

Grace

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

There but for the grace of God go I.

But you. You stay over there, with your bad luck. I have been spared, but you...well, you just do what you can to survive this unfortunate twist of fate. But try to do it gracefully, ok? It's not necessary to whine and moan about it. I'll keep you in my prayers — obviously God favors me, at the moment. And from over here I'll admire how serenely you deal with things. Look how you surrender. It's the only way, really. Submission is your only saving grace. Sure, I'll comfort you; grace you with my presence during this time of trouble. But just... just take it all with good grace, OK? There's really nothing you or I can do about it, and I don't want to have to feel guilty or anything.

Black bodies. See how they acquiesce, go where we put them, do what we tell them. Obedient. Submissive. They move through this life (when we tell them they can) with such a quiet grace. Good men and women of God, graced with athletic talent, beautiful singing voices, strong backs for us to exploit.

Female bodies. Petite. Fragile. Painted, smoothed, carved and forced into a beauty of form. Moving with such a delicate, innate grace. Look how she walks in those heels, the graceful sway of her hips. Such fragile grace in the prominence of the collar bone. But that face needs some work, the sweet smile is her only saving grace. No worries — a little nip here and tuck there, cheekbones, nose, chin. Paint the lips, it will bring out the blue of her eyes. Straighten and whiten the teeth; the smile's nice, but...

Animal bodies. Floral and faunal bodies. Nature is full of beauty and grace. The graceful gait of the tiger. The graceful, towering height of the

redwood. The graceful tranquility of ivory. The graceful flight of the golden eagle. The graceful swell of sound as the tide comes in and the graceful twinkle of the stars overhead — when we can see them through the light pollution and smog. The graceful melting flow of the glaciers. The graceful song of the last of the humpback whales. The graceful journey of the salmon upstream — until they reach the dam. Damn, that oil spill delivered the coup de grace to the survival of the shorebirds' nesting habitat and the sea turtles' spawning grounds and the dolphins' food supply.

There but for the grace of God go I.

Go I. Through the corruption, destruction, pollution, persecution, oppression, depression, suggestion, correction, deception, discrimination, separation, disconnection. I go. Gracefully. Because what other choice do I have?

But wait.

Wait.

You keep using that word — grace. I do not think it means what you think it means.

True grace is the antithesis of all that has been said, of all we have learned it to be. True grace is an *invitation*. An invitation to thrive; an opportunity that we must be willing to receive, and that requires us to open our hearts and eyes to see the reality of what is happening.

True grace is wild and unpredictable. It explodes our expectations, crumbles our defenses, pushes past our boundaries and moves beyond anything our minds can imagine.

True grace is prophetic, calling us toward Truth. It is revelatory and redemptive, but only so far as we are

willing to let go of “self” and “other” and surrender to Oneness.

True grace is a reward and a gift, yes, but one that is always present if we can only learn to tune in to the synchronicity, the syncretism, the syncopation and rhythm of life. And it is a gift that we, too, can give. An invitation that we can extend. A wildness that we can encourage.

True grace is profound and sacred, and yet...

It is real. It is here. In every opportunity for connection. In every careful decision. In every moment of appreciation. It is in my body in all its imperfect beauty. It is in the anger of every black man and woman who refuses to remain silent any longer. It is in the resiliency of this earth, which will go on long after we humans do all we can to destroy her. It is mine, but it is also yours.

True grace is ours, if we choose to accept it.

By Shay MacKay with this month's theme team: Karen Hering, Karen Hutt, Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs, KP Hong, Ruth Palmer

Grace Theme Resources

Books

Beloved by Toni Morrison
Godless Grace by Orenstein and Blaikie
Grace Eventually by Anne Lamott
About Grace by Anthony Doerr
Ram Dass: *Fierce Grace* (2001)

Film

Amelie (2001)
Good Will Hunting (1997)
Amazing Grace (2006)

Youth

Holes (2003 film)
The Red Balloon (1956 film)

Just Words



When my father was hospitalized for the third time in a month, his longtime physician came into his room for a chat. He pulled up his chair near my father and spoke to him gently and compassionately, "It seems like a new pattern in your health is emerging here which seems to be: hospitalizations to stabilize things, then periods of being at home, only to be followed by hospitalizations. We can continue this pattern as long as you like. I will do all I can for you if you opt to continue this. But we can choose another way, which is to turn to palliative care and call in hospice. We can say it has been a good life and move to a different kind of care from your home. I will support whichever direction you want to take. You think about it and let me know what you decide."

My father thought about it briefly and decided to enroll in hospice that afternoon. He went from 23 daily medications to four. That day my parents called and spoke to each of their children. They seemed united in their choice. My father died at home about a month later. I was able to be with him in the days leading up to his death. He died with dignity and grace in his sleep. He died having had important conversations with his family members, friends, and his minister. My father was ready to let go of his life. He had lived a life of integrity and determination. He had lived with chronic pain for the last three decades of his life. He left worried about my mother and regretting not be able to see his grandchildren married and with children of their own. But he largely left this life grateful and at peace.

The conversation my father had with his physician was, up until the recent past, entirely too rare. Now, as people are more and more willing to talk about the end of life, these conversations are becoming more frequent. Palliative care and hospice care are now part of the medical options presented to patients for consideration. But still, most of us are unprepared to talk about our own end times. We don't want to think about it until we are ready—like maybe when we are 109...

Some of us, who are a lot younger than 109, aren't given the option to wait. With this in mind, organizations all over the world are encouraging people to have conversations about death and dying. They are being asked to think about how they want to be treated when their time comes, whether it is at 92 or 29.

Last spring I preached on the need to have these kinds of conversations and the response was extremely positive. A group has formed here at Unity Church to structure the conversations that we hope every adult member and friend of this community will sign up to be a part of. Please watch for our news. We will be recruiting and training facilitators and setting up small group conversations in the winter and spring. Again, it is my hope that as many of you as possible will be able and willing to participate.

My humble hopes for these groups? That we courageously talk about our fears and concerns, that we ask questions of one another and ourselves, and that we find and share resources for determining end of life choices. And my final hope? That the conversations lead to greater clarity and spiritual depth, and we have a greater sense of community.

— Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs

The Wheel of Life

In Celebration

Ashley Horan

Ordained into the
Unitarian Universalist Ministry
on October 3, 2015

Archives Team

Minnesota Reflections

Unity's Archives Team will be contributing to the University of Minnesota's "Minnesota Reflections" project. The project provides funds to digitize selected archival materials from organizations around the state and makes them available on its website: <http://reflections.mndigital.org/cdm/>

Soup Suppers

After the 4:30 Sunday Worship Service
All meals will offer vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options. People with specific food allergies may contact madeline@unityunitarian.org to arrange to have a special preparation.

November 1: Tomato basil soup with grilled cheese sandwiches

November 8: Chili

November 15: Roasted red bell pepper puree with corn salsa or Provencal minestrone

November 22: Baked potato soup with all the fixins

November 29: Hungarian beef stew or sweet potato soup

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www.unityunitarian.org

NOVEMBER WORSHIP CALENDAR / OFFERING RECIPIENTS

November Sunday Worship Calendar

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

November 1: *Immortality We Can Trust: Story Sunday*

Come celebrate Dia de los Muertos and All Souls and learn how we can cultivate the gifts of those we've loved and lost. Grace offers blessings hidden in the grief. Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Rev. K.P. Hong will be joined by worship associate Diane Ross. Please bring pictures and other tokens of those you've loved and lost for the Dia de los Muertos altar that will be set up just outside of the sanctuary doors.

On Story Sundays, elementary school-aged children (Workshop Rotation, grades 1-6) begin in worship with the congregation in the Sanctuary. After a Story for All Ages, children proceed with Journey Guides to their classrooms for regular religious education programming.

November 8: *Emerging from the Brokenness: The Power of Grace and Mercy*

Grace often finds us in the midst of trauma and pain. Sometimes it does not, and we have to find our own way through the muck and mire of our lives. Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs and worship associate Rochelle Lockridge will explore the relationship between a sense of agency and a grace that cannot be forced.

November 15: "... he passed by on the other side." *A Reflection on the New Orleans Pilgrims of Unity Church*

As New Orleans civic leaders, James Carter and Michael Cowan will interpret the sacred meaning of the bonds of public friendship that have united their city with her sister city at the northern end of the great river that connects us, through the fidelity of the pilgrims of Unity Church.

November 22: *Gratitude and Grace: Family Sunday*

The whole church family will come together to celebrate Thanksgiving. Come praise the ordinary, the everyday miracle, the feast we gladly see laid out before us when we finally manage to open our eyes. Grateful for an abundant harvest home, we turn toward the winter holidays with gratitude, humility, and bright anticipation.

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

November 29: *The Grace of the Wait Itself*

We may have faith that grace exists. We may even have experienced moments of grace at different times in our lives, but waiting and trusting that those moments will happen takes patience and discipline. That work can be challenging but can also bestow its own gifts upon us. Please join Hallman Ministerial Intern Shay MacKay and worship associate Brian Newhouse as they invite us to find the grace within the waiting.

Offering Recipients

Each Sunday, thirty percent of the offering goes to support the Community Outreach Ministry at Unity Church and seventy percent is given to a chosen community non-profit recipient. **Please make checks payable to Unity Church.**

November 1: Minnesota Television Network

Minnesota Television Network (MTN) is a community media center located in Northeast Minneapolis. MTN offers media training to those interested in harnessing the connective power of media to build bridges of larger understanding and collaboration between diverse communities. This collection will provide seed money for video training scholarships aiming to bring the voices of local non-profits into the scope of MTN productions. Unity Church member Paige Tighe is a outspoken cheerleader for MTN.

November 8: Will's Education Opportunity Fund

Will's Education Opportunity Fund provides assistance to many who could not otherwise afford post-secondary education at a community college, technical school, or university. Will's Fund also assists those whose life choice is to serve others in need, often in low-wage jobs in the non-profit sector. These Will's Fund recipients may have the desire, but not the resources to further their education on behalf of their clients. Will's Fund was established in 2011, inspired by young men from Boys Totem Town who attend the Circle of Peace. Church members Allen Giles, Richard Buggs, Mary Anderson, Russel Balenger, and Louise Wolfram all support this offering recipient.

November 15: Ujamaa Place

Ujamaa Place was founded in 2010 with the purpose of helping young (ages 18-28), disadvantaged African American males who are undereducated and underserved. Ujamaa Place offers an intensive wrap-around program, ranging from six-months to two-years, that focuses on self-empowerment, life skills, GED preparation, spiritual development, community service, job skills, job placement, and connection to family. Unity Church member Rick Heydinger is a founding member of Ujamaa Place.

November 22: Partner Church Ministry Team

Unity's Partner Church Ministry Team uses this annual offering to subsidize travel expenses for church members and members of our partner church community in Homorodszentpeter, Transylvania, so that our relationships continue to grow. Please visit the November Parish Hall exhibit to view photos from past pilgrimages.

November 29: Minnesota Sinfonia

The Minnesota Sinfonia is a professional, non-profit chamber orchestra offering free-admission concerts and educational programs in and around the Twin Cities. The Sinfonia performs more free, in-school concerts than any other professional orchestra in the state. Today's collection will help fill the gap caused by the recent loss of a major corporate donor. Ginny and Craig Allen are staunch supporters of the Minnesota Sinfonia.

CALL TO MEETING / BOARD OF TRUSTEES



CALL TO MEETING

**Annual Meeting of the Congregation
Saturday, November 21, 2015**

10:00 a.m.

Come early for a pancake breakfast at 8:30 a.m.

Unity Church will hold its Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Saturday, November 21, at 10:00 a.m., in the Sanctuary. Childcare will be provided.

At this meeting the Board will:

- Report to the congregation and present the operating budget for 2016
- Ask the congregation to elect three new trustees (bios and photos to follow): Estelle Brouwer, Justin Cummins, and Bailey Webster
- Ask the congregation to vote on changes to the church by-laws
- Ask the congregation to vote on a long-term bank note
- Ask the congregation to vote on the ordination of Rose Schwab

Details and an agenda will be mailed to eligible voting members. Eligible voting members include those who have signed the membership book and have made an identifiable pledge and a payment on that pledge during the 2015 fiscal year. The annual report, budget information, trustee nominee bios and photos, and meeting agenda will be mailed to members in early November. All are welcome!

Budget Information Meetings

Wednesday, November 11 • 7:15 p.m.

Sunday, November 15 • 10:15 a.m.

Do you have questions about the financial landscape at Unity Church? Do you want to learn more about the 2016 budget that the congregation will be asked to approve on November 21 at the Annual Meeting? We are providing two opportunities for curious congregants to ask questions and explore in detail the church finances and 2016 proposed budget. Please join Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director, at one of the budget information meetings or contact her with questions at barbarah@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x116.

Data at Church

From Deborah Carter McCoy, Trustee



The leaf tornado swirls on 6th & Robert Street as I wait for my afternoon bus and I contemplate the mundane and meaningful. The little tornado reminds me of my own busy life and all the things clamoring for my attention. The congregational survey seems mundane. Just another survey. Another 20 minutes asked of a busy life. Easy to skip in the whirlwind.

The survey provides insight into what you think and feel about our church. The survey was developed over many years and includes the work of Laura Park, Bill Etter, ministerial interns, Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs, and others. Each spring, the Board of Trustees convenes its subcommittee to review the previous year's survey, including comments, and make recommendations on what the next survey will ask. This subcommittee then begins the daunting and important task of encouraging participation.

Once the survey responses are in, the data team (Laura and Bill) present preliminary findings to the Board of Trustees and Executive Team. Each comment is read. The final report is shared and discussed. The Executive Team uses the results during their annual August retreat to highlight opportunities for the upcoming church year. (The church year is typically September–May.) The Board of Trustees uses the findings to guide decisions regarding continuity planning, policy modifications, and the operational budget.

The survey results may seem as complicated as the survey itself. (Ugh, it's so loooong and didn't I just rank that same statement?) In an intentional effort to demystify the data and move toward transparency in governance, the Board of Trustees expanded the methods used to communicate survey results through Wellspring Wednesday offerings, a high-level recap at the annual meeting, newsletter articles, and board columns.

The survey results and all of the comments are a touchpoint for trustees during board meetings. The results matter because they are the tool to validate the work toward our Ends.

When the 2016 congregational survey is unveiled in the spring, don't view it as another dry leaf in the whirlwind of life, but as a beautiful green leaf unfurling with meaningful possibility. Your possibility. Our possibility. Take those twenty minutes and share your thoughts. We listen.



Please see page 5 for a congregational survey summary.
Visit <http://bit.ly/ucusurveyresults2015> to view the slides.

CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS / VOLUNTEER CORNER

Survey Says...

From the Board of Trustees, with gratitude to Laura Park and Bill Etter

In May 2015, 263 people completed the congregational survey. Respondents answered questions about the extent to which they saw the Ends (www.unityunitarian.org/mission-and-ends.html) being true for our church and about their own sense of spiritual growth and maturity. The survey results document found online (<http://bit.ly/ucusurveyresults2015>) summarizes what we discovered about our congregation. Some of the most interesting findings:

- Overall, respondents see us doing well on our Ends (slides 8-9). Although, people who said that they or someone in their family identified as a person of color rated our Ends lower overall, and some of them substantially lower (slide 12).
- Overall, we saw significant progress on three “Beyond” Ends:
 - Serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner, and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment,
 - Live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism, and
 - Build authentic relationships with people across differences, in the spirit of humility and reverence.
- Comments on the survey encourage us to find ways to welcome and include people from a wide range of diverse backgrounds (slide 14).
- Results from the spiritual maturity portion of the survey encourage us to develop our ability as a congregation to actively integrate spirituality into our lives (slides 16 and 21).
- The spiritual maturity portion of the survey showed that while “I believe my life has meaning and purpose” is a spiritual strength of our congregation, “I have a clear purpose to my life and am able to articulate that purpose to both myself and others” is a key opportunity (slide 25). For this reason, our Executive Team is building opportunities to reflect on and clearly articulate meaning and purpose into much of this year’s programming and activities. This connection will explore deepening our congregation’s commitment to providing a stable financial base for the operation and maintenance of Unity Church through pledging.
- Slide 25 shows other signature strengths and key opportunities for Unity Church in the area of spiritual growth and development.
- We reviewed the impact of church programs and activities on spiritual growth a little differently this year (slide 31). We grouped activities into categories instead of listing each one. People reported that music activities have the greatest impact.

The congregational survey results were presented at a Wellspring Wednesday session on October 14—our thanks to all who attended and to Bill Etter for presenting the information. Take a few moments to review the survey information and results. Ask yourself, “Do these results change how I view the difference Unity Church is making in the world?” Think about what difference you’d like to see the church make in the future.

Share your thoughts! Look for trustees identified by the red ribbon on their name tags or find contact information online (www.unityunitarian.org/board-of-trustees.html). If you have questions about the structure and content of the congregational survey, please email Bill Etter at better61@gmail.com.

Footnote: The Board of Trustees is charged with the responsibility of monitoring progress toward meeting the 2014–2018 Ends. These Ends were approved by the congregation and guide the work of the Executive Team and others as they focus on providing a seemingly endless river of opportunities to explore in the life of a Unity Church congregant. One important tool available to monitoring the Ends is the congregational survey.

Volunteer Corner

Please contact Madeline Summers, Volunteer Coordinator, at madeline@unityunitarian.org to sign up for any of the following opportunities. In addition if you would like to know more about other opportunities or discuss the particular gifts and talents you’d like to share with Unity Church, contact Madeline to explore which opportunities are best for you.

Soup Supper Cooks

Help by filling the following spaces:
Sunday, November 1, and 29
2:30-4:30 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Work with a group of 5-6 people to prepare a soup supper for over 100 people. Additional support and training provided as needed. Volunteers for Soup Supper are able to attend the 4:30 service. This is a family friendly volunteer opportunity!

Wellspring Wednesday Cooks

Light help needed:
Wednesday, November 4, and 18
3:30-7:30 p.m. (or a few hours during that time)

Welcome Teams

We are currently looking for additional Welcome Team Members at the 9:00 and 4:30 services. Volunteers greet members and visitors as they arrive to church, welcome them to Religious Education and to worship, pass out orders of service, ring the church bell, collect and count the offertory, and assist with serving coffee during our fellowship time after the service.

Circle of Peace Movement

The Circle of Peace Movement is a group of peacemakers committed to breaking the cycle of inner city violence and promoting racial healing. Volunteers are needed to cook, serve, and clean up after meals, drive kids to events, and offer administrative support. Volunteer opportunities can range from heavily involved to light work once a month.

LIBRARY TEAM / PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP

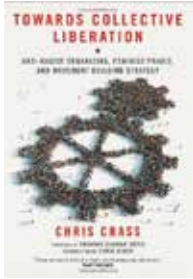


What's New in the Libraries and Bookstall!

From Louise Merriam, Library and Bookstall Team

The Library Team buys books for the Anderson Adult Library throughout the year. Recent purchases include:

Towards Collective Liberation: Anti-Racist Organizing, Feminist Praxis, and Movement Building Strategy by Chris Crass



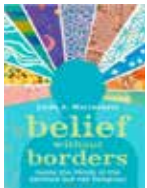
Degrees of Freedom: The Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota, 1865-1912 by William D. Green

You Are Here: Discovering the Magic of the Present Moment by Thich Nhat Hanh

Dreamers: An Immigrant Generation's Fight for Their American Dream by Eileen Truax

Nothing Gold Can Stay: The Colors of Grief by Mark Belletini

Szekely Origins and Radical Faith: From Mongolia to Transylvania: The Birth of Unitarianism by Ferenc Frank Ehrenthal



Belief without Borders: Inside the Minds of the Spiritual but not Religious by Linda A. Mercadante

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

The Anderson Adult Library, on the second floor of the Eliot Wing, is open after Sunday services and at other times by request. The Whitman Children's Library, located on the lower level, is open 15 minutes after Sunday morning services end and will be featured in next month's column. Stop in to see what's new!

Welcome Words



I appreciate that Thanksgiving, with its call to practice gratitude, comes at a challenging time of the year. The daylight shortens, the cooler winds blow, and the to-do lists lengthen. What better time to pause and honor the moments of grace and thankfulness in our lives? If you haven't yet explored gratitude as a daily spiritual practice, I invite you to experiment with it this month. Take a moment each morning to name one or two things for which you give thanks. Go around the dinner table and invite each person to name something that happened in their day. Post a note of gratitude daily on your Facebook page, and see what others share in response. Rotate family members finding a table grace to share. Gratitude not only opens and strengthens our own hearts, but can deepen our kinship with others. In that spirit, I offer this prayer of gratitude from W.E. Dubois: "Give us thankful hearts... in this season of Thy Thanksgiving. May we be thankful for health and strength, for sun and rain and peace. Let us seize the day and the opportunity and strive for that greatness of spirit that measures life not by its disappointments but by its possibilities, and let us ever remember that true gratitude and appreciation shows itself neither in independence nor satisfaction but passes the gift joyfully on in larger and better form." See you in church!

Rev. Lisa Friedman
Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement

Pathway to Membership Classes

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

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers
Sunday, November 8: 5:45-7:00 p.m. ~ also offered ~
Wednesday, November 18: 7:15-8:30 p.m.

If you have been visiting Unity Church and would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalism and our congregation, we invite you to join us for a Welcome to Unity class. Together, we will explore the mission and vision of this church, as well as historical and contemporary Unitarian Universalism. There will be time to reflect on our own faith journeys and religious questions.

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Exploration
Three Tuesdays, November 17, 24, & December 1: 6:30-8:30 p.m., Light dinner provided

In this class, we will have an opportunity to share more deeply our religious journey, to take a more in depth look at the history of Unity Church, to discuss the expectations and benefits of membership, and get to know the programs and ministries of the congregation. Come join us for lively discussion, great food, and a chance to meet others who are exploring Unity Church as a spiritual home.

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church
Wednesday, February 10: 7:15-9:00 p.m.

This class explores the deeper meanings and expectations of membership and shared ministry. It offers time to reflect on the meaning of generosity and how you can discover the places in your life where the world's need meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class will conclude with a celebration ceremony as participants sign the membership book and officially join the church!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



New members, left to right: Poppy Potter, Krysti Schwab, Jean Jordan, Linda Mandeville, Jake Early, Melissa Early, Michelle Brasure, Robin Hoffman, Rev. Lisa Friedman, Nancy Reed

Michelle Brasure

Michelle and her teenage son Oliver live in south Minneapolis with their dog Clyde and two cats. They enjoy biking, traveling, and spending time outside. They have visited Unity Church on and off for several years and are drawn back to the strong religious education programming.

James and Melissa Early

Jake and Melissa Early have three children: Peder in fourth grade, and Emmy and Mari in third grade. They are an active family and spend a lot of time outdoors. They came to Unity Church because they wanted a church that better aligned with their personal beliefs.

Robin Hoffman

Robin Hoffman is a new resident, having come from Rhode Island last January (2015). In addition to her thirty year affiliation with Unitarian Universalism, she also practices meditation with the Kwan Um School of Zen. Robin has two sons, and with a wedding coming up, one future daughter-in-law.

Linda Mandeville

Linda recently moved to St. Paul from California to join her daughter who started her medical residency at the University of Minnesota. Her passions are reading, writing, knitting, and building community around ideas and actions that matter. Unity Church seems to her a center of joy, compassion, and thoughtfulness.

Poppy Potter

Poppy has been living in Saint Paul since 2001. She has dedicated her professional life to serving young people as a teacher and experiential educator. Currently she directs the Twin Cities Outward Bound Center. She loves spending time outdoors taking photos, hiking, and walking her dog!

Nancy Reed

After over 30 years of attending Unity Church off and on — mostly on — Nancy decided it was important to her to become a member. She is recently widowed and came back to the church after Janne invited her to attend the Grief and Loss Group. Nancy and her husband, Ron, who died in 2014, attended the church faithfully for many years while residing in St Paul. Their two sons, now adults, attended religious education classes. Ron was an active member and served on the Board of Directors. Upon reflection of what this church has meant to her over the years, she came to believe it has been a significant part of her transition from a more restrictive religion to a liberal religion, which she truly believes in. This church has supported her throughout most of her adult life. Ron often wondered why she did not become a member so he would be happy to know that she has finally committed herself to this church. Nancy is a retired nurse practitioner and healthcare director and is passionate about restorative justice, caring for her young and active grandsons, and her community involvement with AAUW and Mill City Commons Village.

Krysti Schwab

Krysti joined Unity Church because she finally believes she has found a church and community where she is welcomed without judgment. She has a storied religious history: baptized Lutheran, confirmed Catholic, Born Again Christian, and now a Green Kitchen Witch and part of the Unitarian Universalist church. She has always believed in God but did not feel her beliefs fit within the rigid rules and dogmas of organized religion as she had experienced them. She wanted to be part of a religious community where all were welcome and could express their faith and beliefs without the fear of eternal judgment and damnation as she believes a loving God would never do this to any of Their creations in Their Image. She is also a part of the LGBTQ community and feels fully welcomed at Unity Church.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Embodied Spiritual Practice

Wednesday Evening

Yoga

Weekly 60 minute yoga practice that alternates between a Meditative Movement class (slow, mindful movement, with special attention to breathing and suitable for all body types and ages) and Therapeutic Yoga (great for those with chronic tightness, chronic pain, or who simply want to move their bodies more freely, and is best for adults). Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat or blanket. See Wellspring Wednesday offering description page 10 for details. Learn more about the instructor, Elen Bahr, at EveryYogi.com or email questions to elen@everyyogi.com.

First Thursday

Tai Ji

A “lunch hour” Tai Ji practice circle will meet in the Foote Room on the first Thursday of each month, from 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., beginning Thursday, November 5. Practicing the Five-Element Form, the circle will be led by facilitator Lisa Schlingerman and is open to those new to Tai Ji as well as experienced participants. It offers enhanced balance, flexibility and peace of mind.

“Tai Ji as a continuous learning process and a moving meditation,” says facilitator Lisa Schlingerman. “The Five-Element form is a joyful dance connecting us to the natural world. We can celebrate the mystery and beauty of life and enjoy a healthy, active practice too.” She notes that people with limited mobility can enjoy the practice seated in a chair.

To participate, email Karen Hering at karen@unityunitarian.org. Dress in comfortable clothes and bring your own beverage and/or treat for a break midway through the practice. Donations will be accepted for the facilitator.

Saturday Morning

Southern Style 5 Animal Kung Fu

This beautiful Chinese martial art emulates the moment and disposition of the Tiger, Snake, Crane, Dragon, and Leopard. Our focus will be on studying the introductory form of this style which incorporates elements from all five animals into an elaborate pattern of intricate movements.

Do not expect lots of yelling, kicking any wood boards (ouch), or much of what you see in action movies. Instead, you can expect an excellent practice which builds strength, conditioning, and flexibility, which both calms and invigorates the spirit.

This class meets on Saturday mornings, in the Body Room, from 10:00 a.m.–noon, and is for any level of experience ages 16–106. To participate, please contact Bryan Kujawski at 612-750-0221 or barney.kujawski@gmail.com.

Crossing and Blessing Our Thresholds

Are you crossing a threshold in your life — a change in relationship, work, home, roles, identity or abilities? Our lives are full of thresholds crossed whenever we experience change — of our choosing and the kind that comes without our bidding. Either way, thresholds often bring heightened awareness as well as risk and possibility. They are places of great vitality and exchange, where new greets old, where outside meets inside, where stranger crosses over to become friend.

For the second year, the four-part Threshold series invites you to explore a current threshold in your own life — one you have just crossed, are in the process of crossing or are about to cross. In a supportive small group facilitated by literary minister Karen Hering, we’ll each reflect on the threshold we’re crossing while accompanying others in crossing theirs. Using conversation, guided writing, and a variety of non-writing activities both playful and serious, we’ll consider the meaning, risks, and possibilities present on our thresholds. Participants are asked to commit to all four sessions. At the end of the series, the group will be blessed by the congregation in worship, honoring the role of community in giving us all safe passage across the many thresholds of our lives.

The group will meet Saturday, January 23, from 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., and three additional Saturday mornings, 9:00 a.m.–noon: February 6 and 20 and March 5. The congregational blessing will occur on Sunday, March 6. The series is free to members; a fee of \$75 will be charged nonmembers at the time of registration.

Group size will be limited. Register early to reserve your place. Please e-mail Karen Hering (karen@unityunitarian.org) or put a note in her church mailbox with your name, phone, email or street address, and a sentence or two describing the threshold you have crossed or will be crossing soon.

Thanksgiving Gatherings

November 26, 2015

Thanksgiving is the perfect time to get together with friends and family, to open our doors to visitors, and share food and conversation!

If you can be a host and would welcome a Unity Church guest or two at your table, or if you wish to be a guest and join a Unity Church family this holiday, please sign-up at the Thanksgiving Gathering table that will be in the Parish Hall on November 8 and 15.

For more information contact Anna Newton at asnewton3@gmail.com or 651-295-1524 (text is OK).



You are invited to a conversation with
Debby Irving
author of *Waking Up White*

Friday, November 6 • 7:00–9:00 p.m. • Free
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
3400 Dupont Avenue South

Unity Church is a co-sponsor of this discussion with author Debby Irving on racial justice, current events in America, and how we can create a better tomorrow. All are welcome—even if you didn't read the book.

What people are saying about *Waking Up White*:



"Debby Irving's powerful *Waking Up White* opens a rare window on how white Americans are socialized. Irving's focus on the mechanics of racism operating in just one life—her own—may lead white readers to reconsider the roots of their own perspectives—and their role in dismantling old myths. Readers of color will no doubt find the view through Irving's window fascinating and telling."

"Brave...A jolting and continuing journey from white oblivion to white awareness described in an honest way that may inspire others to do such transformation work on themselves...Empathetic."

Visit www.firstuniversalistchurch.org for details.

2015-16 Hallman Ministerial Intern

Shay MacKay



Last week I was given the gift of reuniting with some old friends that I worked with 18 years ago in Tacoma, WA, at a homeless shelter called Nativity House. This reunion brought back all sorts of memories of my time with the "guests" of Nativity House, and there is one in particular that has stayed with me.

One afternoon, I was busy helping to get lunch prepared when someone tapped me on the shoulder. I turned to find Andy, a regular guest, standing behind me, quietly crying and desperately trying to stay on his feet. Andy was extremely drunk and, by the looks of him, had been for several days. I took one look at him and said quietly, "Come with me."

I led him into our small chapel and sat down next to him, trying to figure out what to say, but before I could get a word out, Andy fell apart. In the dim light and deep stillness of that place, he wept as if his heart was breaking, and mine broke as I listened. We sat that way for a long time, close but not touching, through his tears and into the silence that followed.

Finally, Andy started talking. He told me how long he had been sober this time, what had happened to trigger this relapse, what he could remember of his behavior from the past few days, and how it all made him feel. He expressed remorse, disappointment, self-disgust, fear, anger and confusion — and deep, deep sorrow.

When Andy was done speaking I asked if there was anything I could do for him. He grabbed my hands.

"Say a prayer, Shay. Will you just pray with me?"

So I closed my eyes and prayed.

When I was done, I looked up to find Andy watching me. He said, through more tears, "Thank you. You're truly an angel, come down to earth." I blushed and smiled, shaking my head and muttering that I wasn't any such thing. He squeezed my hands, looked directly into my eyes and said, "Don't be embarrassed. You are an angel."

And then he leaned in even closer to me and whispered, "It's OK. I'm an angel, too."

It was a moment of pure grace; a gift given with no strings attached. "I'm an angel, too." With those four words, Andy reminded me of the light that resides within every single person, and proved that every encounter with another person — regardless of who is "giving" and who is "receiving" or who is in control — every encounter has the possibility of being mutually transformative. For me, that's what grace is all about.

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

Elders' Group

Allowing Our Spirits to Play!

Tuesday, November 17 • 1:00 p.m. • Center Room

Experience the wonder of exploring faith through story and discover how curiosity and play can enhance your spirituality. Some of the facilitators from the team that spends Sundays with Unity's preschoolers in the Spirit Play program will be guiding us in this journey. All self-identified elders and their friends are welcome!

Women's Retreat

Save the date for Unity's 8th annual Women's Gathering on Saturday, January 30, 2016! If you are interested in helping with the gathering, please contact Rev. Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

A New Knitting Group at Unity!

This is a warm invitation to get in touch with your inner UKnitarian and connect with other Unity Church members and friends. If you are interested in gathering regularly with other knitters in the congregation for fellowship and service opportunities, please contact Linda Mandeville (lindamandeville@aol.com) or Rev. Lisa Friedman (lisa@unityunitarian.org).

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

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

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

November 4

Dinner menu: Chickpea and date tagine over almond couscous, seasonal roasted vegetables, salad, sorbet

After Freedom, the Challenge of Attaining Equality and Dignity in the Struggle for Civil Rights with Dr. Bill Green

Based on his book *Degrees of Freedom: the Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota 1865-1912*, Dr. Green will examine how in the wake of freedom, in nineteenth century Minnesota, "the equality of all men" remained illusive, even among friends. Dr. Green is a professor of history at Augsburg College and former superintendent of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Group Spiritual Direction with Sarah Cledwyn

Join Spiritual Director Sarah Cledwyn in contemplative conversation around the worship theme of grace. When have you received a gift of kindness or generosity of spirit that felt unexpected or underserved? When have you been loved and accepted for your whole self, including your failings, wounds and mistakes? How do you offer grace to yourself and to others? We will engage with the theme through a group process of listening, sharing, and deepening.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Therapeutic Yoga

This week's practice is great for those with chronic tightness, chronic pain, or who simply want to move their bodies more freely. The 60 minute-long practice takes place lying on the floor, with slow, subtle movements in the body and gentle breathing. We find this practice is best for adults, not youth. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat or blanket. There will be a few mats and blankets available for loan. Learn more about the instructor, Elen Bahr, at EveryYogi.com or email questions to elen@everyyogi.com.

Go: A Chinese Game

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

New Family Religious Education Orientation

This in-person session will orient families whose children are enrolling in Religious Education for the first time as well as welcome any returning families. Contact kp@unityunitarian.org if you plan to attend this orientation session.

Tween Group (grades 5-8)

Everyday Enjoyable Parenting (pre-registration required)

November 11

Dinner menu: Made from scratch lasagne (Yup! Even the pasta!), kale caesar salad, bread, chocolate brownies with mascarpone frosting.

In the Grace of the World

You are invited to an evening of music and reflection by the Unity Singers as they commemorate their ten-year anniversary. The program will include some of the most beautiful and memorable pieces from their repertoire, both old and new. Unity Singers offer this concert in the spirit of celebration and gratitude for ten years of ministry within and beyond this congregation. Prepare to be uplifted!

Budget Information Meeting

Do you have questions about the financial landscape at Unity Church? Do you want to learn more about the 2016 budget that the congregation will be asked to approve on November 21 at the Annual Meeting? We are providing two opportunities for curious congregants to ask questions and explore in detail the church finances and 2016 proposed budget. Please join Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director, at one of the budget information meetings or contact her with questions at barbarah@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x116.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Meditative Movement

This 60 minute-long practice includes slow, mindful movement, with special attention to how we use our breath. This session is suitable for a wide variety of body types, and there is no previous yoga experience required. Youth ages 10 and up are welcome to come with an adult family member. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat or blanket. There will be a few mats and blankets available for loan. Learn more about the instructor, Elen Bahr, at EveryYogi.com or email questions to elen@everyyogi.com.

Tween Group (grades 5-8)

Go: A Chinese Game

Wellspring Wednesday Reminders

There is no Wellspring Wednesday on November 25. Happy Thanksgiving!

Wellspring Wednesday is on Winter Break from December 9–December 30. Dinner, worship, and programming resume on January 6.

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY / FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

November 18

Dinner menu: Boston -style meal brought to us by our youth pilgrims who journeyed to Boston this year. Details to follow.

Hungarian Movie Night!

The November Parish Hall exhibit is of photos from pilgrims (church members and friends) who have traveled to our Partner Church in Homorodszepter. Join us as we show a few family-friendly films to get a broader, smarter, and entertaining image of Transylvania and Hungarians!

Open Page Writing Session with Karen Hering **Writing about Grace: an opening to new possibilities** **Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org**

"What is grace?" Augustine asked and then confessed, "I know until you ask me; when you ask me, I do not know." This session considers grace as the breath of new possibilities that sometimes seems as evasive as it is ever present.

Welcome to Unity: Our Class for Newcomers

Tween Group (grades 5-8)

Go: A Chinese Game

There is no yoga at Wellspring Wednesday this week.

There is no Wellspring Wednesday on November 25.

December 2

Dinner menu: Roasted bell peppers with rice pilaf stuffing, roasted potatoes, balsamic apple salad, sherbet

The Season of Giving: An All Ages Service Project

Come and join Unity Church members of all ages in helping others this holiday season. We will have opportunities to adopt other families for the holidays, support Amicus's Winter Warm Up Drive, and more.

Open Page Writing Session with Karen Hering **An Infinite Expectation of the Dawn: Writing about Waiting** **Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org**

December in many world religions is the season of waiting — the quiet posture of expectation that opens our awareness not just to what we know is coming but, especially, to the unexpected. In this session, we'll reflect on cultivating a spirit of active waiting even as we march and work for change.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Therapeutic Yoga

This week's practice is great for those with chronic tightness, chronic pain, or who simply want to move their bodies more freely. The 60 minute-long practice takes place lying on the floor, with slow, subtle movements in the body and gentle breathing. We find this practice is best for adults, not youth. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat or blanket. There will be a few mats and blankets available for loan.

New Family Religious Education Orientation

Tween Group (grades 5-8)

Fellowship Groups

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

A New Look at the Bible: Second Thursday of the month (November 12) at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Paul Gade at 651-771-7528

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

Caregivers Group: An informal support group for caregivers. Third Thursday of the month (November 19) from Noon–2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (November 10) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (November 28) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760.

Living With Grief Group: For people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (November 17) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, November 9, and 23, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

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

Unity Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. All are welcome—even if you haven't read the book. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net.

November 10: *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Egan

December 15: *Straight Man* by Richard Russo

January 12: *The Underground Girls of Kabul: In Search of a Hidden Resistance in Afghanistan* by Jenny Nordberg

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, November 6, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209.

Women In Retirement, The Choice Years: This group meets the second and fourth Thursday (November 12 and no meeting on Thanksgiving) of each month from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org for more information.

Young Adult Group: Potluck supper on Tuesday, November 24, at 6:30 p.m., in the Center Room. Bring your favorite dish to a relaxed evening of good company and conversation. Contact: Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org

Sangha Zen Meditation: Find renewal and grounding. Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction is offered on the first Tuesday (November 3) beginning at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kford5@comcast.net

Black Friday at Church

Feeding the Spirit on the Feast Day of Consumption

The Cost of Justice

Friday, November 27, 2015

10:00 a.m. • Sanctuary

Rev. Danny Givens, Jr.

Special Guests

Nekima Levy-Pounds and Lena Gardner

Musical Guest

Kevin Jackson

Marketers call the Friday after Thanksgiving “Black Friday” because it is often the day that retailers first “go into the black” for the year as holiday shopping gets under way.

Unity Church’s eighth annual “Black Friday at Church” celebration offers you an opportunity to launch the holiday season with spiritual renewal, fellowship, and good cheer, an alternative to the habitual consumerism on display in the broader culture.

Ministerial Resident, Reverend Danny Givens, Jr., will share a message of hope and a call to action, challenging us to confront how capitalism’s greed has silenced the voice of justice. As laborers all over the country fight for better wages, fair scheduling, and improved benefits; as violence and racism continue to prove that black lives don’t matter; as immigration detention centers, border patrols, and the prison industrial complex render liberty for all a moot point, we are called to proclaim that black, brown, yellow, and red bodies are not commodities to be used in our pursuit of more.

Join fellow Unity Church members, families, friends, neighbors, and colleagues on the Friday morning after Thanksgiving Day for a rousing, intergenerational worship service. Activities for children and families, as well as child care, will be provided.



Winter Warm Up Drive

Make Winter Warmer for Those Seeking Second Chances

From the Racial and Restorative Justice Team

Men and women released from prison face huge challenges on their way to rejoining society. The challenges begin with finding a bed and enough to eat on the first day out—nothing compared to finding an employer who will hire, and a landlord who will rent, to an ex-offender. Doing either is difficult without transportation, especially during the winter. And who would want to apply for a job or an apartment without the basics for personal grooming? These little things mean a lot to those trying to make good after doing their time. That's why Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Team asks you to help provide the following items for its community partner Amicus who assists those leaving prison in a time of need.

- Hygiene items such as shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body lotion, deodorant, and shaving cream (all items should be unopened)
- New gloves, hats, scarves, and socks suitable for the job site
- Hand and foot warmers
- Bus passes or cash to buy bus passes

Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Team will collect these items beginning Sunday, November 8, and continuing through January. On Sundays, please bring donations to the Racial and Restorative Justice table in the Parish Hall. Donations delivered during the week should be brought to Lisa Friedman's office.

Mano a Mano Craft Sale

Get a head start on holiday shopping at our Bolivian crafts sale! Warm and fuzzy scarves, hats and sweaters; adorable finger puppets; and affordable stocking-stuffers will all be on sale Sunday, November 22, in the Parish Hall, after each service. Proceeds benefit the life-giving work of Mano a Mano International Partners, which builds clinics and schools, and trains health providers, teachers and farmers in rural Bolivia. Cash, check, and credit cards accepted.

Are you **looking**
for that perfect holiday gift?



Join Unity's Sustainable Living Group

Tuesday, November 10

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. • Gannett Room

This year the group is looking deeper into what it means to incorporate and implement green and thoughtful living practices into our homes, our congregation, and our community. This meeting will help determine the group's priorities for the year and all are welcome and encouraged to attend and bring ideas to the table! Questions? Contact Jessica Zimmerly at jjimm0813@gmail.com.

Help Cook for Jeremiah Program Families

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

Parish Hall Artists

Partner Church Ministry Team

Selected Photographs from 22 years of Pilgrim Visits

Since 1990, Unity Church has been a partner to a Unitarian church in the village of Homorodszentpeter, Romania. What does it mean that we have a partner church in the Hungarian region of Transylvania? Co-Ministers Janne and Rob Ellersaacs began leading pilgrimage trips in 2001 so fellow travelers could experience and learn about our historical Unitarian roots. To date, more than 120 people have made this journey, including one courageous female member who went alone in 1993!

Today, being a partner church is about building relationships. It is about learning more about each other, and about being Unitarians on opposite sides of the globe. Most importantly it is about presence, knowing that we are not alone, and finding ways to share many versions of "abundance" with each other.

Homorodszentpeter is nestled in the foothills of the Harghita mountain range. Fields and pastures dot hillsides topped with trees. Village homes and a white-washed church with its tall clock tower are clustered in the Homorod River valley. The local economy is predominantly subsistence farming, dairy cows, sheep, milk, and cheese.

Photographs in this exhibit were taken by church members/friends during their visits. November's church theme of "grace" and a varied representation of what might be experienced on a Pilgrimage determined the selection. This is a brief glance at the richness and depth of our experiences, friendships, hardships, and sacredness.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Listening to Trees at Walden

Annual Boston Pilgrimage with Unity's High School Juniors

From Drew Danielson, Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries

Thoreau sat comfortably in a corner next to the wood stove in his snug 6' x 8' cabin, not quite pleasantly answering questions from the 18 of us squeezed in next to him. He came across as smug in many of his answers, or at least brimming in self-confidence, taking immediate offense to any question that might have smacked of a challenge to his philosophy. He had just given a rather biting answer to a question concerning his allegiance to any formal religion, in which he called all religions shams, and that he preferred to follow the voice of the "over soul" which he heard very succinctly when talking with the trees. Then, someone asked a follow up.

"What do the trees say?"

Henry David smiled to himself before smirking at his questioner, "Go listen for yourself."

Later, our excellent history reenactor admitted he didn't know what Thoreau heard in his daily nature walks but he felt comfortable saying what he did, as it matched Thoreau's personality and his belief that all men should listen for the truth of the over soul, or true spirit, for themselves. The juniors on this pilgrimage seemed very comfortable with that — it was a listening bunch, more than a group of over-sharers. They listened to the trees at Walden, they listened to the pilgrims at Plimoth; they heard Ralph Waldo Emerson's words, they heard the sounds of the city and the ducks in Boston Common. It was a joyful and loving group this one, making me think they kept hearing promises of Beloved Community, and a better world.

I like how they listened. I'm excited to ask them what they did hear, I'm eager to be asked what I heard too. We don't have to travel to Walden to listen.



Save the Date

2016 Children's Musical

For the past 26 years, talented members of the Unity Church community have come together to write, compose, direct, choreograph, and perform a unique show for Unity Church. Participating in the Children's Musical has been a rite of passage and transformative experience for many of our young people. If you have a 6th, 7th, or 8th grader, consider whether this fun, team building experience might be right for them.

To find out more, please come to one of the parent information sessions in December. They will be held between the 9:00 and 11:00 services on December 6 and 13. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

November Calendar

Sunday, November 1: Story Sunday (elementary age children begin in the Sanctuary for a story before heading to classes), new Workshop Rotation cycle: "On Being Human" *Daylight Savings Time, fall back!*

Wednesday, November 4: New Family Orientation, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday, November 8: Regular R.E.

Saturday, November 14: Parents' Night Out child care! Spend time with other Unity members 6-8:30 p.m. (RSVP required to michelle@unityunitarian.org)

Sunday, November 15: Regular R.E.

Sunday, November 22: Family Sunday: Thanksgiving (all children worship in Sanctuary; nursery care available)

Friday, November 27: Black Friday Family Worship with Above Every Name, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 29: No R.E. classes (Thanksgiving weekend) – activities for school age kids; nursery care available

MUSIC MINISTRY



Music Notes

From Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries

To achieve great things, two things are needed; a plan, and not quite enough time. This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before. Music ... can name the unnameable and communicate the unknowable.

— Leonard Bernstein (In recognition of the 25th anniversary of his death.)

I had the delight of presenting the opening lecture at the Source Song Festival this last August, 2015. The title, *In search of Artistry: Crossing the Invisible Line*, was meant to inspire the assembled singers and pianists to look for ways to reach the extraordinary in their work and performance. To find and release moments we might say are "touched by grace." To prepare oneself so deeply as to "get out of the way" of such possible occurrences. Moments of gifted beauty.

Program description: Beauty has been described as a "sudden awareness." Poet John O'Donohue says "beauty has the ability to surprise us." Thinking of artistry as incomparable beauty, how do we prepare, create, find and ready ourselves for such inarticulate moments.

In an effort to urge these young performers to get out of the usual approaches, I shared many quotes from artists in other disciplines. All offered similar principles but sparked different thinking because of such varied verbiage and imagery. For instance, the following:

The poet Rainer Maria Rilke writes: "Perhaps we are here in order to say: house, bridge, fountain, gate, pitcher, fruit-tree, window...."

To say them more intensely than the Things themselves
Ever dreamed of existing."

From John Gregor, Minnesota fine art photographer: "Finally, and this is the 'rub': great photographs are created when the photographer let's go of his process and takes a risk. 'Safe' photographs are almost never interesting. The risk that a photographer takes does not necessarily have to be a physical risk, it can be visual, emotional, or intellectual. I am most inspired by those images that reflect something new about seeing the world. In the process of showing a new way of seeing the world the photographer has had to let go of his or her conventional vision and that means letting go of what is familiar. When you let go of what is familiar you are taking a risk."

From Mary Whyte (*An Artist's Way of Seeing*): "Truly learning to paint then becomes, in large part, a matter of learning how to see. This means we must become masters at observing and feeling the world around us before we can begin to express it on an easel. It also becomes a matter of knowing ourselves."

Painter, Andrew Wyeth: "You don't have to paint tanks and guns to capture the war. You should be able to paint it in a dead leaf falling from a tree in autumn."

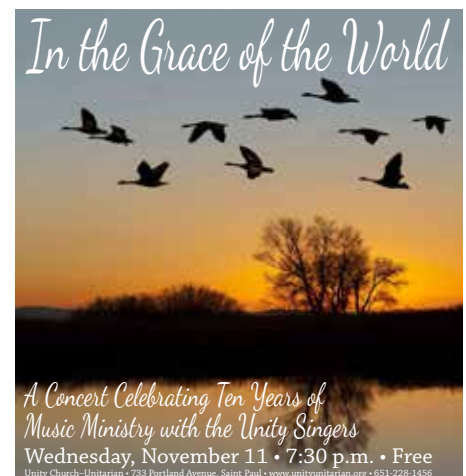
From actor Alan Alda: "The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. You can't get there by bus, only by hard work and risk, and by not quite knowing what you are doing. What you will discover will be wonderful. What you discover will be yourself."

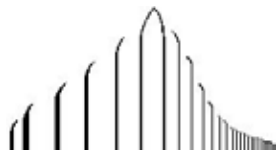
Philippe Petit, famous wire-walker: "I prepare by reducing the unknown to nothing. How arrogant of me to dare to put a wire across and say 'I will walk!'. I have to be very respectful of the space. The space is something I will never conquer or master. But, if I walk it with artistry, with poetry, with meaning, as

a piece of theatre, or an opera, which is what I call a walk, then maybe it can inspire you. It has taken me a life-time of serious confrontation. The essential thing is to etch movements in the sky, movements so still they leave no trace. The essential thing is simplicity."

I tend to believe that all of us are always reaching for that special, inarticulate moment, that moment far beyond words, when we are suddenly stilled, when our breath is suspended by an awareness of something extraordinary; something that tugs and pulls at our instinct and moves us somewhere out of ourselves, far beyond the norm. That all of us are in the search to release that best vision within ourselves; that we are in a search for that inner vision that "sees suddenly" the presence of the art, the surprise of it; we are in search for that suddenly simple ability to invite and allow its expression. That "happening" when all of us are joined into one indelible moment in time.

There is an Irish proverb which says, "that which is wonderful is seldom". We have to cultivate an environment of thinking that invites and allows the spontaneous visit of the artistic muse. Having the opportunity of working with so many dedicated singers, I often see in their eyes that moment of "sudden awareness". Such a gift. Perhaps a moment of grace?





UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN

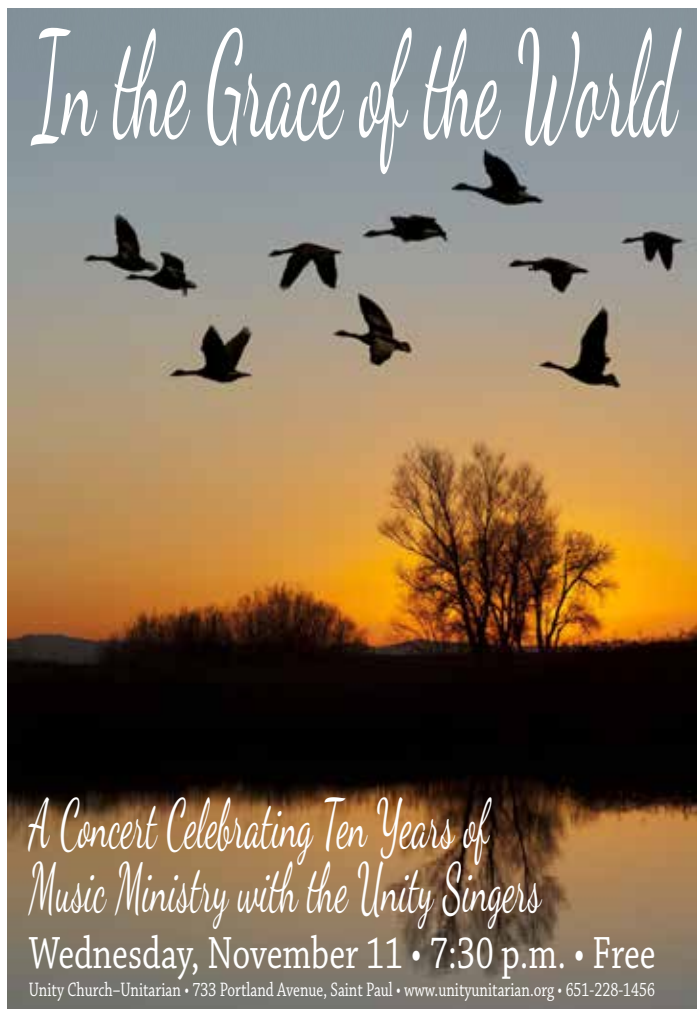
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**TIME SENSITIVE
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**A WEEKEND COMMEMORATING THE
10TH ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE KATRINA**
A Samuel Morgan Forum
*Ideological Passion vs. Principled Pragmatism:
Bridging the Racial Divide in Urban America*
Dr. Michael Cowan and James Carter
Saturday, November 14 • 9:00 – noon • Parish Hall
Michael Cowan and James Carter will speak frankly about the challenges and conflicts, as well as the learning and excitement, involved in their ten-year effort to bridge the racial divide in New Orleans. They will describe the outcomes it has produced, ongoing racial tensions as revealed in a current conflict, and some lessons to be drawn from its record. They are eager to engage Minnesota friends in this difficult, timely conversation.
10 Years Later: A New Orleans Dinner Event
Saturday, November 14 • 6:00 p.m. • Parish Hall
Come remember and reflect about Hurricane Katrina and the aftermath of the storm with pilgrims from Unity Church, friends from the Selma 70, and special guests James Carter and Michael Cowan from New Orleans. Music will be provided by the inimitable Rev. Carl Walker (himself a New Orleans pilgrim). Dinner is \$15 per person and the menu includes: shrimp and grits, red beans and rice, and Bananas Foster trifle. Register and pay for dinner online at www.unityunitarian.org. Child care is available by request to michelle@unityunitarian.org by November 10.
A Reflection on the New Orleans Pilgrims of Unity Church
Sunday Worship, November 15 • 9:00 & 11:00 a.m., 4:30 p.m.