

Awakening

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.

As spring gives way to summer and the budding natural world awakens, refulgent and green, I recall this poem by Hafiz:

*What is this precious love and
laughter
Budding in our hearts?
It is the glorious sound
Of a soul waking up!*

Awakening, Merriam-Webster tells us, means waking up from sleep or a rousing from indifference and inaction or a moment of sudden awareness. All of which, like the budding of love in our hearts, seems a glorious and desirable thing. Except that, sometimes, it is not.

Have you ever been roused from sleep, unwilling to leave either the dreams you were inhabiting or the comfort and safety of your bed? Have you ever been metaphorically asleep to some unwanted truth and resisted its call to action or awareness? Have you ever been awakened to one new awareness only to shut down, saying *enough already*, when another new awareness followed it?

As story tells it, a Hindu initiate of Vedanta had just awakened to the illusion of separation between beings. "God is all, and all is God," he proclaimed and ventured joyfully into the day. He was following a path through the jungle when an elephant and rider approached from the other direction. The rider shouted at the man to step out of the way, but the man kept walking, knowing he was God and the elephant was God, and assuming this to be a test of his newfound awareness. From atop the elephant, the mahout shouted louder and more urgently as they drew closer on the narrow path, until suddenly the initiate was knocked into the ditch, bruised and confused.

Seeking an explanation, he returned to his teacher, who said, *Yes, it's true – you are God and the elephant is God. But why did you not listen to the warning of the mahout, who is also God and was telling you to move off the path?*

Spiritual awakening is not a one-time event. Nor is it a blissful status achieved for all time. It might be better understood as a lifelong process, a way of being that continually disturbs our indifference and continually enlarges our awareness, sometimes uncomfortably.

The spiritual teacher Anthony de Mello once said the first step to awakening is to acknowledge that we don't want to wake up and are likely resisting it. "The second step," he said, "is a readiness to understand, to listen, to challenge your whole belief system. Not just your religious beliefs, your political beliefs, your social beliefs, your psychological beliefs, but all of them."

"... In order to wake up," he said, "the one thing you need most is not energy or strength, or youthfulness, or even great intelligence. The thing you need most of all is the readiness to learn something new."

If there's one thing we've been asked to do in the past year and a half — day after day after day — it is to learn something new. To let each new awareness open us to another and another and yet another, even when we haven't wanted to keep opening. To listen, to understand, to challenge our beliefs and consider them from new angles. How do we make ourselves ready for that?

I take inspiration from the natural world just outside my door, watching the dirt where I have transplanted gifts from the gardens of friends and from our old house. Remembering bulbs and root bundles tucked into pockets in the soil here, I've been waiting for new shoots to appear.

For the plants, of course, the dirt all around them is different. The patterns of sunlight and rain have been changed. A few have met their end to the hunger of squirrels and rabbits or to my improper planting. But most, I have been delighted to witness, have learned how to awaken to a new season in this new place. Each in its own time has reached its roots down to claim what it needs from the darkness below. And each in its own time has stretched new shoots into the daylight to declare what it needs from above. The fiddleheads have loosened their tight fists. The hostas have opened the ears of their leaves. The lilies have slipped their slender proclamation points into a brand new sentence still in the making.

Reaching back into the Old English origins of the word "awakening," I find these roots: "to spring into being, arise, originate." Knowing nothing comes from nothing, I search back to ancestors and old teachings in my own origins. I reach inward to the knowledge carried in old bulbs and root systems buried in my bones. And I stretch up and out, toward the light falling on my small patch of soil today, letting the buds of my heart open to love and to laughter — and also to tears. Like this I am making myself ready, day after day, to learn what it is to live here, to love now, to offer my own new shoots to the garden and seasons unfolding around me.

By Karen Hering on behalf of this month's theme team: Ahmed Anzaldúa, Drew Danielson, Ray Hommeyer, KP Hong, Ruth MacKenzie, Laura Park

¹Hafiz, *The Gift: Poems by Hafiz, the Great Sufi Master*, trans. Daniel Ladinsky (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999).

²Anthony de Mello, *Awareness*, (New York: Image Books, Doubleday, 1992).

JUNE SUNDAY SERVICES AND OFFERING RECIPIENTS

Sunday Services

Please join us online for multigenerational Sunday Services live-streamed from the Sanctuary at 10:00 a.m.

June 6: *Upped and Awakened*

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/7UhCG9NueBM>

Perhaps in this historical moment of inflection, infection, and insurrection is a deepening self-awareness and search for new identity as a people and nation. An emerging moral and spiritual ethos that can acknowledge the rupture rather than simply trying to stitch our future to the familiar past, and help us to imagine the world anew as other awakenings have done. How does the life of faith awaken us, so with scales fallen from our eyes, we can make our way through this liminal period of unsettled lives and social transformation? Rev. KP Hong and worship associate Nate Solas explore awakening as a people of faith.

June 13: *The Freedom to Lament*

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/pNRPYJFmAV0>

The formal and public gestures of a lamentation verify the fact of our losses. The act of lamenting can be a spiritual discipline. Its practice can shape us in surprising developmental paths. Our guest preacher, the Rev. Karen Hutt, assisted by worship associate Merrill Aldrich, will explore the power of personal and communal lament through historical and contemporary examples. Rev. Hutt currently serves as adjunct minister at First Universalist in Minneapolis, and vice president for student formation vocation and innovation at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.

June 20: *Until Father Gets Home*

Livestream: <https://youtu.be/Jh3nI905QzY>

Umberto Eco wrote, "I believe that what we become depends on what our fathers teach us at odd moments, when they aren't trying to teach us." Fathers are traditionally thought of as a provider and protector. Unity Church member Mike Huber and worship associate Brian Newhouse explore how we are shaped by those who played those roles — or didn't or couldn't — in our own lives. And what could we learn if they move beyond those roles, not to teach us, but to care for themselves?

June 27: *Beyond Our Walls: Worshipping with UUs Worldwide*

Livestream: This link will be sent by email and available on Unity's homepage on Sunday morning, June 27.

On the last day of General Assembly, the annual gathering of the Unitarian Universalist Association, we will join many thousands of other Unitarian Universalists in an online worship service led by our faith siblings across the river at the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. We will livestream the service at our usual worship time and hope you will join in this largest annual worship gathering of Unitarian Universalists.

Offering Recipients

Thirty percent of the offering goes to support Unity's Community Outreach Ministry and seventy percent is given to a chosen community non-profit.

June 6: Freedom School

Freedom School, held each summer in the Rondo Education complex, is a free, six-week program for students in grades K-8. Freedom School provides nutritious meals, addresses the pandemic learning loss in reading and math, and connects learning through lessons in community and personal responsibility, music, field trips, and fun. This collection will buy books for the summer 2021 program.

June 13: Habitat for Humanity

For the past ten years Unity Church has joined other neighborhood churches, under the umbrella name of Faith Builders, to staff two weeks of volunteer labor for home construction in the St. Paul area. This offering will continue to fund this shared work, in the event that volunteers are called back in late summer. Otherwise, it will support Habitat's At Home Fund, dedicated to assist Habitat homeowners who are struggling to make their mortgage payments due to Covid-19. The At Home Fund is dedicated to protect homeownership through financial assistance and to increase access to affordable homeownership opportunities.

June 20: Rondo Garden

Rondo Garden is part of the Rondo Commemorative Plaza (RCP), which opened in July 2018, the first public place dedicated to a community destroyed by the construction of Interstate-94. RCP is a venue for contemplation, education, and reconciliation. Summer 2021 will introduce the Rondo Garden, a bold, innovative design intended to highlight the indomitable spirit of Rondo. Today's collection will be matched by allocated grant funds. Unity's Nancy Wagner is a volunteer RCP gardener.

Sunday Coffee Hour

After the service you are invited to participate in a virtual Zoom coffee hour, where we share a bit of our lives with each other and get to know one another more deeply. Join on Sundays after the 10:00 a.m. service: bit.ly/unitycoffeehour.

Flowers for Sunday Service

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

BELOVED COMMUNITY STAFF TEAM

Unity Congregants Take Racial Justice Beyond

Mary Pickard

I had the privilege of interviewing five Unity Church members about how they identified their own personal passions, talents, and particular opportunities to promote racial justice and multiculturalism beyond the boundaries of Unity Church. They reflected on the tools Unity has provided, the spiritual grounding that propels them to create change, and the struggles that have opened them to learn and transform.

When asked to describe what she does to apply antiracism and multiculturalism in the larger community, Eileen Galvin asked, "Is it about the things I need to do, or is it a way of being that must be applied to all things?"

As a communications professional at Friends School of Minnesota, a Quaker K-8 program, Eileen is called to antiracism work every day because of a school-wide commitment to abolish white supremacy. She finds that Unity has helped her notice and reflect on what's happening, leading to personal transformation.

When she heard Dr. Robin DiAngelo talk about white privilege at Unity, Eileen's reaction was, "I did all those things associated with white privilege. I knew there was stuff I didn't know, but I didn't know how much." Results from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) at Unity gave her tools for charting her own development — tools for reflection.

"I was raised to know this is not a fair system. As a white person learning more about how white supremacy runs through all our systems, I can't not do this work. I can't be okay with an unjust system that systematically oppresses people." It doesn't jibe with "the inherent worth and dignity of every person."

Merrill Aldrich and Nate Solas both work in IT — a profession they say is dominated by white men. What Merrill calls the "dam-breaking moment"

happened in his workplace when a Black employee talked about what was going on in his life and why this global conversation about George Floyd's murder was important to him.

His speaking up opened the door to further conversation and to Merrill stepping up. He volunteered to lead internal discussion among the 65 employees. "The most important thing to focus on was to open the conversation so people don't feel it's taboo to talk about racism and multiculturalism. It was important to help people work through the awkwardness, shame, and fear so we could be open to learning. We must understand that sometimes good intentions have negative impacts on people."

That's a lesson Nate learned as well. A conversation with a new female hire was his "wow" moment. "Our best efforts to welcome her were good, but not good enough. She felt discounted so we needed to realize our efforts weren't landing the way we intended. There is a tendency for people to treat everyone the same — but we need to recognize that life experiences are different. It's not enough to make the hire and assume you're done. We need to check in more and listen."

Mary Baremore is acutely aware of difference as a sign language interpreter for people who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing. Most interpreters are white, well-schooled women. "There is an elitism and supremacy that comes from being able to hear. It's called 'audism.' We must look at how we benefit from being hearing and how we use it in various ways within the deaf community. Layer race on top of that and there is increased complexity."

Unity "opened up the flood gate" for Mary to think about how she uses language. "I think all the time about the appropriateness of me interpreting for an African American man, for

example, who has a different way of expressing himself. I must be aware of his culture and my culture and reflect on the language I'm using. I know I'll never be fully adequate. Unity brings an invitation to be courageous; to know that we will fail every day and not give up; we will get back up and do better."

Angela Wilcox recalls her discomfort. "Even though I had done a lot of antiracism work, I had been told it was wrong, uncomfortable and rude to talk about race." When Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs talked about race from the pulpit and their own discomfort, it "transformed how I thought about discomfort as a spiritual practice," said Angela. "It gave me the courage to talk about it at work and that broke ground, so people opened up."

As an educator in the Hopkins public schools, Angela has made a point of incorporating antiracism work into all her activities and continuously engaging her colleagues in the conversations and training. She has found the IDI and accompanying coaching helpful. "What clicked for me was that it's important to meet people where they are and not where you think they should be. Antiracism training can make people defensive. We need to move into curiosity and not shame."

Next Right Actions

IDI: The opportunity to take the *Intercultural Development Inventory* is available to every Unity Church member. Email Drew Danielson for more information at drew@unityunitarian.org.

In the Justice Database: *Learning for Justice*: Free resources for K-12 on dismantling white supremacy and advancing human rights. bit.ly/JusticeData

Antiracism Literacy Partners: Wednesday, June 23, 7:00-9:00 p.m., details on page 8.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Making Way for the New

Jennifer Tong, Trustee

As I write this in May, Unity Church is in the midst of saying goodbye to Rob and Janne. By the time this is published we should know the name of the interim minister who is expected to arrive in August. The board has decided not to do a congregational survey this spring, and instead will collaborate with the Ministerial Search Team's process for a survey later in the year. We are also gradually moving out of the depths of the pandemic in the U.S. and toward a more transitional state, as the miracle of vaccination helps move us out of full pandemic mode but we are not yet sure what our new reality will look like. As we keep saying, it's a liminal time.

Lately I find myself feeling a mental emptiness, a blankness, which I recognize from experience as a curtain being drawn on my conscious mind, like a play that has ended. These feelings used to send my younger self into a panic. A project would end — what if I never get another job? A relationship ended — what if I never have another relationship again? I struggled to conjure an immediate vision of my future.

Now I liken that mental emptiness more to what happens when we sleep. The curtain is drawn on our conscious mind and from the outside it appears nothing is happening, but within the body and mind important activities are underway. Among other things, REM sleep (the time when we are dreaming) helps us sort and organize our experiences and memories. It reinforces and stores the memories that matter most, in part by jettisoning those that are less important, helping us separate the transient from the permanent. Our dreams help us process what we've experienced during the day. From an evolutionary perspective this activity is so important that despite the risks of being unconscious for a good part of our lives we still require sleep and dreamtime to survive.

Perhaps not coincidentally I've been working on a project to finally bring home all the stuff from my family's cluttered storage unit. I've wanted to do this for years but didn't because it's mostly boxes of my files, some of which date back to childhood. I was able to conveniently ignore it all until forced to reckon with it by the new owner's increase in the storage fee.

The process itself, much like REM sleep, has helped sharpen my understanding of what I really value. I had to spend hours sorting through boxes of unimportant things (tax forms dating back to 1995; my junior high yearbooks) to finally find the things I cared about (my diplomas; letters from my parents). I began to understand how hanging on to everything was making it harder to see the things that I treasured most. Some items are clearly transient and I have no problem putting them in the recycling bin. Others I cherish and vow to make more prominent in my home. Then there are all the other things — is this important to me? Will I regret letting it go or will it be replaced by something more meaningful in the future? Can I envision what that would be? I'm still working through it all.

As a congregation we will need to go through a similar kind of process. This interim period can be a vital time to help us sort through and understand the past, elevate our greatest values, and make way for the new. In her book *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going* Susan Beaumont describes the type of work organizations can do to negotiate liminality, some of which sound to me remarkably like dream sleep, such as soul-tending, group discernment, and shaping institutional memory.

And if we do our work well, we will be refreshed, re-energized, and ready for whatever comes next.

Serve on Unity's Board of Trustees

Have you felt a pull into deeper service to the congregation, or know someone who is? If so, we invite you to consider serving or nominating someone to serve on the Board of Trustees!

We are now accepting applications and nominations for new trustees.

For more information, please attend one of the following information sessions, or reach out to Alex Askew, Board Secretary, at alexaskew@gmail.com. You can fill out a nomination form or an application at <http://bit.ly/unitytrustee>.

Trustees are essential in envisioning Unity's future and holding us accountable to our stated Ends. We welcome you to learn more about this opportunity. Applications close July 1.

Zoom Information Sessions

Sunday, June 6, 11:30 a.m.

<http://bit.ly/TrusteeJune6>

Wednesday, June 9, 6:30 p.m.

<http://bit.ly/TrusteeJune9>

Sunday, June 13, 11:30 a.m.

<http://bit.ly/TrusteeJune13>

Wednesday, June 23, 6:30 p.m.

<http://bit.ly/TrusteeJune23>

TRANSITIONS

Update from the Ministerial Search Team

Welcome to the second *commUNITY* update on the work of your Ministerial Search Team (MST). As you know, an interim minister will be named to serve Unity Church starting in the fall of 2021. That selection is handled by our Board of Trustees. (The board's transition sub-team is Jackie Smith, Louise Livesay-Al, and Kevin Harris.) In a separate process, the MST was appointed last fall by the congregation and board. We will be working with you, and with the Transitions Office of the UUA, in our search for a settled minister to begin in the fall of 2022.

We are grateful for the UUA's guidance — in the form of a thorough handbook, sample documents, timelines, and staff expertise — which has enabled us to jump right in. With each MST member taking the lead in filling various roles, our team is deciding on protocols and tools for communications, budget management, documents and records, and other tasks coming up this summer. One of these is to contact the UUA Transitions Office on June 15, the date that new searches are formally initiated each year.

Covenanting with one another is another priority as our work gets underway. By this we mean articulating the commitments we make to one another, to the congregation, and to the UUA. Honesty, care, and respect are among the values that will guide us as we serve you, inform and work with the UUA, and honor the needs of searching ministers.

You can keep up to date with our work at the Governance tab on Unity's website, and right here each month in *commUNITY*. We look forward to some intense, lively, and very exciting work!

Staff Transitions Update

Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation

As staff assignments adjust and evolve in the course of ministerial transitions and the forthcoming interim year, the ministry of the church remains grounded in the gifts and experienced leadership of our staff. The Rev. Karen Hering has already begun overseeing the pastoral care ministry of the church, ensuring a vital and uninterrupted care for the congregation's well-being through this transition. She will continue the coordination of small group ministries and adult programming from Chalice Circles and Thresholds series to Wellspring Wednesday programming for the coming year. Her current responsibilities for community outreach will be transferred to the newly hired Community Outreach Coordinator beginning July 5. "I see our congregational life as being centered on love in action," reflects Karen. "Over the past year, I've been grateful for the chance to work with Community Outreach Ministry Teams on one aspect of that, and I'm now honored to be focusing my ministry on pastoral care as another aspect of love in action."



In turn, we are delighted to welcome the Rev. Shay MacKay who has agreed to serve as the Community Outreach Coordinator for the duration of the interim year, to coordinate and provide spiritual support for the community outreach teams as they reach for a greater integration of justice work grounded in faith practice. As many will recall, Shay served as Unity's 2015-16 Hallman Ministerial Intern and brought many gifts as a community organizer, active participant in racial justice work, and an inspiring collaborator in our ministry with the wider community. Importantly, Shay will work closely as part of the Faith Formation Team which includes Karen Hering, KP Hong, and Laura Park, to more closely align the community outreach ministry of the church with the deep and transformative ground of spiritual formation.



Covid-19 Plans for Church-Sponsored Gatherings

Like you, we are so eager to return to in-person ministry at the church. As we monitor state and local health guidelines, the Executive Team's decisions about how we open the church building will be grounded in values of equity, inclusion, consent, and the well-being of an interdependent community. Knowing that we will never be able to eliminate all the risk from Covid-19, we will make decisions in the best interest of all and with care and attention to those most impacted by the disease.

Beginning June 1, we will move forward with in-person gatherings at the church for fully vaccinated groups, within limited building hours. Please contact Laura Park (laura@unityunitarian.org, 651-228-1456 x110) if you wish to reserve space. *We expect our guidelines for in-person gatherings to change as we respond to the changing reality. Please watch for ongoing updates.*

We currently hope to return to in-person worship on September 12, 2021, for the Merging of Waters services. We will also make reasonable accommodations for those unable to participate in person. We will continue to livestream our services, and offer online and in-person options to our families to participate in Religious Education, based on how widely vaccines are available to children.

As we remember the joy of being together in community, we are beginning to gradually return to in-person opportunities. This is complex and challenging work with many moving parts, and as a faith community, we will make our way with care and compassion for one another leading the way.

Executive Team and members of the Reopening Team: Barbara Hubbard, Ahmed Anzaldúa, Heidi Birkholz, Teresa Connor, Karen Hering, KP Hong, Laura Park, and Martha Tilton.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS



Welcome Words

Laura Park, Acting Director of Membership and Hospitality

In his reflection during the May 16 service, Rob talked about our three expectations of membership:

- Develop personal practice that helps 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.

If you're new to Unity Church and looking for ways to better understand our church's invitation into personal practice, I highly recommend the Wednesday summer series beginning June 16. KP Hong, our Minister of Faith Formation, and Karen Hering, our Associate Minister, will talk about four Transcendentalist practices that over the summer you can try in community: writing, reading, conversation, and meditation. This will be a wonderful chance to try out some practices with other Unity Church congregants and explore whether and how Unity Church might support your religious and spiritual journey. See more details on page 8 of this newsletter.

My virtual door is always open for more conversation about our membership expectations and how you might explore them as you get to know the church and find pathways to deeper connection to the life of the church. The best way to contact me right now is email, if possible, laura@unityunitarian.org. Or call the church office and leave a message: 651-228-1456 x110. I look forward to getting to know you!

Mentoring at Unity

A Path to Deeper Connection

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

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

Pathway to Membership Classes

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

Finding Yourself at Unity

Sundays • 1:00-2:00 p.m.

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

- June 6: Virtual Building Tour
- June 13: Religious Education for Children, Youth, and Adults
- June 20: Pastoral Care
- June 27: Membership 101

Sunday morning church emails include the class topic and a Zoom link to get connected (<https://bit.ly/UnityFYU>), or email laura@unityunitarian.org to receive weekly reminders.

Committing to Unity

Dates to be determined, fall 2021

- *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 class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can discover the places in your life where the world's need meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book (virtually if necessary) and officially join the church! Let Laura Park know you're interested in the next class when it's scheduled at laura@unityunitarian.org. She can also arrange a private signing ceremony.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS / STAYING CONNECTED

Welcome New Members

Marjorie Ames: I am a returning member of Unity Church. My eyes were opened to poverty, inner city challenges and the need for beloved community when I lived on the West side of Chicago as a youth. Yoga, meditation, dancing, and drumming are some of my interests and spiritual practices. For twenty-five years I have worked in the field of supporting people with disabilities in various capacities.



Julie Angert: I came to Unity Church as I was looking for a spiritual home that fit my current beliefs better than the religion I was brought up in. I am excited to get involved in some of Unity's many activities and connect with others who attend Unity!



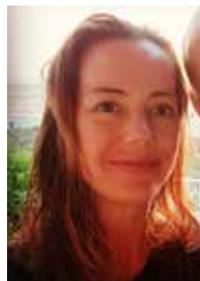
Sarah Armstrong: I'm a retired psychologist and teacher. I'm married with three adult children and seven grandchildren, who are the loves of my life. While I've attended Unity Church for many years, the pandemic year solidified for me my desire to make a more formal commitment to the community, and I'm delighted to be a "new" member.



Jack and Terri Hawthorne found the White Bear Unitarian Church in 1978 with their four sons. In 1984, after moving to St. Paul they transferred to Unity Church. They love spending time with their eight grandchildren and five great-grands. Jack was a pioneer in the computer industry and retired from Univac (Unisys) in 2001 as a Director of Disaster Recovery. Terri retired in 2001 as the Director of Women Services at Metropolitan State University she also was a Women's Study Community Facility professor.



Emily Lewandowski: I live in Eagan with my husband Nik, an electrician, and our two children, Maja (6) and Leo (4). I'm currently a stay-at-home-parent, but plan to resume my work as a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker within the next year. I'm eager to introduce my family to the Unity community!



Ongoing Group Meetings

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

Caregivers Group meets on the third Thursday of the month. Contact: Karen Hering, karen@unityunitarian.org

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

Families Living with Mental Health Challenges meets the first Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Contact: Karen Hering, karen@unityunitarian.org

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

Living With Grief Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month. Contact: Karen Hering, karen@unityunitarian.org

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

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

Men's Conversation Group meets Monday, June 14 and 28, from 7:00-9:00 p.m., to discuss a wide range of topics. Contact Terry McDanel, tmcdanel@gmail.com

Men's Retirement Circle: Monday, June 7 and 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Tom Zell, tomzell@me.com

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

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

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

Single Parenthood Support Group meets every other Wednesday, June 9 and 23, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Contact Laura Park, laura@unityunitarian.org

Textile Arts Group meets every other Wednesday, June 9 and 23, from 7:15-8:30 p.m. Bring your knitting, embroidery, etc. Contact Johanna Stammeier-Toole, johanna2le@gmail.com

Unity Book Club meets the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne, jack.hawthorne@centurylink.net. On June 8 the group will discuss *Educated* by Tara Westover.

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

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

JUNE WELLSRING WEDNESDAY

Summer Programming

Online and In Person

As we move into the summer months, Unity Church's Wellspring Wednesday programming will continue to offer a single weekly program for online education and fellowship through the end of June.

In July and August, this will shift our weekly offerings to focus on one of four spiritual practices as an invitation to Unity friends and members to deepen an existing practice you have or to try a new one. Each Monday, a video message focused on one of the four practices will be shared by email. On Wednesday evening, a small group experience of that spiritual practice will be offered online or in person at the church.

The four spiritual practices featured in the weekly messages and small group experiences (and the dates they will be offered) are:

- **Writing** (offered in person by a lay leader sharing prompts from the book, *Writing to Wake the Soul*) July 7/August 4;
- **Reading** (offered as *lectio divina*, both online and in person) July 14; August 25
- **Conversation** (offered as a modified drop-in Chalice Circle experience, both online and in person) July 21/August 11; and
- **Meditation** (led by KP Hong, offered in person only) July 28/ August 25.

To learn more about spiritual practices in general and about these four and the groups that will be offered, **come to the June 16 Wellspring Wednesday program, "Finding a Spiritual Practice to Feed Your Soul."** The June program is not required in order to participate in the groups in July and August, but it may help you choose which group or groups you wish to attend. More information about attending the groups in July and August will be included in those upcoming newsletters.

June 2 • 7:00-8:30 PM

What's Changed: Everything and Nothing • Register: <http://bit.ly/NextRightAction>

One year ago, following the murder of George Floyd and in the midst of uprisings still roiling the Twin Cities and the nation, we gathered online asking how, individually and together, to identify our next right action — and how to take it. One year later, in this Wellspring Wednesday program, we offer peace circles led by circle keepers Russ Balenger and Maura Williams, to pause and consider: what has changed since then and what has not changed. And how does that influence our own understandings of our next right action today? Come to speak — and listen — from the heart, to learn and to be changed yourself.

June 9 • 7:00-8:30 PM

The Latest in Electric Cars • Register: <http://bit.ly/afecars>

Transportation is a huge contributor to climate change — some say it is 40% — and a range of solutions is needed, one of which is the transition to electric cars. Please join us for a description of the industry, Minnesota options and availability of models, a look at the big picture around the world, and a bit of future forecasting of everything you ever wanted to know about electric vehicles (EVs). Our primary speaker is Jukka Kukkonen, chief educator and strategist for transportation at Fresh Energy and director of Shift2Electric. Bring your questions! We will also have a brief look at non-ownership options for EVs — i.e. shared or hourly rental options and an exciting new program for St. Paul.

June 16 • 7:00-8:30 PM

Finding a Spiritual Practice to Feed Your Soul • Register: <http://bit.ly/SpiritualSnacks>

Unity Church has long encouraged members to choose and develop a regular spiritual practice that will help you grow your soul. For many of us, these spiritual practices became even more important during the pandemic. Join Unity Church ministers Karen Hering and KP Hong for a conversation about the what, how, and why of spiritual practices. Participants will then be invited to join a breakout session on one of four practices to be featured in monthly small group offerings in July and August. Learn about how reading, writing, conversation and reflection can become spiritual practices and consider which of these might feed the hunger of your soul.

June 23 • 7:00-9:00 PM

Antiracism Literacy Partners: A Next Right Action • Register: <http://bit.ly/ARLPjune>

What does it take to be racially literate and engaged in antiracism in a day-to-day way? Where do we find resources and support in our ongoing learning about systemic racism and the work of dismantling it? This program is an easy entry into finding antiracism books, podcasts, and videos, as well as discussion partners for talking about them. Come to choose a resource, sign up for a buddy or small group, and receive discussion guidelines.

June 30 • 7:00-8:30 PM

2021 Berry Street Essay: "Bend a Knee: A Theology of Shared Ministry"

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

Established in 1820 by William Ellery Channing, for two centuries the Berry Street Essay has annually invited an esteemed minister to deliver a lecture to colleagues on salient questions affecting liberal ministry in the United States. This year's 2021 Berry Street Essay will be presented by Unity's own Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs, positing that genuinely transforming congregational ministry is situated at the intersection of social justice and spiritual development. Tracing the joys and struggles of both their marriage and their ministry, Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs will consider the meaning of partnership in ministry and invite us into practices that lead to greater clarity and depth. Watch for details about viewing the lecture the week before June 30, and then join the discussion facilitated by Clover Earl, Unity's board chair.

ART TEAM / LIBRARY-BOOKSTALL TEAM

Attention All Artists, Creators, and Makers!

An Invitation from the Unity Art Team

Maura Williams, Unity Art Team

We have longed for the time when we will return together to the physical space we fondly acknowledge as our communal spiritual home. Finally, that day is in sight. So Unity's Art Team has come up with a fitting "welcome back" opportunity to know each other more deeply and in new ways. Let's learn more about new faces we met remotely and get reacquainted with those we have missed over the past year.

The Unity Art Team invites you to submit something you have made to be exhibited in a congregational exhibit we're calling *Celebrating Our Creative CommUnity*. We invite you to submit:

- An item hand-made by you
- That can be hung on the wall or shown in a display case
- That you have created with careful and engaged attention
- That you proudly (and bravely?) exhibit as an expression of yourself and your interests

We recognize that some may have found new forms of expression while quarantined, perhaps even about experiencing the pandemic, while others have honed their craft for much of their lives. Either avenue to your self-expression is welcome.

The details:

- The items will be exhibited in the Parish Hall and beyond for the month of October, 2021.
- This is not a juried exhibit. All submissions will be accepted pending screening for appropriateness of content and safety of presentation.
- One submission per person.
- Entries may be submitted by members and friends of Unity Church, age 15 and older.
- All two-dimensional submissions must be wired and ready for hanging on the wall. Each must be no larger than 48" on any side.
- Three-dimensional objects smaller than 18" on a side will be shown in covered display cases. Larger 3-D objects need to be mounted and ready for display. The art team will follow up with entrants about displaying 3-D objects if there are challenges.
- Because there are other opportunities to share written materials within Unity, entries featuring calligraphy will be the only acceptable written word submissions.
- Unity cannot accept submissions of video productions, or any item requiring AV equipment.
- Items may be sold. Unity collects a 20% commission on sales.
- Submissions will be received electronically starting July 1. The submission deadline is midnight of September 1, 2021.

Questions? Email artteam@unityunitarian.org. Submit your amazing creation at <http://bit.ly/creativecommunity21>.



The Library-Bookstall Team

Cows for Kids: Summer Reading and Fun

Shelley Butler, Unity Library-Bookstall Team

Did you know that cows sleep 14 hours, drink close to a bathtub of water, and produce five to ten gallons of milk every day? I didn't, and if you're a city kid like I was, then you rarely get to visit a dairy farm. For full disclosure, while I have visited the cows at the Minnesota State Fair nearly every year of my life, I have only been on an honest-to-goodness dairy farm once in my life. In spite of this, my love for all things cow-and-milk related has never waned. And while the Unity Children's Library is still closed, read on for a couple of great cow titles and a fun Milk-the-Cow activity, as well as ways to support Minnesota businesses at the same time.



One of the staff picks at the Red Balloon Bookstore (redballoonbookshop.com) is *I'll Love You Till the Cows Come Home* (Board Book) by Kathryn Cristaldi and illustrated by Kristyna Litten. RBB staff member Angela says that "this is the

sweetest, silliest, cutest 'I love you' sort of read aloud. The rhymes are skilled, funny, and charming and so are the lovely illustrations."

From Minnesota publisher Capstone Press, take a look at *Cows and Their Calves: A 4D Book* by Margaret Hall. Sweet photos and easy-to-understand informative text make this a good introduction to what cows and calves look like, what they eat, and where they live. Download the Capstone 4D app or go online for an accompanying, short video. Find the \$6.95 paperback for sale online at Minnesota's Black, woman-owned bookstore, Black Garnet Books (<https://bookshop.org/shop/blackgarnetbooks>).



Since many of us don't have the opportunity to milk a real cow, you can give kids the feel of it with the **easy-to-do activity at home: "Milk the Cow."** You will need: one disposable, waterproof glove (vinyl or nitrile exam gloves work best) and a backup, a rubber band, and a pin or needle. To Do: Fill the glove with water and secure it closed with the rubber band. Next, prick a hole in each of the fingers of the glove. Then, hold the glove up and show kids how to "milk" a cow. Farmers have told me that milking a real cow does feel like this. Have fun!

Note: The Unity Online Bookstall will be closed for the summer on June 1, 2021. To place a special order please email library@unityunitarian.org.

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Act for the Earth Update

Greening Transportation

Barb Thoman, Act for the Earth Team

When I got married, my husband and I sold one of two cars and we began bicycling and taking transit regularly. We took jobs that were accessible by transit and we ran errands on the bus and our bikes. Chip and I joked that the savings from being a one car family for 20 years put our daughter through college. We were lucky to live in a transit-rich part of the region that also has sidewalks and a great network for bicycling.

When I was a volunteer with the International Institute helping people learn to ride the bus, it seemed tragic that much of the region's affordable housing is in places where transit service isn't good, where sidewalks are limited to major corridors, and where destinations are often too far apart for bicycling.

The transportation sector is the largest contributor to climate change in the U.S., according to the EPA. Transportation emissions also contribute to disease including cancer. Manufacturing cars and trucks requires huge amounts of natural resources and energy. And a lot of land is taken up to park all these vehicles and that parking contributes to run-off and urban heat.

So, what can be done? How can we reduce our transportation emissions and still live purposeful and joyous lives? We can drive less. We can be more thoughtful about our driving — saving up a list of chores to be done on less frequent trips in the car. We can carpool to a restaurant, a movie, or a park. We can ride a bike or the bus to Unity Church or to a friend's home. We can drive a hybrid or electric car, but not too much.

We can fly less. We can take a vacation closer to home to one of the beautiful places in Minnesota or a nearby state. We can take a trip on Amtrak. It's a great way to get to Chicago, Seattle, or Washington, DC. It will give you time to think and strike up a conversation with someone interesting.

To achieve our climate change goals, we need to do all of these things, starting right now. June's Wellspring Wednesday and Garden Party help to educate and encourage a move toward electric with a focus on electric vehicles.



The Latest in Electric Cars: What's New, What's Coming

Wellspring Wednesday, June 9 • 7:00 p.m. • Register: <http://bit.ly/afecars>
See the page 8 for details.

Electric Garden Party

Friday, June 11 • 6:00-8:00 p.m. • Unity Church, Holly Avenue parking lot
Curious about electric vehicles? Join us to view electric cars and bikes and speak to the owners about their experience of EV ownership. Bring your electric vehicle or electric bike — show off your cool electric ride. Tesla, Chevy Bolt and Nissan Leaf will be among the attractions. While you're here you can get a tour of our newly established tree nursery, our pollinator gardens, and children's garden beds. Pandemic safety protocols will be followed. Note: if you are bringing your EV, please contact Priscilla Morton at prismorton@comcast.net or 612-269-3458.

Sanctuary Ministry Team invites you to...

A Baby Shower for Our Sanctuary Guests

You are cordially invited to attend a parking lot or drive thru baby shower for Sherifatu on Saturday, June 5, at 2:00 p.m. Sherifatu is expecting a baby girl at end of June. She and the family arrived here with no baby supplies, so we have set up a baby registry at Target. Gently used infant wear is also gratefully accepted. Please join the Sanctuary Ministry Team in celebrating this momentous time in their lives.

Find the baby registry at [target.com/gift-registry/](https://www.target.com/gift-registry/) and search for " Sherifatu Gawusu." Questions? Contact Pat Haff at haffpatricia@gmail.com.

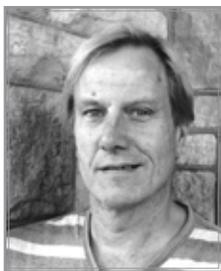
Habitat for Humanity Summer Construction

With the pandemic's effect on livelihoods, and a very tight housing market, supporting



Twin Cities Habitat For Humanity is as important as ever. Whether you can work on the construction or not, please give generously to the Sunday offering for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity on June 13.

For summer construction, the plan is for Unity Church members to participate again as part of the "Faith Builders" team with neighboring churches. We hope to be called back for work in August, after a Covid-19 distancing hiatus. The dates and location have not been confirmed. Watch future church communications for those details and the possibility to sign up to work. Construction experience is not needed, though if you have it, it is helpful. Questions? Please contact Chuck Griggs at griggscb@msn.com or 612-408-0486.



Wake Up

Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries

OMG don't get me started on "woke-ness."

If you don't know this already, unless you are younger than 28 you are not capable of being "woke." Actually, if you are older than 21 it's highly unlikely

you are woke — possible, but doubtful. I know this because all the kids have made it very clear. It is best I just keep my thoughts to myself on all social issues and never, under any circumstances use the term ever, for anything, and surely not to describe myself.

Unity kids, a couple of which I own, are really adamant about this. And it makes it very hard to talk with them about issues of race, gender, orientation, inclusion. As I write this I'm aware of the likelihood I'm going to use wrong or incomplete terminology, which they would never do, illustrating how much more advanced they are than I. That fear that they'll shut down the conversation once they detect my fusty ignorance, is what too often stops me from pushing back, or pushing them.

I can hear myself beginning to sound curmudgeonly; I also don't want to let this be a rant that only proves the point that an important dialog isn't happening because we've gotten very sensitive, and a line has been drawn between those who have awoken, and those who remain asleep. I don't want all the lovely and affirming themes of awakening to be drowned in a too-typical spat over who is more evolved than whom. The birds were singing this morning (5:45, too early) the sun is out, I've got coffee and it feels too good to be awake.

There is something in what the youth are feeling that I do admit is true. By virtue of growing up in a time, and in a church community, and in their schools where inclusion, tolerance, and a disdain for oppressions and inequality are increasingly part of the air they breathe, quite possibly they do wake up every morning with a clearer head than I ever have. Maybe more oxygen is getting to their brains. Perhaps I am hungover from taking in too much of the intoxicating poison of my privileged life and the world I grew up in. Do I still have enough healthy brain cells to truly wake-up?

I think so. Far too seldom I stop reading my news feed in the morning, and following the impulse to yawn I take a truly deep breathe, through my nose, filling my lungs, and I am amazed by how invigorating it feels. I follow that with a joint cracking total body stretch that makes every part of my body tingle and spark with electricity. For the next few moments I feel euphoric and happy and in love with life and capable of doing anything. Why on earth don't I do this simple thing every day and all the time?

I admit I can't completely work out the metaphor I'm developing but I'm eager to start a new day feeling fully awake. I've slept enough through this pandemic, that is certain. We can't go forward sleepwalking. Breathe!



Music Notes

**Ahmed Anzaldúa
Director of Music Ministries**

"I don't know."

Lately, I've found myself saying and writing this a lot.

"When will the choirs start singing together again? What will the music

ministry look like this coming year? What time are rehearsals next fall? Can we sing outdoors? Can we sing indoors?"

"I don't know."

"What about the children? What about people that won't be vaccinated? Should we keep our masks on when we sing? Is it okay for people in the Sanctuary to sing on Sundays? Can we have people in the Sanctuary now?"

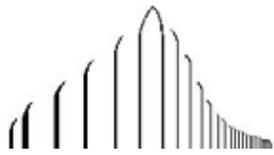
"I just don't know."

What I do know about the coming months is that there will be music. Our choirs will continue to sing and discuss hymns regularly using Zoom, and we will begin to meet outdoors to sing together, gradually figuring out together what that means for worship and the life of the church. We'll find our way, just like we have since our building closed its doors. And maybe in the fall we'll have something resembling our pre-pandemic music ministry, or maybe we'll have something completely different. I just don't know.

Looking back on the last year, not knowing hasn't been such a bad thing. We've adapted and we've accomplished some truly remarkable music-making, virtual and in-person, recorded and live. At the same time, it has also been a year full of grief, and I expect that once the elation of being together again passes, we'll also have to make room for lamentation. Perhaps we can all stand to not know for a little while longer.

Sing with a Unity Choir

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



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

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2021 UUA Virtual General Assembly

Serve as a Unity Church Delegate to General Assembly

Each year, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) gather in a General Assembly (GA) to do the business of the association. That may sound dry, but the conversations about our faith values and how we want to see them expressed in our statements and practices can be deeply meaningful. This year's GA will be held remotely and you can represent Unity Church as a delegate. Learn more at www.uua.org/ga/congregations, and contact Laura Park at laura@unityunitarian.org if you would like to serve as a delegate.



The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Lisa Wersal and **Louis Asher** celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary in June.

In Memoriam

Marcy Mann-Anderson
April 25, 1957–May 22, 2021

If you have a joy or sorrow or life-cycle event you would like to share with the ministers or congregation, please complete the form at www.unityunitarian.org/pastoral-care.html or send an email to Karen Hering at karen@unityunitarian.org.

Awakening Theme Resources

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