Church Office.

Important dates for Pageant participation include:

December 12: costume fittings, 10:15 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.

December 19: choir rehearsal, 10:00 a.m.

December 23: dress rehearsal, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

December 24: performances, 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Notes

from Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministry

The ancient roots of the word 'art' have to do with connection.....and, at its best, is our connection to the mystery, to the parts of ourselves that are deeper and truer than the day-to-day world. — From *Staying With Your Beauty* by Roderick Maclver

As I drive to Unity Church in the midst of these stunningly beautiful October days, I often ponder what music can add to our lives, how it can be partner, support and inspiration to the many complex daily issues we work through. In his 'welcome address' to freshman at Boston conservatory, director Karl Paulnack pointed out that the Greeks were the first people to understand how music really works. They observed that music and astronomy were two sides of the same coin. Astronomy was seen as the study of relationships between observable, permanent, external objects, and music was seen as the study of relationships between invisible, internal hidden objects. *Music has a way of finding the big, invisible moving pieces inside our hearts and souls and helping us figure out the position of things inside us.*

In his book, *A Way of Being Free*, Ben Okri says "the highest things are beyond words. That is probably why all art aspires to the condition of wordlessness. When literature works on you, it does so in silence, in your dreams, in your wordless moments. Good words enter you and become moods, become the quiet fabric of your being. Like music, like painting, like literature, art wants to move into silence, into the emotional and spiritual conditions of the world. Statues become melodies, melodies become yearnings, yearnings become actions."

As we enter that time of year that speaks so often of family, home, connections and the promises we make or live, I often must remind myself to take the time and moments that revitalize my highest intentions. Over and over again I find that 'art' and the 'beautiful' within it help me to find that balance.

From *The Cry of Our Times: to Awaken Beauty* by John O'Donohue:

"When we experience the Beautiful, there is a sense of homecoming. Some of our most wonderful memories are of beautiful places where we felt immediately at home. We feel most alive in this presence for it meets the needs of our soul. In the experience of beauty we awaken and surrender in the same act. It brings a sense of completion and sureness. Without any of the usual calculation, we can slip into the Beautiful with the same ease as we slip into the seamless embrace of water; something ancient within us already trusts that this embrace will hold us."

I wish for all of us the presence of mind and heart to seek moments of balance, to seek inner revelation through accepting the embrace of music, of art, of the beauty around us. Again, from Roderick Maclver in *Staying With Your Beauty*, "Our challenge as musicians, as artists, is to muster the technique, the vision, the persistence, and emotional courage to explore what means most to us. Our challenge as people is even greater – to live a life that is in itself a work of art. Henry David Thoreau described the challenge this way: *It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful, but it is more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. We are tasked to make our lives, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of our most elevated and critical hour.*"

Singing Opportunities

Walk-In Choirs

An opportunity for those that would love to sing but just cannot make choir rehearsals. Come and rehearse from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. in the Foote Room on November 21, then sing in our 4:30 p.m. service!

Carmina Singers

A one-time experience that meets for a few rehearsals and then performs once at the 4:30 p.m. service. We will rehearse from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. on December 5 and December 19 in the Foote Room and sing during the 4:30 p.m. service on December 19. Come and enjoy preparing and singing some wonderful holiday music! Childcare provided.

Gather and Sing at the 4:30 Service

Gathering music for the 4:30 p.m. service will be a time for community singing. The singing will begin at 4:20 p.m. and end promptly at 4:30 p.m. when the service begins. Come and be with us to add your voice or just to enjoy the singing.

Save the Date!

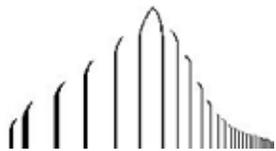
Saturday, December 11 • 6:30 p.m.

Holiday Carol Sing and Choir Concert featuring Unity Children's Choir, Unity Singers and Unity Choir

Come to sing together and hear beautiful music of this season!

Please feel free to contact Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries, with any questions at ruth@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x118.





UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Thanksgiving Gatherings

See page 6 for details.



Inside this issue of *commUNITY*:

- Worship Calendar page 3
- Unity Tomorrow Update..... page 4
- Pledge Drive Update..... page 5
- Black Friday at Church..... page 7
- A Day in Seminary page 12
- OPEN PAGE..... page 13



Morgan Sheff Photography

Unity Church—Unitarian Annual Meeting of the Congregation Saturday, November 20, 2010

Pancake Breakfast • 8:30 a.m.
Annual Meeting • 10:00 a.m.

Unity Church will hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 20, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary following a pancake breakfast (beginning at 8:30 a.m.) hosted by the Board of Trustees. At this meeting, the Board will report to the congregation, present the operating budget for 2011, and elect three new trustees. There will also be a *Unity Tomorrow* report on the predesign process.

Please join us — first for pancakes and then for some time to reflect on the work of the church!

All are welcome!