

Longing

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 are all longing to go home to some place we have never been — a place, half remembered and half envisioned we can only catch glimpses of from time to time.

Community. — Starhawk

What does it mean “to long?” Is it to “dwell in thought” as the dictionary suggests? How is it different than to yearn — to crave — wish for or to desire? or is it “a strong desire, ache, churning, hunger, thirst or a hankering?” As we explore the theme for October of longing, we may discover that far from being simply “wishful thinking,” longing is intimately connected to a religious and spiritual impulse for more depth, meaning, and purpose. Former Episcopal priest Barbara Brown Taylor claims that when people talk about being “spiritual but not religious,” what spiritual often means is “the name for a longing — for more meaning, more feeling, more connection, more life.”

Taylor notes that even people who rest comfortably inside the institutional church and consider themselves religious feel this longing and “harbor the sense that there is more to life than they are being shown.” When UUs sing about there being “more love somewhere,” this may be the feeling we are trying to express. We know there is more, and we are going to “keep on ‘til we find it.”

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar asked “what is the difference between desire and longing? Desire is a fever of the head, longing is the cry of the heart.” If that is true, then how do we listen to the “cry of the heart?” One of the ways is certainly through music.

While reflecting on this theme, Ahmed Anzaldúa, Unity’s Director

of Music Ministries, remembered a choral concert he conducted, of which the central theme was four different expressions of longing: *Sehnsucht* (German); *saudade*, (Portuguese/Brazilian), *sevđalinka* (Arab/Turkish) and the *Blues* (African American). German’s *Sehnsucht* attempts to express the longing for a deeper relationship to life itself, often understood as German romanticism; *saudade* (Portuguese/Brazilian) is a feeling of melancholy which colors the Portuguese and Brazilian temperament. *Sevđalinka*, often heard in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is music which reveals love, grief, enthusiasm and joy all at the same time. The *Blues* is a genre of music many of us are familiar with and expresses the struggle of being black in America; the haunting tension of suffering and surviving the brutality of racism. These musical styles express different aspects of the human emotion of longing.

For some, longing is an uncomfortable and awkward word. It reminds us of craving for that which we no longer or can’t have. Longing can be a kind of nostalgia which isolates a person from being fully present to the here and now. As Fernando Pessoa wrote:

The feelings that hurt the most, the emotions that sting the most, are those that are absurd — the longing for impossible things precisely because they are impossible; nostalgia for what never was, the desire for what could have been; regret over not being someone else; dissatisfaction with the world’s existence. All these half-tones of the soul’s consciousness create in us a painful landscape, an eternal sunset of what we are.

Longing then can be a form of nostalgia or, it can easily be misinterpreted as “constant craving.” In the late capitalist society in which we live, we are constantly being sold the lie that material goods will satisfy our longings and provide fulfillment. Bombarded by messages linking happiness with consumption, we get lost amidst the promise of easy solutions to our longing for more. Our yearning for connection and depth get repackaged and expressed as a craving for stuff.

But what if we considered longing not as a verb, but as a noun? Nouns simply identify a class of people, places or things and in so doing, describe an inherent part of the human condition. It is an attempt to express the inexpressible; that feeling within the human heart — longing for what has been and the not yet; for the invisible to be made visible, whether in art, music, or in the return of a beloved person from our past; to an inchoate sense of incompleteness. Jeremiah Abrams wrote:

We all carry a holy longing, a yearning to know the meaning of our lives, to have a connection with the transpersonal, to experience the spiritual dimension of human life, to return to our souls’ divine origins. Spirituality is the art of creating union with something greater than ourselves, with a Higher Power.

The Irish priest and poet John O’Donohue asks that each of us “come to accept your longing as divine urgency” and to bless “the longing that brought you here and quickens your soul with wonder.” Similarly, every Sunday at Unity Church our common

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INTERIM REFLECTIONS



What do you — as members of Unity Church — long for? I've been talking with many members of the congregation and have been listening carefully to the hopes and dreams, concerns and fears about the future. There is no one single story or vision that has emerged yet, but at least one consistent theme *has* emerged: "we want to understand the interim process better — and engage with it in a way we couldn't last year." So, in addition to working on your Ends Statements as identified by the Executive Team, this is a brief outline of the tasks that I will be paying attention to this year:

Exploring Your History – A review of the church's life story, where it has been, what it has accomplished, the regrets present for what has not been accomplished, a celebration of gifts, some healing of wounds. This is your 150th anniversary year! A perfect time to dig deep into your past.

Articulating Your Identity – Consider what aspects of Unity's identity could use some strengthening, what needs to be brought to the fore so that the church will be living its identity more fully.

Reviewing Your Leadership – People who had found service with the previous ministry meaningful but are ready to change roles and step down when ministry changes, and people who had not yet found a place in leadership discover openings that call to them.

Strengthening Denominational Connections – Review relationships with other UU congregations in the area, and with the larger UUA, to determine how those relationships might work more effectively for everyone.

Preparing for the Future – After exploring its history, gaining clarity on its identity, the congregation considers what qualities of ministerial leadership are needed in order to be most effective in the life of the congregation and the world.

Woven in and amongst these developmental tasks are three overarching themes that will also impact the interim time. We'll reflect on:

Gathering – What does it mean to gather and re-gather fully, mindful that Covid still exists among us? How do we continue to serve those who wish to join us only online?

Grieving – How will Unity Church find ways to constructively grieve the multiple losses experienced in the last couple of years, namely: the death and illness of your former ministers; and the search process which did not result in a call for a new senior minister?

Growing – How will the congregation grow in their capacity to handle the complexities of gathering, grieving, and our on-going commitments to the work of undermining white supremacy culture?

Friends, we have much to do but the good news is — we are doing this together. I am discovering a resilient and generous congregation that is well prepared to undertake these challenges. I'm grateful for the opportunity to do it with you!

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, Interim Senior Minister

Longing {continued from front cover} prayer calls us to "live into our longing to embody and help to build the Beloved Community." The plea that we might "live into our longing" is a countercultural understanding of longing.

This is not longing as acquisition, as unfulfilled sexual desire, as yearning for lost youth. Instead, our weekly prayer calls us to stay awake to new possibilities and keep moving toward our better selves. Living into longing creates a divine urgency that pulls us toward the holy and helps us move from isolation into community. But for all the theological implications of longing leading us toward wholeness, it is a bittersweet feeling

Longing then, may be better suited as a noun, which means we simply accept it as a state of being, and therefore, we must also accept that as such, life is imperfect and impermanent. If we treat longing as a noun instead of as a verb — as a state of being to be desired to be honored; this is what is intrinsic to what it means to be fully human; is to be in this unresolved state of being. It is beautiful because it's incomplete.

By Rev. Kathleen Rolenz and this month's theme team: KP Hong, Andrea Anastos, Tom Duke, Ahmed Anzaldúa, Karen Gustafson

Longing Theme Resources

For further reflection on this theme please see this month's Spiritual Practice Packet available online at <https://bit.ly/longingpractice>.

Interim Ministry: For the Times In-Between

Wednesday, October 5 • 7:00 p.m. • In-person

Saturday, October 15 • 9:30 a.m. • Online via Zoom: <https://bit.ly/InterimOct>

How does interim ministry differ from settled ministry? What are the tasks and expectations of an interim minister? How might Unity Church use their interim ministers to their best advantage both here and now and for its future success? Join Rev. Kathleen Rolenz for a conversation about the spiritual practice of stewarding personal and institutional change.

SUNDAY SERVICES / OFFERING RECIPIENTS

October Worship Services

Unity Church offers two in-person services each Sunday at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. The 9:00 a.m. service is also offered via livestream.

October 2: *What Will You Do With Your Second Chance?*

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz

Livestream at 9:00 a.m.: https://youtu.be/uM9V_fNiKwk

The Jewish High Holy Days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are the religious equivalent of granting ourselves and one another a second chance. We do this by engaging in a spiritual practice of searching our minds and hearts for damage done by — or to — others and asking for forgiveness. Once forgiveness is offered or accepted, what then, will you do with your second chance?

October 9: *150 Years of Longing*

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz

Livestream at 9:00 a.m.: https://youtu.be/W5dC_OHaEPw

On February 25, 1872, Unity Church was “born.” Throughout your rich and varied history, the congregation has expressed its longings for a world made fair through acts of integrity, service and joy. In this sermon and service, Rev. Rolenz will explore significant moments in the history of this congregation which provide an inspirational road map for the future. We will also Celebrate New Lives in this Sunday’s service.

October 16: *The Thread We Follow* Pledge Drive Sunday

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz

Livestream at 9:00 a.m.: <https://youtu.be/1zRgyCYDBaE>

Over the past few years, we have turned to the church for ‘Brave Harbor’ during the pandemic, and ‘Trusted the River’ as we moved into the liminal time of ministerial transition and search for a settled minister. What does this moment in time mean for each of us? How does this covenantal faith community shape, enrich and guide our lives, today and into the future? We will hear from three members of Unity Church, as well as our Artist-in-Residence Lester Mayers during this service.

October 23: *Longing, Loss, and Love*

Rev. Karen Gustafson

Livestream at 9:00 a.m.: <https://youtu.be/wRJ-MygwbSU>

October 30: *Giving Up the Ghosts*

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz

Livestream at 9:00 a.m.: <https://youtu.be/xRrjwWABMnY>

Some ghosts are friendly, others hungry, and still others are disruptive. On the Sunday before All Hallows’ Eve, Samhain, All Souls and All Saints Days, we’ll explore how we are haunted or liberated by the ghosts who visit us.

October Offering Recipients

Each week, seventy percent of our Sunday offering is given to a community non-profit and thirty percent supports the Community Outreach Ministry at Unity Church. Donations are gratefully accepted online at <https://bit.ly/sundayoffering>.

October 2

Creating Opportunities for Post- Secondary Education

(COPE) assists underrepresented students in the community in obtaining educational opportunities, financial support, and other resources they need to reach their highest academic, professional, and personal goals. COPE provides after school mentoring, college preparation, ACT/SAT college prep classes, college tours and fairs, financial planning, and an annual fundraising scholarship event. This collection will support after school mentoring.

October 9

Unity’s Peace and Justice Scholarship Fund was created to honor the dedicated leadership of Pat Haff and her 12 years of coordinating Unity’s Community Outreach Ministry. This fund is dedicated to supporting equal access to participation in Unity’s pilgrimages and hands-on workshops that serve as an important cornerstone of Unity’s community outreach programs. This collection will support scholarships for Unity’s social and racial justice programming.

October 16

The Golden Rule is a sail boat operated by Veterans for Peace. This fall The Golden Rule is sailing the “Great Loop” around the eastern United States on a mission to educate the public about their role in diminishing the prospect of nuclear war. Unity’s Veterans for Peace, Barry Riesch, Michael Orange, and Mike McDonald are dedicated to keeping The Gold Rule afloat. This collection will underwrite the supplies for the 2022 Great Loop adventure.

October 23

Casa Guadalupana, founded in 1999, serves the immigrant Latinx community. Located in West St. Paul, Casa Guadalupana provides safe, dignified, stable housing to women and children who have been displaced from their countries of origin and are seeking a safe place to live while they navigate the complex immigration system. Unity Church members volunteer at Casa Guadalupana and are connected through the St. Paul Sanctuary Coalition.

October 30

Days for Girls provides washable feminine hygiene kits to send to girls in developing countries as a way to help the girls continue their education, avoid marrying at a young age, and break the cycle of poverty. This collection will help the Arden Hills Days for Girls Team meet its 2022 goal of sewing, assembling, and distributing 800 kits to be sent to Kenya. Unity Church member Denise Dejarlais is part of the Arden Hills Team.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / PLEDGE DRIVE



A Recipe for Moving Forward

Kevin Harris, Trustee

Fall is in full swing and with it a return to hot soup, apples, holiday meals and pie. Like so many, I can't bite into an apple pie without thinking of my mom's own pie. As my mom's only son, I loved what she loved, and learned to cook at her side.

Cooking with my mom often meant trying to recreate one of her tried and true recipes without having anything in writing. I remember following her directions carefully as I made my first beef Wellington dinner for a friend. After trying to save a disastrous pastry and consulting my mom about missing ingredients, I ended up dumping it all in the garbage can. I'd made the fatal mistake of disregarding the conditions I was cooking under. I discovered I failed to keep both the countertop and my hands, cold enough for the dough. I didn't make the adjustments needed and didn't know how to improvise. I learned that it's not just the ingredients but also the environment, the conditions for the ingredients. I followed the process before for me, and the environment changed my outcome.

I joined the board at Unity Church at a time when everything in our environment was shifting. The past two years saw unprecedented times in Unity's history including the retirement of our honored co-ministers of twenty years, Rob and Janne; the murder of George Floyd and the prosecution of those responsible; the selection of an interim minister; participation in a process to select a settled minister that took an unexpected path; the arrival of Covid-19, its variants and a world wide pandemic; and the shocking illness and loving celebration of our beloved Rob. What would we face next?

Throughout it all I found myself grieving for simpler times when the weight of impending loss on top of longing wasn't on us. I don't know if those simpler times I imagined were real or fiction, but I do know that as a congregation we've lived through past difficulties, sorted through differences, refused to defer our shared dreams, and allowed the experiences to impact and inform us. All of these actions are key ingredients to our recipe for moving forward, especially when we include appreciation for the current environment and deep respect for the past.

The best way I know of honoring the work that's gone before is to continue to reflect, learn and contribute to our shared future. This includes committing myself to the church, sharing my appreciation for the gift of friendship so many in this congregation have given me, and having a strong sense of gratitude for our entire church community. As a trustee, I support our board in leadership that identifies where we are now, acknowledges what we can learn from the past, and, informed by our end statements, defines where we are going in the future. If we can accomplish these three things together, we will be better prepared to face whatever comes next.

The Thread We Follow

2023 Unity Church Pledge Drive



Over the past few years, we have turned to the church for "Brave Harbor" during the pandemic, and "Trusted the River" as we moved into the liminal time of ministerial transition and search for a settled minister. What does this moment in time mean for each of us? How does this covenantal faith community shape, enrich and guide our lives, today and into the future?

The Way It Is by William Stafford

There's a thread you follow. It goes among things that change. But it doesn't change. People wonder about what you are pursuing. You have to explain about the thread. But it is hard for others to see. While you hold it you can't get lost. Tragedies happen; people get hurt or die; and you suffer and get old. Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding. You don't ever let go of the thread.

October marks the beginning of Unity's annual pledge drive when we ask each other to declare our financial support for the church's worship and programs in 2023. Soon you will receive a mailing that includes a personalized pledge card and information about why and how to pledge. As we find ourselves in tumultuous times, having a thread to hold onto without ever letting go guides us through. Your generous annual pledges help make that possible.

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BELOVED COMMUNITY STAFF TEAM

Faith Formation and Antiracism — Complexity and Connectedness

Erika Sanders, Beloved Community Staff Team

As Unity's antiracist multicultural work has grown and become more complex, opportunities for congregants to be involved have sprouted in nearly every part of church life. Individually and in community, congregation members are engaging with the Double Helix Model (bit.ly/unitydoublehelix) of Faith Formation and Antiracist Multiculturalism and becoming deeply intentional about their spiritual practices.

To discuss this further, I interviewed Mike Funck who recently completed a three-year term as a Teaching Associate (bit.ly/teachassoc).



I wanted to know how Mike had experienced antiracist multiculturalism as an embedded part of his church life.

Erika: Tell me about what you learned as a Teaching Associate, and how it shaped your understanding of the relationships between religion and multiculturalism.

Mike: We began with a deep dive into the history of liberal theology, which was both fascinating and challenging. I had a profound “a-ha” moment, a realization about the vast interconnectedness of things we do at Unity Church, and how all our work can be connected to the process of faith formation and antiracist multicultural work. Monthly worship themes, Chalice Circles, Open Page Writing Sessions, everything I had been a part of, all began to feel like a spiritually connected whole.

Erika: As a Teaching Associate, did you work with the Double Helix Model?

Mike: Yes, I did. People say the Double Helix is a good example of why we have a bumper sticker at Unity that reads, “It’s Complicated!” And I understand that — it’s not simple. But

at the same time, it makes sense to me. The Double Helix Model helps me pull disparate ideas together and I use the model as a road map. Grappling with the model was a good way for me to understand both what had existed in my life before, and what I can do differently in the future. The graphic elements of the model and the mural-like graphic (bit.ly/soulworkgraphic) that was created at a Team Dynamics event help me look at the whole, but also to enter into the work one piece at a time. The videos (bit.ly/soulworkvids) created for the Team Dynamics event were very helpful to me, too.

Erika: Have you changed your ways of interacting with the world as a result? Or have you developed new practices?

Mike: The process has reinforced two key things: the importance of listening, and of speaking for myself alone. These practices resonate across everything I do and have helped me be more intentional about interacting across differences that may be cultural. On the surface, many interactions and differences may not seem to be about race or culture but in fact are, and present opportunities to learn and become better. As part of the Teaching Associate experience, we write up “case studies,” which are concise descriptions of a situation we experienced or observed in which cultural or racial differences were handled less than ideally, and how deeply that affected peoples’ lives. In each case study, we talked about what happened and explored what could have happened instead.

The process opened my eyes to the multiplicity of ways we could respond to cross-cultural situations. This not only helped me to develop skills related to intercultural competency, but also enriched my spiritual practices and understanding of faith. This is something we do continually because we experience life and change continually. It’s a lifetime learning project.

Erika: How has this changed your world outside of Unity Church?

Mike: In our sometimes-contentious society, it’s not unusual to run across people with perspectives that I find offensive or wrong. It’s difficult to know what to do when someone says something objectionable. That’s when I re-engage in the power of listening. If I then share my own views, it’s not in the spirit of telling someone else what to say or think, it’s simply sharing my perspective which may be different than their perspective. Even with that intellectualization, it’s still hard to do. That’s why it’s a practice.

Erika: What has led you to be a spiritually curious person?

Mike: I’ve always been curious and loved to learn. In my profession as a technical writer, I loved to approach projects with the goal of understanding their complexity and connectedness, asking “how does this all fit together?” It’s similar to the way I’ve learned about antiracism and multiculturalism as part of my journey at Unity. It’s one thing to be generally aware and curious about things, but another to crack the book open a bit more, learn more about ourselves and understand that race is a component of our lives, even when we don’t see it. It requires understanding the systemic racism that is baked in and, for many white people, not apparent at the surface level. It’s necessary to pull it apart. Dismantling anything like systemic racism generates pushback. Thankfully, my experience with groups at Unity is one of growing with fellow pilgrims. We may or may not think and feel the same, but we have a commonality of spirit. When we share trust and vulnerability in a group or “go deep fast,” our capacity to grow is profound.



WELCOME NEWCOMERS



Welcome Words

Laura Park, Director of Membership and Hospitality

It can be challenging to come into a community where the majority have been here for more than 10 years. There are acronyms to learn, of course (FYU, COMT, RE, COA, WW). More than abbreviations, though, it's the influence of shared experiences that can be hard to access as a newcomer. Who is that person who yells out "Wheeee!!!" during celebrations? Why does everyone get tense when someone mentions the May 22 congregational meeting? Why does everyone get teary-eyed when they hear Fred Small's song *Everything Possible*?

This is a particularly poignant moment to enter the life of this congregation. We've recently memorialized our beloved long-tenured Minister Emeritus Rob Eller-Isaacs. We've had difficult news about the serious health challenges of our beloved long-tenured Minister Emerita Janne Eller-Isaacs. Our search for a new senior minister did not end as we'd hoped last May.

Despite these challenges, or maybe because of them, I can still recommend this congregation to you. Ours is a love story, and we try to move through the challenges all love stories have with faithful commitment and care for one another. We are so far from perfect in our efforts, but our work to come back "to begin again in love" speaks to our potential.

Need more information about our abbreviations or puzzling reactions? I'm here to help answer your questions about congregational life and the pathways you might explore to know the church better and deepen your spiritual life. Contact me at laura@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110. I look forward to meeting you!

Mentoring at Unity

A Deeper Path to Connection

Would you welcome having a guide to congregational life at Unity Church? Request a mentor! Your mentor will meet with you at least once a month face-to-face and be available for ongoing questions and advice. You can decide together what connection would be most helpful. You might attend Sunday services together or meet to discuss Unitarian Universalism and your spiritual journeys, or attend a church event together, or find another way to connect. Each pair makes a commitment to work together for at least six months. Contact Laura Park at laura@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Pathway to Membership Classes

Explore a deeper connection to Unity Church and the commitments and opportunities of membership. Contact Laura Park at laura@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110 with questions or to participate.

Finding Yourself at Unity

Sundays • 10:15 a.m.

Gannett Room in-person and online at bit.ly/fyuonline

Finding Yourself at Unity includes eight classes that you can attend in any order to better understand how Unity Church supports our faith journeys, our work to build Beloved Community, and our efforts to bless the world. Topics include: UU History; Faith Formation for Children, Youth, and Adults; Congregational and Pastoral Care; Q & A with a Minister; Worship & the Liturgical Year; Social Justice & Community Outreach; Membership 101 & Congregational Life, and a Building Tour. This month's offerings:

October 2: Membership 101

October 9: Unitarian Universalist History

October 16: Q&A with a Minister

October 23: Membership 101

October 30: Congregational and Pastoral Care

Committing to Unity

Thursday, October 27 • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • Unity Church

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

This is how Unity Church talks about its expectations of membership. Does the invitation into this ongoing work resonate with you? Are you ready to make the membership commitment? This session, for people ready to become members, 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 need meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book and officially join the church. Let Laura Park know you're interested in participating or to ask questions. She can also arrange a private signing ceremony.



PASTORAL CARE / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Pastoral and Congregational Care

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

Richard Fousheé

March 2, 1938 – September 4, 2022

If you have a joy or sorrow, life-cycle event, or concern you would like to share with the ministers and Pastoral Care Team, or have shared in the embracing meditation during Sunday service, please complete the online form at <https://www.unityunitarian.org/congregational-care.html>. You may also contact Karen Gustafson, Interim Minister of Pastoral Care, by email at kareng@unityunitarian.org.



Ongoing Pastoral Care Groups

Families Living with Mental Health Challenges: A support group for families living with mental health challenges.

Caregivers Group: 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 Pastoral Care Team member Cynthia Orange for an informal support group for caregivers.

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. All are welcome to come to discuss issues related to the grieving process.

Contact Rev. Karen Gustafson if you would like to participate in one of these groups.

Everyone Grieves

Wednesday, October 12 • 7:10 p.m.

In-person in the Robbins Parlor

Everyone who loves experiences loss. Everyone who has expectations will experience disappointment. Everyone who has faced a major life transition will know the reality of something ending in order to make way for something new. Join Rev. Karen Gustafson and members of the Congregational Care team to consider the Five Gates of Grief from Frances Weller's book *The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief*. Come together to hold a place to expand our capacity for past and future grief, to regard it as "holy and human." (Michele Cassandra Johnson in *Finding Refuge: Heart Work for Healing Collective Grief*).

Fellowship Groups

For more conversation about getting connected, contact Laura Park at laura@unityunitarian.org.

Afterthoughts offers time immediately following the 9:00 service to discuss the service.

Caregivers Group meets on the third Thursday of the month.

Evergreen Quilters: This quilting group meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month.

Families Living with Mental Health Challenges meets the first Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Kung Fu meets Saturday mornings, 9:00-10:00 a.m., online via Zoom. Email Barney Kujawski at barney.kujawski@gmail.com to receive the link.

Living With Grief Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month.

Men's Breakfast Group meets monthly on the first Saturday for breakfast from 8:30-10:00 a.m.

Men's Coffee Group meets every other Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. for light-hearted conversation.

Men's Conversation Group meets Monday, October 3, 17, and 31, from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Men's Retirement Circle: Monday, October 10 and 24, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

New Look at the Bible meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Recovery from White Conditioning meets Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Textile Arts Group meets online the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Bring your knitting, embroidery, etc.

Unity Book Club meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-8:30 p.m. October 11: *A Promised Land*, by Barack Obama (chapters 1-15). November 8: *A Promised Land*, by Barack Obama (chapters 16-end).

Women in Retirement meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, from 1:00-3:00 p.m., in the Center Room. Social hour at noon!

Young Adult Group (ages 18-35) is a fun, reflective group of people working to build multi-faith and multi-cultural community. They come together to ask the questions that are consuming us, to practice sharing what is sacred, and to try to live consequential lives as we navigate the complexity of being an adult. All are welcome. To be added to the Young Adults email list, please email kp@unityunitarian.org.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday gathers a multigenerational church community to nourish right and holy relationship among us and deepen our life of faith, grounded in spiritual practice and antiracist multicultural work. The weekly experience includes:

- Sharing meaningful time and nourishing food together.
- Brief multigenerational worship.
- Opportunities to play, learn, and practice with one another.

5:45 p.m.: Dinner is \$8/adult, \$4/child, \$20 max/family (financial support is available by email to laura@unityunitarian.org).

6:40 p.m.: Multigenerational chapel service in the Ames Chapel

7:10-8:30 p.m.: Weekly programs with childcare provided. See October programs below!

October 5

Dinner: Tacos! Chicken tinga and vegetarian

Interim Ministry: For the Times In-Between

In-person in the Foote Room

How does interim ministry differ from settled ministry?

What are the tasks and expectations of an interim minister?

How might Unity use their interim ministers to their best advantage both here and now and for its future success? Join Rev. Kathleen Rolenz for a conversation about the spiritual practice of stewarding personal and institutional change.

Beginner Violin

In-person in the Choir Room

Join Mayra Mendoza for beginning violin lessons appropriate for all ages. Learn basic violin posture, note reading, and more! Contact Mayra at mayraquitzia@hotmail.com with questions. All ages are welcome!

October 12

Dinner: Fried chicken

Everyone Grieves

In-person in the Robbins Parlor

Everyone who loves experiences loss. Everyone who has expectations will experience disappointment. Everyone who has faced a major life transition will know the reality of something ending in order to make way for something new. Join Rev. Karen Gustafson and members of the Congregational Care team to consider the Five Gates of Grief from Frances Weller's book *The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief*. Come together to hold a place to expand our capacity for past and future grief, to regard it as "holy and human."

Lectio Divina

Online via Zoom, register here: <https://bit.ly/lectio22-23>

Meet online to share in our ongoing offering of Lectio Divina. Following a centuries-old Benedictine spiritual practice of contemplative reading, a chosen poem is read aloud, as attendees are encouraged to lift up what they heard and how the poem spoke to them. A different poem at each session. A rich way to receive poetry's gifts in a small group setting. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler. Also offered October 25. Register once to attend any or all sessions.

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person in the Choir Room (see October 5 for details)

October 19

Dinner: Chili and cornbread

Come As You Are: A meditative creative writing exercise centering on yourself

In-person in the Foote Room

This creative writing exercise, led by Unity Artist-in-Residence Lester Mayers, will begin by centering in a meditative space. All are welcome. Please bring paper or a notebook and writing utensils. But most importantly, bring your willingness and openness to explore yourself. This event is multigenerational. Youth and younger, if comfortable with writing, are invited. Experienced writers and people who don't think of themselves as writers are equally welcome.

Board Game Night

In-person in the Center Room

Open to everyone; kids are welcome with their adult(s)! We'll have a variety of board games available for ages 10 and up that are easy to learn, or bring a favorite board game that you would like to play. Bring a board game for the younger set, too, if an adult comes with it to facilitate the game.

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person in the Choir Room (see October 5 for details)

October 26

Dinner: Lentil Stew with optional barbacoa beef topper

The Immortal Plastic Bottle

In-person in Parish Hall and via Zoom, register here:

<https://bit.ly/ImmortalBottle>

What are plastics and how did they become such an integral part of our daily lives? Since its invention over a century ago, when many believed in nature's boundless capacity to buffer the byproducts of industry and provide an infinite supply of raw materials, plastics have quietly grown evermore abundant and diverse. This presentation, offered by Unity's Act for the Earth Team and researcher Mary Kosuth, will examine the current science to reveal the hidden costs of convenience. See page 11 for more information.

Beginner Violin with Mayra Mendoza

In-person in the Choir Room (see October 5 for details)

LESTER MAYERS • ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

This poem is an excerpt from Mayers's second book of poetry, *African Booty Scratcha Lovin da ashy blaq fat chall wif yella teen peasy head & a broken smile*, written in African American Vernacular English. Mayers began writing this poetic offering while working full-time at a hospice in Boulder, Colorado. Mayers's main reason for writing this book is to love his inner child, that, at the time, still suffered from self-loathing due to societal sickness with colorism.

"The lessons I learned there always leave my vocabulary insufficient. I met many spirits I respect and revere who left an indelible mark on my soul. Each day I went to work, I usually sang Aretha Franklin to the patients throughout the day. She was the gift that kept on giving. After learning about Aretha's upbringing, hearing stories of those souls that have since passed, along with a friend who too has a powerful voice and story within the church; like Aretha's, I wrote this poem."

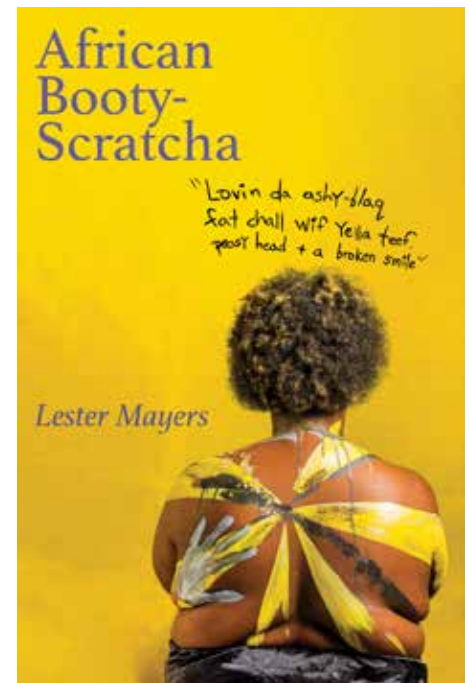
This poem will be a complete musical experience that will be highlighted during Mayers's evening concert in November. The book can be purchased at www.Lestermayers.com.

da voice of our Ancestors; a poem fo Ree (Aretha Franklin & Eryka Ree)

Ree took ta da mic
da audience sat up
she dragged da air
from out da entia atmosphere
da front row bent down
tucked da leatha brown ripped bibles
unda da pew
dey were ready fa lift awf
Ree inhaled & exhaled
"Oh, Mary, dont you weep, dont you
mourn"
Sista Roberta screamed
"Amen, sister"
Ree voice lifted
"Oh, Mary, dont you weep, dont you
mourn"
again Sista Roberta shouted ova da
rumblin church
"Alright, Testify! Let da gud lawd use
ya"
da choir rose
da drumma began conjurin
da piano playa assured us no matta
how loud we got
da lawds marchin band wuz ready ta
usha our spiritz
from a shoutin mouf ta listenin ear
continuin ta sang
Ree turned ha back ta da audience
ha lips facin da choir
ha pony tail facin da mic
da audience aint miss a wurd

"gud God almighty, Jesus hallelujah!"
passa screamed
& da foundin mothaz tossed deir hats
da baybays began ta cry
not cuz dey were scured
cuz da spirit wuz ragin
& laps were shakin
chins dripped holy spit
& sweat
"gud God almighty Ree"
"gud God almighty"
137 people moved by one voice
da place rockin so loud nuffin
from da outta
world wuz hurd
not even da slick gun shot
dat went thru a two year old & ha
motha whom wuz late ta service
or dat lady screamin from da third floor
of da crack house cross da street
or da lil boy locked in da deacons
office drownin in holy wada
a still born-baptized-violated mistaken
amen
Ree
Amen
in da name of da holy ghost we sang in
da name of Jesus we clap
in da name of da heavens we rock in
da name of da spirit we shout
but say a silent praya wen 9 are
butchered

& 8 are maimed
& 7 are abandoned
& 6 are barbequed
& 5 goes ta worship den 4 are bombed
so 3 are accused
2 goes ta trail
&
1 motha screamz
cuz 0 are convicted
137 people moved
by 1 voice
weepin fo God
prays fo ha in silence
not even in church iza BlaQ woman
allowed ta mourn.



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Obama School Team

School is in session!

The scholars are back in school, and school buses are rolling right along at Barack and Michelle Elementary School, across the street from the church. The annual “first day” staff lunch was held in Unity’s Parish Hall on August 29, with Dick Buggs, Ray Wiedmeyer, and Karen Abraham serving up a delicious salad lunch. The teachers were so grateful and happy to be starting back. Christine Sarkes, Marty Rossmann, and Nancy Heege provided snacks to help welcome scholars and families back during the Open House on September 1. Enthusiasm was high among families and staff.



And thanks to all who contributed generously to the offering on Sunday, September 18, that benefitted the school. The school appreciates the ongoing support of Unity families.

We are still in need of a few people to bring snacks for monthly staff meetings. Contact Diane Grasse at dianegrasse@gmail.com to be added to the team of snack providers, who will be called on occasionally through the year. Because there’s no interaction with scholars, this task doesn’t require a background check.

Calling all former students of Saint Paul’s Webster Magnet School (now Barack and Michelle Obama School) and family members! As you may have heard, this will be the last year of the school building as it’s currently configured. Beginning next June, the school will close for two years of renovation and transition to a new school, still bearing the Obama name. In the meantime, this year is also the 100th anniversary of the school building, and plans are underway to celebrate its 100 years. We’d like you to be in on the celebrations! If you or members of your family were students at Webster, please contact Nancy Heege at nancyheege672@gmail.com so we can keep you informed about opportunities, including an open house for alumni and friends next spring.

Gun Sense Team

Join Our Work for Sensible Gun Laws

Unity’s Gun Sense team continues to keep the need for gun sense legislation in the fore, especially as Election Day approaches. All candidates on the ballot can be questioned on their position regarding gun laws. Talk to your neighbors and family to increase your own awareness and the awareness of others on this issue. We can’t give up especially with the growing ownership of guns. Visit the Gun Sense table in Parish Hall after Sunday services to share your ideas and pick up a free gun lock to share with gun owners.

Affordable Housing Team

Housing Justice is a Racial Justice Issue

The vision of Unity’s Affordable Housing Team is that every person has safe, affordable, quality housing — no matter their class, zip code, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, disability, or other factors.

Our work reflects the needs of this community: shelter, development, and policy. We meet on Zoom on the second Tuesday of the month (October 11) from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Come check us out! Contact Judy Miller for the Zoom link at jmkmam@comcast.net.

Prairie Homeless Companion



Friday, October 14 • 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Shepherd of the Lake Church, Prior Lake, MN

Details and registration: <https://bit.ly/prairiehomeless>

This unique performance by zAmya Theater Group consists of actors who have experienced homelessness. They creatively and engagingly share real stories of homelessness beyond the stereotypes. The performance is followed by a dialogue between performers, Beacon staff, and local Beacon partners that provides information about housing insecurity, Beacon’s approach, and real solutions.

Act for the Earth • Save the Date

Climate Change and the Military

Friday, November 11 • 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Online via Zoom, register: <https://bit.ly/climatearmilitary>

Act for the Earth invites you to a presentation by Vince Dijanich, a Vietnam veteran, long-time nuclear activist, and climate change activist with Veterans for Peace. Vince will describe the environmental and climate impact that our military imposes on the earth — as much destruction and greenhouse gas emissions as some whole countries produce. The presentation will be followed by a discussion on solutions. Please join us on Veterans Day for discussion of a topic that is not usually addressed in other climate forums.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Act for the Earth and the Indigenous Justice Teams

Truth Telling and Healing: Indigenous And Environmental Justice Series

Part 2: Place and Property: Treaties Among the U.S. and Indigenous Nations

Tuesday, November 1 • 7:00 p.m.

In-person and online via Zoom

Register here: <https://bit.ly/justiceseriestwo>

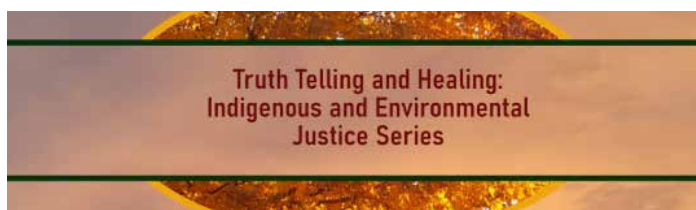
At the beginning of all our worship services and congregational events, we give a land acknowledgement, the last line of which states:

We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota and Ojibwe nations, and we wish to interrupt this legacy, beginning with acts of healing and honest storytelling about this place.

As we begin the process of telling the truth and taking responsibility for our part in historical injustice and the complicity that continues into the present, Part 2 of our seven-part monthly series on Truth Telling and Healing will focus on the treaties that were made with indigenous people of Minnesota. Please plan to join us in person or online on Tuesday, November 1, at 7:00 p.m., for a presentation by Martin Case, author of *The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land Became U.S. Property*.

Case was the project lead for the U.S. Treaty Signers Project done by the Indian Land Tenure Foundation and on the design team for the development of "Why Treaties Matter," an exhibit collaboration of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, the Minnesota Humanities Center and the Smithsonian Institute. He brings a wealth of knowledge about treaties with indigenous peoples and how those treaties have been broken or abrogated over the years since they were signed.

In this presentation, Case will discuss "U.S. Indian" treaties, especially those in which Dakota people ceded land to the U.S. His topics will include how treaties created property titles (part of the famous Doctrine of Discovery); how treaty making sought to change the way people relate to the places where they live; and how stories shape our sense of who belongs here — historically, today, and in the future. The session will include some time for reflection and sharing emotionally and spiritually about what it means to live on land that was taken, stolen, and tricked away from the original owners.



Act for the Earth Team

Unity Plastic Crisis Challenge

What was once a futuristic, affordable product for the post WWII generation, has become a global pollution catastrophe. The United States comprises just 4% of the world's population, yet we use 24% of the Earth's resources and have the highest rate of plastic waste (300 pounds annually) per person in the world. Join Unity's Act for the Earth Team as we explore the devastating effects our plastic use has on oceans, ecosystems, wildlife, and the people who live near plastic production plants. Watch for weekly updates over the next two months — including a Plastic Crisis Challenge — as we invite you to join us in assessing our individual and collective potential for change!



Film and Discussion

The Story of Plastic (90 min)

Friday, October 14 • 7:00 p.m.

In-person in Robbins Parlor and online via Zoom:

<https://bit.ly/reduceP>

This powerful film presents the story of our current plastic crisis, from fossil fuel extraction to disposal, the damage caused to people and animals, and how the oil and gas industry has successfully manipulated the narrative around it. You can watch the film ahead of time on Amazon Prime and join the conversation at approximately 8:40 p.m.



Wellspring Wednesday Event

The Immortal Plastic Bottle with guest Mary Kosuth

Wednesday, October 26 • 7:10 p.m.

In-person in Parish Hall and online via Zoom:

<https://bit.ly/Oct26ImmortalBottle>

What are plastics and how did they become such an integral part of our daily lives? Since its invention over a century ago, when many believed in nature's boundless capacity to buffer the byproducts of industry and provide an infinite supply of raw materials, plastics have quietly grown evermore abundant and diverse. This presentation will examine the current science to reveal the hidden costs of convenience and offer solutions that work.

Mary Kosuth is a PhD candidate in the Environmental Health Sciences Division at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health. She completed an M.S. in Public Health in 2018 after publishing a paper about anthropogenic debris in beer, salt, and global tap water. In an effort to contribute to our understanding of the synthetic polymer's biogeochemical cycle, she is presently focusing her attention on method improvement, remediation in wastewater, and atmospheric testing in both urban and remote settings.

LIBRARY-BOOKSTALL / LECTIO DIVINA



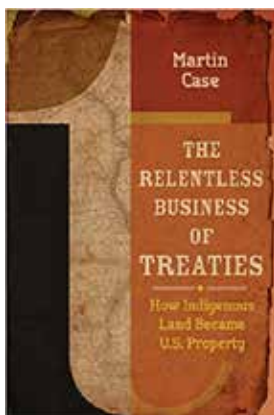
The Library-Bookstall Team Unity Church-Unitarian

Honest Storytelling About This Place

As most everyone has heard by now, we start each worship service by acknowledging Dakota and Ojibwe people with gratitude for stewarding the land and for continuing contributions to our region. We pledge to engage in “honest storytelling about this place.” The Indigenous Justice (IJ) and Act for the Earth teams are sponsoring “Truth Telling and Healing” events every month from now through April — thank you!

As a companion read to the October event, “Relationship to Land,” the IJ Team recommends *The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land Became U.S. Property* by Martin Case, finalist for the 2019 Minnesota Book Award, published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press.

Most of us know that the United States stole land from indigenous people via broken treaties, but it’s much more complicated than that. Treaties were not real estate transactions but were agreements between nations to do with alliances, trade, rights, and land cessations. The harmful ramifications of the American myth, predicated on the Doctrine of Discovery (the principle that a colonial power held dominion over a territory when “discovered” by that power while Indians merely inhabited the land) are still felt and being settled in court today. The author uses Minnesota as a case study. In the Bookstall and the Anderson Library: 323.11 C



For more books on Indigenous justice and history, visit the Unity Bookstall and the Unity Anderson Library on Sunday mornings. Browse the library catalog online at <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/UnityChurch>.

A Spiritual Practice to Feed Your Soul: Lectio Divina



Second Wednesday (October 12)
and
Fourth Tuesday (October 25)
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Online via Zoom, register:
<https://bit.ly/lectio22-23>

Meet online to share in our ongoing offering of Lectio Divina. Following a centuries-old Benedictine spiritual practice of contemplative reading, a chosen poem is read aloud, as attendees are encouraged to lift up what they heard and how the poem spoke to them. A different poem at each session. A rich way to receive poetry’s gifts in a small group setting. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler.

In The Justice Database: Why Treaties Matter.org

<https://bit.ly/JusticeData>

An award-winning exhibit made in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. Explore the virtual exhibit online or view on permanent display at the Minnesota State Capitol, 3rd Floor, Rooms 316-317.



OCTOBER PARISH HALL ARTISTS

Anna Karena

My daily art sessions intersect with contemplating the universal questions: Who am I and why am I here? It is a dialogue between the canvas and me, much like tango with its intimate call and response “conversation.”

Working with a vibrant palette of acrylic paints and inks, I approach the canvas with no plan or idea in mind; I work intuitively, making marks or spreading paint randomly. Soon I am in the dance, moving and responding to each new mark and color until I begin to see a direction emerge. Once I see what the canvas suggests, a plan begins to form and I simply follow through. By staying open and present, the painting process is easy and natural. If I start to impose my will on the canvas, however, the dance becomes forced and contrived and the art looks inauthentic or clichéd.

My work is about self-discovery without judgment, and it involves vulnerability. I post my daily painting progress on social media, which exposes my process — and me — before the work is finished. This process engages viewers and invites them to interpret what they see, to relate to it, to comment on it, maybe even to become attached to certain images or nuances. Often, the painting will change, perhaps even completely, and

as such; everyone who participates can experience the transformative process of letting go of the outcome or any part of the process. It’s a journey we all take together.

This path of self-discovery has been an awakening of my spirit with the ability to recognize and respond to the spoken and unspoken

messages I receive and am bombarded with daily. I am struck by all the messages of what female beauty is or is not and the ways body shaming can occur in our culture, amongst others. Like my art, each person is a composite of many layers of meaning, and for the most part we only see is the most recent layer.

The creative process I’ve chosen keeps my art honest, true, and authentic. The resulting work signifies a process to self-acceptance and inner peace. I invite you to view my work with an open heart and mind, allowing it to fill you, as you too, find your steps in the dance of self-discovery and acceptance.



Tell Me Something Good

Layl McDill

“A long time ago in a kitchen in Wichita, Texas, a young mother mixed up another batch of homemade play dough. She made all the colors for her freckle faced daughter and when her daughter rolled and squished this salty substance something magical happened — she began to turn into an artist.”

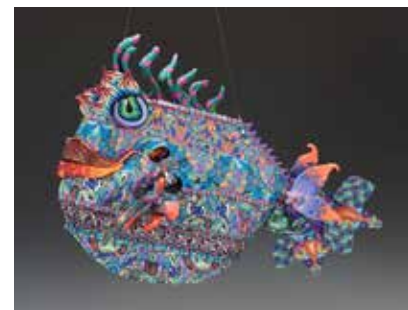
And *that* is my origin story. Stories help us make sense of our world and help us connect with others. My polymer clay sculptures are filled with the sensation of story. When people engage with my work I am often asked “What is this from?” because my work seems like it’s derived from fables or myths. But soon they realize the stories are all fresh and just a little off kilter. They make sense but it’s actually total nonsense like my piece “Sometimes chickens drive tractors over the clothesline.” Most of us can relate to a day like that! But it sure does make a great story.

I have also recently started a series of sculptures based on elements of story. One of which is “There were even Windows in the Clouds — Chapters of Childhood.” I wanted to play with creating visualization of chapters by making different scenes on each shelf of the piece. I also examined the story structure of the Hero’s Journey in the the “Infinite Story Generator.” This piece invites the viewer to imagine a character leaving their domestic existence (symbolized by a grid of many different domestic “reasons” someone might adventure out). The story flows into forests and seas and even a cave of riddles until ending at a castle — or is it the end?

The magical technique of millefiori also has a fascinating origin story. The Egyptian’s developed the process to put tiny images into rods of glass called canes. I have created my own form of this technique with polymer clay so I can create my pallet of pictures which cover all my pieces.

Just as stories give the feeling of impending surprise my work holds many hidden treasures. I will often see a dad pointing out the tiny dogs hidden on one of my teapots or a grand kid asking grandma if she can find the particular animals. I don’t even know all the things hidden in my work!

Stories have been a theme in my work since I began my career in 1993. I’ve created pieces with full stories built into my work and pieces that just carry elements of life’s narratives. I have also explored storytelling as a performer and as a way to engage with others. Stories are such an elemental part of our existence and I hope to create art that expresses this and leads to the creation of more stories.



Fish With a Fire Within

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Why would they keep coming?

Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries

Early in the church year, the numbers attending Tower Club, Unity's youth group for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders are wonderfully high. I know it's in large part because 16 of them are going to Boston in late October, and I'm kind of making them come. Add to that a loyal few seniors, and a group of 10th graders who were just invited after completing COA who come because their parents either really encouraged it,

or they have their own curiosity about what a group of their peers might be getting together to do.

The numbers tend to go down; I hate that and never really accept it. I want them all to stay, and to bring their friends.

I was looking at each of them sitting in the circle recently, asking myself "Why would they keep coming? What is this one looking for, and how likely is it they will find it here?" I think it's good to ask those questions, and really wouldn't it be nice if I could just straight up ask each one of them, and then be confident in saying "that's great because that's exactly what you'll find here!" Or not. But the truth is most of them wouldn't be able to say precisely what it is they want. Most could confidently say what they *don't* want, no problem, but what they truly seek? Much harder.

Which is the problem with longing. If I am asked what I long for I'd probably start with many things I think I want or more deeply, desire. I have more trouble identifying what I long for partly because I'm not sure of how I define longing. I think of longing as a feeling, or maybe more a whole bunch of feelings that go along with a sense that something is missing, or neglected, or gone, or never realized. I've had those feelings for as long as I can remember, and their effect on me has changed over time. They've made me mad, eager, depressed, hopeful, and confused. Sometimes when feeling bereft I run down a list of questions or suggestions, "Do I want this? Should I do this? Am I missing something? Do I need more exercise?" Sometimes that is helpful, but more and more as I age, it is exhausting and fruitless.

When I was young, more often than not I found it to be energizing! Heck, that's why I'm living this life — to find out! To identify what I am longing for and to find it and grab it and possess it! There is something out there and it may be elusive and hard and maybe my parents never found it but I sure am not going miss it.

Probably this is why I really like working and hanging out with young people. I am not under an illusion they are all happy and optimistic and excited about where they are now or the challenges of their future, but I do find an energy in their expectations, and sometimes a firm conviction of their right to seek what they long for. The kids in Tower Club do not all find an answer in coming together in a circle and being willing to open their hearts to each other. But in the effort they often say something profound and then laugh, are embarrassed, get angry or sad, get confused, or light up with recognition or discovery. There is no substitute for being near that, for knowing most of us are longing and that we just might figure out for what.

What I see in the faces around the circle of those I think will keep coming back, is longing. It hurts but it also makes me smile.

Children's Choir

Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:15-10:55 a.m., Choir Room

Unity Children's choir is a vibrant group of singers comprised of children from grades one through five. The choir meets from 10:15-10:55 a.m., each Sunday in the Choir Room at Unity Church. Children's choir rehearsal activities are focused on hands-on music making. In addition to singing the children experience music through movement, games, playing instruments, reading music and learning about the elements of music. No prior experience is required to join the choir. For more information contact Kathleen Radspinner, Unity Children's Choir Director, kathleenr395@gmail.com.

The Children's Choir sings at Unity services approximately one Sunday each month. Additional special Children's Choir traditions include a spring community outreach nursing home concert, a December holiday concert with all the choirs of Unity church and many opportunities for the singers to socialize together.

Youth Choir

Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:15-10:55 a.m., Ames Chapel

Unity's Youth Choir for grades 6-9 builds on the Children's Choir and responds to the interest and musical skills of Unity's youth and families. Youth Choir is a primarily-vocal group also welcoming instrumentalists to join in the ensemble. If you're too old for Children's Choir and miss it, if you've noticed how connected music is to your spirituality, and/or if it just feels good to sing, Youth Choir is for you! No prior musical experience necessary. For more information contact Laura Potratz, Unity Youth Choir Coordinator, lauramusic@unityunitarian.org.

MUSIC MINISTRY



Music Notes

Ahmed Anzaldúa, Director of Music Ministries

I typically get the urge to play "Águas de março" (Waters of March) near the end of September or early October, and if you pay attention you may hear its unique chord progression in some of the interludes during the worship service or integrated into a piano improvisation as part of the gathering music. This beloved Brazilian song by Antônio Carlos

Jobim exists in two versions, the original with Portuguese lyrics and the version in English. The lyrics do not tell a story but, rather, present a series of images, with nearly every line starting with "É..." (it is...) In my opinion, these images combine in such a way as to perfectly express the concept of *saudade*.

Saudade is a deep emotional state of profound longing, and is generally considered a very difficult word to translate, a state of being that is deeply connected to Portuguese identity. Not only does it encapsulate the concepts of nostalgia or longing, but also love and the knowledge that the object of that longing may be gone for good. *Saudade* expresses a collection of things, places, and experiences that collectively trigger feelings of both pain and joy. *Saudade* is both memory and desire and exists out of time but also is profoundly connected to the awareness of the passing of time.

The English lyrics of Waters of March are written from the perspective of someone in the northern hemisphere, referencing waters of defrost and the coming of spring. They are much more hopeful and life-affirming than the original Portuguese. However, in its original version in Portuguese, this song references the rainiest month of the year in Rio de Janeiro, a month that in the southern hemisphere marks the end of summer, the rainiest and windiest month of the year, with days that gradually become colder and cycles in our lives that renew... March is to Brazil what September is to Minnesota. The melody and the chord progressions in this song constantly move in a downward direction, like the water flowing along the streets, carrying everything away, reminding us of the inexorable pull of gravity and time.

Singing Truth: An American Conversation



Guest conductor Dr. Alexander Lloyd Blake, founding artistic director of the internationally acclaimed choral ensemble Tonality, will lead singers from the Minnesota Chorale and Border CrosSing to present "Singing Truth: An American Conversation." Performances will be held on Saturday, October 1, 7:30 p.m., at Westminster Presbyterian Church, and Sunday, October 2, 4:00 p.m., at Unity Church. Both concerts are presented at no charge; details are available at www.mnchorale.org.

Peter Mayer Concert

Friday, October 21 • 7:30 p.m.
Sanctuary at Unity Church

Tickets at brownpapertickets.com/event/5578157

Minnesota's own singer/songwriter Peter Mayer will be presenting a solo concert in the lovely Sanctuary at Unity Church.

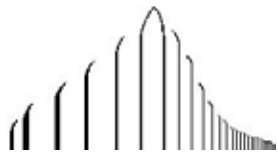


He will be playing some newer songs as well as some old favorites. Peter has been a full-time singer/songwriter for 25 years, performing in venues across the country. He has eleven albums to his credit as well as numerous singles that he has recently released. Please join him in this celebration of autumn!

Threshold Choir goes active!

Threshold Choir is an international organization with more than 200 chapters around the world. The vision of Threshold Choir is a world where all at life's thresholds may be honored with compassion shared through song. The mission of this organization is to sing for those at the thresholds of life. In practice, this often takes place at bedsides of those that are dying. Unity Church is home to the Twin Cities chapter of Threshold Choir. The singers of this choir have been rehearsing for close to a year, training to sing at bedsides, and will now begin to actively sing in the community. You can find more information about Threshold Choir at thresholdchoir.org.

If you are interested in taking part in this ensemble, contact Ahmed Anzaldúa at ahmed@unityunitarian.org.



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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

REV. KP HONG, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
BARBARA HUBBARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**



Truth Telling and Healing: Indigenous and Environmental Justice Series

TURN TO PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS ABOUT PART 2 OF THE SERIES!

Donate to the Food Shelf

Hallie Q. Brown needs our help more than ever. Our donations for the month of August totaled 204 pounds including fresh produce lovingly grown and harvested by the children and adults tending Unity's Children's Garden. For the month of October the food shelf needs corn bread mix, canned corn, canned green beans, cake mix, frosting, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie filling, and other Thanksgiving food items.



Donating money online is great, too! Visit hallieqbrown.org and click on donate.



**GET
OUT
THE
VOTE**

Unity Church members are invited to help Get Out the Vote! Stop by the table in the Parish Hall on Sundays or sign up to take action at unityunitarian.org/uu-the-vote.html. You'll receive weekly updates on nonpartisan actions you can take.