

Hospitality

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.

Minneapolis' Mixed Blood Theater company has an entire page of their website devoted to their belief in radical hospitality. It claims that by inviting audience and community members to "voluntarily become supporters of a vision that ensures access for all" they will realize their commitment to justice and erase social, political and economic dividing lines, creating a truly inclusive community.

When I think about practicing this sort of radical hospitality here at Unity Church, the first question that comes to mind is, "Whose church is this?" Certainly countless men and women have created this place over the years, and continue to do so, but can we own that which belongs to God? Perhaps we are not tasked with making decisions about how and when to be hospitable, but rather to be stewards called to hold in trust a holy space, invited to welcome each and every child of God into communion with the sacred here. If this is the case, and if we believe in the inherent divinity within all, then how could we ever respond to a stranger's appeal with anything other than, "Of course." Of course you are welcome here. Of course our vision ensures access for all.

Henri Nouwen claims that true hospitality can only be offered by those who "have found the center of their lives in their own hearts." This means that the very first step in creating a space of inclusion and transformation is to go within. Each aspect of ourselves is important, has something to teach us, and combines to create the whole of who we are. As the Sufi poet Rumi writes about our inner "guest house," we must welcome in each feeling, each piece of ourselves because "each has been sent/as a guide from beyond."

We all have behaviors, thoughts, and feelings that we struggle with, things within our inner life that are strange and uncomfortable, but it is in these places of frustration and fear that we are most likely to encounter God and to experience transformation.

It is this embracing of the stranger, of the unknown, of the mystery that makes true hospitality a radical act. We must paradoxically choose to intentionally create the conditions for reverence and greater life, while also choosing to surrender control of how the story will unfold. As we work within to integrate all aspects of ourselves, we are invited to rest in the movement of something larger, something deeper. And as we work among our Unity family to counter alienation and inequity we are called to trust each other, to believe that only through mutual reverence for each other and the sacred can we co-create the unfolding narrative of our lives together.

This is true not only within our own souls or among the walls and boundaries of our church community, but extends beyond, out into the world, into the interconnected web of all creation. We must move beyond acting as if we are guests here on Earth, entitled and devoid of responsibility. We must move beyond ideas of dominion and control, choosing instead to participate in acts of co-creation toward healing and greater life.

This means, also, moving beyond comfort and ease, entering fully into the suffering of our world and all Her inhabitants. As Abraham ran out into the desert seeking and embracing strangers, radical hospitality calls us to seek out that which is unfamiliar and uncomfortable; as Nouwen says, "we are called to reach out with courageous honesty" into the places and moments

that break us open. It is within these moments, when we allow ourselves to be vulnerable with strangers and with mystery, that we can deeply experience the holy and move beyond ourselves into the place where spirit flows freely.

But we live busy, fragmented lives and it can feel like a lot to choose to be this present and open to possibility. Who has the energy to live into active co-creation with God, our fellow humans, and our Earth when we can so often feel like we are just desperately scrambling for some control? Where do we find the spiritual resources to enable ourselves to make space for the unexpected? And when we are feeling battered and broken, where do we find the courage to open ourselves in welcome of the "other"?

Perhaps we will find some answers together as we explore hospitality this month.

By Shay MacKay
with this month's theme team:
Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs,
Lisa Friedman Karen Hering,
K.P. Hong, and Karen Hutt

Hospitality Theme Resources

Books

I Wonder As I Wander: An Autobiographical Journey by Langston Hughes
Reaching Out by Henri J.M. Nouwen
The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. Le Guin

Film/Theater

Witness (1985)
Chocolat (2001)
www.mixedblood.com

Youth

Counting By 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan
Animals United (2012 animated film)

Just Words



As part of our sabbatical last spring, we drove to South Carolina to spend time in Beaufort learning more about the Civil War and post Civil War history there. There is much I could say about what we learned there but this article is about the drive down. As some of you know, I love long distance driving. Put me behind the wheel of a car on a good freeway and I can go for hours. I love maps and can stare at them for during the hours that others drive. I love how everything falls away as I drive through landscapes that give way to new and unfamiliar terrain. I must confess that I love to drive fast.

I try not to be aggressive or tailgate but to work with the flow of the traffic in a respectful way while getting there as quickly as possible. I try not to get hot behind the collar, though Rob will tell you that I get a bit impatient behind RVs on single track highways.

While driving to South Carolina it became clear that the driving was different. People were very aggressive. I began to watch the faces of the other drivers. They appeared to be possessed or gripped by some unknown force. Many of them drove with white knuckles and crazed eyes and they drove insanely. Not much gets me to slow down, but it seemed the sane thing to do given the circumstances. When we were passed by two cars from Ontario with surfboards on the roof, it dawned on me what we were seeing. We were in the midst of spring break traffic on its way to the ocean and to southern locales. Once we got on the freeway coming directly from New England, New York and other eastern states the desperate driving became even more intense. I was glad to arrive safely in Beaufort not just because it was our destination, but because it also meant getting out of the insane driving.

Why in the world am I talking about this as summer draws to a close? I bring it up because I am determined to not focus so much on vacation time this year. I want my focus to shift to finding peace and tranquility each day. I want to find mini vacations at the beginning of each day and as the day draws to a close. I never want to be desperate for breaks from my everyday life no matter how busy or frantic for warm weather I become.

Recently I was visiting a beloved colleague who is dying. On the floor of his hospital room is a big sign. It says, "Stop, Breathe, Center." It asks that you take time to focus on your breathing and to center yourself right there on the 10th floor of Kaiser Hospital. While waiting for the elevator, I took the sign's advice. I felt the pain of our impending loss. I felt the solidity of the floor. I came back into my body and remembered to breathe. I felt a connection that had been missing in my hurriedness. I vowed then that I would remember this sign every day. I am trying to do so.

Please, as you come back from those cherished vacations, will you think about how you — how we — can find ways to bring restorative time into our everyday lives? Will you join me in taking time to *stop, breathe* and *center*?

Welcome back to the church year. May we find ways to be restored together this year without leaving town. We are looking forward to seeing you!

— Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs

The Wheel of Life

In Memoriam

Sally Ross

April 16, 1923 – August 5, 2015

Bill Downing

July 21, 2015

In Celebration

Emerson Royal France

born one more redeemer

August 14, 2015

to parents

Sarah Ullmer and Morgan France

2015-16 Monthly Themes

September: Hospitality

October: Reverence

November: Grace

December: Waiting

January: Authority

February: God

March: Suffering

April: Compassion

May: Transcendence

June: Awakening

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SEPTEMBER WORSHIP CALENDAR / OFFERING RECIPIENTS

September 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. Sunday, September 13, is a Family Sunday and families worship together in the Sanctuary for the entire service. Religious Education classes for children and youth begin on Sunday, September 20.

September 6 • 10:00 a.m. ONLY

How Radical Should We Be for Racial Equity?

— Dane Smith

New research about the history of civil rights and racism in Minnesota reveals how truly radical some of our Unitarian Universalist pioneers were, not only for abolition, but for absolute economic and social equality for people of all races. These radicals have been largely vindicated by history and their vision, though still unrealized, has become consensus. As the confederate flags finally come down, as we are informed by Charleston and Ferguson and our own disturbing disparities right here in this neighborhood, let's think about today's cutting edge. What are the radical equalizing actions we can embrace that will vindicate us a century from now, and move our community to that Promised Land where race makes no difference in health, wealth, or happiness? Musician: Rochelle Lockridge, guitar and vocals

September 13

Merging of Waters Family Sunday

Come celebrate the start of a new church year by merging the waters of the world in a time of reunion. There will be a story for all ages, music from special guest Peter Mayer, and an opportunity to consider how best to make amends and to begin again in love. Janne Eller-Isaacs will return to the pulpit to begin a series of services on hospitality. Please bring the water you have collected over the summer for this merging ritual.

September 20

Entertaining Angels — Rob Eller-Isaacs

Abraham, father of three faiths, looms large in our consciousness. He is both the faith-crazed father willing to sacrifice his son and the man who kept the sides of his tent rolled-up so he would never miss the chance to welcome a guest. What sacrifice might hospitality require of us? We join our Jewish friends around the world in a service for the High Holy Days. Rob will be joined by worship associate Nicole Lynskey.

September 27

The Door Standing Open — Janne Eller-Isaacs

Unitarian Universalism is founded upon theological openness. As a non-creedal religion we welcome believers, questioners, and nonbelievers alike. Janne and worship associate Grant Wacker will explore how we can put this foundational understanding into the practice of community hospitality.

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.** Nominations for 2015-16 church-year offering recipients are being accepted online at www.unityunitarian.org/nominate-the-offering.html.

September 6: Full Cycle

Full Cycle is a nonprofit bike shop in south Minneapolis offering a six-month, paid internship program for homeless youth ages 16-23. Participants learn bike repair, customer service, and sales along with hands-on business skills including job keeping behaviors, resume writing, and interviewing protocol. Full Cycle's integrated neighborhood strategies include street-based outreach and a youth-run food shelf. Funds collected will directly support the summer internship program. Unity Church member Jim Davnie is a big supporter of Full Cycle.

September 13: Growth and Justice

Growth and Justice is a non-partisan, non-profit, research and advocacy organization, focused on expanding prosperity in Minnesota. It promotes policies that reduce inequality and that eliminate racial disparity, through investment in human capital and public infrastructure, by ensuring universal and affordable health care, and through a cleaner and greener economy. Unity Church member Dane Smith is president of Growth and Justice.

September 20: Will's Education Opportunity Fund

Education is a universal change agent, especially for those, young and old, who yearn for a better future. 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 are strong supporters of Will's Education Opportunity Fund.

September 27: Camp Tamarack

Camp Tamarack is a non-profit, non-denominational, overnight summer camp for children in the Twin Cities. The camp was founded in 1970 with the purpose of giving urban children the opportunity to experience a rural environment and to learn positive life lessons. Camp Tamarack prides itself on being an affordable, exciting, and memorable experience for our young campers. Unity Church member Dick Buggs supports Camp Tamarack.

What does it mean to be a trustee?

From Mark Foster, Trustee



As I reflect on my first year as a member of the Unity Church board, two things stand out in my mind: transition and policy governance.

Transition: On the immediate horizon we are about to lose three valuable and seasoned trustees and have begun to seek candidates for the next three years. These next three years will see

further work on leadership transition as we prepare for the eventual retirement of Rob, Janne, and Barbara. Sketching out the process of how we will begin to prepare for this future change in the life and leadership of Unity Church is a hands-on task of your board. I serve on the Transition Subteam that is tasked with developing and presenting this process to the board for its approval. Building of the foundation has begun; as Peggy Lin mentioned in her March column, we don't know exactly when this will happen but we do know it is *when*, not *if*. We have the skeleton of a timeline started. The next board members will be part of this process and provide greater detail as the event approaches.

Policy Governance: Learning about and becoming comfortable with the principles of "policy governance" and coming to appreciate its value has been a growth experience for me. In a nutshell, policy governance means Unity Church has policies that are intended to be in furtherance of our Ends. Our Ends are value statements based on input from the congregation and they are rewritten by the board and approved by the congregation every five years. The Board's job under policy governance is not to determine *how* the policies are carried out, but to empower the Executive Team (ET: Rob, Janne, Barbara, and Lisa) by giving it the authority to make decisions that are in furtherance of Unity's Ends. The ET takes care of the "how" side. Under our policy governance model the board works to ensure the ET works within the "limitations" established by our governing policies. We are currently working with Ends that were approved in 2013. Board members elected buy the congregation this fall will be engaged in developing the 2018 End Statements. For more information about Unity's Ends, see Rich Hamer's column in the May 2015 *commUNITY* or Lia Rivamonte's column in the April 2014 *commUNITY*. The Ends are reproduced in her article and can be found at www.unityunitarian.org/mission-and-ends.

This congregation blessed with a creative and effective Executive Team and a governance model that supports rather than interferes with their work. It is an honor for me to serve as a board member and I look forward to the new ways in which I might contribute during my second year of service.

Serve on Unity's Board of Trustees

Would you like to engage more fully in the life and mission of Unity Church-Unitarian? Consider serving on the Board of Trustees. Nominations are now open for three trustees, each serving a three year term which will begin following Unity's annual meeting in November 2015.

Board service is an excellent way to learn about church operations, build relationships with church leaders and other church members, learn policy governance, and gain appreciation for Unity's role in the wider community. No experience is necessary, but a willingness to learn and participate actively is essential.

Serving on the Board will also give you an opportunity to grow your experience and skills in the following areas:

- Leadership and Strategic Planning
- Relationship Building and Organizational Development
- Governance
- Financial Management and Oversight

To qualify for Board service, you must be a voting member of the congregation. Nominations will be considered by a nominating committee consisting of Ginny Allen, Mark Foster, and Steve Harper.

The nominating period is open through September 15. Candidates will be interviewed in September with selections made and presented to the Board in October. Three candidates will then be presented for a congregational vote at the Annual Meeting in November.

Serving on Unity's Board is an effective way to live out your values while ensuring a strong foundation that can sustain and grow this vibrant community. Please contact Ginny, Mark, or Steve to express your interest or to nominate someone else as a candidate. You can also review a full job description posted online at <http://bit.ly/BOT2014>.

Unity Church Photo Directory

We need your face in our new Unity Church photo directory!! Did you know that 45% of our members have joined in the last nine years? A current photo directory is an exciting, community-building opportunity for our congregation. Stop by for a photograph by one of our Unity Church photographers during one of the following times this September, and we will have a new directory out by the end of the year!

Sundays: September 13, 20, and 27

- Between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- After the 4:30 p.m. service

Wednesdays: September 16, 23, and 30

- Between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m.



For more information or to volunteer your help, contact Barbara Hubbard at barbarah@unityunitarian.org or at 651-228-1456 x116.

Unity Church Anti-Racism Leadership Team Seeks New Members

Help Build an Actively Anti-racist Congregation

The Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT) works with the Board of Trustees and the Executive Team to further Unity's goal of becoming an actively anti-racist institution. The Board of Trustees will be appointing new team members this year to fill upcoming vacancies. The work of the ARLT is focused internally, on all aspects of church life — from the education and training programs offered to the congregation, to making Unity Church a welcoming and inclusive church community, to policies and procedures that reflect our commitment to anti-racism. Beloved Conversations, the Selma Pilgrimage and Wellspring Wednesday programming are examples from last year of congregational activities fostered by social justice teams in the church to accomplish this work. In the near term, the ARLT will be working with Unity's staff, community outreach teams, and external partners to plan and implement new programs, and to record the church's progress toward becoming an anti-racist institution.

To learn more about the team or the appointment process, contact Drew Danielson (staff liaison to the ARLT) at drew@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x112, Ginny Allen (Board chair), or any of the ARLT members: Brooke Darst Rice, Vicki Stewart, Gabrielle Mead, Jill Henriksen, Peter Heege, Russ Peterson, Amy Kujawski, Avi Viswanathan, and Mary-Margaret Zindren. A full description of the responsibilities and expectations of the position is available online at <http://www.unityunitarian.org/antiracism-leadership-team.html> or by contacting Drew Danielson.

2015-16 Hallman Ministerial Intern



Shay MacKay

How did you get here?

Close your eyes and surrender. — Rumi

Three years ago, after exploring many winding roads, I answered a call that had been moving within me for a long time and entered seminary. With only a week left until the admissions deadline, I sat down with the application to Starr King School for the Ministry and made a decision; I chose to surrender. This was unusual for me, as I usually liked to know exactly what was coming next and where I was headed, but for some reason that step into ministry required something different of me. Perhaps that's why I had put it off for so long — I had to learn how to dwell in the mystery; but now, the decision was made and the promise needed to be kept, so I let go and gave way — to whatever the process of formation required of me, to wherever the journey toward deeper ministry took me, and to however Spirit decided to dance and flow through me.

This internship was unexpected, arriving a year earlier than I had planned and with a congregation I had barely dared hope would want to explore ministry with me, but as I've learned over the past three years, when I allow myself to embrace the unknown amazing things happen. As poet David Whyte says, it's important to listen, surrender and pay attention. I am so excited to listen with you to what moves among us as we work together over the next few months and to pay attention to all the ways in which we will learn about and from each other. I have been ghosting around the edges of your beautiful community all summer and I can't wait to settle in and join you.

So, how did I get here? I closed my eyes and surrendered.

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

Service of Ordination for Ashley Horan



In the Unitarian Universalist tradition only a gathered congregation may ordain a person to the ministry. At a special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, May 17, the congregation of Unity Church-Unitarian voted unanimously to ordain Ashley Horan into the Unitarian Universalist Ministry.

*The members of Unity Church-Unitarian
invite you to participate in the Service of Ordination for Ashley Horan
into the Unitarian Universalist Ministry*

Saturday, October 3, 2015, at 2:00 p.m.

Unity Church-Unitarian

A reception in the Parish Hall will follow the ordination.

PATHWAY TO MEMBERSHIP / ONGOING GROUPS

Welcome Words



September is a time of new beginnings. As we begin an exciting new program year at Unity, I want to welcome back those of you who took a summer break from church and offer a continued welcome to those of you who worshipped with us during these dappled summer Sundays and discovered Unity as a spiritual home. Whether you are a long-term or brand new member of our community, I hope that you will consider the rich offerings this fall and try out some new things to feed your soul and encourage you on your faith journey. I hope that you will greet the people around you and make some new friends. I hope that we will remind one another of the many ways in which we are a part of something much larger than ourselves. Welcome back to your church and let me know how I can help to make this an amazing year!

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, September 20: 12:15-1:30 p.m. ~ also offered ~
Wednesday, October 7: 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.

Finding Yourself at Unity: A Deeper Exploration

Saturday, October 10: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Potluck lunch ~ also offered ~ **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 part of 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.

Committing to Unity: Joining Unity Church

Saturday, October 3: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. ~ also offered ~
Wednesday October 29: 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 needs meets the gifts and joy you have to offer. The class concludes with a ceremony as participants sign the membership book.

Ongoing Groups at Unity Church

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 (September 10) 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 (September 18) from Noon–2:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Evergreen Quilters: Second Tuesday of the month (September 8) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and fourth Saturday of the month (September 26) from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Contact: Peggy Wright at 651-698-2760.

Living With Grief Group: A group for people living with grief and loss. Third Tuesday of the month (September 15) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact: Janne Eller-Isaacs at janne@unityunitarian.org

Men's Retirement Group: Monday, September 14 and 28, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Contact: Phil Morton at 952-934-3578

Unitots!: A drop-in playgroup for families (parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles) 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. Contact Jack Hawthorne at jack.hawthorne@comcast.net. **September 8** discussion: *Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod* by Gary Paulsen. **October 13** discussion: *Gardenias* by Faith Sullivan.

Unity Bridge Club: Friday, September 4, at 7:00 p.m. Contact: Priscilla Swartz at 651-454-3209.

Connections for Women in Retirement: This group meets the second and fourth Thursday (September 10 and 24) 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, September 22, 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 from 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Ames Chapel. Instruction is offered on the first Tuesday (September 1) beginning at 5:00 p.m. Contact Ken Ford at kford5@comcast.net

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Sunday Welcome Teams

We are currently looking for additional Welcome Team members at all services (9:00, 11:00, 4:30). Volunteers are needed to 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 after the service. Welcome Team members are asked to serve at one service once per month.

Welcome Team Mini Training Sessions: Religious Education

Wednesday, September 9 • 7:15-8:00 p.m.

Come for Wellspring Wednesday dinner at 6:00!

We will be facilitating a 45 minute training to get our Ushers and Greeters more acquainted with Religious Education programs. This training will include orientation as to the layout of Religious Education programs in the downstairs, how we welcome families in, and what resources we have at Unity Church for visiting families.

Obama Elementary Tutors

Volunteers are needed to tutor students at Obama Elementary (located across Holly Avenue from Unity Church) who are struggling with reading and/or math skills. Volunteers will be assigned one or two classroom teachers based on availability and are asked to spend at least one hour per week for three months in this significant service to children in our community.

Emergency Response Team

Join a task force that will help design and update the Unity Church emergency response procedures. We'd love people with backgrounds in emergency response, large group training, copy writing, or editing to apply.

Sunday Soup Suppers

We are currently looking for Soup Supper cooks to fill the following Sundays:

- Sunday, September 20 • 2:30-4:30 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, September 27 • 2:30-4:30 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Work with a group of 5-6 people to prepare a sustaining meal for over 100 people. You could take one of your family recipes or one that we have tested. Additional support and training provided as needed. Volunteers for Soup Supper are able to attend the 4:30 p.m. service if they so choose.

Join a Wellspring Wednesday Cooking Team

- Wednesday, September 16 • 3:30-5:00 p.m. or 5:00-7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 23 • 2:00-5:00 p.m. or 5:00-7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 30 • 2:00-5:00 p.m. or 5:00-7:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays, starting September 9 • 4:00-8:00 p.m.

(or a few hours during that time)

No specific cooking skills needed — we teach you everything you need to know!

Grocery Shoppers

We are currently looking for individuals or groups willing to help grocery shop for our Sunday and Wednesday night dinners. Volunteers will most likely have to lift packages that are 10 pounds, or sometimes heavier. Very flexible as you can go shopping when it works for your schedule during the week before a dinner.

Baking Brigade

Baking Brigade events will happen sporadically throughout the church year. Sign up to come help bake cookies, pastries, pies, and more! You may also choose to gather a group of friends and you can schedule to bake, at church, whenever would work for your group.

Get involved! Share your gifts!

Meet new friends!

Please contact Madeline Summers, Volunteer Coordinator, madeline@unityunitarian.org to sign up for any of the opportunities on this page. 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, you may set up Involvement Appointment. During this appointment you can explore which opportunities would work best for you and how to make your biggest difference.



Cleaning Day Extravaganza!

Unity's facilities staff is looking for a team of 15-20 people to come in on Saturday, October 10, from 9:00 a.m. - noon, for a cleaning day extravaganza. Over the course of the morning they will be leading the group in projects such as dusting, painting, and weeding. We will provide any necessary training to those attending and will have staff on hand to help. Volunteers will not be expected to lift heavy objects and we are planning to find accessible jobs for everyone who signs up. You can come an help for the whole time or a few hours during that window.

As an appreciation for helping with this event, lunch will be provided at noon to all volunteers. Please sign up by contacting Madeline Summers, madeline@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107.

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.

September 9

Taco Local Night: A taco feast featuring all locally sourced ingredients. Come enjoy the bounty of a Minnesota summer!

Scavenger Hunt/Team Challenge Sara Ford & Rev. Lisa Friedman

Celebrate the start of a new Wellspring Wednesday year with a community-wide night of fun and fellowship! Participants of all ages are welcome to join in the fun. Teams will have to solve problems and work together to complete the challenges.

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.

Embodied Spiritual Practice:

Yoga for Every Body

Embody your spiritual practice with this 75-minute Vinyasa flow class. You'll be gently guided through breath work and yoga poses intended to bring our bodies, minds and spirits to a new level of openness. Come as you are and experience non-judgmental, non-competitive, lovely yoga. Youth ages 10 and up are welcome to come with an adult family member. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Bring a yoga mat, towel and water bottle. A few mats will be available for loan. Elen Bahr is a 200-hour RYT certified yoga instructor. You can find out more about Elen at EveryYogi.com.

Religious Education Teacher Training with Rev. KP Hong

September 16

Dinner menu: Turkey lettuce wraps, rainbow root veggies and cabbage crunch, and chocolate pudding.

Unity's Library & Bookstall Team Presents Nature as Spiritual Practice: A Book Conversation with Kim Chapman & Jim Armstrong, Authors of *Nature, Culture, and Two Friends Talking*

Kim Chapman and Jim Armstrong, both practicing Unitarian-Universalists, will lead a conversation with the group on the place nature occupies in the human psyche. Does nature nurture, calm, enliven, increase the intelligence of, and deepen the experiences of people? How does or should a lover of nature react when confronted by bad news about the effect of people on nature? What about the good news—how are we learning to be part of the natural world, actually supporting the nature world with our economic and cultural systems, and are we learning fast enough to offset some future, feared (some would say, overblown) environmental crisis?

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month:

Visible, Vocal, Valuable

Crafting our Stories: Join Unity's Addiction and Recovery Ministry to learn the principles of advocacy in how we tell our stories to reduce stigma, create hope, and provide inspiration for others. This is the first of two programs to honor this important awareness-raising month. All are welcome.

Great College Search with Craig Allen

**This class runs from 7:15-8:45 p.m.*

Can't tell the SAT from the ACT? Got your Wheatons mixed up? Experiencing FAFSA freak-out? For high school families, finding a college can be a stressful for the whole family. Learn how to optimize the process and become a critical consumer of colleges.

The four weeks will cover these topics:

September 16: Getting ready for the college quest. Conducting a search.

September 23: Creating a list of schools. Applying to the schools you select.

September 30: Financial aid basics.

October 7: Competitive Colleges: What, Why (or Why Not), and How

Sessions will consist of presentations followed by question and answer sessions and are for high school students and/ or parents who are currently in or interested in starting a college search and application process. We'll also try to raise-up topics that might be of special interest to Unitarian Universalist searchers. Craig Allen is a member of Unity Church and a certified college admissions counselor. He is also a member of the Higher Education Consultants Association (HECA) and the Minnesota Association for College Admission Counseling (MACAC).

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga

Go: A Chinese Game

Tween Group begins!

SEPTEMBER 23 AND 30 WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY OFFERINGS

WELLSPRING WEDNESDAY

September 23

Dinner menu: Garlic roasted pork, seasonal fall vegetables, and cheesecake bars for dessert

Voting Rights: 50 Years Ago & Today **Mark Haase & Jeff Narabrook**

The Voting Rights Act was signed fifty years ago on August 6, 1965, prohibiting racial discrimination in voting. What protections did that historic legislation offer and what is the state of those protections today? How do voting rights differ by state, even when we all vote for federal offices? What do the participation patterns in recent elections tell us about voter access and perception? Why is the restore the vote campaign for those living the community on parole or probation from a felony conviction so critical today? Join us for an important evening of reflection and discussion on our democracy, sponsored by Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Team.

Mark Haase is a private attorney specializing in government relations and a founder and steering committee member of the Minnesota Second Chance Coalition. He was formerly Vice President of the Council on Crime Justice, a criminal justice service, research, and policy reform nonprofit organization which he now represents as coordinator and lobbyist for Restore the Vote Minnesota, a coalition of over 72 organizations advocating to allow Minnesotans on felony probation and parole to vote.

Jeff Narabrook is Voter Outreach Director for the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State. He directs voter outreach, civic engagement and civic education efforts of the Office. In partnership with community organizations and nonprofits, Jeff implements a statewide outreach plan to provide voter education and voter registration assistance, especially to communities that vote at rates below average. Jeff attends Unity Church with his wife Gloria, and children Jasper and Julian.

Open Page Writing Session

Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing session participants use stories, poetry, images, and objects as well as wisdom from religious teachings, science, and history to reflect on the month's theme in their own words and on their own pages. No writing experience is necessary.

Open the Door: Writing about Hospitality RSVP to karen@unityunitarian.org Hospitality, Henri Nouwen said, creates emptiness that is friendly, "a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy." In times often defined by territorial behavior and a landscape fenced off by unbending opinions, how can the practice of hospitality create free and open space where we might meet one another and become friends?

Great College Search

Session Two: Creating a list of schools

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga

Go: A Chinese Game

Tween Group



Join a Wellspring Wednesday Cooking Team

Cooking help is needed Wednesday, September 16, 23, and 30
4:00-8:00 p.m. (or a few hours during that time)

No specific cooking skills needed — we teach you everything you need to know!

Grocery Shoppers

We are currently looking for individuals or groups willing to help grocery shop for our Sunday and Wednesday night dinners. Volunteers will most likely have to lift packages that are 10 pounds, or sometimes heavier. Very flexible as you can go shopping when it works for your schedule during the week before a dinner.

Contact madeline@unityunitarian.org if you would like to help cook or shop!

September 30

Dinner menu: Build Your Own Tater Tot Hot Dish! With plenty of rich creamy deliciousness and also plenty of healthy options. Dessert will be a strawberry icebox cake.

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month:

Visible, Vocal, Valuable

Telling Our Stories: Using the coaching from the earlier session, we will tell our stories to each other. Those who wish may receive coaching on how to craft an even more powerful message. This is the second of two programs to honor this important awareness-raising month. All are welcome.

Comfort Shawl Ministry

For many years, the U-Knitarians of Unity Church have been knitting comfort shawls to be given to members and friends as they experience times of grief, healing, and other challenges. Each shawl is blessed by the members of the Pastoral Care team and extends the warm, loving embrace of our community. Come hear testimony to the power of this ministry and learn how to knit the shawl pattern. All are invited to discover their inner U-Knitarian and become a part of this ministry of care and hospitality.

Embodied Spiritual Practice: Yoga

Great College Search Session Three:
Financial Aid Basics

Go: A Chinese Game

Tween Group

White Bear Unitarian
Universalist Church
cordially invites you to the

Ordination of Laura Smidzik

to the
Unitarian Universalist Ministry

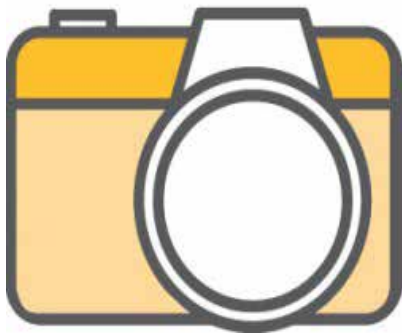


**Saturday, September 19
2:00 p.m.**

**White Bear Unitarian Universalist
Church: 328 Maple Street,
Mahtomedi, Minnesota**

For many of the past 15 years, Laura served as a lay leader at Unity Church–Unitarian and in 2014 she graduated from United Theological Seminary.

Carpool if possible because parking is limited. For childcare or other special needs, kindly contact dre@wbuuc by September 12. A reception with refreshments follows the service. All are welcome.



Unity Church

Photo Directory

*Pictures will be taken on
Wednesdays & Sundays
during September.
Details on page 4!*

September Soup Supper Meals

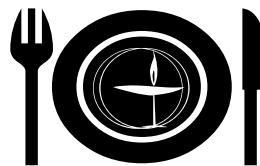
Soup Suppers are served each Sunday after the 4:30 p.m. service. All meals will offer vegan, vegetarian, and gluten free options. People with specific food allergies may contact madeline@unityunitarian.org to arrange to have a special preparation.

- September 13: Chili
- September 20: Corn Chowder with Smoked Trout
- September 27: Chicken and Fennel Soup with Parmesan Broth or Creamy Broccoli and White Bean Soup

Unity Church Mother/Daughter Book Club

The second Wednesday of each month, 5th and 6th grade girls and their moms will gather at Unity Church (following Chapel service) to discuss their monthly read. The Mother/Daughter Book Club began last year and is welcoming one or two more Mother/Daughter pairs for the coming Wellspring Wednesday year. Each month, one of the girls (with the assistance of her mom) will lead the book discussion and book related activity. The group was inspired by the website A Mighty Girl and tries to keep book selections from their suggested reading list of female focused protagonists. Check out their list: <http://www.amightygirl.com/books/book-club?cat=423>

The Mother/Daughter Book Club's first fall meeting is Wednesday, September 9. The group will be discussing (appropriately enough) *Mother Daughter Book Club* by Heather Vogel. Also that evening, the group will set the reading calendar for the year. If you are interesting in joining the group and just learning more, please email Elizabeth Wrobel at wrobelsmith@hotmail.com.



DINE WITH NINE RETURNS IN SEPTEMBER!

Dine with Nine Potluck & 2015-16 Supper Sign Up

Saturday, September 12 • 6:00–8:00 p.m. • Parish Hall

Are you interested in getting to know more people at Unity Church? Do you enjoy great food and lively conversation? Would you like to extend the hospitality of our community to both new and long term members alike? Beginning in October, small groups of Unity Church members and friends will gather in each other homes once a month for food and fellowship. Join us for an all-ages potluck dinner in the Parish Hall to kick-off our new Dine with Nine season and to learn more about the program.

You can sign up to participate in this year's Dine with Nine suppers in several ways: at the September 12 potluck, online at www.unityunitarian.org/dine-with-nine.html, or by email to Teresa Wernecke at teresa475@gmail.com. Please include your contact information and let us know if you would like to sign up for a family or adult only group or whether you have particular location or transportation needs. We look forward to another great year!

Young Adult Potluck

Tuesday, September 23 • 6:30 p.m. • Center Room

Are you looking to meet other young adults (ages 18-35) at Unity Church? Bring your favorite dish to a relaxed evening of good company and conversation. If you have questions, please contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.

Working Towards Prayer

Saturday, September 19 • 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Rev. Rob Eller Isaacs offers this workshop to help participants summon a quality of attention, a way of being, he calls prayer. This class is ideal for people who are seeking to deepen their existing prayer life and for those who are aspiring to discover a practice of prayer that works for them. Register by contacting Marcy Mann-Anderson at marcy@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x110. This class is free for pledging members and \$75 for non-pledging members and friends.

Power of Me Mother-Daughter Retreat

Saturday, September 19 • 3:30-8:00 p.m. • Parish Hall

For girls in grades 4-8 and their mothers

Please join us for this very special retreat where mothers and daughters will learn practical communication techniques to use at home when emotions are high. You will leave feeling close and connected. This retreat includes partner yoga, hands-on work between mothers and daughters, break out workshops, and a light dinner. Sign up online: <http://madhatteryogawellness.com/power-of-me/pom-mother-daughter-retreats/> Break out workshops:

- *Workshop for Mothers: Mindful Parenting: Top 3 Strategies for Peace at Home* with Samantha Moe, M.A. SLP
- *Workshop for Daughters: How to Talk with my Parent about what I'm Really Feeling* with Katie Thune, M.A. Ed., RYT

Articulating Your Unitarian Universalist Faith

Tuesdays: September 29, October 13, 20, 27, and November 3

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Have you ever struggled with what to say after “I’m a Unitarian Universalist?” You are not alone. This five session class is designed to explore and practice what to say when we are called upon to declare ourselves religiously or illuminate some angle on this liberal religious movement that has touched and changed so many lives for the better. Such moments are precious opportunities to deepen our own path and perhaps grow a happy awareness in someone else about this rich living tradition. This series provides hopeful inspiration and resources, plus the opportunity for meaningful connection to fellow UUs. Look for a sign up list in the Parish Hall on Sundays or RSVP directly to Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x107.

Group Spiritual Direction

Where are you on your spiritual journey?

Where are you on your life journey?

Join Spiritual Director Sarah Cledwyn, MA, for Journey Conversations, a time to reflect on and deepen our engagement with our own journey and gain appreciation for the journeys of others. Journey Conversations will provide an extended opportunity to bring focus and attention to the path of your life as well as provide community connections for support and deep reflection. Groups will meet every other week beginning in September and space out to once a month beginning in November. Groups will run through May 2016. A day group will meet from 10:00 a.m.-noon on Mondays and another group will meet on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free childcare is available with advance notice. Please register online at <http://www.unityunitarian.org/spiritual-direction.html>. Cost is \$30 per session with a sliding fee scale. If you have questions or want more information, please contact Sarah at sarahcledwyn@gmail.com.

September

Parish Hall Artist

Robyn Beth Priestley

A is for Afton, Z is for Zippel Bay is a project that highlights the wealth of natural areas we have in this state and that have inspired me.

I selected a number of parks from throughout the state, including the oldest park (Itasca, founded in 1891) and the newest park (Lake Vermilion, established in 2013), picking a variety of locations and ecosystems. I searched for the essence of each park—how it makes me feel and what strikes me—as well as what is iconic and inspiring about each one.

Creating artwork that expresses our connections to nature through art is my heart’s work. I am committed to understanding conservation issues and environmental stewardship, and conveying that understanding through my artwork to enliven our sense of responsibility for the natural world.

I want to remind people of what state parks have to offer, and I hope the viewer will come away with a sense of each park. I would love it if people are inspired to visit and experience the glory of all of these parks.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

Habitat for Humanity Summer Build Nears Completion

From Chuck Griggs on behalf of Unity's Affordable Housing Ministry Team



Faith Builders summer Habitat for Humanity home at 667 Lafond Avenue.

Unity Church members and friends participated in another Habitat For Humanity construction project during June and July to build another new and affordable home in the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul, just two doors away from last year's project.

This was a project of Faith Builders, a partnership with five area churches including Unity Church. Over two weeks, twelve people from Unity Church put in 210 hours of construction labor. Additionally, four people provided seven lunches to the entire Faith Builders team, about 15 to 18 people. Drive by 667 Lafond Avenue to see the hard work of Faith Builders and the wonderful difference this new home makes in the neighborhood.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and talents as well as those who contributed to the build through their Sunday offering donations.

10th Annual Unity Church Pilgrimage to New Orleans

Information Session: Sunday, September 13 • 10:15 a.m. • Center Room

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and the 10th pilgrimage of Unity members and friends who have gone to respond. Join the 2015 pilgrimage this fall, from October 24-31, and help Unity Church continue to make a difference. This is an opportunity to participate in a service and educational pilgrimage to the city of New Orleans where many of its citizens are still rebuilding their homes and communities a decade later. The week-long trip includes hands-on service projects, meetings with community leaders, connections with new and old friends, and opportunities to explore the rich and unique culture of the Crescent City. Each pilgrimage also offers time for reflecting on major themes of racial and economic justice in New Orleans related to our communities back in St. Paul. Find out more at the September 13 information session or contact Lisa Friedman at lisa@unityunitarian.org.



From Unity's Racial and Restorative Justice Outreach Team

Selby Avenue JazzFest

Saturday, September 12

One of the celebrations that make the end of summer poignant and pleasurable is Selby Avenue JazzFest. It will be held on September 12, from 11:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m., at the intersection of Selby Avenue and Milton Street (about half a mile from Unity Church). The music is free! Featured musicians include Walter Chancellor Junior and His Band, Salsa del Sol, Jazz Heritage Showcase, Source Code, Walker West Urban Legends of Jazz, and Dick and Jane's Big Brass Band.

You might go just for the scene: friendly people, exciting food and merchandise for sale, information about local organizations, the Health and Wellness Village. If you plan to stay awhile and listen to jazz, consider bringing a chair. There will be several rows of seating, but it tends to fill up, especially as the headliners come on. See you there!

Elections

Summit-University Planning Council Board of Directors

If you live in the neighborhood, support Unity Church's continued presence on the Summit-University Planning Council by voting on Saturday, September 12, in the Summit University Planning Council (SUPC) Board of Directors election. Cast your vote at the SUPC table at the Selby Avenue Jazz Fest You must live within the SUPC boundaries (Summit to University, Lexington to Marion). Your vote counts!

Evergreen Foodshelf

The third Sunday of every month is Evergreen Food Drive Sunday. Donations can be brought anytime and should be placed in the barrels located at both the Holly and Portland Avenue entrances.

OPEN PAGE / CAIRNS/ LIBRARY AND BOOKSTALL TEAM



Open Page Writing Sessions

Led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering, Open Page writing sessions are opportunities to correspond with the "still, small voice within." Using stories, poetry, images and objects as well as wisdom from religious teachings, science and history, participants reflect on the month's theme in their own words and on their own pages. No writing experience is necessary.

Open the Door: Writing about Hospitality Wednesday, September 23 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Unity Church • Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

Hospitality, Henri Nouwen said, creates emptiness that is friendly, "a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy." In times often defined by territorial behavior and a landscape fenced off by unbending opinions, how can the practice of hospitality create free and open space where we might meet one another and become friends?

Seeds of Reverence

Wednesday, October 28 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Unity Church • Free; RSVP required to karen@unityunitarian.org

"Without reverence, things fall apart," writer Paul Woodruff has observed. "To teach reverence," he says, "you must find the seeds of reverence in each person and help them grow." This writing session uncovers the seeds of reverence planted within each of us and help them grow.

Writing about Grace: an opening to new possibilities

Wednesday, November 18 • 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Unity Church • 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.

CAIRNS  2015

In the Foreword to *Sacred Place*, Rob and Janne wrote, "The book you now hold in your hands tells the story of a place made holy by a century of song and grief and gratitude. It has been home to countless threshold moments in its people's lives. It has held us in times of heartache. It has echoed with joyful shouts of thanks and praise."

When we first conceived of a journal of the arts in 2008, we envisioned a space of a different kind but for similar purpose. *Cairns* is home to countless threshold moments. Each issue echoes with joyful shouts of thanks and praise, as well as heartache.

Everyone has a story; many generous and brave people have shared their stories in *Cairns* in a variety of mediums (and many have not). Are we as a congregation informed and enriched by the songs, stories, poems, paintings and images of grief and gratitude of each other? If you answer, "yes," would you consider, again or for the first time, opening your heart to your congregation and submitting to *Cairns: The Unity Church Journal of the Arts*?

Final deadline for Cairns Vol. 7: October 1, 2015.



What's New in the Libraries and Bookstall!

Library-Team Sponsored Events

There is a great lineup of book-related events this fall. The kickoff takes place on August 28, at 7:30 p.m., when Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) will talk about her new book, *The Senator Next Door: A Memoir From the Heartland* (co-sponsored with Common Good Books). The next, on September 15, is a book conversation with Kim Chapman and Jim Armstrong, authors of *Nature, Culture, and Two Friends Talking*. The conversation begins at 7:10 p.m. after the Wellspring Wednesday worship service.

Books will be available for sale at these events and details are online at www.unityunitarian.org.

Have You Seen This Book?

The following books are overdue at the Anderson Adult Library. This is a gentle reminder to check your shelves and return Unity books to the library. Remember: We don't charge fines!

- *New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander
- *Case for God* by Karen Armstrong
- *Power of Acceptance* by Judith Bemis
- *Transitions* by William Bridges
- *Raising Spiritual Children in a Material World* by Phil Catalfo
- *Moral Measure of the Economy* by Chuck Collins
- *Einstein's God* by Krista Tippett

New Books

The following books are now available in the Anderson Adult Library: *Dreamers: An Immigrant Generation's Fight for Their American Dream* by Eileen Truax, 2015.

Belief without Borders: Inside the Minds of the Spiritual but not Religious by Linda A. Mercadante, 2014.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Pitter-pattering Questions

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

From K.P. Hong, Director of Religious Education



"Is not hospitality an interruption of the self?" asked Jacques Derrida. Does not absolute hospitality require that I surrender security, control, and welcome the arrival of what overturns the sovereignty of the self? I think of a Buddhist nun who shared this from her retreat:

"Something was troubling me, and I went to seek guidance of the monk leading our retreat. We sat down in the garden, under the full moon. He looked for a moment at the moon, then folded his robes under and assumed

the lotus position. He closed his eyes and said, 'Now I am ready to listen.' I must have talked for over an hour, and when he opened his eyes, he said, 'I understand what you are saying.'"

She concluded, "When someone listens like *that*, your life is up for grabs."

Your life is up for grabs? When was the last time someone listened and attended to our lives with such radical and disciplined hospitality that our lives felt up for grabs? That we were welcomed out from behind our gated lives and made available to be recruited by a great, wild mystery waiting to move in with us? When was the sovereignty of our self overthrown by such unqualified hospitality that our life was up for grabs?

Children exemplify lives that are continuously (and indiscriminately) up for grabs, irresistibly drawn to the immediacy and intimacy of each moment, beckoned by its intensity like bears to honey. And if we are honest, isn't this what overwhelms us as grownups: their constantly shifting, mercurial, erratic selves that have little in common with our adult longing to exist more reliably in the long stretch of identity? Watch the *sacramental* chemistry of children playing together, mutually absorbing and becoming for one another the outward signs of each other's inner reality. Educational theorists like Robert Coles and Edward Robinson have researched the rich *inner life* of children and how its authority is pivotal for children's learning and growth. But compared to such authority of their inner life, my suspicion is that, at some level, we as grownups would rather put our faith in the powers of knowledge, lesson plans, and pedagogy rather than trust in the capacity of our own inner spiritual lives. Far easier to simply import spirituality into pedagogy — a moment of Quaker silence here and there in the lesson plan — than to consider that our spirituality is in effect our pedagogy. Far easier to default to more "legitimate" forms of spirituality — call it religion, psychology, or art — than staying close to that great and wild mystery that keeps our spiritual attentiveness vibrant and luminous.

Without romanticizing one or the other, or segregating one from the other, I wonder what might happen if we risked the human heart above pedagogy? That as spiritual guides of children, what we really offer them is a glimpse of that great, wild mystery that has moved in with us, inhabiting our spirituality. And when our children feel their lives up for grabs by all that they encounter in the world, what will grab hold of them and never let go is a sacred and relentless love made known in our hospitality.

And so we begin another year, with immense gratitude for teachers who risk the interruptions of love, in which our children's lives are wondrously up for grabs.

Rev. KP Hong can be reached by email at kp@unityunitarian.org or by phone at 651-228-1456 x104.

Sundays with Kids

Tips about where and when your children or youth should be during Religious Education:

Nursery

- Infants and toddlers ages six months (and sitting up) through three years can be signed in to the nursery starting 15 minutes before each service.
- No registration required
- Label all personal belongings.
- Please leave your cell phone number and set phone to vibrate.
- Collect your little ones immediately after worship.

Spirit Play

- Children can be signed in to their Spirit Play preschool class 10 minutes before the service.
- Make sure two teachers are in the room; if not, stay with your child until they arrive.
- Nametags are in the pocket charts on the door and should be returned there after class.
- Collect your preschooler immediately after worship
- New this year: classes run 75 minutes.

Workshop Rotation

- 9:00 a.m., 4:30 p.m. Children in grades 1-6 should be escorted to the Ames Chapel starting 10 minutes before worship. Make sure at least two Journey Guides are in the Chapel; if not, stay with your child until they arrive.
- 11:00 a.m. Children begin with worship in the sanctuary with their families, then follow their Journey Guides to classes.
- Collect your child from their Workshop (varies each week, check signs).
- Classes run 75 minutes.

Junior High (Grades 6, 7 and 8)

- Junior High youth can escort themselves to and from classes.
- Youth should wear nametags while in the church building
- New this year: classes run 75 minutes.

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

R.E. Resumes Sunday, September 20

Information for new and returning families:

- If you attended one of the spring registration sessions, your child is already registered. Watch for classroom information via email. See you on Sunday, September 13, for Merging of Waters Family Sunday, and Sunday, September 20, for the start of Sunday School!
- If you have not yet enrolled your child(ren) or youth for Sunday School 2015-16, please join us on Wednesday, September 2, 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. 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. Childcare will be provided.
- If your family is unable to participate in this final registration on September 2, please contact R.E. staff: kp@unityunitarian.org
- This is NOT enrollment for Coming of Age (program for our 9th grade youth) nor Our Whole Lives (sexuality education for 7th-9th graders). For those programs contact Drew Danielson: drew@unityunitarian.org.

Religious Education Teacher Training

ALL teachers who have committed to a teaching/mentoring role for 2015-16 are strongly encouraged to attend Teacher Orientation and Training.* Please join us for sessions to orient you to your role in the journey of faith development. Trainings will be held on Wednesday, September 9, and Saturday, September 12. Please choose one training and sign up online: <http://www.unityunitarian.org/teacher-trainings.html>.

Schedule of Training Sessions (please choose one)

Wednesday, September 9 • All sessions 6:45-8:30 p.m.

Come for Wellspring Wednesday dinner at 6:00 p.m.

- Spirit Play
- Workshop Rotation
- Journey Guide
- Junior High

All other roles will receive orientation as needs/events arise.

Saturday, September 12 • All sessions 10:00 a.m.-noon

- Spirit Play
- Workshop Rotation
- Journey Guide
- Junior High

All other roles will receive orientation as needs/events arise.

Questions? Contact KP Hong at kp@unityunitarian.org.

*Note: Teachers whose responsibilities begin second semester are welcome to attend, but also may choose to attend orientation scheduled for January 2016.

Diving Deep in Spirit Play

From Sarah Cledwyn, Spirit Play Teacher and Parent

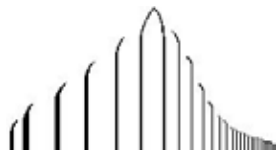
Have you had the experience of looking for something or learning something and arriving at a point of intuitive, "Yes!?" One time this happened to me was when I joined a swim team and was learning the butterfly stroke. I had watched swimmers race using this stroke and it was graceful and beautiful. When I first tried it, I felt I was just flopping around in the water. As I practiced more, I remember the first time my body did the stroke correctly and I felt smooth and coordinated, moving through the water with ease. Ah, so that was how to do it.

In July, I had the privilege of traveling to a conference about Godly Play, the Religious Education curriculum that our Spirit Play is adapted from. Watching my first story at the conference, I felt that same kind of "Yes!" moment. The presence of the storyteller drew us all in. Her movements and calm, the openness of the story itself felt reverent. The invitation into wondering and putting ourselves into the story was powerful. Suddenly I felt like my own presentation of Spirit Play stories has been as uncoordinated as my first attempts at the butterfly stroke. I also was left with a burning desire to offer our little people a new kind of experience in their class.

As someone who is a professional listener, I find that creating a safe and open space within which folks can wonder about and grapple with their life experience is vital to growth and learning. I seek this space for myself in my journal, with my own spiritual director and I do this informally in conversation with good friends. This safe and open space is what I want our class to feel like, where we wonder together, where we encounter a story that pulls us in, where we speculate about who we are in the story and what this means for our life and understanding. To build this kind of fluency with our own truth in the presence of someone who loves us is a practice of spiritual formation. To bring our child to our beloved community and to wonder with them about their joys and sorrows and about their experience is an opportunity as a parent for spiritual intimacy with our child and with our own truth. And for those of us who teach, we have an invitation before us to deepen our preparation, to deepen our own engagement with our children and with the stories themselves. Spirit Play is an invitation for all of us as we deepen our love and reverence.

This year as we practice church and love together in Spirit Play, I hope that we encounter more of those "Yes!" moments of recognition and rightness. What part of this story do you like best? What part is most important? Are you in this story? Come, let us wonder together.

"To bring our child to our beloved community and to wonder with them about their joys and sorrows, and about their experience, is an opportunity as a parent for spiritual intimacy with our child and with our own truth."



UNITY CHURCH—UNITARIAN

Sanctuary Entrance: 733 Portland Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
Business Entrance: 732 Holly Avenue • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-228-1456 • fax: 651-228-0927 • www.unityunitarian.org • unity@unityunitarian.org

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Unity Church Photo Directory

Pictures will be taken on Wednesdays & Sundays during September. Details on page 4!



SING in a Unity Church Choir!

Here at Unity Church we have a vital choral program and invite you to consider joining us this year. If you've been wanting to do this, how about this fall?

For the adults, it is helpful to have some musical experience such as music lessons at some time in your life, or having sung with a choir. Of course, if that is not in your background but you have a passionate interest and the courage to jump into the flow of things in order to learn a new skill, we invite you to come and sing with us. We have a great time together!

Please contact Ruth Palmer, Director of Music Ministries, with questions at ruth@unityunitarian.org or 651-228-1456 x118.

First rehearsals for this church year are as follows:

- **Children's Choir** (grades 1 - 5): Sunday, September 13, from 10:15–11:00 a.m. Kathleen Radspinner, director (kathleenr395@gmail.com); Foote Room
- **Unity Choir** (adult, high school and beyond): Thursday, September 10, from 7:30– 9:15 p.m. Ruth Palmer, director; Parish Hall
- **Unity Singers** (auditioned membership): Tuesday, September 8, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Ruth Palmer, director; Parish Hall/Sanctuary
- **Women's Ensemble**: Sunday, September 15, from 10:15-10:45 a.m. Ruth Palmer, director; Choir Room

Peter Mayer at Merging of Waters

Unity Church is thrilled to welcome Peter Mayer to the Merging of Waters service on Sunday, September 13, at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 4:30 p.m. Don't forget to bring the water you have collected this summer for the merging ritual.

