

Welcome and Belonging

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 faith and strengthen our bonds with one another in religious community.

Unitarian Universalists are a people of welcome. We put love at the center of our faith, constantly drawing the circle wide, then wider still, welcoming comers of all creeds, colors, ages, and life experiences. This, at least, is the story that we have often told, of our congregations as a “sanctuary of like minded people” providing a sense of belonging to many who have not been welcomed in other institutions and homes in our community.

The spiritual practice of hospitality is where welcome becomes more than a simple “come in,” but a transformative practice of service and going deep. In the churches that I have known best, this is often tied with food, from pancake breakfasts to potlucks and donuts on Sunday morning. The time another member pulled me aside, “Hey, are you able to bring that roast squash dish again to the next potluck?” was when I knew, in a way different than I had before, that I belonged to the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore. Shared meals tie welcome and belonging together, collapsing the distinction between the welcomed and welcomers, building a sense of shared community and belonging.

But what are the ways that this is not the whole story?

This fall, our monthly themes are paired concepts: some are in tension with each other, some are on a continuum. This pairing, between welcome and belonging, gets deeper the more we start to ask questions

about it: Who does the welcoming, and who is it that is welcomed? Who, or what, determines who belongs? Is it the community that articulates norms for who participates in it? Or is it the individual who says, “you have been so kind, but this just isn’t where I fit in”?

I belong to any number of institutions, from the Unitarian Universalist Association, to my professional association, to my family. That belonging comes with obligation: What are the claims that institutions that we are a part of can make on us? What claims can we make on them? In belonging to the Unitarian Universalist Association, can I call for it to be more welcoming in ways that I see more clearly than the institution can?

These questions and more are present this fall, at multiple scales. Who and how we welcome is a live question at the start of a new ministry, even as the question of who belongs to and who gets to make claims on the United States of America is hotly debated in the upcoming election.

Lastly, there is a concept in physics called the observer effect. As I understand it, at the quantum level it is impossible to enter into a system and observe it without in some way impacting the system. As we talk about welcome and belonging, how do we observe this effect in our own system? Every time we welcome someone or something new, or are welcomed ourselves, we change. The system changes, almost imperceptibly, with

each addition and omission. Over years, the discipline of welcome as a spiritual practice requires the spiritual discipline of change. That is where we will pick up next month, in our October theme of Change and Tradition.

*Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair
with this month’s theme team*

Practice Welcome and Belonging Join Us for Our Engagement Fair

**Wednesday, September 18
7:10 p.m. | Parish Hall**

Discover opportunities to make a difference in our Beloved Community. Meet ministry team leaders, explore volunteer roles, and find service with others who share your heart for deeper connection. Come and see how you can be part of something bigger.



Theme Resources

For further reflection on the theme, see this month’s spiritual practice packet, available online at unityunitarian.org/chalice-circles.



What Door Does This Key Open?

Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair, Senior Minister

Years ago, the Alban Institute published an article by Israel Galindo titled, "Staying Put: A Look at the First 10 Years of Ministry." In it, Galindo described patterns he has noticed over years of serving as a spiritual director for clergy, how each year of a new ministry often shares a common theme (year four, for example, is often a year of discontent as a ministry transitions from "new" to "established"). The theme of the first year, he writes, is the question, "Which door does this key open?"

For most clergy, the first year at a new church is filled with excitement and challenge. You work to get to know the members (who's who, who does what and, if it's a small congregation, maybe even who's related to whom). This "getting to know you" phase is accomplished by providing basic pastoral care, visiting with members, and meeting with as many church groups as possible. You blunder through discovering the "turf" that people think belongs to them, and you manage to put out a few fires... The early months offer the perfect opportunity to "get dumb" and ask questions that you won't be able to get away with later. Taking an "observer" stance in the first year of ministry at a new call or appointment allows you to discover the church's rhythms, habits, and practices.

Stacie, Ailish, and I moved to St. Paul on July 15, giving ourselves two weeks to unpack before I started at Unity on August 1. The boxes are unpacked, both at home and at church, and we are settling into our new lives here. Somehow in this move the number of keys on my keychain has quadrupled. Four weeks ago, I had three keys in my pocket: to my house, my car, and a master key for the congregation I worked at. Now, my keychain has an apartment key, a mailbox key, a key to a storage unit, fobs for the apartment building and gym, a bike lock, four different Unity-related keys, and at least four keys that I am honestly unsure what they go to. It does not take a subtle preacher to draw out the metaphor here.

I met many of you during the candidating process — a time that requires some level of competence and skill. Over the next year, please bear with me as I work through this key chain, asking a lot of questions, connecting all the keys (literal and metaphoric) I have just been handed to the systems and doors they connect to. There is so much in the air at Unity Church these days. I am itching to get to work — and humbled when I try to open my office door with the key to my apartment mailbox. But even in that moment, I am excited to be here with this community.

As a practical note: much of my job in the coming year is to get to know as many people and systems at Unity as I can. In addition to seeing each other at Unity events, feel free to email me at oscar@unityunitarian.org, or book time to meet with me here: bit.ly/meetrevoscar.

See you at church,

Oscar

Merging of Waters is September 8!

Bring water from your summer adventures for our ritual of reunion!

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

Carolyn Ann Gallagher

April 6, 1945 – July 15, 2024

Jennifer Ann Bjorhus

August 25, 1964 – August 9, 2024

Congregational Care

Do you have a concern or celebration you wish to have shared in the Embracing Meditation during Sunday worship? Would you like to request a call from a minister or a helping hand or listening ear of a Care Team member? Complete the online congregational care request form at unityunitarian.org/congregational-care or send an email to pastoralcare@unityunitarian.org. If you are experiencing an urgent need for pastoral support, call 651-300-9123.

Flowers for Worship

If you would like to provide flowers for a Sunday worship service, please contact Suki Sun at sunflowerselflove@gmail.com.



**UNITY CHURCH-
UNITARIAN**

integrity · service · joy

commUNITY is the monthly newsletter of Unity Church. Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Subscriptions are free to those who make pledges to Unity Church and are available to others for \$30/year.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES | OFFERING RECIPIENTS

Sunday Worship Services

Beginning Sunday, September 8, we will return to two in-person services at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. The 9:00 a.m. service will be offered via livestream. Find the livestream links at unityunitarian.org/sunday-services.

September 1: *Labors of Love*

Rev. Lara Cowtan | Lorelee Wederstrom, worship associate

One service only at 10:00 a.m.

Is making a meal or baking or creating art or music an expression of your love? Let us lift up the many labors that go unsung, the under appreciated and maybe uncompensated work of people for others that enrich our lives in priceless ways.

Merging of Waters Family Sunday

September 8: *Water Flows Down Hill*

Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair

Come one, come all to our Merging of the Waters ingathering Sunday! Bring water from a special place you've been this summer (or your backyard hose) and we'll reconnect at the start of a new year together. Rev. Sinclair will offer a reflection on belonging, and how we are drawn to faithful life in community, sometimes in spite of ourselves. Musical guest: Peter Mayer

On Family Sundays, children experience the entire worship together with their families in the Sanctuary. A story for all ages and activity books related to the stories and sermon help children to engage in the experience of worship. The nursery is open for children under three years of age.

September 15: *Who Belongs?*

Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair

Unitarian Universalists are rightly proud of width and breadth of our institutional welcome. But who decide who is welcomed? Who belongs? What are the systems that we can either critique or build to deepen our understanding of welcome?

September 22: *Whose are we? To whom do we belong?*

Rev. Lara Cowtan

The ancient question, "Who am I?" inevitably leads to a deeper one: "Whose am I?" because there is not identity outside of relationship. You cannot be a person by yourself. To ask, "Whose am I?" is to extend the question far beyond the little self-absorbed self, and wonder: Who needs you? Who loves you? To whom are you accountable? To whom do you answer? Whose life is altered by your choices? With whose life, whose lives is your own all bound up, inextricably, in obvious or invisible ways?

September 29: *Salve*

Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair

In 1348, a community of monks in Sienna opened the doors of their abbey to serve as a hospital during the plague. Seven hundred years later, the abbey exists as a picturesque ruin, popular with tourists and filmmakers. What are the risks of hospitality, and why do we do it anyway?

Offering Recipients

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

September 1: *Unity's Peace and Justice Scholarship Fund*

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 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.

September 8: *Friends of the Mississippi River*

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) engages people to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities region. FMR knows today's young people are the future stewards and advocates of the river, and this collection will support youth development programming and the development of functional pathways into environmental professions for young people, and particularly BIPOC youth.

September 15: *Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota*

The Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM) provides free immigration legal representation to low-income immigrants and refugees in Minnesota and North Dakota. ILCM works to educate the community about immigration matters, advocates for public policies which respect universal human rights, and offers free immigration legal representation. This collection will support their internship program where participants learn to navigate the complexities of the immigration system in the Twin Cities.

September 22: *JJ Hill Montessori School*

With guidance from certified Montessori teachers, students at JJ Hill School use hands-on materials to establish critical thinking skills and respond to real-world issues. Unity Church has a group of committed volunteers working alongside school staff, and this collection will help provide additional materials for students, staff, and volunteers during the 2024-25 transition year when JJ Hill prepares to move into its new facility across the street from Unity Church.

September 29: *Social Justice Clinical Pastoral Education*

Social Justice Clinical Pastoral Education (SJCPE) provides justice-centered, liberative spiritual care education for faith leaders who desire to expand their capacity for walking with individuals through their stories of pain, healing and transformation. SJCPE peer groups include four inmates at Stillwater Corrections Facility learning to provide spiritual and pastoral care to one another. SJCPE is a progressive faith presence in an otherwise conservative, Christian-dominated environment. This collection will sponsor inmate participants.



Love and Justice Prevail

Debbie Cushman, Trustee

As I near the end of my term on Unity's Board of Trustees I find my reflections centering around transition, gratitude and belonging.

The passage of time can be a funny thing, especially during a global pandemic.

My entire term on the board, until this past month, has been alongside interim ministry — first with Rev. Dr. Kathy Hurt and then Rev. Kathleen Rolenz. I learned so much from both of them and there's no doubt these transitional periods influenced the way that I experienced governance at Unity. To be sure, the extended search for a called minister created a wide range of tasks and stressors. At the same time, it also allowed us — a congregation grieving and in flux — the opportunity to pause and get to know ourselves a little better.

Board service has brought me a deep sense of gratitude for playing a small part in the flow of history at Unity. As time goes by, the more I wonder what was on the minds and hearts of those who walked before us. How many causes did our predecessors throw themselves into over the past 150+ years? Voting rights, mental health, civil rights, same sex marriage, housing equity and racial justice are just some of the highlights. Where will we go next? I think often of the alley that leads out of the small parking lot behind the building and how a fellow congregant pointed out that it leads straight toward the Capitol.

I'm also grateful for getting to know the fellow trustees with whom I've had the honor to serve. And I can't say enough good things about the various iterations of the Executive Team. What a gift to spend time in deliberation, in fellowship, in service together. Participation on the board creates small group membership in and of itself; at the same time, it requires trustees to deeply consider Unity's place in the world. To whom do we belong?

I invite us to reflect on the words, so thoughtfully considered and arranged, in the statement on Moral Ownership found in Unity's Governing Policies, I.D.: "The Moral Owners of Unity Church-Unitarian are members of Unity Church-Unitarian and others who yearn for the Beloved Community and see Unity Church-Unitarian as an instrument for its realization. The Beloved Community is engaged with the work of the spirit. It is community at the highest level of reality and possibility, where love and justice prevail."

With Rev. Oscar Sinclair having just arrived (welcome!) this coming year offers all of us a unique opportunity to help refine the ways in which we'll continue to move ourselves forward. Please do take the time to shape Unity's 2025-2029 Ends Statements by participating in the congregational survey this month and attending cottage meetings to follow. May the journey take us ever closer to where love and justice prevail.



Welcome Words

Philippa Anastos, Membership Coordinator and Program Assistant

September is a time of endings and beginning: here in the Northern hemisphere, it is the season of harvest, yet it is also the launch of the new church year. In many ways, this

new church year represents a harvest for our Beloved Community. So much work and love has gone into bringing us to *this* new beginning, filled with a bounty of hope and energy. I remain in awe of the welcome and outreach I see within our congregation, and look forward to seeing the abundant growth of this new year!

Pathway to Membership Classes

The offerings below invite you to explore a deeper connection to Unity Church and the commitments and opportunities of membership. Contact Philippa Anastos, Membership Coordinator and Program Assistant, philippa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110.

Finding Yourself at Unity

For Visitors and Inquirers

Sundays 11:15 a.m. | Drop-ins welcome; childcare available Gannett Room or online via Zoom: bit.ly/fyuonline

Join the repeating eight-session cycle at any time. Weekly church emails include the session topic or find the session schedule at the Welcome Table in Parish Hall.

September 1: No class, Labor Day Weekend
September 8: Worship & the Liturgical Year
September 15: Congregational Care
September 22: Membership 101
September 29: Building Tour

Committing to Unity

**Tuesday, September 17 | 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Center Room
Light refreshments**

Join Philippa Anastos and Rev. Oscar for a discussion of the commitments of membership at Unity Church. Does the invitation into this ongoing work resonate with you? 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 Philippa Anastos know you're interested in participating or to ask questions. She can also arrange a private signing ceremony.

BELOVED COMMUNITY STAFF TEAM

All About the Beloved Community Staff Team

Lia Rivamonte, Beloved Community Staff and Communications Team



As we begin the new church year, we are reminded that Unity is rich in numerous opportunities to be together as a congregation in all the ways that matter — joy, pain, grief, celebration, worship, social justice — and in learning about ourselves and one another. The arrival of Rev. Oscar brings our congregation an especially charged atmosphere of promise and renewal. The Beloved Community Staff Team (BCST) is already at work exploring opportunities for deeper connection for this new year.

What is the BCST?

The BCST was initiated in 2016 by senior co-ministers Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs to coordinate and sustain efforts across the congregation that explore and deepen learning explicitly through the lens of antiracist multiculturalism. Aspiring to achieve the Beloved Community, prophetic practice — developing meaningful ways to integrate our values into our day-to-day lives to make qualitative changes in our souls—is a constant. The BCST serves to expand and strengthen our collective capacity for antiracist multicultural understanding, and ensures that this remains foundational across the congregation from how we operate to our programs and activities, embedding our antiracist multicultural Ends throughout congregational life.

It was the BCST, for example, that:

- Implemented congregation-wide learning opportunities with Team Dynamics that sharpened our awareness and understanding of intersectionality (bit.ly/houseofinter) and dominant culture.
- Created the Double Helix Model (bit.ly/unitydoublehelix) interlacing faith formation and spiritual practice with antiracist multiculturalism.
- Worked closely with the Ministerial Search Team to engage the congregation in examining

biases surrounding identity and expectations for a senior minister.

Under Rev. KP's steadfast, inspired leadership, the BCST is committed to 1) *critical discernment* — keeping in mind the larger historical implications of this work, 2) *connection* — sustaining our humanity and empathy towards one another, 3) *tracking hypocrisy* — aligning what we say with what we do and noticing when we have failed, and 4) *hope* — empowering our creativity to reimagine the future in building the Beloved Community.

The Unity Ends Statements that ignite the BCST work are:

- Know each other in all our fullness.
- Create an ever-widening circle of belonging for all people.
- Create brave space for racial healing and dismantling the dominant culture.

"Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world." — bell hooks, *Killing Rage: Ending Racism*

Who is in the BCST?

The Executive Team (ET), staff members, and lay leaders make up the BCST. The ET: Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation; Laura Park, Executive Director; and now senior minister Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair. Staff members are Rev. Lara Cowtan, Minister of Congregational Care; and Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries. Lay member Angela Wilcox serves as project manager and scribe.

To better inform the congregation about this work, former BCST members Erika Sanders and Pauline Eichten created the Beloved Community Communications Team (BCCT). The team has been at work for over seven

years and is charged with the task of sharing stories of the struggles, questions, and collaborations coming out of the multicultural work at Unity and in the wider world of our faith and city. The current team includes Shelley Butler, Becky Gonzalez-Campoy, Marjorie Otto, Suki Sun, Ray Wiedmeyer, and me, team leader and BCST liaison. Guided by the work of the BCST, the BCCT is responsible for collecting and writing Beloved Community News articles and blog posts that focus on the issues, ideas, and challenges of the antiracist multiculturalism work, and for posing questions and engaging in reflection that offers deeper understanding and multiple perspectives.

Complexity is our only safety and love is the only key to our maturity.

—James Baldwin

Antiracist multiculturalism work is inherently complex. As much as we wish it were simple — "love is love," "we are one," and numerous other aphoristic phrases we employ that invite complacency, to build the Beloved Community is to embrace the many layers of identity and experience that each of us represents. To dig down into our own human existence and examine ways to "know one another in all our fullness" is often difficult and sometimes painful, revealing uncomfortable truths about ourselves and how we influence others to the good or ill, but ultimately redemptive.

The BCCT would like to hear your story! What illuminates your commitment to creating an antiracist multicultural community? Share a story, image, and/or video in the All Our Fullness program (bit.ly/ucuaof), or just get in touch to let us know you are interested in working with us: aof@unityunitarian.org.

In this new church year, may we be guided by our faith and connected in love as we aspire to build the Beloved Community.

GET CONNECTED

Dine With Nine

Want to enjoy conversation, food, and fellowship with fellow Unity Church members and friends? Enjoy meeting new faces and/or renewing prior acquaintances? Like extending the hospitality of Unity's community in a personal way? Dine with Nine is for you!

Small groups (approximately nine per group) of Unity Church members and friends gather once a month for food and fellowship. Each group is self-directed and chooses the dates, times, and locations for their gatherings. Often, these are pot-luck meals in group members' homes, but groups may also choose to mix in visits to restaurants, a picnic, or a catered/delivered meal.

Popular groups in the past have included child-friendly groups for parents and groups that commit to trying meatless meals! Questions? Find the Dine With Nine team in Parish Hall on Sundays or contact Philippa Anastos at philippa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110.

Add your Picture to Unity's Database

Help Rev. Oscar learn the names and faces of Unity's congregation! Voting members and pledging friends have access to the database where they can manage their own demographic and giving information, view the calendar and directory, and upload a picture. Need help logging in? Email martha@unityunitarian.org.

Food Ministry Volunteers Needed

Questions? Email Heidi at heidi@unityunitarian.org.

Share your hospitality talents in the kitchen during coffee hour on Sunday mornings. No kitchen experience required! Sign up: bit.ly/ucucoffeesunday.

Wellspring Wednesday returns September 11! Help with prepping meals, setting tables, and cleaning up. Sign up: bit.ly/wwfood2425.

Join a Welcome Team

Once a month, you and your team members help to nurture mutual belonging at Sunday services through tasks like greeting congregants, ushering, talking to people in Parish Hall, and connecting newcomers to more information about the church. Training and support provided! Interested? Email Philippa at philippa@unityunitarian.org.

All Our Fullness

Introduce yourself in All Our Fullness, a new project of stories, art, and videos designed to help us "know each other in all our fullness," and take a deeper dive into the people of our Beloved Community. Details and submissions at bit.ly/AllOurFullness.

Fellowship Groups

Email Philippa Anastos at philippa@unityunitarian.org to get connected with a fellowship group.

Afterthoughts offers time after the 10:00 service to discuss the service.

Caregivers Support Group meets on the third Thursday of the month at noon. An informal support group for caregivers.

Evergreen Quilters 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 third Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Living With Grief Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month. A group for people living with grief and loss.

Men's Coffee Group meets every Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. for light-hearted conversation.

Men's Conversation Group meets on Zoom September 2, 16, and 30, 7:00-9:00 p.m. The Men's Conversation Group meets to discuss a wide range of topics; to offer support for each other with emotional, spiritual, family, and other issues; and to develop a deeper connection with one another.

Men's Retirement Circle meets Monday, September 9 and 23, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

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

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

Textile Arts Group meets the first and third Wednesday of each month, 9:30-11:00 a.m., in the DeCramer Room. Bring your knitting, embroidery, etc.

Unity Book Club meets the second Tuesday of the month (except in September), 7:00-8:30 p.m.

September 17: *The Hidden Lives of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben
October 8: *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt
November 12: *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World* by Katherine

Women in Retirement meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, 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.

TRANSYLVANIA PILGRIMAGE

A Pilgrim's Pen

Rev. Lara Cowtan, Minister of Congregational Care

A pilgrimage is a ritual journey with a hallowed purpose. Every step along the way has meaning. The pilgrim knows that life giving challenges will emerge. A pilgrimage is not a vacation; it is a transformational journey during which significant change takes place. New insights are given. Deeper understanding is attained. New and old places in the heart are visited. Blessings are received and healing takes place. On return from the pilgrimage, life is seen. With different eyes. Nothing will ever be quite the same again.

— Macrina Wiederkehr.

On July 31 we gathered, 20 brave, curious souls, some familiar faces, some new, ages 10-77. We began our journey in beautiful Budapest, exploring the rich and complex history. At times proud and gilded with art and architecture, and other times fraught with violence and betrayal. We learned of the ebb and flow of the tides of thousands of years of human influence carved into the landscape, buildings and hearts of the people.

Onward into Transylvania we visited the sites of the first people to be called Unitarian, the early seeds of our modern faith tradition. Our courageous, bold and visionary ancestors helped to lay a foundation for other liberal religious traditions and established an enduring heritage of Unitarian communities that have stood the test of time and even persecution. Our pilgrims stayed in homes with families in Homorodszentpeter, a village of 200 people. We participated in daily life activities, visited the cemetery, walked with cows to and from the fields, toured a local factory, observed bread-making and cheese-making and crafts, the preparing of meals beginning with live ducks and lambs through to the stew pot. We sang and played with village children and even had a fun-filled evening of bowling! Gifts were exchanged and friendships made and renewed. We also shared with the villagers in a moving tribute to Revs. Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs, who built and tended this bond of partnership, and we participated in Sunday worship on the theme of hope and resilience.

And, as the quote above says, this was not a vacation, it was a journey of personal reflection and growth. Along the way, we were met with challenges of cultural clashes, personal differences, language barriers, discomfort, extreme heat, even lack of running water at times. For people who had made this journey before, there was grieving of loss and change. For those new to the journey, at times the newness and uncertainty was exhausting. We found too that much can be communicated without words, and that laughter and tears are universal, as our hearts expanded.

The scars of the world wars and the oppressive years of communism became even more evident as we left Transylvania and crossed the Carpathian Mountain range for our final days in Bucharest.

Our Partner Church relationship, this precious connection is so very special, rich and resilient, meaningful and powerful.

This pilgrim is returning home transformed and grateful.

Köszönöm szépen

Rev. Lara Cowtan



WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

Wellspring Wednesday Schedule

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. Dinner begins at 5:45 p.m. in Parish Hall, a short chapel service begins at 6:40 p.m. in Ames Chapel, and programs begin at 7:10 p.m. Childcare is available and advance registration is not required.

The cost for dinner is \$10/adults, \$5/child (ages 5-12), \$3/child (ages 2-4), and \$25/family. If you need financial assistance to help cover the cost of dinner, please email Philippa Anastos at philippa@unityunitarian.org. If you plan to join us and need a special dietary preparation (vegetarian, dairy-free options are available), please email Heidi Birkholz at heidi@unityunitarian.org.

Help prepare a Wellspring Wednesday meal!

bit.ly/wwfood2425

We have such a good time in the kitchen together! Kids are welcome with their adults! Questions? Contact Heidi Birkholz at heidi@unityunitarian.org.

Wellspring Wednesday Programming

Is there a program or class you would like to see offered — or that you would like to offer — at Wellspring Wednesday this fall or winter? Tell us about it by completing the online proposal form: unityunitarian.org/ww-proposal.

September 11

Dinner: Ojo pinto bean and pepper enchiladas, watermelon corn salad, Mexican rice, and Snickerdoodle bars

The Farm Bill: It's What's for Dinner

Parish Hall and Zoom: bit.ly/farmbilldin

The food you see at the grocery store or farmers market is heavily influenced by the Farm Bill. This legislation keeps millions fed, funds land and water conservation, crop subsidies, crop insurance, research, and much more. While historically bipartisan, this year's Farm Bill is falling victim to the polarization endemic to our politics today. Yet many farmers, including small, organic, and diversified farms cannot access benefits the Farm Bill provides. Join Nikki Warner from The Good Acre and Amanda Koehler from Land Stewardship Project for a "back porch conversation" about farming today, the Farm Bill and ways it can be improved.

Nikki Warner is the Director of Communications and Government Affairs at The Good Acre, a non profit food hub in Falcon Heights. She is committed to transforming our food system to promote healthy and resilient communities.

Amanda Koehler leads state and federal policy organizing, land access and emerging farmers policy organizing, at the Land Stewardship Project. Amanda has a bachelor's degree in environmental science and a master's degree in advocacy and political leadership.

Religious Education New Family Orientation

Interested in learning more about Unity's religious education programs for children and youth? We offer Religious Education New Family Orientation on the first Wednesday of every month (September's orientation is the second Wednesday). Email Nelson one week in advance if you plan to attend: nelson@unityunitarian.org.

Lectio Divina | Zoom: bit.ly/UnityLectio24-25

Join a sacred experience of listening, contemplating, and responding to inspirational texts. Though the spiritual practice of Lectio Divina is centuries-old, typically utilizing Scripture, Unitarian Universalists use contemporary poetry. Participants report that Lectio Divina is "rejuvenating" and "insightful." Zoom from the Gannett Room at Unity on Wednesdays. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler.

September 18

Dinner: Bratwurst, hot dogs and not dogs, potato salad, roasted broccoli, raspberry streusel bars

Engagement Fair | Parish Hall

Itching to turn all that election year anxiety into action? Discover opportunities to make a difference in our Beloved Community. Meet ministry team leaders, explore volunteer roles, and connect with others who share your heart for service. Come and see how you can be a part of something bigger.

Hymn Sing | Robbins Parlor and Zoom: bit.ly/ucuhymnsing

In 2021 Unity Choir members started meeting with Ahmed every few weeks on Zoom to sing and discuss the hymns in the Unitarian hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*. The group started with the first hymn, and is now nearly 200 hymns in! At each session group members sing the hymn, discuss its music, text, history, and theology, while also sharing personal reflections on the music and its meaning.

Young Adults Group (ages 18-35) | Center Room

A fun, reflective group of people working to build multifaith and multicultural community. They come together to explore questions of life and faith, and to practice sharing what is sacred, as they navigate the complexity of being an adult.



WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY | SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

September 25

Dinner: Rancho Gordo red beans and rice, green beans, and brown butter chocolate chip cookies

To Keep Our Balance:

Change and Tradition at Unity Church

Parish Hall and Zoom: bit.ly/wwkeepbalance

Join Unity's Executive Team in a conversation about evolution and continuity at Unity Church. After major transitions in the last three years, what comes next? Are we done changing, and if not, how do we approach our responsibilities to the traditions of the church and the possibilities of the future?

Love Letters to the World:

Writing Effective Letters to the Editor

Zoom: bit.ly/loveletteredit

Mother Teresa once described her work this way: "I'm a little pencil in the hand of a writing God, who is sending a love letter to the world." Unitarian Universalists are likewise committed and impassioned to harness love's power to challenge exclusion and oppression, to elevate public conversations, and be a force for good. One way to help shape public discourse around key issues is to contribute letters to the editor. Lisa Wersal will offer useful tips to guide your writing process to match what editors are looking for to fill their opinion pages.

Lisa Wersal taught academic writing and religious studies to university students, and has been a writer of academic articles, essays, opinion pieces, poetry, and many letters to the editor.

How to Help Young People Process Emotions



In their book *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk*, Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish set out a series of practical parenting strategies that respect the worth and dignity of each young person. Their practices do not pretend to solve parenting for you, instead they focus on how parents can more intentionally cultivate children's capacities for emotional regulation, cooperation, responsibility, autonomy, positive self-regard, and flexibility. In this first of seven sessions, we explore four practices that demonstrate care for young people's emotions. Our focus: how can we effectively respond to young people's emotions in ways that promote self-expression and self-awareness?

A Spiritual Practice to Feed Your Soul: Lectio Divina

Wednesday, September 11 | 7:10 p.m.

Tuesday, September 24 | 7:10 p.m.

Registration: bit.ly/UnityLectio24-25

Join us for a sacred experience of listening, contemplating, and responding to inspirational texts. Though the spiritual practice of Lectio Divina is centuries-old, typically utilizing Scripture, Unitarian Universalists use contemporary poetry. Participants report that Lectio Divina is "rejuvenating" and "insightful." Each second Wednesday and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:10 p.m. on Zoom; or Zoom from the Gannett Room at Unity on Wednesdays. All are welcome! Register once and attend as often as you are able. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler. Questions? Contact Shelley at library@unityunitarian.org.



Sign up for Chalice Circles!

Registration: unityunitarian.org/chalice-circles

Chalice Circles bring together groups of 8-10 committed participants with a trained leader to listen — to each other, to the world, and to their deepest selves — and develop a more intentional and authentic life. Each month, a packet of spiritual practice content related to the monthly theme is published for use by circle participants, and anyone in the congregation interested in reflecting more deeply on the theme. Registration is open through September 13, with the opening retreat from 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 21. If you have questions, please contact Philippa Anastos, Membership Coordinator and Program Assistant at philippa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110.



Sangha Practice

Tuesdays | 4:30-6:00 p.m. | Ames Chapel

At the heart of Buddhist practice is the commitment to awaken — to step into our doubts and predicaments and hear the roaring of life at the still point of a turning universe. Through weekly practice of meditation, we discover a clarity of mind attentive and accountable to each moment of life's flow, and touch the mystery of our original face. This group is open to anyone interested, no experience is necessary, and instructions will be provided. For more information, please contact Rev. KP Hong at kp@unityunitarian.org.



Unity Church Pledge Drive | Coming October 2024

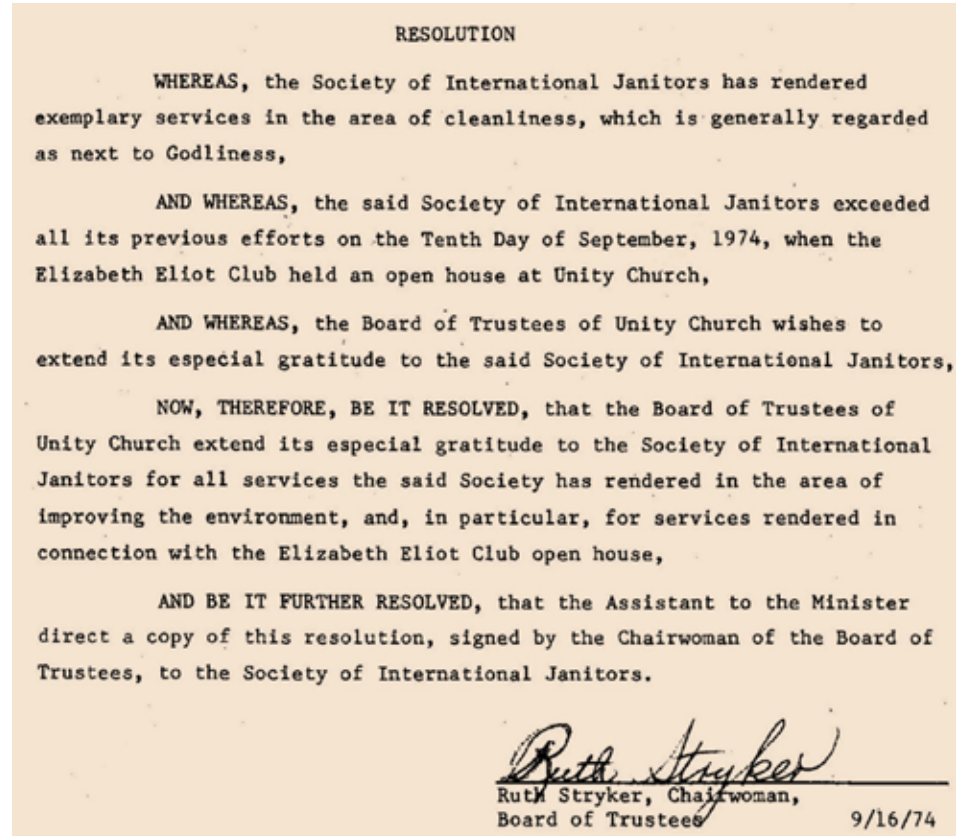
SEEDS OF JOY



From the Archives Team

You Never Know What You'll Find

Recently, we came across a resolution, ostensibly passed by the Board of Trustees in 1974, commending the Society of International Janitors for its services to Unity Church.



The members of this esteemed group were young men in their twenties working as part-time custodians. Among them Mark Foster, a law school student, and Phil Platt, Bob Douglas, and Pop Wagner, musicians who did some performing in Europe, hence the International title. No one admits to writing the resolution. The copy of the resolution also includes some commentary, we suspect added by one of the Society members:

There was a spirited discussion on the resolution, in which most speaking to the point praised the Society. Two members of the Board wondered what the Society was, and one member questioned whether the Society was not, in fact, a collection of cleanliness freaks. Following discussion, and amid general tumult, cheers, shouts, and huzzas, the motion was unanimously passed.

Read more about custodial life at Unity Church on the history page of Unity's website: unityunitarian.org/unity-church-history.

Let us know if you have any other interesting stories or artifacts related to Unity's history, official or not. We love to hear the stories. Contact Pauline Eichten at pfeichten@yahoo.com or Louise Merriam at machias1@gmail.com.

Current members of the Archives Team are: Pauline Eichten, Louise Merriam, Patt Kelly, Carol Miller, Betsy Moore, Fritz Hoehn, Eve Johnson, Deb Woodburn, and Susan Foote (emerita).



Welcome! You Belong, We All Belong Here!

Shelley Butler, Library-Bookstall Team

Welcome and welcome back! Here's to new beginnings!

Our worship theme for September, Welcome and Belonging, reminds us of the deep, open place in our hearts where others can come and go, and where we are all akin, related to each other in community of like souls. To be welcoming, "we must let the person stir us; we must connect... and it will tumble us into the magic realm of transformation... What matters is that we stretch our hearts open to each and draw near to each other."¹ Belonging is to both acknowledge the fact of it in each other, and to allow ourselves to experience it ourselves.

One way we do both is to share our stories through words and art. A Unity choir director once said, "If you can open your mouth, you can sing." Likewise, a literary minister often said, "If you can put pen or pencil to paper, you can write." Sometime, someone must have also said, "If you can see it, you can create art." (Have you guessed where I'm going with this?) *Cairns: The Unity Church Journal of the Arts* is just such a place to share your own unique and wonderful words and art with the congregation. It's a space where everyone at Unity is welcome and where everyone belongs! Won't you join us in this, our 16th annual issue? Submit here: bit.ly/Cairns16.

On another topic (and I know you know this but want to remind you anyway), our fresh and well-stocked Bookstall is open again twice on Sundays, after each of the morning services. Your purchases are the funding for all the book purchases for the Anderson Library, as well as for some special events like Café Unity, our annual coffeehouse of music and original writing (mark your calendars for the evening of May 2, 2025).

Those Bookstall purchases allowed us to add to the library: *Beyond Welcome: Building Communities of Love* by Linnea Nelson, which examines the UU joys and responsibilities of creating foundational structures of love; and *Belonging: Remembering Ourselves Home* by Toko-pa Turner, which acknowledges that while we are more connected than ever before, we also experience alienation; and helps us understand how to belong.

And speaking of special events, save the date for Friday, October 25, 2024, when we'll be celebrating *Belongings*, the new book by one of our favorite poets, Margaret Hasse (more on this next month).

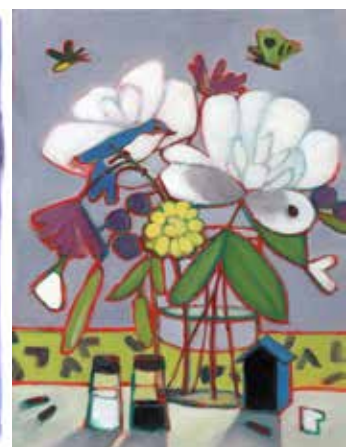
¹Homan, *Radical Hospitality*

September Parish Hall Artist

Megan Moore



Megan Moore's work is accessible, calming, and at times meditative. Her paintings are inspired by natural forms, personal symbolism, and elements of magic realism. Supporting community and individual wellness through artwork and interpersonal connections is her purpose as a visual artist. To this end, she works on commissions of all sizes that hold special meaning in the lives of her clients. She has done both private and grant-funded mural work throughout Minneapolis and St. Paul, while continuously working on self-directed projects. Her work has been purchased and commissioned for display in several health care settings including The Washburn Center for Children and the HOPE clinic at HCMC. She is also an artist organizer with LoLa (the League of Longfellow Artists) and is interested in using her art to build community.



Come meet Megan Moore between services on Sunday, September 15!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Housing Justice Team

Dutton Foster, Housing Justice Team

Are you concerned about Minnesota's chronic and serious housing crisis but not sure how to start learning more? The Housing Justice Team is a small group, meeting monthly, seeking to stay abreast of metrowide efforts to alleviate the serious shortage of deeply affordable housing in our area. As we try to educate ourselves in order to better inform the congregation, we currently partner primarily with three organizations which promote

- Housing creation with Beacon Interfaith Collaborative and Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity,
- Housing shelter services with Project Home,
- Housing policy with (primarily) Beacon.

As time and energy allow, members of the Housing Justice Team participate in various ways with the efforts of these organizations to help homeless and underhoused members of the community. Individual efforts may range from donating time or supplies, joining a Habitat build, attending a rally at the Capitol, writing to lawmakers to support critical legislation, or contributing financially.

To learn more, please come and check us out. There are no requirements other than concern for the community and openness to learning ways to become more useful.


We meet on the second Tuesday of each month from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Visiting a meeting would give you a better idea of our activities, and we certainly don't pressure anyone to join us. We normally gather on Zoom, but plan to meet at church in person in October. Contact Judy Miller at jmkmam@comcast.net for more information and to request a Zoom link to join our next meeting.

JJ Hill/ Obama School Team

Nancy Heege, JJ Hill Obama School Team

One of the best ways I can think of to affect the future of our city and our world is by working with children in the here and now. As I listen to a child read, celebrate their progress, and let them see I'm interested and supportive, I'm helping them build their sense of worth and accomplishment.


Our group of Unity volunteers will start back to work at JJ Hill Magnet Montessori Elementary School this fall. We'll be working in classrooms, shelving books in the library, and providing other assistance in this, the last school year at 998 Selby Avenue. A year from now, they'll move into the building across the street from the church, Barack and Michelle Obama. If you'd like to learn about how you can give a few hours a week and make a real difference, contact us. Email nancyheege672@gmail.com or John Christiansen at jchrist5051@gmail.com.



UU the Vote is a bold initiative created by the Unitarian Universalist Association's Side With Love team, engaging people in voter registration, education, get-out-the-vote drives, voter protection, and more. To get connected to Unity's UU the Vote effort, visit unityunitarian.org/uu-the-vote or stop by the table in Parish Hall on Sundays.

In The Justice Database


Rock the Vote



Find information on early, absentee, mail-in, and election day voting in Minnesota, as well as voting resources, and opportunities for involvement in building the political power of young people. bit.ly/JusticeData

Donate to the Food Shelf

Thank you for all the donations to Hallie Q. Brown over the summer. During the month of July we donated 265 pounds of food and some school supplies to Hallie Q. Brown. Please continue to donate nonperishable food items such as granola bars, fruit bars, cereal boxes, bottled water, soup, macaroni and cheese and canned vegetables. Paper products and cleaning supplies are also very helpful.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

What's for Dinner?

Anna Newton, Act for the Earth Team

Around four o'clock in the afternoon comes the dreaded question: "What are you thinking about for dinner?" This is more than idle conversation. It is a reminder that the dinner hour is approaching and we had best figure out what to eat! Embedded in my husband's question, besides genuine curiosity, are layers of social expectation and family history.

Often I have something planned ahead. But there are days when I am preoccupied with a project, and the question feels like an intrusion. My defensive response is, "Why am I the one who always has to figure this out? Why don't you cook for a change?" In fairness though, cooking is not a skill he was taught. The fact remains that the daily task of feeding the family falls disproportionately upon women. I accepted that role long ago.

My approach to my husband's question has changed as we have settled into retirement, and I try to view it as an invitation for shared decision making. Should we roast cauliflower, or stew it with lentils for a spicy Indian stew? Cook rice or noodles? Thus a menu plan emerges, and we often prep together.

For my part, I have to be in the right frame of mind to teach and be patient with my husband as we chop onions and start the rice before stir frying the rest of the ingredients. Mistakes happen when I hurry and discover what I take for granted but my student does not know. Is it worth it, when I could do it more quickly alone? I see his willingness to help, and I see the courage it takes for someone accustomed to success in a demanding career risk failure. As I see his confidence grow, the impact of empowering others to share in the harvest and meal preparation is made clear.

I think a lot about food and how to use the kitchen to fight climate change. Every choice made, from which protein to eat to whether to heat up a big oven, is an opportunity to support diversified farms, to reduce CO2 emission, to reduce food waste. Our Act for the Earth Team goal is to help the congregation make informed choices about these issues. Visit our webpage at unityunitarian.org/act-for-the-earth for links to effective ways to save money and benefit the planet. This month we are also sponsoring two events in our ongoing food conversations that explore how government policy impacts how food is grown. Please join us on this journey!

Bike Ride Along and Lunch Along the Mississippi

Monday, September 2 | 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., including lunch

Registration and details at bit.ly/bikeandlunchafe

Discover how different the world looks from a bike! Enter Hidden Falls Park off Magoffin Avenue and meet at the second parking lot. We'll bike a loop on fairly level and mostly shaded trails, cross the river twice, and stop at City House for lunch.

Act for the Earth Film Night: *Common Ground*

Friday, September 6 | 6:00 p.m. | Robbins Parlor

Please join Unity's Act for the Earth Team to watch and discuss the much anticipated sequel to acclaimed *Kiss the Ground* (2020). Pizza and salad will be served at 6:00 (donations to cover cost appreciated!).

Sobering yet hopeful, *Common Ground* exposes the toxic interconnections of American farming politics and health, shares stories of destruction and healing, and explores how regenerative agriculture and soil health plays a vitally important role in changing these systems for the better.

The Farm Bill: It's What's for Dinner

Wednesday, September 11 | 7:10 p.m. | Details on page 8.

Climate Justice Revival: Organizing Hour



**Reimagine Together
From An Extractive Age to
A New Era**

Sunday, September 29

1:00-2:00 p.m. | Foote Room

Registration: bit.ly/reimaginehour

Our congregation is joining Unitarian Universalists (UU) across the land for a Climate Justice Revival. Together, we are reimagining a spirit-filled and liberatory future! Unity Church is participating in the advocacy portion of the Revival by hosting an "Organizing Hour." Through various activities, we'll help you identify your personal stake in the upcoming election and teach you how to use the power of relational organizing. The nationwide Climate Justice Revival is sponsored by the UUA, UU Ministry for the Earth, UU Service Committee, and many other organizations and brought to Unity Church by our Act for the Earth and UU the Vote teams. Questions? Contact Terri Burnor at terriburnor@gmail.com.

The Minnesota
Unitarian Universalist
Social Justice Alliance
(MUUSJA) works to
connect Unitarian
Universalists and allies
to help shape a just and
loving world. muusja.org





Pitter-pattering Questions

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

Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation

The multidisciplinary field of *childhood studies* has evolved considerably since its founding in the early '90s, informed by human sciences from sociology, anthropology, and developmental psychology to education, law, and cultural studies. The scale and reach of the field are captured in questions both familiar and generative. How have changes in our shifting understanding of childhood influenced the lives of children? Is childhood better understood through generalized stages of cognitive, emotional, and moral development or through critical constructions of childhood in history, society, and culture? What is needed for children's resilience as they start school, move through education, make friends, and navigate the many challenges they will face? How is the wellbeing of children bound up with the wellbeing of families and public investments in reducing socioeconomic- and race-based achievement gaps? But perhaps among the most consequential claims from childhood studies literature is that children should be understood as social agents: that children are the best informants of their own lives with agency to create their social worlds, exercising their own social competencies, acting diversely and creatively rather than stereotypically, if only grown-ups would grant.

The appeal and welcome of children having agency is hardly surprising, as it offers moral corrective to ways children have been objectified, instrumentalized, and denied personhood throughout history. We can finally start from the perspective of what children *are* rather than what they are *not yet*, namely developed adults. Simplistic preconceptions of children as passive recipients of socialization,

without distinctive moral voice and capabilities of their own, have given way to unprecedented appreciation for children's agency with all their complexity and creativity. Instead of being subordinated or sentimentalized, the dignity of childhood now occupies a position on a shared continuum of agency with adults.

Yet as important as this welcomed shift has been, the modern notion and accent on agency as constitutive to being human has profound limitations, a one-eyed prophet that sees only what it can do and not what it may undo. For agency has always presupposed a corresponding *belonging*, only together establishing two fundamental modes of being human. Without the traction and friction of belonging to the people and world around us, agency is set adrift from any real responsibility and deprived of consequence and dignity. (Technology, among the most seductive forms of agency, now allows us to pre-order a "friend" for \$99 at friend.com.) But if anyone is existentially bound to relationships and belonging as the primary ground of life, children surely are by their condition and exigency as dependent creatures.

What if agency needs to be grounded not in further autonomy, freedom, entitlement, or other *rights-based commitments*, but in the strong embrace of belonging? If there is a correlation between our language and the environment structured by that language, what strong *belonging-based commitments* do we speak that structure the environment in which our children can learn and grow and flourish? Belonging by *affinity* or *identity* or *compliance*, or *dependency*, or *transaction*, or *facsimiles* like "Alexa" and "Siri"... or by covenant audacious enough for the inherent worth and dignity of their sacred personhood? If childhood

reveals in the strongest possible terms that human beings are responsible for one another, what practices of belonging will ground and animate our life together as we cross numerous ethical thresholds and face pressing questions everywhere about us?

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

Nursery Caregivers Needed

Unity's nursery is seeking youth caregivers — on a volunteer or paid basis — for the coming church year. Interested youth age 13 or older can email Katrina Nichols at katrina@unityunitarian.org for an application. Also seeking adult volunteers!

2024-25 Religious Education Enrollment

Religious Education classes begin Sunday, September 15. For families still needing to enroll children, please contact Nelson Moroukian at nelson@unityunitarian.org.

MUSIC MINISTRIES



Music Notes

Ahmed Anzaldúa
Director of Music Ministries

Much of my doctoral work at the University of Minnesota was related to the idea of making choral music accessible to everyone. This meant identifying barriers — economical, geographical, cultural — and working to remove them. As a music student I was brought up to think of this sort of work as a chore, separate from the “true work” of making music. Over time I have come to realize that it is in fact at the core of our work as artists. The arts are fundamentally about connecting with other human beings; every barrier that we remove helps make these connections easier to create and maintain, they make the art itself more powerful and potentially transcendent.

When we talk about inclusion and access in the arts, however, there is often backlash to protect the purity of the art form. I think this protectionist impulse is understandable, often connected to superficial ideas of quality and excellence. However, I also think it is misguided and implies that the arts are fragile and that they can be irreparably polluted by outsiders. My understanding of how the Music Ministry at Unity Church should function is that it should not be primarily an arbiter of taste or gatekeeper of quality, but rather as a creative home for our community; a space where there is room for everyone’s musical gifts.

This is all to say that participating in the Music Ministry at Unity Church is remarkably straightforward: just show up. It’s fine to enjoy the music on Sundays, but I also want to encourage you to think of the Music Ministry as a creative musical home at this church, and the door is wide open. If you’d like to sing in a choir, just come to a rehearsal. If you’d like to sing in a group without committing to a choir, just come to one of the drop-in choirs or various Wellspring Wednesday events happening this year. If you have a musical gift to share with the congregation, talk to me or to someone on the music staff and we’ll find a way to make it happen. Do you wish Unity had a Balinese music ensemble or a brass band? Start it up! I’ll help.

Border CrossSing Dance Party

Friday, September 13 | 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 15 | 4:00 p.m.

La Doña Cervecería: 241 Fremont Ave N, Minneapolis

Join us for an interactive concert of popular Latinx dance music including salsa, rumba, and son in celebration of National Hispanic Heritage.

Sing with a Unity Church Choir

Rehearsals begin in September!

Email ahmed@unityunitarian.org to get connected.

Unity Singers | First rehearsal is September 3

Rehearsals: Tuesdays, 7:30-9:15 p.m., Foote Room

Unity Singers is Unity’s auditioned, chamber choral ensemble (typically between 20 and 28 voices.) Each singer’s involvement is built on a passion for singing and for ministry through music. This ensemble has an outstanding trajectory of representing Unitarian Universalist music locally and nationally. Due to the requirement for independent learning and the pace of rehearsal and performance, membership in Unity Singers requires a yearly audition, scheduled individually with the director.

Unity Choir | First rehearsal September 5

Rehearsals: Thursdays, 7:30-9:15 p.m., Parish Hall

Unity Choir is a large choral ensemble (typically between 60 and 80 voices) and is the strong component on which Unity’s choral program is built; a vital and energetic presence in our community. New members interested in applying will have a brief interview with the director and will be asked to sing a few warm-up sequences and short tonal memory exercises.

Women’s Ensemble | First rehearsal is September 8

Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:30-11:00 a.m., Foote Room

Women’s Ensemble is a continually growing and evolving group. While this group emerged and continues to function as a space that supports and empowers women, all soprano and alto singers are encouraged to apply for Unity’s Women’s Ensemble, including transfeminine, transmasculine, and non-binary as well as cis male sopranos and altos. New members interested in applying will have a brief interview with the director and will be asked to sing a few warm-up sequences and short tonal memory exercises.

Children’s Choir | First rehearsal is September 15

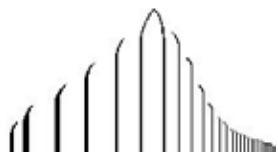
Rehearsals: Sundays, 10:15 - 10:55 a.m., Choir Room

Unity Children’s choir is a vibrant group of singers comprised of children from grades one through five. 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. Contact Kathleen Radspinner, Children’s Choir Director, at kathleenr395@gmail.com.

Youth Choir | First rehearsal is September 15

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

Unity’s Youth Choir for grades six through nine 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. No prior musical experience is required. Contact Shekela Wanyama, Unity Youth Choir Director, at shekela@unityunitarian.org.



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

Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair, Senior Minister
Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation
Laura Park, Executive Director
Louise Livesay-Al, Chair, Board of Trustees

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**

Merging of Waters is September 8!

Bring water from your summer adventures for our ritual of reunion!



Cairns
The Unity Church Journal of the Arts
Vol 16, 2024

You Belong Here

← **NOW collecting original art, prose,
poetry, song, reflection, and more for**

Cairns

**The Unity Church Journal of the Arts
Vol. 16, 2024**

Final Deadline: Monday, September 30, 2024

Submit online here: <https://bit.ly/Cairns16>

Wellspring Wednesday Returns September 11

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.

Dinner begins at 5:45 p.m. in Parish Hall, a short chapel service begins at 6:40 p.m. in Ames Chapel, and programs begin at 7:10 p.m. Childcare is available and advance registration is not required.

See page 8 and 9 for menus and programming! See you at church!