

Reverence

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

I began writing this month's article by trying to define reverence, but that proved an impossible task. Google told me it is considered by many to be a virtue, whatever that means. I was also informed it acts as both a noun and a verb and is described in terms of other hard-to-define words like respect, awe, veneration, honor, devotion. What I ended up with after much research is an intangible, an experience that is elusive and ephemeral and difficult to put into words.

Maybe we should approach reverence from a different angle. What are the things that we as Unitarian Universalists revere? And how does that shape who we are and how we are in the world?

It seems to me that we UUs revere the journey rather than the destination, questions rather than answers, relationships based on equity rather than hierarchy, covenant rather than contract; most importantly, we have deep reverence for the Holy (however that may be defined) within, among and beyond each aspect of Creation, including ourselves.

It is our reverence of these things that reminds us of our place within the interconnected web. In opening ourselves to awe of the Mystery, respect for curiosity, and devotion to justice we begin to realize both our smallness within the larger story and our unique gifts to offer in the unfolding. It is from this place of humility and awareness that we can *choose* reverence. We can intentionally bow our heads at the majesty that surrounds us; and we

can deliberately stand tall to honor the beauty of adding our voices in harmony to the Song that is always being sung.

And it is this choice, this *intention* of reverence that makes all the difference. As Irish priest and author, John O'Donohue says, "What you encounter, recognize or discover depends to a large degree on the quality of your approach. When we approach with reverence, great things decide to approach us. Our real life comes to the surface and its light awakens the concealed beauty in things. When we walk on the earth with reverence, beauty will decide to trust us. The rushed heart and arrogant mind lack the gentleness and patience to enter that embrace."

By living into our UU principles moment by moment we refine our approach to Life and cultivate our capacity for reverence. It's like doing all the prep work so that when a sudden moment of awe arrives our hearts recognize it and we can choose to open our souls to the beauty, the harmony, to that which is larger than ourselves. When we approach the search with reverence, great truths and depths of meaning will be revealed to us. When we behold *all* of our fellow human beings with reverence, we will be blinded by the light that dwells within, and justice, equity, and compassion are sure to follow. When we aspire to live in a beloved community held in reverence, we will naturally work together towards spiritual and intellectual growth, turning our world towards greater peace, freedom, and love.

So, however you define reverence, whatever you understand it to be, take this month to consider when and where you approach life in this way. Spend some time thinking about what it is you revere and how that prepares you to experience and embrace sacred moments, wherever and whenever they may happen.

By Shay MacKay
with this month's theme team:
Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Karen Hering, K.P. Hong,
Lisa Friedman and Danny Givens

Reverence Theme Resources

Books

A Haunting Reverence by Kent Nerburn

Reverence: Renewing a Forgotten Virtue by Paul Woodruff

Out of Africa by Isak Dinesen

Dream Work by Mary Oliver

Beauty: The Invisible Embrace by John O'Donohue

Film

Simon Birch (1998)

Contact (1997)

Baraka (1992) and *Samsara* (2011)

Youth

Wangari's Trees of Peace by Jeanette Winter

In God's Name by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney

Just Words



The question is still sounding in my mind. But first the context. A group was gathered in the Robbins Parlor to hear Unity Church member Kim Chapman read from his new book. Kim is a biological ecologist who, with his friend and poet Jim Armstrong, just brought out a book of essays and poems entitled, *Nature, Culture and Two Friends Talking*. The conversation was deep and challenging. Some spoke of their despair in the face of the climate crisis and of their fear that life as we know it is under immediate threat. Others, including Kim, expressed confidence in the resilience and creativity

with which human beings have weathered past crises and suggested that it is difficult to be resilient and creative when captured by despair.

"But where to we start?," a woman asked. "We are so disconnected, so isolated, sometimes I don't know where to turn." "Turn to the church," I replied. Start right here among these people with all of their hope and despair. Intentional religious communities are the best instrument we have for creative connection, for moving out of isolation, and for knitting together the fabric of our lives. No other organization provides such a comprehensive response to the existential challenges we face.

What's the church worth to you? Please don't stop reading. We are grown-ups. We have to be able to talk about values. What's the church worth to you? There are a couple of ways to approach this question. The fee-for-service approach would be to make a list of the ways in which you participate in the life of the church and determine the fair market rate of each of those services. But the truth is that the church is a spiritual cooperative. It is not a charity. It is a cradle of charity. It is not an advocacy group or an arts organization. It is a community that encourages advocacy and fosters the arts. This month when you're asked to make your pledge, "think on these things."

As always,

Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs

What's it Worth?

October is pledge drive month at Unity Church!

The congregation will be exploring the question "What's it Worth?" in a variety of ways including printed materials, testimonials from members, and messages from the pulpit. Anticipate an invitation to talk with one of our canvassers about "what it's worth" to you!

The pledge drive will kick-off on Sunday, October 4, with services led by The Reverend Gail Geisenhainer and with special guest musician Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout. Rev. Geisenhainer is known as one of the most dynamic preachers in the UUA.

You won't want to miss this powerful Sunday!



Rev. Gail Geisenhainer



Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

John Emkovik

June 6, 1927–September 4, 2015

In Celebration

Carol Stenson Kujawski

born one more redeemer

July 31, 2015

to parents Amy and Bryan Kujawski

Laura Smidzik

Ordained into the

Unitarian Universalist Ministry

on September 19, 2015

Marathon Alert

The Twin Cities Marathon will wind its way along Summit Avenue the morning of Sunday, October 4. Many roads will be closed from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please plan alternate routes and allow extra time to reach Unity Church that morning.

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Unity Church–Unitarian
733 Portland Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456
www.unityunitarian.org

OCTOBER WORSHIP CALENDAR / OFFERING RECIPIENTS

October Sunday Worship Calendar

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

October 4: Pledge Drive Sunday

To Be or Not To Be: Grown Up Church for the 21st Century — Rev. Gail R. Geisenhainer

While the posturing politicians and pandering pundits draw off our life energies into the pointless, endless question, "Black Lives Matter or All Lives Matter?", we need to ask "Will the church Matter to Black Lives? How will it matter? When?" The purpose and practice of church: now. This service will also feature Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout who is the Director of Music at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Ann Arbor.

Gail Geisenhainer serves as Senior Minister with the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Originally from Massachusetts, Gail has served UU congregations in California and Florida. She and her partner of 32 years, Celeste DeRoche, share passions for candor, books, dogs, and the state of Maine.

October 11

Becoming Small — Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs

Reverence is a way of being in the world that reminds us there is something larger than ourselves upon which we can and must rely. Religious liberals celebrate human agency, the ability to choose and the kinds of discipline that lead to self-control. And yet too many of us have lost touch with the gifts humility can bring. Join Rob and worship associate Jen Niemela in a service that calls for us to reclaim the practice of reverence.

October 18

8 Steps to Reverence — Rev. Danny Givens, Jr.

Often we struggle with how we, as a covenant practicing people, hold the reverence we carry through times of skepticism in our lives. Worship associate Heidi Mastrud will join Rev. Givens as he shares 8 Steps to Reverence.

October 25

Remember Who You Are — Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs

In our demanding, busy lives it is difficult to remember to notice the miraculous that surrounds us and the holiness that is everywhere. It is often most challenging to remember that the same sacred spark also exists within us. Janne and worship associate Rene Meyer-Grimberg will explore the meaning of reverence when we include ourselves in what is holy.

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 11 • 2:00 p.m. • Green Space

Bring all your fuzzy (and non-fuzzy) critters for a special blessing of honor and gratitude for the non-humans who companion us throughout our lives. You are also invited to bring photos of pets that can't attend or those you have lost in the past year.



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. **Please make checks payable to Unity Church.** Nominations for 2015-16 church-year offering recipients are being accepted online at www.unityunitarian.org/nominate-the-offering.html.

October 4: MUUSJA

The Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA) works to help the 26 Unitarian Universalist congregations around our state strengthen and deepen their work for justice in their local contexts, and to bring UUs together across congregational lines to be powerful voices for justice in Minnesota. Through youth programming, congregational consulting, educational forums, working groups, internship opportunities, and public witness and advocacy, MUUSJA's mission is to "unleash courageous leadership and collective power to build a just and loving world."

October 11: Justice Learning Scholarship Fund

This scholarship fund was created to honor the dedicated leadership of Pat Haff in her 12 years of creating Unity's Community Outreach Ministry. This fund will be dedicated to supporting everyone's equal access to participation in Unity's pilgrimages and hands-on work trips which have been an important cornerstone of the community outreach programs.

October 18: One Voice Mixed Chorus

For over 25 years One Voice Mixed Chorus has been Minnesota's LGBTQ and straight allies chorus committed to building community and creating social change by raising their voices in song. One Voice is dedicated to the mission of wrapping the stories of marginalized people in song and taking their repertoire of narration, liberation and hope to rural communities throughout the Midwest. The chorus is housed here at Unity Church where it has many dedicated supporters who proudly nominate One Voice as yet another agency making the dream of a more inclusive society happen.

October 25: Circles of Peace

The Circle of Peace Movement is a group of peacemakers committed to breaking the cycle of inner city violence and promoting racial healing. The circle impacts the community by creating positive relationships with youth in trouble, parents, and other city and community members. Youth from local residential facilities, parents, grandparents, police and probation officers, city officials, and community members have all attended the circle since it began over five years ago. Members of Unity's Restorative and Racial Justice Teams, along with other congregants, help provide the dinner hour meals for the Circle of Peace that meets at Unity Church each Monday night. This year a Hmong women's and African men's circle have started meeting on Thursday evenings. Also, this year Sarah and Russel Balenger (founders) received a Facing Race Ambassador award from the St. Paul Foundation.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / ANTI-RACISM LEADERSHIP TEAM

The "U" in Unity...

From Hal Freshley, Trustee



According to you—as measured by this year’s congregational survey—this church community is actually making some significant progress in moving toward deeply cherished goals to, “Live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism”; and to “Serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner, and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment.”

That said, it should be noted that even though we hold our leaders accountable for inspiring us and helping us achieve these ends, YOU/WE are what makes this transition real. We at Unity Church need to be, all of us, talking about (and engaging in) activities that are consistent with our aspirations—both within the church and outside. Many of you participated in the Beloved Conversations that started last year as a way for people of faith from different backgrounds to get to know one another on common ground. Just this May a dedicated group of adults and youth participated in the marches in both Selma, Alabama, and its mirror walk here in St. Paul, to commemorate major watersheds in civil rights. In July there was a substantial showing of Unity folks at the Rondo Reconciliation event, a much-needed healing civic activity to acknowledge the devastating impact of neighborhood destruction, but also of the power of hope and charity to move forward. And just last month Common Good Books contacted Unity Church as a venue for Senator Amy Klobuchar to discuss critical civic issues. In my mind Unity Church is gradually gaining greater community visibility as a “meeting ground” for the wider work of justice-seeking and community-building civic conversation.

It is you/we who are the volunteers working with our partner organizations (the many organizations with whom Unity has a relationship because their aspirations parallel our own); it is you/we who show up when and where we’re called (Black Lives Matter, Selma mirror enactment at the Capitol, the Rondo Reconciliation event); and it is you/we through our presence here at Unity Church, that *support each other* with our love, our gifts, and our service. And—this is significant—you/we are helping to build community when we get our pictures taken for the photo directory so that we can be recognized by face and name. We are building community when we tell our stories to each other and when we leave this place and go out to our homes, our workplaces, and our neighborhoods with a more courageous spirit of community in our hearts.

When we live lives of integrity, service, and joy we really do become part of a larger contingent force, all together building beloved community.

Congregational Survey Results Session: Turn to page 8

What’s Going On?

From Russ Peterson, Anti-Racism Leadership Team



Unity—the church, the community, even the building—is a busy place these days. Our Sunday services, thought provoking and soul soothing as they may be, are only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

This month’s worship theme of reverence has a different resonance for Unitarian Universalists than it does for members of creedal faiths. Reverence, for us, is less concerned with turning our focus inward

toward traditions and beliefs that define us and set us apart from the world outside the sanctuary walls. While we do cherish and revere what happens within our worship space and our own hearts, our principles call us to look outward as well.

As UUs we understand that our values must not only be held in our hearts, but lived. That’s a tall order, but reverence—a reverence that looks not just inward, at our shining ideals, but outward, towards cherishing and healing our hurting world—provides a good foundation: a solid place to stand while we strain to reach farther.

Cultivating outward-looking reverence begins with awareness. And awareness begins at home. Remember what I said about Unity Church being a busy place? As a member of our Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT), part of my job is to help this big and busy place to be aware of its own efforts, as they relate to the goal of dismantling racism.

How much do you know about Unity’s anti-racism efforts? I invite you to learn about Unity’s support of the Circle of Peace at the Racial and Restorative Justice Team’s table in the Parish Hall. And to read about upcoming educational opportunities—Janne’s cultural competency class (Who Are Our Neighbors?, see page 4), Wellspring Wednesday programs, and other opportunities—in this newsletter, on the website, and in Sunday inserts. There’s a lot going on. Find out how you can take part.

2015 Overcoming Racism Conference

Vigilance Now!

November 13-14, 2015 • Metropolitan State University

Presented by the Facilitating Racial Equity Collaborative
www.overcomingRacism.org

Each day will include a full slate of workshops with opportunities to reflect, connect, and commit!

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Mahmoud El-Kati, professor at Macalester College

Nekima Levy-Pounds, Esq. is an award-winning professor, attorney, civil rights expert

Tall Paul (Paul Wenell Jr.) is a Anishinaabe hip hop artist.

Dr. Heather Hackman has been teaching and training on social justice issues since 1992

Lessons from Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Team

Interested in learning about a unique approach to restoring communities and individuals who have experienced trauma? Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Team is planning events this year for you to learn about the wonderful things the Circles of Peace are accomplishing and what it means to support the local community in their own healing. Team members are available for conversation in the Parish Hall on Sundays during coffee hour through October 11. We are sponsoring a Wellspring Wednesday presentation, Black Lives Matter: An Invitation to Conversation, which will be held October 21 (see page 9 for details). If interested in joining our work or supporting Peace Circles contact Terri McNeil at tmcneil003@yahoo.com.

Who Are Our Neighbors?

Saturday, October 24

9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. • Unity Church

Led by Janne Eller-Isaacs, this workshop will provide all participants with the opportunity to explore some of the cultural assumptions that can get in our way, consciously and unconsciously, in interacting with others, especially those of different cultural backgrounds. RSVP to Martha Tilton at martha@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x105.

Save the Date! November 14, 2015

Racial Healing and Reconciliation: Lessons Learned

A Samuel Morgan Forum

with Dr. Michael Cowan and James Carter

Saturday, November 14 • 9:00 – noon • Parish Hall

On this 10th anniversary of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, former New Orleans City Council member James Carter and Dr. Michael Cowan from Loyola University will reflect on lessons learned and lessons that we are still engaging today.

Come to a New Orleans style dinner and evening!

New Orleans Under Reconstruction: Looking Ahead

Saturday, November 14 • 6:00 p.m. • Parish Hall

Come and celebrate 10 years of Unity Pilgrimage to New Orleans! We will honor the stories, celebrate the culture of the city we have come to love, and look ahead with hope to the future.

2015-16 Hallman Ministerial Intern

Shay MacKay



My initial landing here at Unity Church has been a whirlwind of activity and excitement that's left me feeling a little ungrounded, so I've been taking lots of long walks, exploring the neighborhood and enjoying the late-summer weather. A few days ago, while walking, I found myself smiling at the antics of

all the busy little squirrels rushing around. At first, I moved briskly, my pace matching their frenetic energy as I walked for exercise, not really caring that I interrupted their work and sent them running for their burrows. But after awhile, I found myself slowing, attempting to quiet my steps and appear non-threatening. Gradually my breathing slowed and deepened, my energy centered, my body loosened and my spirit expanded until I was moving in mindfulness. The scents of freshly mown grass and the previous night's rain; the bursts of color from lovingly tended gardens; the music of birds, barking dogs, distant children playing; all combined to envelop me, engaging my senses and soothing my soul.

Suddenly I stopped, startled out of my reverence by a flash of pure white as a brilliant albino squirrel scampered up a tree a few feet away. It stopped on the trunk level with my head and stared at me, its tiny body twitching as it tried to decide if I was truly a threat. It was gorgeous and I could only stand there, as still as possible, and pray that it would stay with me for a few more moments. As we watched each other I began to speak softly, apologizing for disturbing its foraging, promising that I meant no harm, thanking it for blessing me with its presence. It soon decided there were more important things to be done and leapt high into the branches of the tree, throwing a scolding chirp over its shoulder as it went. I laughed and continued on my walk.

Two blocks later I almost stumbled over another squirrel as it dashed out from a nearby shrub and crossed the sidewalk in front of me. Again, I stopped and stared. This one was a beautiful deep black with bright, dark eyes that watched me warily from the edge of the grass. After a few seconds it shot across the street and out of sight. I stood there and shook my head, smiling softly at my encounter with the yin and yang of Creation. By slowing down with intentional presence and respect, I had been given an opportunity to find balance. I felt solid, grounded firmly in my place within the miracle of existence. And my spirit soared, singing in praise and gratitude for the beauty of this Earth.

Please feel free to contact me at shay@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x129.

PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP / ONGOING GROUPS

Welcome Words



In a multi-theological faith, people often wonder how Unitarian Universalists cultivate reverence. For me, reverence begins when I am intentionally open to the sacred and to all that reminds me of what is larger than myself. Sometimes that means pausing to take in an amazing glimpse of the moon in the night sky. Sometimes it means diving deep into conversation with someone I've just met in the Parish Hall. Sometimes it means taking the time to go around the circle in a meeting and bring everyone's story into the room. The Holy is found in many places in our lives and in the daily connections that honor our humanity. As the church year unfolds, may we practice reverence with one another. See you in church!

Rev. Lisa Friedman
Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement

Pathway to Membership Classes

Sign up at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. Lisa is happy to meet with you personally to answer questions and welcome you into the congregation. Childcare is available by contacting Michelle Hill at 651-228-1456 x127 or michelle@unityunitarian.org at least one week in advance.

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers
Wednesday, October 7: 7:15-8:30 p.m. ~ also offered ~
Sunday, October 25: 10:15-11:30 a.m.

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

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Exploration
Saturday, October 10: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Potluck lunch ~ also offered ~ **Three Tuesdays, November 17, 24, & December 1: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Light dinner provided**

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

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church
Saturday, October 3: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. ~ also offered ~
Wednesday, October 28: 7:15-9:00 p.m.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can discover the places in your life where the world's needs meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book. There will be a special New Member recognition ceremony on Sunday, November 8.

Ongoing Groups at Unity Church

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

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

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

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (October 15) from Noon-2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

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

Living With Grief Group: For people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (October 20) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, October 12, and 26, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

Unitots!: A drop-in playgroup for families (parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles) with kids through preschool age. Every Monday and Thursday, from 9:30 a.m.-noon, in the nursery. Contact Michelle Hill at michelle@unityunitarian.org

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net. **October 13** discussion: *Gardenias* by Faith Sullivan.

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, October 2, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209.

Connections for Women in Retirement: This group meets the second and fourth Thursday (October 8 and 22) of each month from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Young Adult Group: Potluck supper on Tuesday, October 27, at 6:30 p.m., in the Center Room. Bring your favorite dish to a relaxed evening of good company and conversation. Contact: Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org

Sangha Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction is offered on the first Tuesday (October 6) beginning at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kford5@comcast.net

VOLUNTEER CORNER / PARISH HALL ARTIST

Get involved! Share your gifts! Meet new friends!



Please contact Volunteer Coordinator, Madeline Summers, at madeline@unityunitarian.org to sign up for any of the opportunities on this page. In addition, if you would like to know more about other opportunities or discuss the particular gifts and talents you'd like to share with Unity Church, you may set up Involvement Appointment. During this appointment you can explore which opportunities would work best for you and how to make your biggest difference.

Soup Supper Cooks

We are currently looking for Soup Supper cooks to fill the following dates and times:

Sunday, October 18 • 2:30-4:30 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Work with a group of 5-6 people to prepare a sustaining meal for over 100 people. You could take one of your family recipes or one that we have tested. Additional support and training provided as needed. Volunteers for Soup Supper are able to attend the 4:30 p.m. service if they so choose.

Wellspring Wednesday teams in need of light help!

Wednesday, October 7, 21, and 28 • 3:30-5:00 p.m. and 5:00-7:30 p.m.

Grocery Shoppers

We are currently looking for individuals or groups willing to help grocery shop for our Sunday and Wednesday night dinners. Volunteers will most likely have to lift packages that are 10 pounds or sometimes heavier. This role is flexible as you can go shopping when it works for your schedule during the week before a dinner.

Welcome Team Members

We are currently looking for additional Welcome Team members at all services (9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 4:30 p.m.). Volunteers are needed to greet members and visitors as they arrive to church, welcome them to Religious Education and to worship, pass out orders of service, ring the church bell, collect and count the offertory, and assist with serving coffee during our fellowship time after the service. Welcome Team members are asked to serve at one service per month.

October Parish Hall Artist

Ellen Starr

I am drawn to flowing lines, organic forms and patterns as these reflect how I experience life—as a fluid dance of constant change, inter-connectedness, intricate weavings of energy and growth. I endeavor to impart a sense of awe or reverence with each piece I create through imagery, beauty, and craftsmanship as I believe the sense of the sacredness of life feeds our spirits, inspiring us to greater heights and richer depths of meaning.

I was diagnosed in 2008 with stage 3A aggressive breast cancer. The years since have been an amazing journey of transformation for me. My current focus with my art is to express the wisdom, healing, and gratitude that have come from the blessing of my awakening due to cancer, releasing old limiting perceptions and the birth of a new life view. My new pieces are about metamorphosis and transformations leading to discovery and healing.

In life we all face many things that we would call trials and tribulations. I have found that when these show up they are actually “the winds of change.” They propel us out of places where we may be stuck, stagnate, or too full of fear to move on our own. While the “happening” isn’t usually a pleasant thing to go through, we shift. We learn something new. We begin to flow again. I call this an enlightening moment. I have come to a place that when these moments show up, I look for the meaning behind them—the lesson or the thing that needs to shift and change. It is a place of comfort and acceptance in the storm. The paintings that I create reflect this wisdom that I have gained through my journeys. The beautiful intertwined patterns show the interconnectedness of life, how everything around us touches us and changes us. They reflect the transforming “dance” that ensues when the “winds of change” blow into our lives and we flow with them.

Cleaning Day Extravaganza!

Unity's facilities staff is looking for a team of 15-20 people to come in on Saturday, October 10, from 9:00 a.m. - noon, for a cleaning day extravaganza. Over the course of the morning they will be leading the group in projects such as dusting, painting, and weeding. We will provide any necessary training to those attending and will have staff on hand to help. Volunteers will not be expected to lift heavy objects and we are planning to find accessible jobs for everyone who signs up. You can come an help for the whole time or a few hours during that window.

As an appreciation for helping with this event, lunch will be provided at noon to all volunteers. Please sign up by contacting Madeline Summers, madeline@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107.



WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday is a multi-generational opportunity to gather midweek at church for food, fellowship, and fun. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship at 6:45 p.m., and an evening of rich programming beginning at 7:10 p.m. All are welcome. Childcare is available and you do not have to sign up in advance.

Dinner: The cost for dinner is: \$7/adult, \$4/child ages 5 to 12, \$2/child ages 2 to 4, and \$20/family. (Children under the age two are free.) Reservations for dinner are not required. All meals will offer vegan, vegetarian, and gluten free options. People with specific food allergies may contact madeline@unityunitarian.org to arrange to have a special preparation. Email Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org for financial assistance to help cover the cost of dinner. No one is turned away.

October 7

Dinner menu: Cauliflower tabbouleh, tzatziki (cucumber-yogurt sauce), Greek salad, and pita bread

How Open Are Our Borders?

Author Erin Hunter once observed: "The only true borders lie between day and night, between life and death, between hope and loss." The Syrian refugee crisis and the early election rhetoric in the U.S. have raised the issue of our current border policy. How can we respond?

New Family Religious Education Orientation — Rev. KP Hong

This session is for families who are new to Unity Church and would like to learn more about religious education and learning opportunities for their children and youth. Information on class registration will also be available.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga for Every Body — Elen Bahr

This is a chance to bring your body, mind, and spirit to a new level of openness with 75-minutes of deep breaths, quiet space, and gentle movement. This session is suitable for a wide variety of body types, and there is no previous yoga experience required. Youth ages 10 and up are welcome to come with an adult family member. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat or blanket. There will also be a few mats/blankets available for loan. Learn more about the instructor, Elen Bahr, at EveryYogi.com and follow Yoga For EveryBody on Facebook.

Great College Search • Competitive Colleges: What, Why (or Why Not), and How — Craig Allen

Learn how to optimize the search process and become a critical consumer of colleges.

Go: The Chinese Board Game

Join Unity Church member Bob Ruud for an evening of learning and playing the Chinese board game, Go. Anyone above the age of 10 is welcome to play. Bring your own board and set if you have one. www.usgo.org/what-go

Welcome to Unity — Rev. Lisa Friedman

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

Tween Group

For youth in grades 5-8

October 14

Dinner menu: Oven roasted pork chops with herbs and garlic, baked sweet potatoes, arugula salad with blue cheese, apple crisp for dessert.

Everyday Enjoyable Parenting — Marty and Jack Rossmann

Parents (grandparents too!) of toddlers to teens are invited to participate in four sessions on the topic of good parent-child relationships. No miracles are guaranteed, but the discussion and group support holds promise for enhanced interactions. Purchase the required book, *The 10 Best Principles of Good Parenting* by Laurence Steinberg (\$10), at the Bookstall in the Parish Hall. This four session class is led by Unity Church members Marty Rossmann, Professor Emerita Family Education at the University of Minnesota, and Jack Rossmann, Professor Emeritus Psychology at Macalester College. Register by e-mail to rossm001@umn.edu. Class is limited to 20 families.

Experiencing Reverence: A Contemplative Conversation — Sarah Cledwyn

Join Spiritual Director Sarah Cledwyn in contemplative conversation around the worship theme of reverence. Where and when do you experience reverence in your life? How do you cultivate the practice of reverence in church, work, home, and the world? How does reverence change us? We will engage with the theme through a group process of listening, sharing and reverent witness.

What Are We at Unity Church Really Thinking?

Nearly three hundred of you took the time to complete Unity's 2015 Congregational Survey this spring. The three-part survey provides the ministers, staff, and board of trustees with important feedback regarding our individual spiritual journeys, progress toward our collective congregational goals, and about the activities and programs offered by the church. The Unity Church board is committed to finding out—from you—how we're doing and using that information to inform planning. This session will offer an in-depth report on what we found out about the congregation and our spiritual lives, what activities at Unity Church are most inspiring, and what makes people want to recommend us to their friends.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga for Everyone — Elen Bahr

Go: The Chinese Board Game

Tween Group

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY: OCTOBER 21 AND 28

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY / CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

October 21

Dinner menu: Red beans and rice, mixed greens salad, and bourbon bread pudding for dessert

Black Lives Matter: An Invitation to Conversation

At the June General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, an Action of Immediate Witness was passed in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. What does it mean to be foot soldiers in the work of racial justice and equity? Where is it safe to voice our outrage at the state of our society, as well as our concerns or discomfort with the tactics of a new movement? How can we invite each other into deeper reflection on our own personal commitments and positions on these important issues? Members of the Racial and Restorative Justice Team invite you to such a conversation, using the circle-keeping process as our model for discussion.

Everyday Enjoyable Parenting — Marty and Jack Rossmann

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga for Everyone — Elen Bahr

Go: The Chinese Game

Tween Group

October 28

Dinner menu: Roast beef with mashed potatoes and gravy

Indians in Public Art: Myths and Misconceptions — Jim Bear Jacobs

Jim Bear Jacobs of Healing Minnesota Stories will take us on a virtual tour of art in the Minnesota State Capitol and other public places in the metro area. He will engage us in a dialogue about how Native Americans are depicted, and the art's narrow lens for telling early Minnesota history. Importantly, the State Capitol is going through a major renovation right now, making this a great time to talk about its artwork, the stories it tells, and the values it reflects. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make changes. Jim Bear is a member of the Mohican nation and parish pastor at Church of All Nations in Columbia Heights. He is the founder of Healing Minnesota Stories, an interfaith effort to create understanding and healing between Native peoples and non-Native peoples through sharing stories.

Open Page Writing Session: Seeds of Reverence

Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org
"Without reverence, things fall apart," writer Paul Woodruff has observed. "To teach reverence," he says, "you must find the seeds of reverence in each person and help them grow." This writing session uncovers the seeds of reverence planted within each of us and help them grow. Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing session participants use stories, poetry, images, science and history to reflect on the month's theme in their own words and on their own pages. No writing experience is necessary.

Everyday Enjoyable Parenting — Marty and Jack Rossmann

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga for Everyone — Elen Bahr

Go: The Chinese Game

Tween Group

October Soup Suppers

Soup Suppers are served each Sunday after the 4:30 p.m. service. All meals will offer vegan, vegetarian, and gluten free options. People with specific food allergies may contact madeline@unityunitarian.org to arrange to have a special preparation.

- October 4: Lasagna soup with Italian sausage, breadsticks
- October 11: Our world famous chili team returns!
- October 18: French onion soup
- October 25: Oktoberfest! Kielbasa and sauerkraut soup or mushroom soup with thyme, pretzel buns

Dine with Nine Begins this Month

Forgot to sign up? You can still sign up to participate in this year's Dine with Nine suppers on Unity's website (bit.ly/dinewith9), or by emailing Teresa Wernecke at teresa475@gmail.com. Please include your contact information and let us know if you would like to sign up for a family or adult only group or whether you have particular location or transportation needs. We look forward to another great year!

Help Cook for Jeremiah Program Families

Help cook a meal at The Jeremiah Program (932 Concordia Avenue, St. Paul), a residence and education program for single moms and their children. Meals are provided before evening classes and Unity Church volunteers (adults and kids above age 6) are needed to help with preparation on the following dates: Tuesday, October 27; Thursday, December 3; Thursday, February 18; Tuesday, March 22. To volunteer contact Karen Buggs at 651-297-0111 or buggs745@hotmail.com.

Young Adult Group Potluck

Young adults (ages 18-35) are invited to join us on the fourth Tuesday of the month, October 27, for a 6:30 p.m. potluck in the Center Room. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org to be added to the email list and receive Young Adult news and announcements.

Black Friday Service Planning

On the Friday morning after Thanksgiving, Unity Church offers a spiritual alternative to the consumerism of the holiday season. This intergenerational worship service has become an important milestone for both Unity Church and the wider community. The planning team warmly invites new members to join them in this inspiring and fun worship planning! Contact Shay MacKay at shay@unityunitarian.org to find out more.

Free Child Care

Free child care is available, with one-week advance notice, for all church-sponsored activities held at Unity Church. Please contact Michelle Hill by email at michelle@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x127.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Pitter-pattering Questions

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

From K.P. Hong, Director of Religious Education



When our teachers ask what I mean by religious education as “relational learning,” it would be unimaginably brilliant to provide a neat, concise definition with no verbal remainder. Brilliant, and unimaginable. I take whatever consolation I can from Rumi’s story in his Sufi masterpiece, the *Masnavi*: a gnat appeals to Solomon for justice against the wind, whose strength continuously afflicts him, tossing him hither and thither, and everywhere hindering his course. Solomon agrees to hear the case but only with both parties present. The wind is summoned and arrives just as swiftly. But nowhere is the gnat to be found! And so it is for all our educational theories and methods when teachers abandon themselves into this draft, this current of the spirit, and do not run to seek refuge from any draft too strong for us.

Whatever *relational learning* may mean, it remains a necessary corrective to the common misunderstanding that what we offer children are programs and activities rather than relationships. Relational learning asks us to practice staying close to children for periods of time long enough to develop a “sense” of their world, to begin to recognize a *signature spiritual voice* unique to each child, a quality of being that exceeds our knowing by reason alone. And with sufficient practice, relational learning returns us to a *second naïveté* (Paul Ricoeur) and its signature language of reverence. This is the not easily acquired language of a second, more serious innocence, with wonder restored but without its earlier credulity. This is language without any need to hide or manipulate, without pretense or posturing, quiet and humble in its profound recognition of our human limitations. Such language of reverence is an unlearning into our native tongue, fluent with uncertainties and mysteries, spoken without the fashionable accent of cynicism but with praise before the irreducible polyphony of life.

Curious where such language might be spoken regularly in our community? Wander into our classrooms sometime, and enter a world of connotations far more than denotations. The subject matters of meaning, purpose, death, God, beloved community, dignity, beauty, and human existence refuse any narrow, denotative precision from any dictionary, and point to what overwhelms our cognitive grasp and analytical control. For what really matters, of course, is the emotional weight and felt experience, the connotative overtones and associations that pull at our lives and flames into meaning. Wander into our classrooms sometime and listen to our children’s fluency with the relational language of connotations that resists any attempt by lesson plans or teachers to contain it within some pre-constructed, denotative framework. (Try limiting “fungus” to its scientific classification and watch yourself utterly and wonderfully fail!) Wander into our classrooms sometime and see our teachers conjugating reverence into curiosity and courage about their own denotations of being a “teacher,” and risking moving into thick connotative relations of being “teacher-parent-spiritual guide-co-learner-fellow pilgrim-playmate-friend-and more” with children.

Of course, connotation and denotation are not separate things but two aspects of the same word, and both are needed. But what would it be like to speak one word a hundred different ways, in order to love a hundred different children or one child a hundred different ways? To risk speaking the world anew with the reverence of *second naïveté*? To risk being a gnat caught in the draft of a sacred and stirring wind? Sharing questions that pitter-patter across our sacred journeys...

Chalice Lighter Training

Do you have a child in grades 3-6* who may like to light the chalice during church services? We're offering a two-part training for interested children:

Tuesday, October 13 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Friday, October 23 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.

During the two training sessions, children will learn about the meaning and history of the chalice, the seven Unitarian Universalist principles, and how the worship service is structured to include the chalice.

Advance registration is required and at least one parent must attend both enjoyable learning experiences with their child. If your child would like to participate in church life in this way, email Erika Sanders at esanders878@gmail.com.

*Sixth graders will find it easiest to be chalice lighters if they participate in workshop rotation; 6th graders who attend junior high classes would miss the first part of class if they light the chalice during services.



October Calendar

Sunday, October 4: regular classes

Wednesday, October 7: New Family Orientation, 7:15 p.m.

Friday, October 9: Potluck for religious education volunteers! 6-8:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 11 – regular RE

October 14-19: Boston Pilgrimage

Sunday, October 18: No classes (MEA Weekend)

Sunday, October 25: regular classes

MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries



I have a huge envy for what you do: singing. It's something I adore and which seems to express a fundamental human drive for the beautiful. And of course, when it's done, as you do it, in a group, as a choir, then it expresses another fundamental human truth, which is a common desire to be together in harmony. — Ramin Gray, Artistic Director, Actors Touring Company, The Events

Recently I saw a, "Call for choirs to sing at the Guthrie Theatre in a production called The Events." Fascinated, I read on and saw an amazing invitation to "sing our values," our reverence for life and community, for that particular sharing that occurs among people who dare to live the belief that we can create Beloved Community. I was totally convinced after reading the following, part of an introductory letter from the Artistic Director of this production. Continuing from the quote above:

And it was this second aspect, the drive towards harmony and community that struck me and playwright David Grieg most palpably as we sat in a school hall in Oslo one foggy autumn evening in 2011 attending a choir rehearsal. I'd asked David to come to Norway with me to explore the aftermath of the terrible events of July 22 when Anders Behring Breivik killed 79, mostly young, people. It seemed that here, gathered together in a hall, was the clearest riposte to Breivik's act: a disparate group of people, bonding themselves into a community through the shared activity of song. And it was halfway through the rehearsal that David and I turned to each other and said: this is our play, isn't it? It's about the choice between working together to make something or ripping it apart, between creation and destruction, between harmony and discord.

The parallels between the choral dynamic they saw and our very own Unity Church community made it clear that we needed to be singing in this. It is my and our honor to bring varied voices from our three adult choirs to "bond together" as one of the choral communities carrying forth these ideas of community, creation and harmony.

Come and see Unity Church sing at the Guthrie on Saturday, October 10. Show times are at 1:00 and 7:30 p.m., see box at right for details. www.guthrietheater.org

Mark your calendar...

In the Grace of the World

A Concert Celebrating Ten Years with the Unity Singers

Wednesday, November 11 • 7:30 p.m.
Sanctuary

The Guthrie Theater's WorldStage Series presents Actors Touring Company production of



Directed by Ramin Gray

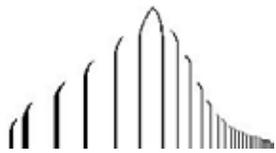
Written by David Greig

Music by John Browne

A powerful exploration of community and healing

Award-winning Scottish playwright David Greig's *The Events* follows a community's search for compassion, peace, and understanding in the wake of unthinkable violence. A response to the 2011 Norway attacks, in which the lives of 77 people were claimed by a car bomb and a mass shooting at a summer camp, this internationally acclaimed production delves into faith, politics, and reason. Featuring original music sung by a **different choir at each performance***, *The Events* is a daring theatrical event that explores our desire to fathom the unfathomable and asks how far forgiveness will stretch in the face of atrocity.

***UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN CHORAL ENSEMBLE** singing in performances Saturday, October 10, at 1:00 and 7:30 p.m. This choral ensemble is comprised of members representing Unity's three adult choirs: Unity Singers, a 20-voice auditioned chamber ensemble; Unity Choir, a 65-voice choir with members of young adults/parents through active retirement; and Women's Ensemble, a 50-voice ensemble of members in middle school through retirement, including several mother-daughter teams.



UNITY CHURCH–UNITARIAN

Sanctuary Entrance: 733 Portland Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
Business Entrance: 732 Holly Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456 • fax: 651-228-0927 • www.unityunitarian.org • unity@unityunitarian.org

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**



The members of Unity Church–Unitarian
joyfully invite you to join us as we ordain

Ashley Ariel Phillips Horan

to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry

Saturday, October 3, 2015 • 2:00 p.m. • Sanctuary
Reception to follow

Clergy, seminarians, and religious professionals are invited to robe and process.
Please arrive at 1:15 p.m.

Childcare available with RSVP to michelle@unityunitarian.org by September 28.

What's a "Cairns"?

- Cairns is a major city in Queensland, Australia (no, that's not it).
- Cairns has been making top-notch fire helmets since 1836 (not even close).
- Cairns are those things you see stacked along hiking paths and on mountain summits (closer).
- *Cairns* is the Unity Church Journal of the Arts (THAT'S the one!).

Find more information on the Cairns page on the Unity website:
www.unityunitarian.org/cairns-arts-journal.html



What's it Worth? October is Pledge Drive month at Unity Church!