

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

“She began to breathe, to breathe at the thought of such freedom; stood and whispered to her child, belong. She held the child and whispered, with calm, calm, belong...”

— R.E.M. “Belong”

When I first heard those lyrics from R.E.M. as a teenager, I wondered if my mother had such sentiments when I was a baby. When I happened to hear that song again as I rocked my firstborn to sleep, I burst into tears, knowing instantly that on some level, it’s likely that all parents hope our children have a sense of belonging. Yet for me, as the child of immigrants, belonging has been more of a hard-fought battle than something I easily laid claim to. So, as we turn to this month’s theme of belonging, I can’t help but reflect a bit on my own journey with this topic, and I invite you to do the same. How does your experience of belonging interweave with our larger reflections on belonging as individuals, and as a community?

At an existential level, most humans, and perhaps most creatures experience a desire to feel a sense of belonging. Certainly, if we look at the broader animal kingdom, it’s clear that being part of a group is not restricted to humans alone. It also seems that belonging isn’t just about survival of the fittest or protection as we see in many species a reflection of what we understand as socialization. We come together in community because it feeds and sustains some elemental part of our souls.

Yet at the same time, the community we crave can also chafe. Particularly for those of us who haven’t grown up with strong community ties, the reciprocity of communal connections can rub up against our sense of personal autonomy and individual freedom. As a result, particularly in religious community, we think about how we create bridges

that support people in moving from the edges of the church to step more fully into a deeper sense of commitment.

Here, we can’t help but engage the question of belonging as it relates to identity. Do we belong out of a sense of sameness? Or can we come together in ways that bridge difference? This is particularly relevant in a UU context where our theological embrace is so very broad. If we as a community can hold a range of faith perspectives from atheism to Islam, if we can find religious meaning in things as diverse as the natural world and the metaphor of Jesus resurrected, what exactly is it that brings us together? What is at the center that binds us together and that we bind ourselves to? We might be tempted to say that it is community, but this is a tenuous assertion in a time where we are increasingly conscious that our community isn’t yet as welcoming as we aspire it to be.

Of the many things we’ve learned over several years of grappling with decentering whiteness, with learning about and working to undo white supremacy, and with several decades of anti-racism work, one thing is clear: our community does not seem to be fully welcoming of people of color. Minimally, many people of color within Unity Church and within Unitarian Universalism writ-large speak of a sense of not feeling welcome to bring our full selves here. We are drawn to a life-giving theology in which we feel deep resonance and call, yet find that we need to work to make accommodations to a cultural expression that can often leave us out. Is this belonging?

In truth, that is not a fair question, nor is it an answerable one, yet it is still one that must be asked. It is not fair because it runs the risk of coming across as an accusation, and what’s the point of accusing any of us for embodying the

culture(s) we were born into? It isn’t an answerable one because belonging isn’t as clear cut as a binary yes/no. Perhaps the only way we can answer the question is to say “yes, and...” or equally “no, and....” Which is why it is a question that we must continue to ask: do we as a community embody the welcome we aspire to? Do we invite into a space of belonging, the people we aspire to be in relationship with?

The poet Nayirrah Waheed writes:

“things. that
should be asked often. in every type. of
relationship:
how it your heart.
is your breath happy. here.
do you feel free.”

Our answers to the question of belonging may always be imperfectly realized, but perhaps if we can continue to ask Waheed’s questions, we may move together toward a place where we can look at each other, answer, simply: yes, and know that we are in a place of belonging.

*Hallman Ministerial Intern Arif Mamdani
with this month's theme team:*

*Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Lisa Friedman, Karen Hering, Ken Ford,
KP Hong, Drew Danielson,
and Andrea Johnson*

Belonging Theme Resources

BOOKS

World of Wonders by Robertson Davies
All The Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr
Eternal Echoes by John O’Donohue

MOVIES

Breaking the Waves (1996)
ET (1982)
Home (2015)
The Point (1971)
Coco (2017)

Just Words



During the last years of her life my mother's mother lived at the old East End Park Hotel at the edge of the park along the lake shore. She would often take care of me for a couple of hours in the afternoon to give my mother a much-needed break. Sometimes my father would stop by after work to pick me up and we would go for a walk in East End Park. In that park there was and is an ageless gnarled apple tree. When I was a toddler my father would lift me up to where three main branches met to form a saddle. I can still remember how the rough bark felt against my summer-naked arms as I held on for dear life while he hovered close by. When I was old and confident enough I began to climb beyond his reach high up into the skinny branches from where I could see out to the beach and the lake that stretched all the way to the horizon. Now and again I still visit that tree and remember the wordless wonder it inspired.

Though I try not to lose myself in novels except when on vacation I couldn't wait to start Richard Powers newly published masterpiece entitled *The Overstory*. The title seems awkward. Overstory? Understory? But the awkwardness faded when I learned that overstory is another word for canopy, as in a forest or jungle canopy. Forests have both an overstory and an understory. The double-entendre is charming as Powers weaves together a series of stories in which people interact with particular trees often over centuries and with even greater consequence he recounts the ways in which the trees themselves live in community.

He is trying to help us understand how insignificant we actually are and how important it is to the planet that we wake up to that fact. Barbara Kingsolver in the *New York Times* review of the book writes:

A tree's-eye view on a planet can also be plenty unnerving, in life and in art. Powers doesn't hesitate to give us wide-screen views of the machinery of his plot, so we can't miss the roles his characters have been assigned as fulcrum and levers bent to a larger purpose. It's a fair enough device in a novel meant to tell us that humans aren't the only show on earth: that in fact we're not much more than a sneeze to a bristlecone pine. In the end, The Overstory defies its own prediction about fiction's limits, making the contest for the world feel every bit as important as the struggles between people. Even if you've never given a thought to the pulp and timber industries, by this book's last page you will probably wish you weren't reading it on the macerated, acid-bleached flesh of its protagonists. That's what a story can do.

I think back to that apple tree in East End Park. I remember how it lent me confidence and courage when I was just a little boy. As the days grow long and with any luck we get to slow down a bit, my hope is to rekindle that deep sense of belonging to something far larger than myself. I hope to take a lesson from the trees. They know more than we do about time and change and what it takes to live a balanced and a fruitful life.

So feel free to join me as I breathe a little more deeply, slow way down, and look up into the trees in wonder.

Be a blessing and be blest.

Rob

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

Gary Zimmerman

July 26, 1931–April 24, 2018

Dennis Kosanke

November 17, 1942–May 13, 2018

In Celebration

Lydia Laine Hilton

born one more redeemer

April 18, 2018

to parents Nikki Holm & Pete Hilton

Maverick Robert Milton Henry

born one more redeemer

April 25, 2018

to mother Laura Rose Henry
grandparents Susan & Lawrence Henry
great grandmother Betsy Guthmann

Merging of Waters

Be sure to collect water from your travels (or backyard!) this summer. The Merging of Waters reunion service will be held on Sunday, September 9.

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JUNE AND JULY SUNDAY WORSHIP

Summer Sunday Worship

During the summer, Sunday worship services are held each week at 10:00 a.m.

Lay-led worship services begin July 8.

Religious Education Summer Sundays in the Garden will be offered during the 10:00 a.m. service.

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

June 3: Centering Decentering

Earlier this year Rev. Mitra Rahnema, editor of the book *Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry*, spoke with members of Unity Church about her book and the questions that arise when UU faith communities grapple with questions of multiculturalism and cultural expressions that are or are not “centered” in congregational life. As we open a month focused on the theme of belonging, join Hallman Ministerial Intern Arif Mamdani and worship associate Maima Fant as they invite us to consider the spiritual practices of centering and decentering and what they might mean here at Unity Church.

June 10: The Importance of Belonging

The experts tell us that the most significant ailment afflicting Americans is isolation. It is a human need to belong to someone, or something. And yet our culture values the rugged individual. How do we square these conflicting values in our lives? Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Heidi Huelster will wrestle with the importance of belonging in our world.

June 17: Longing to Belong

Poet John O’ Donohue explains that the word belonging holds together the two fundamental aspects of life: being and longing. Belonging is deep, only in the superficial sense does it refer to our external attachment to people, places, and things, rather it is the living and passionate presence of the soul. Join ministerial intern Andrea Johnson and Rev. Lisa Friedman as we explore our longing to belong.

June 24: The Freedom of Belonging

It is easy to shy away from commitment and call it freedom. But there is a difference between freedom from and freedom to. True belonging invites us into discipleship not to a person, though the teacher may well embody the teachings, but to the teachings themselves. What does discipleship look like in our religious community? What kind of freedom is born of true belonging? Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Rev. KP Hong will offer the service.

Summer Sundays Pancake Brunch

July 15 and August 19 • Following the 10:00 a.m. service!

Join us for a pancake brunch after Sunday worship. We’ll have fresh pancakes, real maple syrup, sausages, juice, coffee, and more! Want to help flip pancakes? Contact Madeline Summers, Volunteer Coordinator, at madeline@unityunitarian.org.

July 1: Young, Scrappy, and Hungry

The hit musical *Hamilton* turns the story of the American Revolution on its head and challenges assumptions about the nature of our democracy. Youth-led movements against gun violence and national movements such as Black Lives Matter and the Poor People’s Campaign issue those challenges again in our day. Unitarian Universalism affirms the democratic process in our faith and world. Join Rev. Lisa Friedman and worship associate Alex Askew for a service asking: What is the hunger for freedom and citizenship that is alive for us today? What lessons might we take from the birth of our nation in the midst of slavery and the oppression of the indigenous people here before us?

July 8: On the Run 1

Unitarian Universalists often discuss race in the abstract. How do we build the beloved community? How do we be more welcoming? How do we dismantle racism? Through this lens, UUs often miss the realities and lived stories of people of color in their own congregation. Join Avi Viswanathan and Kevin Ward as they begin the exploration of the racism people in our own community face.

July 15: On the Run 2

Worship Associates Kevin Ward and Avi Viswanathan continue the exploration of how white supremacy paralyzes progress and justice. How can we own our roles in the oppression of people of color, and what is the way forward? Musician: Sunita Staneslow

July 22: Knowing and Doing Better

Worship leader Jackie Smith and worship associate Bob Lies will unwrap the tension between knowing something to be true, understanding that what is one’s truth might not be another’s, and the balance between both living in and healing a broken world.

July 29: Inherent Worth and Dignity

The first principle of Unitarian Universalism is the inherent worth and dignity of every person — an affirmation that we are each a part of the original blessing of being. Having once been challenged by a lifelong Unitarian Universalist: “Can I still be a UU, even if I’m not sure of everyone’s worth and dignity?”, Rev. Lisa Friedman and worship associate Bryan Smith will ponder the question of what it means to be a religious tradition which places its faith in humanity, in a world whose cruelty and tragedy does not always bear that faith out.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Belonging

From Nila Gouldin, Board of Trustees



The theme for the month of June is belonging. It is defined as an affinity for a place or group. *The first phrase that comes to my mind is a sense of belonging — a place that feels like home.*

This word represents that emotion that we experience when something *just feels right*. We feel protected, enveloped by values and emotions that feel comfortable. We relish experiencing the calm that comes over us when we exhale. We exhale and release

the pent up anxiety, tension, and worry that we did not even know was inside of us. Once gone, there is a peaceful void — a calm. This calm is likened to home. After all, home is a place where body, mind, and spirit can relax and rejuvenate.

Home was a physical address during childhood. A place where you spent your time, with your family, when not in school or playing outside with friends. A place to eat, sleep, do homework and chores. It was predictable and secure. In hindsight, did we ever think that it could be any different? Why would we want it to be?

As we got older, we noticed that a physical address was not the only kind of home. There were different types of homes, mainly intangible. Just like our childhood home, these intangible ones provided the space to relax and rejuvenate our intellect. Discovering an intangible place where our spirit feels calm is the experience that most Unitarian Universalists share. It is different for everyone yet the similarity still exists. Where does our body, mind, and spirit belong? Everyone gets to define their belonging — sense of home — despite their process.

The previous examples demonstrate belonging in a passive state. It exists as something that happens to us, we are the recipient, or something we experience. Very rarely did we control where we lived as a child. We did not go through a scientific process to ignite our academic or recreational passion, we simply experienced its revelation. How does one recognize their belonging in a larger context?

Belonging, in the active tense, encompasses creating home, that sense of belonging. It is akin to being convinced of one's purpose and using our talents and resources to that end. How does the alignment of our talents — physical presence (body), mental abilities (mind), and spiritual compass — materialize? It is the evolution of the intangible sense of belonging into tangible actions that foster a sense of belonging. It can be seen in the positive impact on individuals around us, in the community at large, and society as a whole. It is not about acceptance by others; *it is about actively creating acceptance* — that environment where all feel the same sense of belonging.

Fellowship Groups

Groups are open to all members and friends of Unity Church.

Afterthoughts: This group meets after the 10:00 a.m. summer service.

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (June 21/July 19) from noon–2:00 p.m.

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (June 12/July 10) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (June 23/July 28) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Kung Fu: Saturday mornings in the Body Room from 10:00 a.m.-noon. Recommended for people ages 15 and older.

Living With Grief Group: For people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (June 19/July 17) from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, June 4, and 18, and July 2, 16, and 30, from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (June 14/July 12) at 7:00 p.m.

Textile Arts Group: Meets the first and third Thursdays of each month (June 7 and 21/July 5 and 19), from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Bring your knitting, embroidery, needlepoint, etc.

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net.

June 12: *Firebrand and the First Lady, Portrait of a Friendship* by Patricia Bell-Scott.

July 10: *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline.

Women In Retirement: This group meets the second and fourth Thursday of the month (June 14 and 28/July 12 and 26), from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction offered on June 5 and July 3 at 5:00 p.m.

Serve on Unity's Board of Trustees

At the annual meeting in November, the congregation will vote to elect three nominees to the Unity Church Board of Trustees.

Trustee terms are three years in length. The board meets once a month throughout the year. Meetings alternate between the second Saturday and the third Wednesday of the month. Trustees typically serve on two sub-committees during the year. A trustee job description can be found on Unity's website at www.unityunitarian.org/board-of-trustees.html.

You must be a voting member of Unity Church to serve on the Board. If you are interested in learning more or would like to request an application, please email Bailey Webster at webst176@umn.edu.

2017-18 MINISTERIAL INTERNS

Hallman Ministerial Intern: Arif Mamdani



Yesterday, May 14, kicked off 40 days of action for the Minnesota Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. It was a long day. The action and rally went off well. Several hundred people gathered. We connected with our local partners in some really wonderful ways, adding our voices to theirs and helping to amplify the fight for living wages for all workers. Thirteen people were arrested, many of them members of Unity Church, and all were released by 3:00 a.m. that night. When I woke up the next morning, I thought "Oh. My. Goodness. We have to do this every week for another month. And there's still Unity work to do! How can I possibly do this?" OK. The words that I used might have been a little different, but the sentiment was the same.

Now, it's reasonable to look at that sentiment and see some rationality, some logic, a sentiment that perhaps many of us have had. But as I sat there later that morning, feeling those same feelings wash over me, I had a moment of grace in which I realized a couple of things: 1) I needed to do some theological reflection on the meaning of "40 days" for me; 2) My questioning was an expression of doubt, aversion, and an absence of faith; and 3) (as my wife reminded me) I had just returned from a weekend meditation retreat and reconnected to old practices in a deeper way — perhaps this 40 day period could be an opportunity, not a hardship; and 4) I wasn't alone in this work — not at all.

I can't say that it was an immediate shift, but if I learned anything at my meditation retreat, it's that feelings are incredibly transient. As I sat with my doubt, aversion, fatigue, and everything else, as I brought love, care, and compassion to myself, I noticed the negative thoughts start to lose their grip. I was able to relax and see more clearly what was happening in my mind and heart.

Many religious traditions give significance to the number 40, and the period of 40 days. In the tradition of Kundalini yoga, practitioners are encouraged to commit to working with a particular meditation or set of postures for a 40 day period (or longer), because it's believed that it takes 40 days to break a habit or pattern, and that part of the purpose of spiritual practice is help us break old patterns to make room for new ones that better serve us. And so I wondered, as I sat there that morning, if this 40 days of action could be not just a National Call for Moral Revival, but also a call for my own revival and reconnection with practices like faith, trust, and compassion.

Will it work? I have no idea. Past experience says yes, but it's also hard to sustain focus and attention for 40 days. Habits are apparently not so easy to change. So, ask me about this at the end of June. In the meantime, I ask you — how do you want to use the days of this campaign to reflect on your life? What could use a revival in you?

As we sing at our rallies, "we have nothing to lose but our chains."

Ministerial Intern: Andrea Johnson



Poet John O' Donohue explains that the word belonging holds together the two fundamental aspects of life: being and longing. Belonging is deep, only in the superficial sense does it refer to our external attachment to people, places and things, rather it is the living and passionate presence of the soul. Belonging is at the heart and warmth of intimacy. When we deny it, we grow cold and empty. Our life's journey is the task of refining our belonging so that it may become more true, loving, good, and free.

I've certainly been on the journey of belonging this year as I prepare for ordained ministry. As I began my year here I wondered if I belonged. Would I be good enough to stand in the long line of hallowed interns that came before me? Would I be worthy of the mentoring, coaching, and supervision time offered by Janne, Rob, Lisa, and my MIST committee? I've come to realize that true belonging can only happen when I present my authentic, imperfect self to the world. My sense of belonging will never be greater than my level of self-acceptance. Self-acceptance is something I truly long for and will continue to work on in my early years of ministry as I find my way, bringing my unique gifts and talents to the people I will serve. You have helped me practice greater self-acceptance this year.

My passion for theology is one gift that I have brought to Unity Church this year in the form of Chalice Circles, small groups of 8-10 people who gather to reflect on the monthly worship themes. I love researching each month's theme, gathering resources to inspire, encourage, and help participants live out their faith in their daily lives. I have been deeply moved by the many stories of spiritual growth and gratitude for the opportunity to share deeply and intimately that participants have shared with me. This program has satisfied a longing for growth, connection, and belonging at Unity Church and I feel so grateful to have been a part of making it a success this year.

As for my own sense of belonging — I am now ready to claim what my beloved seminary professor has termed, *congregational theologian*, as my call to ministry. My deepest desire is to help Unitarian Universalists tap into the theological riches of our tradition, identify our deepest convictions and ultimate concerns, live authentic and meaningful lives, and connect to the creative and mysterious power source at the depths of our being (God). I take enormous pride in my UU heritage, understanding the distinctive beauty and ongoing relevance of our traditions and I firmly believe that Unitarian Universalism can play an integral part in creating a more just, peaceful, compassionate, and multicultural world.

Thank you for loving me into ministry; blessing me with your presence, guidance, support, and encouragement this year. It has been a joy to experience not just in my head but in my body this sense of belonging to my call, to this faith, and to the ground of my being.

WELCOME WORDS / WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Pathway to Membership

Sign up for Pathway to Membership classes at the Welcome Table on Sundays or contact Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107.

Finding Yourself at Unity

A Deeper Inquiry:

Finding Yourself at Unity is offered on a regular basis on Sundays, from 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. These sessions can be attended in the order that works for you and will offer participants the opportunity to share part of their religious journey, to take a more in depth look at the history of Unity Church, to discuss the expectations and benefits of membership, and get to know the programs and ministries of the congregation. Childcare is available in the nursery. June and July topics include:

- June 3: Religious Education for Children, Youth, and Adults
- June 10: Q & A with a Minister
- June 17: Membership 101 and Congregational Life
- June 24: Worship and the Liturgical Year
- July 1: No class, 4th of July weekend
- July 8: UU History
- July 15: Social Justice and Community Outreach
- July 22: Pastoral Care
- July 29: Membership 101 and Congregational Life

Committing to Unity:

Joining Unity Church

Wednesday, June 6 • 7:00-9:00 p.m.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and finding the place where the world's needs meet the gifts you have to offer. The class concludes with a celebration ceremony as participants sign the membership book.

Welcome Words



Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement

Summer in Minnesota is a time to tend to our spirits — to bask in the sun, to try new adventures, and to remember we belong to a wide, wonderful universe. Here at church our congregational life will relax, but still be going strong with many opportunities for worship and connection. Come hear the reflections of our wonderful lay preachers and enjoy the musical gifts of our members. Relax over a pancake breakfast (page 3), enjoy a St. Paul Saints game with Unity friends (back cover), or join a parents' book club here at church (page 10). Sign up to tutor at the Freedom School or volunteer with the summer blood drive for the American Red Cross (page 8). Make new friends tending the Children's Garden and growing produce for our local food shelves. The summer season is a glorious time to savor life's gifts together. See you in church!

Welcome New Members



New members, left to right: Bill Quist, Deb Quist, Angie Scott, Vanessa Assata Taylor, Morgan France, Sarah France Ullmer, Elizabeth Elcombe

Elizabeth Elcombe came to Unity Church because she was looking for a community in which her children could explore the big questions in their lives and she could develop a spiritual practice of her own. She is living her dream as a Montessori Children's House teacher.

Sarah France Ullmer joined the church over 10 years ago by a recommendation from good friends. Life happened and she drifted away, married **Morgan France**, and brought him to church. Unity was the first church that Morgan had attended that resonated with him. They look forward to having a church family with their two sons, Emerson and Peter.

Deb and Bill Quist have three grown children. Deb flower-gardens and sings. Bill writes poems and fixes their house. They love to read and travel, and enjoy their new old home in Southeast Minneapolis with easy airport access. They joined Unity Church so they'll never have to recite a creed again.

Angie Scott was first introduced to Unity Church by friends as she shared her hope for finding a faith community with which she could not only meet her own spiritual needs, but also provide her kids, Fin and Sada, with opportunities to more intentionally engage their own spiritual growth. Angie is a psychologist at The Emily Program in St. Paul. Angie lives with her husband, Jeff Gustafson, and their kids in Mendota Heights.

Vanessa Assata Taylor and her granddaughter are excited that they found Unity Church. They love the liberating message and revolutionary spirit. No more slave religion, no more hatred. A message of liberty. They want to be involved in the united strong vision that they see, to make a better world for the future.

Grand Old Day

On Sunday, June 3, street parking will be limited due to the Grand Old Day street festival. Unity's parking lots will be managed by volunteers so that worshippers can park while fair-goers contribute money toward Unity's Habitat for Humanity build. Share the news with your neighbors that they can park with us and support a great cause! If you are interested in volunteering for a parking shift, please email Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

Racial Justice Movie Night

Fruitvale Station

Friday, June 8 • 7:00 p.m. • Robbins Parlor

Join Unity Church members and friends for an ongoing film series to further our growth in the understanding and challenging of white supremacy and structural racism. Popcorn will be served and there will be time for conversation. Though he once spent time in San Quentin, 22-year-old black man Oscar Grant (Michael B. Jordan) is now trying hard to live a clean life and support his girlfriend (Melonie Diaz) and young daughter (Ariana Neal). Flashbacks reveal the last day in Oscar's life, in which he accompanied his family and friends to San Francisco to watch fireworks on New Year's Eve, and, on the way back home, became swept up in an altercation with police that ended in tragedy. Based on a true story. Winner of the 2013 Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award for U.S. dramatic film at Sundance.

Summer Solstice Sadhana with Elen Bahr

Thursday, June 21 • 7:30-9:00 p.m. • Unity Church

Celebrate the light! In yogic tradition, a Sadhana refers to any spiritual exercise aimed at progressing each person toward the very ultimate expression of their life. The summer solstice is a beautiful time to celebrate the activating energy of the sun and recognize the bounty of all we have individually and collectively manifested. In this class we will embark on a ritualized journey that may include intention setting, breath exercises, chanting, slow flowing yoga postures, meditation, visualization, and deep relaxation. All levels of practice are welcome and supported; please bring a journal and pen.

Mentoring at Unity

Unity Church has a mentor program available to all visitors and new members. A mentor serves as a guide and a resource in the congregation. They pledge to meet at least once a month face to face, and be available for ongoing questions and advice for at least six months. Each mentor/mentee team can decide what is most helpful — to have a buddy with whom to attend services and events, or a partner with whom to discuss Unitarian Universalism and each other's spiritual journeys, and more. If you have questions, or would like to request a mentor, please stop by the Welcome Table in the Parish Hall or email Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

The Continuum of Anti-racism & Racism: Unity Resources

Shelley Butler, Library & Bookstall Team

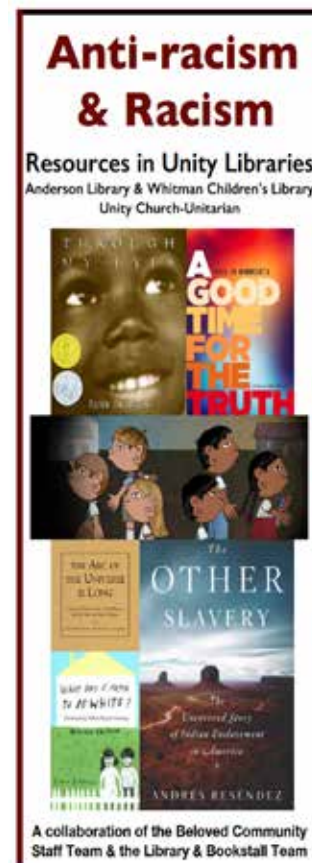


"If, as a white person, I conceptualize racism as a binary and I see myself on the 'not racist' side," writes Robin DiAngelo, "what further action is required of me? No action is required at all.... This guarantees that, as a member of the dominant group, I will not build my skills in thinking critically about racism or use my position to challenge racial inequality." In *My Grandmother's Hands*, Resmaa Menakem talks about how Americans tend to think of healing as binary, either we are broken or healed. But neither growth nor healing work that way; rather, people move, or hopefully evolve, on a continuum.

I get it, though having grown up in a mainly white, middle-class, Christian neighborhood in the northern but segregated city of Minneapolis, I'm constantly challenged to resist the binary thinking with which I was educated from kindergarten through graduate school. Fortunately, there are many people and resources at Unity Church to help us find our way along the continuum toward healing.

To that end, Pauline Eichten of the Beloved Community Staff Team collaborated with Unity Library volunteers to gather print materials and online sources to create the Anti-racism / Racism Collection. Access the collection on the Unity Library Catalog home page. To see selections from the collection for children and adults, find the "Anti-racism & Racism: Resources in Unity Libraries" brochure in the kiosks, libraries, and Bookstall.

The most recent book in the collection and in the Bookstall (available at Unity Church June 15) is *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo. "DiAngelo provides a powerful lens for examining, and practical tools for grappling with, racism today." —Starred Review, Publishers Weekly



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Evergreen Quilters

Thank you!

Evergreen Quilters wishes to thank all Unity Church members and friends for their incredible participation in the April quilt raffle and silent auction. All proceeds will be distributed to the Evergreen projects, supporting organizations that serve women and families. The raffle and auction raised \$5,044.52!

Project Home

Thank You!

Thank you to all the volunteers who made Project Home possible! It takes over 165 volunteer shifts to extend our hospitality to Project Home families during the month of May. Your support and dedication makes a difference!

**GIVE BLOOD.
SAVE LIVES.**



Save the Date Blood Drive

**Tuesday, July 31 • 1:00-7:00 p.m.
Parish Hall**

Unity Church will host a blood drive for the American Red Cross this summer. Watch for information about scheduling a donation appointment online. Interested in volunteering or helping organize? Contact Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

Food Shelf Donations

Thank you for supporting the families served by the Hallie Q. Brown Food Shelf!



Food shelf collection trunks are located at the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances. Non-perishable food, toiletries, and pet food are all gratefully accepted.

Habitat for Humanity: June 4-8

The Unity Church Affordable Housing Outreach Ministry Team is co-sponsoring a Habitat for Humanity build as an interfaith partner in Faith Builders. This will be new construction in the near East Side area of St. Paul. A Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity "green" build integrates building practices that reduced detrimental impacts on the environment, promote healthy indoor air quality, and reduce energy costs while increasing the long-term affordability. Work week is June 4-8. Sign up online at <http://faithbuilders.tchabitat.volunteerhub.com>. Questions? Contact Chuck Griggs at griggscb@msn.com or 612-408-0486.



Volunteer: 2018 St. Paul Freedom School

How do children in St. Paul spend summer having fun while participating in an exciting learning environment? Freedom School! At Freedom School, students entering kindergarten through 9th grade experience a multicultural learning atmosphere that includes the basics (math and reading) but also singing, dancing, and learning from specially selected books that inspire great pride in personal cultural traditions. There are field trips to places relevant to good futures and to places that are just fun. Best of all: it is offered at no cost to families.



One of the two St. Paul locations is Rondo Education Center. Every year several volunteers from Unity Church serve by sorting books to get the summer off to a good start, and as helpers for the teachers during the summer term. This year Freedom School starts in late June and runs until July 27.

Interested in serving as a volunteer or want to learn more? Visit the Freedom School table in the Parish Hall after the 10:00 a.m. service from May 27-June 17, or contact Jane Thomson thoms028@tc.umn.edu.

Enjoy your summer...

Nancy Heege, Obama School Ministry Team

And as you think ahead to fall, please consider ways you could assist with Unity's Community Outreach Ministry Team supporting Obama Elementary School. We are making a real difference for the school community, and we'd love for you to join us!



One-time opportunities include helping to provide snacks for a teachers' meeting, or helping to feed a family in need with a financial gift of \$20 or more that will be used to purchase and distribute Cub Foods gift cards. There are also a number of one-time opportunities added by the school during the year, we'll keep you posted.

Ongoing opportunities include classroom tutoring, assisting in the library with the re-shelving books and processing new books into the collection, working on special projects, volunteering for the administrative committee supporting this ministry team, and more. For more information contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-28-1456 x107.

Join Unity Church members who say, "The time I spend tutoring at Obama School is an hour I feel good about. The demonstrative, affectionate scholars give me a feeling of warmth and purpose." [Jane T.] And, "Working in the Obama school library is needed and a nice chance to see the children coming and going and to work with a very pleasant staff. If you mislay your car keys at the school (I did), everybody in that very friendly atmosphere will help you find them." [Caroline F]

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

One Year of Partnership with Protect Minnesota

Sue Conner, Gun Sense Ministry Team

On Sunday, June 3, Unity Church will recognize the congregation's participation in the Interfaith Alliance for Gun Safety. This alliance is made of people of faith from *all* traditions working together to protect Minnesota from the devastation of gun violence.



This church year has been the first year of the partnership between Protect Minnesota and Unity's Gun Sense Ministry Team. We have worked:

1. To raise awareness of the issue of gun violence and of Minnesota gun policies
2. To support and facilitate Unity Church members in expressing their views to their state government.

What a year it has been! Look at all the ways that Unity Church members have connected to the work of Unity's Gun Sense Ministry Team:

- Attended workshops in how to talk about issues of gun policy
- Attended a Wellspring Wednesday presentation by Protect Minnesota's director, Nancy Nord-Bence
- Participated in an enormous rally at the Capitol in February
- Lobbied legislators in person
- Attended hearings when relevant bills were presented in committee
- Made calls to committee heads
- Mailed over 100 postcards to their state legislators
- Addressed the issue during Veterans' Day on the Hill
- Unity youth participated in demonstrations this spring, including forty youth who marched in the March for Our Lives (and were greeted by many more Unity Church members at the Capitol)
- Stayed connected through monthly emails about upcoming actions and events
- Made gunlocks available from the Ramsey County Sheriff's office (if you live in Ramsey County, you may have one of these locks for free)

Now, as summer lures us into reverie with its pleasurable experiences, don't tune out this issue. Gun violence will continue though the legislature is disbanded. Read, think, talk, ask questions, and remember that there is an election in November.

June 2 is National Gun Violence Awareness Day: Wear Orange

Wear Orange was started in 2015, two years after 15-year-old high school honor student and drum majorette Hadiya Pendleton was shot and killed on January 29, 2013, in Chicago — just one week after she performed with her high school marching band at President Barack Obama's second inauguration. An accidental casualty of gang violence, Pendleton was shot in a South Side park where she and friends had taken shelter from the rain. Refusing to stay silent about her death, and the gun deaths of so many others, Pendleton's friends decided to wear orange to commemorate her life and raise awareness. Why orange? It's the color that hunters wear in the woods to protect themselves and others from gunfire. (from People.com)

An Invitation From Protect Minnesota, MAD DADS of Minneapolis, Survivors Lead

Wear Orange to Stop Gun Violence

Saturday, June 2 • 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

North Commons Park (1801 North James Avenue, Minneapolis)

Tabling by community organizations, arts and crafts for the kids, food trucks, community-based entertainment, survivor stories, and a rally at noon.

Offering Recipients

June 3: Habitat for Humanity

This offering will go toward Unity's share of the cost of building a Habitat for Humanity home with our partner, Faith Builders.

June 10: Unity Church Chalice Camp

This offering will support scholarship opportunities.

June 17: Vivienne's Joy Foundation

Vivienne's Joy Foundation raises awareness of Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood. The foundation's first project is a new community playground in St. Paul.

June 24: PTMJC

Pu Taw Memorial Junior College has been meeting the post-secondary educational needs of Karen students in Mae La refugee camp in Thailand since 1996. This offering will support their teacher training program.

July 1: MPWW

Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop offers creative writing classes to men and women in correctional institutions. This collection will go toward funding one 15-week writing class of 14-16 students.

July 8: Transitional Conferencing

Transitional Conferencing assists incarcerated individuals to effectively reintegrate with community and family after release.

July 15: Vivienne's Joy Foundation

See June 17 description.

July 22: CLF Prison Ministry

The Church of the Larger Fellowship prison ministry brings hope and inspiration to over 700 inmates nationwide through its pen pal matches, reading materials, pastoral care, and UU classes.

July 29: ApparentPlan

ApparentPlan is a faith-based network of efforts with the focus of helping churches and synagogues develop their own congregational response to older members, while specializing in health promotion and elder advocacy.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Pitter-pattering Questions

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

From KP Hong, Director of Religious Education

Martin Buber, the celebrated Jewish theologian and mystic, found his contemporaries too quick to classify the world and persons into subject/object dichotomies. He found such partitioning finally inadequate to the inherently relational nature of the child for whom the effort to establish relations came first: "In the beginning is relation — as category of being, readiness, grasping form, mould for the soul; it is the a priori of relation [which] does not rely on a distinction between oneness and separateness." (*I and Thou*, 1923) Neither one nor two, located neither within the self nor outside in the world of social and political affairs, this meeting ground *in-between* harbored for Buber the most authentic and creative aspect of our personal and communal life. For pivoting on this primary meeting ground were the bonds of belonging and the violence of difference.

We have long been familiar with faith formation as *relational learning*, of children held by covenant in a community of profound belonging (and perhaps more so given liberal faith's penchant for giving children wings that set them free more than roots that hold them close). Premised on such relationships of belonging, we recognize the model of faith formation as first *caught* (in early childhood), then *taught* (in middle childhood), then *bought* (in adolescence, of getting buy-in/agreement/consent), then *sought* (in young adulthood and beyond, through question and discovery). Models are models, and faith formation is rarely so neat and linear. But for progressive faith, sought is where many of us remain (stranded).

What about that difficult and demanding form called *wrought* faith? Faith that is worked like wrought iron is worked — molten hot, hammered, rolled, more suited for forging than casting into some pre-existing mold. (Wrought iron is resilient while malleable, easily welded and corrosion-resistant!) Such wrought faith surely points to those inseparable processes of teaching and learning. But while there is little hesitation or ambivalence about learning, teaching often feels uneasy for many, weighted not only by its technical challenges but by the ethical complexities and even suspicion about exercising power over vulnerable children. It seems easier to shift our attention to learning, however fortuitously that may happen.

Not so for the members of the Religious Education Ministry Team who have been reimagining faith formation for the coming year. If wrought faith is taught and forged on the anvil of relationships, how do we organize relationships toward belonging strong enough for consequential faith? For faith that can forge and reshape the world? Does it ask for volunteer relationships of a few Sundays, a month, or a yearlong relationship of tenacious commitment to a group of children? Do we ask a growing number of teachers to organize themselves as yearlong teams who forge a sense of shared ministry among themselves, and ground their teaching less in lesson plans than in the relational pedagogy that takes hold when radical belonging is risked? Would wrought faith ask for anything less?

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

Summer Sundays in the Garden

Religious Education steps into our Summer Sundays in the Garden program, weekly at 10:00 a.m., from May 27 to September 2.

Typically for children ages 4-12, and no registration is necessary but drop-in capacity will be limited by number of adult volunteers. Regular nursery is offered throughout summer. There are still openings for volunteers to assist, no prerequisite garden experience necessary; just a desire to share and learn with children. For more information contact KP Hong at kp@unityunitarian.org.

R.E. Enrollment Sessions

Enrollment sessions for 2018-19 religious education classes will be offered on the following days in the Foote Room:

- Sunday, June 24
11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.
- Sunday, July 15
11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Sessions include enrollment for OWL and COA. Childcare provided. Questions? Please contact michelle@unityunitarian.org.

Our Whole Lives: Parent Summer Book Club

This group is open to all adults, but geared towards parents, and will touch on communicating with your children about sex and sexuality. Discussions, led by Jamie Bosc, will center on the topics covered in the book for each month. Contact Jamie with questions at bosc.jamie@gmail.com. The group meets on the following Tuesdays, from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

June 26: *For Goodness Sex* by Al Vernacchio

July 24: *Girls and Sex* by Peggy Orenstein

August 21: *Come As You Are* by Emily Nagoski

Summer Fun for Children and Youth at Unity Church

Chalice Camp: July 9-13 and July 16-20

Explore UU history, personal identity, and beloved community.

New this year! Chalice Kids: July 23-27 and July 30-August 3

Chalice Kids is a drop in program for kids and youth.

Details at www.unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html.

ART TEAM / MUSIC MINISTRY

June Parish Hall Artist: Lorelee Wederstrom

About this Exhibit: "From the Land of Sky Blue Waters"

As a native Minnesotan, water has been a primary contributor to Lorelee's lifestyle and a source of endless inspiration for her since early childhood. She grew up spending summer days and evenings in a swimming pool. Lorelee was a lifeguard and swimming instructor in her teens and throughout college while her family had a lake cabin until 2011. She has lived on or near a river most of her adult life and spends as much time as possible on the North Shore of Lake Superior. This exhibit pays homage to her birthplace and to the fact that her late father worked for Hamm's brewery in St. Paul for over thirty years. Many will recall the popular beer adds that boasted our fair state. She owes a great deal to this heritage of water!

Lorelee thinks of water as a continuous source of universal energy that links us all and is especially grateful to live in a part of the world where she can enjoy it in abundance. In much of her work, and especially in the pieces selected for this exhibit, Lorelee uses intentional camera movement and slow shutter speeds to try and connect with that energy. She considers working in this manner a spiritual practice.

This exhibit is also a first attempt to pair her photographic art with her poetic musings. Lorelee finds these musings often take poetic form and, in preparing for this exhibit, she realized that she has written a lot about water and her relationship to it.

An artist's reception will be held on Monday, June 25, from 5:00-8:00 p.m., in the Parish Hall at Unity Church. All are welcome.

July Parish Hall Artists: Rose Allen and Gary Jurek

Rose Allen has always had a passion for fiber. Quilting is her medium. She enjoys creating both functional and art quilts. Sewing and handwork are part of her daily meditative practice. She designs intuitively — playing with color, texture and shapes on her design wall. She loves to collaborate with other artists — especially her husband Gary Jurek. Rose is a member of Unity's Evergreen Quilters.

Gary Jurek views stained glass as an art medium that accents the whimsical. The combination of sun, color, design, and vibrant glass impacts our living space and captures our imagination. Gary adds, "it also goes well with quilts!"

Artist Residency at Obama Elementary

The Unity Art Team sponsored an Artist in Residence Program at Obama Elementary School the week of April 9-13. COMPAS artist, Mica Lee Anders, spent the week working with two classes of second graders and two classes of third graders. They learned about famous quilt artists, Faith Ringold and The Gees Bend quilters, as well as others. The artist incorporated Adinkra Symbols from Africa in each quilt block. The blocks are now on display at Obama Elementary. The students learned about design, fabric, color, shapes, patterns, cooperative learning and group planning during the week. On the last day of the residency they made an item of their choice to take home with them.

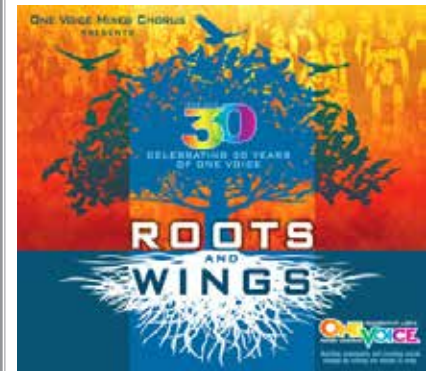


Each scholar had their own block to create in their quilt. In the block shown here the center Adinkra Symbol stands for intelligence and ingenuity.

Unity Church members Jane Thomson, Nancy Birger, Hillary Magnuson, Sally Foster, Pam Satre, Carol Humpage, Barb Rogne, and Paul Rogne volunteered in the classes that week and were much appreciated. Thank you!

Summer Musicians

Summer is a great time to share your musical gifts with Unity Church members and friends. If you are interested in participating as a musician during a summer service, contact Kathleen Bartholomay at kathleenbartholomay297@gmail.com or 651-343-4764.



One Voice Mixed Chorus Roots & Wings

Saturday, June 23 • 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 24 • 3:30 p.m.

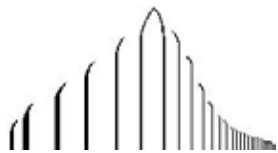
Ordway Concert Hall

Tickets: www.ovmc.org

Join One Voice Mixed Chorus on LGBT Pride Weekend to celebrate 30 years of One Voice! Roots & Wings reflects on where we have journeyed in our 30 years and honors the resilience of the LGBT and allied community. Drawing from our "roots," One Voice performs audience favorites including *Gay vs Straight Composers* and *The Lesbian Second Date Moving Service!*

From our rich history of commissioning new music, audiences will hear One Voice's first ever commission *One Voice* by Minnesota songwriter Ann Reed, as well as *Our Phoenix* composed by two transgender artists.

Spreading our "wings," the concert showcases our future dreams with Heather Small's *Proud and We Won't Stop Dreaming*. Experience the One Voice story on Pride weekend!



UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

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**TIME SENSITIVE
MATERIAL**



Take Unity Church Out to the Ball Game

**Saint Paul Saints vs. Wichita Wingnuts
Wednesday, July 25 • 7:05 PM • CHS Field**

Join other Unity Church members and friends at CHS Field! We have pre-purchased a block of seats together at \$14 per ticket. You can reserve your tickets at the Summer Opportunities Table in Parish Hall or by contacting Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107. RSVP by June 30. All are welcome!

ROBIN DIANGELO RESMAA MENAKEM

Experiencing the Racial Body and Mind

Friday, June 15, 7:00-9:00 PM

Saturday, June 16, 9:30 AM-3:30 PM

Unity Church-Unitarian

Register online at www.unityunitarian.org
Cost: \$50-\$150 sliding scale fee, lunch included.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, November 3, 2018
Unity Church Silent and Live Auction