

## Cultivating

*The life of a congregation is a rich community tapestry of people, programs, ministries, and worship. We lift up the patterns of this tapestry at Unity Church with the threads of monthly themes woven through our worship and programming. These themes deepen our understanding of our faith and strengthen our bonds with one another in religious community.*

It's June — the season of both the cultivated and the uncultivated. In the past several weeks, everywhere we look, those carefully cultivated rows of tulips bloomed, alongside the earlier rows of daffodils and jonquils and other signs of spring. While out driving in the country, we may see row upon row of soil, broken up and tilled, cultivating the earth for the plantings which are soon to come. It's a process many of us dream about when the winter earth is frozen solid; in the midst of February we imagine ourselves outside, with hoe and rake in hand, preparing the earth for its next phase.

Cultivating is the theme for June and it's an obvious one for the beginning of summer. Our theme team conversation began with agriculture and how our ancestors did (or did not) understand the importance of cultivating diverse groupings of plants. Stories are told about the colonists who first came to Turtle Island and saw blueberries growing next to sage, strawberries alongside dogwoods and thought they just happened to grow that way. Little did they know Indigenous peoples knew how to place plants together in such a way as to foster their health and well-being. A careful cultivation of seeds from year to year; with hundreds of years of trial and error, fostered the biodiversity which we now know is essential for our survival.

As with all words, "cultivation" or it's active sibling "cultivating," has several meanings. It can mean to "improve by labor, care or study," or "refinement and good education," but it's this definition that is most striking: "to seek the company or friendship of."

Certainly, we cultivate the soil for its eventual harvest, but what if we imagined cultivating the soul because we want to befriend it? In Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* she writes, "I spend a lot of time thinking about our relationships with the land, how we are given so much and what we might give back..." She describes cultivating her garden as an act of love and friendship. She continues, "I looked around at the garden and could feel her delight in giving us these beautiful raspberries, squash, basil, potatoes, asparagus, leeks, spinach... It reminds me of my little girl's answer to, 'How much do I love you?' 'Thiiiiis much,' with arms stretched wide they replied." ("Epiphany in the Beans," pg. 122).

Cultivating a garden is not unlike cultivating a loving, equitable relationship, built on mutual trust and respect. Later, in the same chapter, Kimmerer describes these loving behaviors as "nurturing health and well-being; protection from harm; encouraging individual growth and development; desire to be together; generous sharing of resources; working together for a common goal; celebration of shared values; interdependence; sacrifice by one for the other; creation of beauty." I was struck by how similar these are to what happens here at Unity Church as we cultivate within our children, youth, Coming of Agers, Bridgers, young adults, adults, and seniors a life-long practice of these loving behaviors.

The metaphor for church as a garden is, of course, one that is well used, for good reason. Unitarian minister A. Powell Davies famously said, "Life is

just a chance to grow a soul." That's what we're doing day in and day out, week after week, decade after decade, cultivating souls to enable all souls to grow in — yes, integrity, service and joy. One of the best poems for this season of year is Gerard Manley Hopkins's "God's Grandeur," especially the last stanza. Relish it, as if it were a ripening strawberry or luscious peach, waiting to be savored: "...And for all this, nature is never spent; There lives the dearest freshness deep down things; And though the last lights off the black West went Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs — Because the Holy Ghost over the bent World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings."

*Rev. Kathleen Rolenz  
with this month's theme team:  
Rev. Lara Cowtan, Drew Danielson,  
Rev. Tom Duke, Rev. KP Hong,  
and Nelson Moroukian*

### Theme Resources

For further reflection on the theme, see this month's spiritual practice packet, available online at [unityunitarian.org/chalice-circles.html](http://unityunitarian.org/chalice-circles.html).

# IN THE MEANTIME



## Reflections on Interim Ministry

**Rev. Kathleen C. Rolenz**

This is the season of “lasts.” My last column as your interim senior minister. My last meeting with the board June 8. My last Sunday will be June 23. Some of you have extended lunch, dinner and coffee invitations and while I’m trying to say “yes” to them all — sadly, I may run out of time. Isn’t that the way life is? Endings bring both urgency and poignancy, and a sense that there is always unfinished business.

So, in addition to the question of, “Where will you go next?” (back to my home in Charlottesville) and, “What will you do next?” (don’t know!), a question I am sometimes asked at the end of an interim is, “Am I allowed to be in touch with you after you leave?” This is always a difficult one for me, because this experience we’ve shared together has been deep and rich. I’ve invested two years in supporting your present and future health, so it’s natural that I too would want to stay in touch. (Just for the record — holiday cards, especially with pictures, are always welcome!)

And yet, we both know that our time together has always had a clear beginning and ending. And while my affection for you will never end — I will always be checking out how Unity Church is doing — my work as your minister will. My job now is to leave the church with as few (here’s my favorite metaphor) “hanging chads” as possible.

Every minister leaves a legacy – hopefully one that is more helpful than harmful. I know you know this, as you have recounted both the gifts and the wounds received by your previous ministers. However, if I have harmed you by something I did or didn’t say or do, I hope to be able to address those harms before I leave.

As I’ve said before, I have loved each of my interim ministries. Yet the gift of this unexpected interim with Unity has surpassed all my expectations. Your health and vitality, your maturity and wisdom, your financial generosity and your genuine love of ministers and of one another all holds you in good stead. During candidating week and the congregational meeting you demonstrated some of the best practices of congregational engagement I have ever experienced. I am extremely proud of you — and the work we have done together. I’m grateful for the work of my interim colleague Rev. Dr. Kathy Hurt, more recently Rev. Karen Gustafson and Rev. Karen Hering, and currently Rev. Lara Cowtan. I shall miss the Unity staff, Executive Team and beloved colleagues in the Twin Cities.

So, we’ll have a joyous month of endings! We’ll celebrate these two years, toast to the future of Unity Church, and with gratitude and appreciation look forward to hearing about one another’s adventures via the newsletter or a Christmas card.

Serving you has truly been an honor.

Love and Blessings,

Rev. Kathleen

## Celebrating the Gifts of Interim Ministry

We began our interim ministry at a time of remarkable stress and anxiety and are about to end in a state of remarkable health and celebration. The Interim Monitoring Team invites you to share some thoughts or words of gratitude for what we’ve accomplished, transformed, learned, or begun in interim. We’ll read from these during a light brunch after the service on June 23 as we celebrate interim, Rev. Kathleen, and the journey we’ve taken together. Please send your submissions to [unity@unityunitarian.org](mailto:unity@unityunitarian.org) by June 16.

## The Wheel of Life

*In Memoriam*

**Daisi Martin**

September 25, 1943 – April 23, 2024

**Carol Dixon**

October 8, 1942 – May 7, 2024

**Mary Pollard**

December 2, 1935 – May 8, 2024

## Staff Changes

With all the staff changes we’ve recently experienced, we thought it could be helpful to list whom to contact about what. Find who you’re looking for here: [unityunitarian.org/staff-roles.html](http://unityunitarian.org/staff-roles.html). Let’s keep in touch!

## Fellowship Groups

Details at [unityunitarian.org/fellowship-groups.html](http://unityunitarian.org/fellowship-groups.html)

**Afterthoughts:** Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

**Caregivers Support Group:** Third Thursday, noon

**Evergreen Quilters:** Second Tuesday, 7:00-9:00 p.m., and fourth Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

**Families Living with Mental Health Challenges:** Third Saturday, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

**Living With Grief Group:** Third Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

**Men's Coffee Group:** Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m.

**Men's Conversation Group:** June 10 and 24, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

**Men's Retirement Circle:** June 3 and 17, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**New Look at the Bible:** Second Thursday, 7:00 p.m.

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

**Unity Book Club:** Second Tuesday, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

**Women in Retirement:** Second and fourth Thursday, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**Young Adult Group** (ages 18-35)  
Email [kp@unityunitarian.org](mailto:kp@unityunitarian.org)

# SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES | OFFERING RECIPIENTS

---

## Sunday Worship Services

Summer Sunday services, from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, are held at 10:00 a.m., both in the Sanctuary and via livestream. Sundays in the Garden for children and youth is held during the 10:00 a.m. service.

### June 2: *An Ode to Joy*

**Rev. Lara Cowtan | Sara Ford, Isaac Fried, worship associates**

Livestream: [youtube.com/watch?v=gWSKhP-1W-A](https://youtube.com/watch?v=gWSKhP-1W-A)

Beethoven was completely deaf when he embarked on his masterpiece, *Ode to Joy*, and it's a tragedy that he never heard a single note of it except inside his head. At many times in our lives, finding joy may seem impossible. Life can seem painful or tragic, and joy completely out of reach. Not ignoring the truths of the tragedies and challenges of our world, how can we cultivate more joy in our lives? This service will include a ritual to release Unity's Ministerial Search Team.

### June 9: *Cultivating a Climate of Care*

**Rev. Kathleen Rolenz | Anna Newton, worship associate**

Livestream: [youtube.com/watch?v=BbkJUxHvO3Q](https://youtube.com/watch?v=BbkJUxHvO3Q)

We are well aware of the realities of climate change; we see evidence of the changing earth on an almost daily basis. Yet climate fatigue — the feeling of helplessness and hopelessness is also evident. How do we cultivate a sustainable level of energy and care for the environment when our own resources are often thin? How is that climate of care practiced within, among and beyond us?

### June 16: *God Was Not Your Father*

**Rev. Kathleen Rolenz**

**Charlie Caswell, Isaac Fried, Chris Russert, worship associates**

Livestream: [youtube.com/watch?v=mR2njf4qNSQ](https://youtube.com/watch?v=mR2njf4qNSQ)

Fatherhood has changed a lot since the first celebration of Father's Day in 1910, as have ideas about masculinity. Our worship associates will reflect on their own experiences of fathers, and the joys and the challenges of navigating maleness amidst a culture that insists on binary thinking.

### June 23: *Accidental Blessing*

**Rev. Kathleen Rolenz | Meg Arnosti, worship associate**

Livestream: [youtube.com/watch?v=rw6V\\_99hjtC](https://youtube.com/watch?v=rw6V_99hjtC)

This Sunday will reflect on the milestone events since Rev. Kathleen's arrival at Unity Church in September 2022: successes, missed opportunities and work that is still in the making. It will include a ritual to release Rev. Kathleen from the responsibilities and duties of serving as Unity's interim minister, followed by a celebration of gratitude. At noon, we'll livestream the worship service at General Assembly 2024, with the Rev. Dr. Molly House Gordan preaching.

### June 30

**Nelson Moroukian | Caswell Burr**

Livestream: [youtube.com/watch?v=mD4nFQ7vN3o](https://youtube.com/watch?v=mD4nFQ7vN3o)

## Offering Recipients

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

**June 2: Unity's Gun Violence Prevention Team's** mission is to engage the Unity Church community to raise awareness of practical efforts that make living with guns in our society safer for everyone. This collection will be used to purchase supplies for the team's efforts to research, educate, and communicate as we work to reduce gun violence of all kinds, including homicide, suicide, community gun violence, and police gun violence. If you are so moved, please wear orange in support of Gun Violence Awareness month in June.

**June 9: Unity's Housing Justice Team** seeks to learn, and help all of us learn, how to help every Minnesotan find and keep a home. The team partners with organizations seeking to make policy and create housing and shelter while dismantling the structural racism that allows housing injustice. This collection will support the communication efforts of the team and help purchase household supplies for 90 families moving into new, deeply affordable housing in Hopkins this year.

**June 16: Mad Dads** serves Minneapolis with integrity and dedication by providing community safety protocols along with positive youth programming and job creation. Its core program is violence intervention and interruption. This program treats violence as a disease which Mad Dads confronts face to face and works tirelessly to prevent its spread in the community. Its youth empowerment club nurtures attitudes and skills that promote relationship, respect, resiliency, and responsibility.

**June 23: The Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund** was established by the UUA Transitions office to enable Accredited Interim Ministers the ability to apply for and take sabbatical time between interim ministries. This fund provides interim ministers time for meaningful renewal and professional development.

**June 30: Camp Tamarack** is a non-denominational overnight summer camp with a mission to give urban youth the opportunity to experience a rural environment while developing life-long personal survival skills. Tamarack provides a first-time camper experience in a safe and fun environment with opportunities to canoe, swim, dance, play games, and build community. This offering will assist with camp scholarships. Unity Church member Dick Buggs is a supporter of Camp Tamarack.

Visit [unityunitarian.org/sunday-offering.html](https://unityunitarian.org/sunday-offering.html) to nominate an organization to receive the Sunday offering.

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES



## Making a New Future Possible

Louise Livesay-Al, Chair

We did it! We just arrived on the other side of a very stressful and hard, but transformative, time for us as a congregation. And we did a lot of hard work along the way to get to a place where we, as a congregation, voted wholeheartedly and emphatically to call Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair as our Senior Minister. I realized after the meeting that in some ways, I had been holding my breath, trying to be prepared for whatever might come. And, I had a sense from everything I had been hearing, that we were ready and excited to call Rev. Oscar.

To arrive at the meeting on April 21 ready to make the call, we worked to learn from the past, heal relationships and wounds, implement changes, and step into action to make a new future possible. There was:

- Close collaboration between the Board of Trustees and Executive Team to identify previous challenges and a way forward through the search process
- Closer connections with the Unitarian Universalist Association
- Election of a new Ministerial Search Team (MST)
- Charges to the MST and the congregation
- Ongoing congregational reflection under interim leadership with Rev. Kathleen Rolenz
- Over 20 cottage meetings facilitated by the MST
- Specific changes to bylaws and procedures to support an effective process
- Congregational and ministerial search survey
- Candidating week changes
- Your involvement and participation!

This was no small task for us and we all rose to the occasion and did our part. When I was standing at the reading desk during the meeting on April 21 and the vote to close discussion was called and I announced, "All in favor say aye," I felt the force of the energy put forward in that aye like a physical thump on my chest. The energy was palpable! Bringing Rev. Oscar out to accept the call and feeling the enthusiasm and joy, was remarkable. I held his arm up and said, "We won ourselves an Oscar!"

So what now? We will release the MST from their duties during the Sunday service on June 2. On June 23 we will celebrate the incredible ministry, leadership, guidance, and spirit Rev. Kathleen Rolenz has brought to Unity these past two years and release her as our interim minister. Over the summer, we will prepare to welcome Rev. Oscar, his wife Stacie and their daughter Ailish to Unity Church and St. Paul. He will begin as senior minister on August 1, and his first service will be Merging of Waters on September 8. Watch for opportunities to connect with Rev. Oscar and family during August. If you would like to join the board for a summer backyard social (offered as one of the auction items during our spring fundraiser), tickets (\$50 each) are available for purchase by visiting [unityunitarian.org/make-a-gift.html](https://unityunitarian.org/make-a-gift.html), selecting "Fundraiser Donation" from the dropdown menu, and including "board backyard social" in the comments section.

We have a lot to look forward to. People are genuinely excited. As I said at the congregational meeting, I am so thankful to the 2024 MST that brought Rev. Oscar to us, and for the foundational work of the 2022 MST. I also extend gratitude to Unity staff, the Executive Team, my fellow trustees of the last several years, and particular appreciation to the members and friends of Unity Church for stepping up and staying connected over the last two years. We are ready! Enjoy the summer as we anticipate our next chapter together.

## Consider Joining Unity's Board

You can engage in supporting Unity in lots of ways — including through board service. With nine members on the board serving three-year terms, three positions open up each year. Think about whether board service could be a good fit for you.

You can read more about the trustee role and the characteristics we're looking for in candidates at [unityunitarian.org/board-of-trustees.html](https://unityunitarian.org/board-of-trustees.html). The application link will be posted there, too. We seek candidates, conduct interviews and then bring a slate of three candidates forward to the congregational meeting held in November.

If you are interested in learning more, board members will be tabling in Parish Hall after Sunday services in June — stop by to ask any questions! We'll also be holding an in-person meeting and one by Zoom for anyone who is curious to learn more. You can reach out directly to trustees, including the three on the recruitment committee: Jackie Boyd at [jduffboyd@gmail.com](mailto:jduffboyd@gmail.com), LauraSue Schlatter at [laurasueschlatter@gmail.com](mailto:laurasueschlatter@gmail.com), and John Steiner-Manning at [johnhsmanning@gmail.com](mailto:johnhsmanning@gmail.com).



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

# MINISTERIAL SEARCH TEAM

## Turning the Page: A Ministerial Search Team Reflection

By Jennie Smith on behalf of the Ministerial Search Team

The Ministerial Search Team (MST) was elated at the emotions that poured out following candidating week and the overwhelming vote of support at the congregational meeting. We also can't help but ponder the reasons and meaning behind the vote. With a congregation of our size and an impressive turnout at the congregational meeting resulting in an almost unanimous vote... we've since speculated and discussed the reasons at length. A strong belief in Rev. Oscar? Confidence in the MST's work? A collective readiness to move forward into the next chapter of our story? Maybe it is all three and something else entirely.

That sense of collective readiness is a natural outgrowth of our work as a congregation over the past two years. Part of the work during this two-year interim has been to name and claim the story of Unity Church today; to understand and heal from the ruptures of the spring of 2022. We needed to pause, reflect, and then turn to each other, again and again, to tell the stories about why Unity matters to us, to our children, to our community, and to the world. We have done that work in circles, listening deeply and bravely speaking our piece of the story, over coffee and at the MST table in Parish Hall, at Wellspring Wednesday events, in choir rehearsals, in our outreach ministry team meetings, and the colorful hallways of the lower level. We've called Rev. Dr. Oscar Sinclair to be part of our story — indeed, he already is. We will all write this next chapter together as we listen, share, reflect, and dream.

While it was surprising that no one had comments during the meeting, we know you have more to say! We want to hear your stories of how you experienced candidating week and the congregational meeting. We've set up a form where you can share stories and moments to help create a collage of voices documenting this chapter in Unity's history (use this QR code or visit the transitions webpage). There is also a place at the bottom of the form to upload pictures. The stories and pictures shared on this form will be included with the MST's final report and shared with the board and archive team to document this important part of Unity's story.



Reflecting on the past year and trying to encapsulate the experience, we listed words to describe the past year's work. One MST member offered the word "painstaking." While some equate this word with negative, laborious work (it starts with "pain" after all), it is quite the opposite and a fitting definition. Defined as "expending, showing, or

involving diligent care and effort," the word painstaking fits well in that list that also includes joy, love, diligent, transforming, and wonder. All embody care and diligence.

This month the Ministerial Search Team will be discharged from our duties, a year after we began this work. To be clear: this is not the end of anything! It marks the beginning of another chapter in the life of our much-loved community. Many of you have asked us, "What's next?" and, "What are you doing now with all your free time?" Check out the "web only" May update from the MST on the Ministerial Transitions page.

Activist and writer adrienne maree brown writes: "... we are shaping the future we long for and have not yet experienced." The seven members of the MST extend our heartfelt gratitude to the congregation for the honor of being a part of this chapter in shaping the future and contributing to this and the next story of Unity Church.

See you at church! The '24 MST

Rich

Ray

Rebecca

Kat

Angela

Jennie

Tara



# BELOVED COMMUNITY STAFF TEAM

## Widening the Circle: Proposed Updates to UU Principles and Purposes

Rebecca Gonzalez-Campoy, Beloved Community Communications Team

Ours is a living tradition. In keeping with this practice, we, as congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), review the bylaws that govern our movement every 15 years, to help us to respond to current and future societal realities. Currently, Article II of the UUA Bylaws and Rules covers Principles and Purposes, and is the source of the Seven Principles. This month, delegates to the 2024 UUA General Assembly will consider a proposed revision to Article II.

Two key parts of the proposed revision concern **Article II, C-2.2 Values and Covenant**, and **Article II, C-2.4 Inclusion**. Here is an excerpt of the proposed Article II, C-2.2 bylaw:

### Values and Covenant

Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. Inseparable from one another, these shared values are:

**Interdependence.** We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it.

We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships.

**Pluralism.** We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.

We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.

**Justice.** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive.

We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic

oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregations, our Association, and society at large.

**Transformation.** We adapt to the changing world.

We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically. Openness to change is fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages, never complete and never perfect.

**Generosity.** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.

We covenant to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. Our generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality.

**Equity.** We declare that every person has the right to flourish with inherent dignity and worthiness.

We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities.

Here is the second key part of the bylaws revision, the proposed **Article II, C-2.4 Inclusion**:

Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories. We pledge to replace such barriers with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. We strive to be an Association of congregations that truly welcome all persons who share our values. We commit to being an Association of congregations that empowers and enhances everyone's participation, especially those with historically marginalized identities.

### Why these changes now?

According to the Article II Study

Commission blog ([bit.ly/art2faq](https://bit.ly/art2faq)):

It's been nearly 40 years since a comprehensive review and revision of Article II. The digital age has shifted our interactions with community and truth. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted our interdependence, and where individualism falls short. There is a rise in global autocracies and attacks on democratic institutions, and climate catastrophes and mass extinctions threaten the delicate balance of the web of life. With the articulation of our shared UU values, we can be better equipped to make values-based decisions in facing these new and evolving realities.

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz explains that the revised values call for a deeper emphasis on community or "among and beyond." Along with this trend, there is a need to update language for authentic inclusiveness, especially related to our BIPOC members. And yet another reason to revise the principles is to make them more relatable and easier to remember in a graphic that places the values of equal importance around the core value of love. Including a covenant with each value provides a specific call to action.



### How does this revision impact Unity?

Unity Church has a long history of encouraging its members to examine and engage in antiracist multiculturalism {continued on p. 7}

# WELCOME NEWCOMERS

{continued from p. 6} work as evidenced by an institutional audit of race relations ([bit.ly/racerelationshistory](https://bit.ly/racerelationshistory)) created more than 20 years ago, and annual reports on our efforts. The Double Helix model ([bit.ly/unitydoublehelix](https://bit.ly/unitydoublehelix)) and Ends Statements ([unityunitarian.org/values-mission-and-ends.html](https://unityunitarian.org/values-mission-and-ends.html)) help us bring spiritual practice to antiracist multicultural work and apply antiracist multiculturalism to our spiritual practice. So, Unity already lives out much of what is proposed in the revised Article II.

## What can we do to participate in the vote on the revised Article II?

Register to attend the UUA General Assembly: Virtual GA, June 20-23, 2024, either as a full registrant for a fee or as a business-only registrant for a donation ([uua.org/ga](https://uua.org/ga)). Then, sign up at Unity to serve as one of thirteen church delegates (we rarely fill our roster). Contact Rev Kathleen Rolenz at [kathleen@unityunitarian.org](mailto:kathleen@unityunitarian.org) for more information. The GA program includes interesting and meaningful workshops, liturgical services, voting opportunities, and fellowship. Never been? No problem. Rev. Kathleen will hold an information meeting before the start of GA so you can engage in a productive and well-prepared way.

For more information on proposed changes to Article II:

UUA Article II Study Commission: [uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission](https://uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission)

UUA Article II Congregational resources: [uua.org/re/article2](https://uua.org/re/article2)

Widening the Circle of Concern: Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change June 2020 (also in book form ISBN 9781558968615): [uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening](https://uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening).



## Welcome Words

**Philippa Anastos, Membership Coordinator and Program Assistant**

In the summer months, our schedules go haywire and we struggle to manage travel, camps, gardening, holidays, and more. It is easy to be overwhelmed when everything in our lives seems to bloom at once. Yet, in this glorious profusion of chaos, we have a chance to cultivate pieces of our lives that don't always have a chance to flourish. With many

church programs on hiatus, I hope you will find and nurture Beloved Community wherever life brings you this summer!

## Pathway to Membership Classes

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

## Finding Yourself at Unity: For Visitors and Inquirers

**Sundays 11:15 a.m. | Drop-ins welcome; childcare available**

**Gannett Room or online via Zoom: [bit.ly/fyonline](https://bit.ly/fyonline)**

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

June offerings:

June 2: Faith Formation

June 9: Q&A with the Minister

June 16: Congregational and Pastoral Care

June 23: UU History

June 30: Building Tour

## Ingathering of New Members

**Sunday, June 9 | 10:00 a.m. service**

During the Sunday service on June 9, we will welcome our newest members with a short ceremony celebrating our covenant with one another. Let Philippa Anastos ([philippa@unityunitarian.org](mailto:philippa@unityunitarian.org) or 651-228-1456 x110) know you're interested in participating or to ask questions.

## Support Hallie Q. Brown Food Shelf

The food shelf really appreciates all of our donations. For the month of April, we donated 295 pounds of food. In June the food shelf needs sunscreen, toilet paper, paper towels, aluminum foil, window cleaner, oven cleaner, disinfectant spray and nonperishable food items.

Thank you!



## Lectio Divina

**Lectio will meet once per month during the summer, at 7:10 p.m., online: June 12, July 10, August 14, and September 11.**

**Zoom: [bit.ly/Lectio2023-24](https://bit.ly/Lectio2023-24)**

Participate in a centuries-old monastic practice of listening, contemplating, and responding to sacred texts; modified with poetry for Unitarian Universalist small group spiritual practice. Led by Lisa Wersal or Shelley Butler. A different poem at each session. Questions? Contact Shelley at [library@unityunitarian.org](mailto:library@unityunitarian.org).

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## Obama/JJ Hill School Team

Every two years, Unity's Outreach Ministry Teams are invited into a Renewal Process, a "shared spiritual practice of reflection and renewal" as a prelude to writing an application to continue for another two years. It's an opportunity to think deeply about our purpose, to consider our accomplishments and to look forward to future challenges.



*Pauline Eichten works with a young reader.*

When our team went through the renewal process two years ago, there were several unknowns. Would our help be welcomed as Obama School celebrated its 100th anniversary? (Yes, we had Unity members involved in planning the event, hanging an art show that was a highlight of the celebration, staffing the hallways during the evening, and even directing cars to park in our church parking lot.) Would we be welcomed this year as volunteers by the staff at JJ Hill Montessori Magnet School, the school which will be moving into the Obama building in 2025? (Yes, definitely!)

As we prepare to go through the renewal process again this spring, we look forward to celebrating what we've accomplished and exploring the changes and challenges in the two years ahead. We invite you to think about how you might be involved with our work next fall! We'll be in touch!

## Act for the Earth: Get Outdoors Together!

Join Act for the Earth for family-friendly outdoor activities this summer — recharge, share a meal, enjoy the fellowship. In case of heavy rain, we will still meet for dinner!

**Spirit of Water Celebration at Hidden Falls Park in St. Paul**  
Saturday, June 15 | 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Details and required registration: [bit.ly/utswatercel](http://bit.ly/utswatercel)  
This is a wonderful community event with speakers, food, art, music and play areas for children. To join a carpool with church friends, email [alana.howey@gmail.com](mailto:alana.howey@gmail.com). Co-sponsored by our partners at Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light, Union Theological Seminary, Friends of the Mississippi River and R.I.S.E coalition.

### Lake Phalen Walk

Wednesday, July 10 | Walk: 5:30-6:30 p.m., dinner after  
Park on English Street, just north of Arlington Avenue East  
Kathy Sidles will lead us south on the Bruce Vento Regional Trail, and back along the east shore of Lake Phalen. Who knows what we will find (birds and bumble bees?), and the lake is gorgeous. Dinner at Saint Paul Brewing Co. Email Kathy at [kesid@aol.com](mailto:kesid@aol.com) if you plan to participate.

### Bike Ride Along the Mississippi

Saturday morning August 17 or 24 | Watch for details!  
Bike 10 miles (optional longer route) along the river, with lunch at City House (an old grain elevator)! Email Anna at [asnewton3@gmail.com](mailto:asnewton3@gmail.com) if you plan to participate.

## Housing Justice Team

### Habitat for Humanity Project (Register by May 27)

Unity's Housing Justice Team invites you to help with a deep "remodel" of an existing home for a Habitat for Humanity client the week of June 3-7 in Roseville. Give it a try! Sign up by May 27 at [bit.ly/ucufb24](http://bit.ly/ucufb24). Questions? Please contact Chuck Griggs at [griggscb@msn.com](mailto:griggscb@msn.com).

### Project Home Juneteenth Celebration

Wednesday, June 19 | Saint Paul

Join Project Home's Third Annual Juneteenth "Fun in the Sun" at Provincial House. Families from Project Home and the Faithful Hospitality project (see below) will participate in everything from a bouncy house to a barbecue. Volunteers are needed for two-hour shifts from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Details and to sign up: [bit.ly/phjuneteenth](http://bit.ly/phjuneteenth). Questions? Contact Donna Franklin at [dfranklin@interfaithaction.org](mailto:dfranklin@interfaithaction.org).

### Be a Weekend Warrior!

We're looking for groups of 3-6 adults to participate in weekend meal teams at Provincial House in Saint Paul. Volunteers assist with serving meals, visiting with guests, and clean up. Details and sign up at [bit.ly/23phmeals](http://bit.ly/23phmeals). Questions? Contact Donna Franklin at [dfranklin@interfaithaction.org](mailto:dfranklin@interfaithaction.org).

### Interfaith Action's Newest Project: Faithful Hospitality

To support asylum-seeking families experiencing homelessness, this new mobile shelter program provides wrap-around services (including mental health services, medical services, etc.). As part of the program, families sleep at area houses of worship. There are three host sites each month and Interfaith Action is looking for volunteers to serve as overnight shelter hosts. To sign up, please complete the online form at [tfaforms.com/4934671](http://tfaforms.com/4934671) (select "Faithful Hospitality" in the interest options box). Then watch this short training video: [youtu.be/OabtR8mwbZ4](https://youtu.be/OabtR8mwbZ4). Elizabeth Kulus will then be in touch with instructions on how to sign up for volunteer shifts. Questions? Contact Elizabeth at [ekulus@interfaithaction.org](mailto:ekulus@interfaithaction.org).

### Where To Begin with the Housing Crisis? (Whew!)

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative is a partner with Unity's Housing Justice Team. They build deeply affordable homes and address the policies and systems creating homelessness. Beacon hosts an introductory, 30-minute meeting about this complex work on Zoom called "Beacon 101." It's offered twice each month. Curious? Find a date that works for you: [beaconinterfaith.org/events](http://beaconinterfaith.org/events).

## Evergreen Quilters: Thank You

Evergreen Quilters thanks everyone for their support of their April quilt raffle and sale. Your generosity made it possible to donate \$2000 each to Hallie Q. Brown Food Shelf, Project Home and The Jeremiah Program.





The Library-Bookstall Team

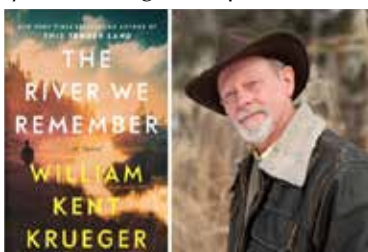
## From the Broiler to the Best Seller List:

### William Kent Krueger

Shelley Butler, Library-Bookstall Team

Remember the St. Clair Broiler on the corner of Snelling and St. Clair in St. Paul? Sadly, it closed in 2017 after 61 years, but more than twenty years ago, I heard about a St. Paul guy who wrote at the Broiler every day. I was curious and checked out *Iron Lake*, which turned out to be his first book, the first in the Cork O'Connor mystery series, and which happened to win the Minnesota Book Award. I was hooked from the start and have followed William Kent Krueger ever since.

Krueger's stand-alone books are best sellers and award-winners, as well. *This Tender Land* (2019) for example, remained on the New York Times Bestseller list for six months. His most recent bestselling book of historical fiction, *The River We Remember*, is described as, "a moving exploration of the ways in which we seek to heal, and a testament to the enduring power of the stories we tell about the places we call home," and has earned more accolades than would fit on this page. The Star Tribune said that this book, "may be his magnum opus."



If you are one of the millions of fans or are just being introduced to this author, **please join us on Wednesday, June 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary at Unity Church for a special guest appearance by William Kent Krueger.** Books will be available for sale.

## June Parish Hall and Eliot Wing Exhibits

Greg Wilkins

This exhibit will be featured in the Eliot Wing hallway.

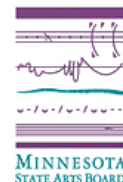
I was born into a diverse family in Chicago, Illinois, and relocated to Central Florida in the mid-70s. We stood out as the only mixed-race family in a small town. I encountered racism and learned to navigate our unique family dynamic in a predominantly white community.

During my childhood in Chicago, I was part of Ravenswood Presbyterian Church, singing in both youth and adult choirs. It was there that I was introduced to African American spirituals, like "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel," which deeply resonated with me. Moving to Florida, I reconnected with spirituals through rich musical traditions at the A.M.E. church.

In the late 70s and early 80s, I attended concerts by Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in Florida, such as Bethune Cookman, where the vibrant music left a lasting impact on me.

Transitioning into the late 80s and 90s, I became involved in political activism, particularly in addressing the mishandling of the AIDS pandemic by the Reagan and Bush administrations. This led me to volunteer work and grassroots campaigns, using African American spirituals as a unifying force during protests and advocacy efforts.

The recent tragedies of Brianna Taylor, George Floyd, and Trayvon Martin reignited my activism. Through my art series "Black Lives Matter," which evolved into "Lift Every Voice and Sing!," I channeled my anger into creative expression. My BLM series was recognized in prestigious venues like the Kennedy Center and Orchestra Hall for its ongoing relevance in advocating for liberation and affirmation for African American communities.



David A. Amdur

This exhibit will be featured in Parish Hall.

"A good painter has two main objects to paint, man and the intention of his soul. The former is easy, the latter hard as he has to represent it by the attitude and movement of the limbs." — Leonardo da Vinci

For the past several years, the main subject of my paintings has been exploration of how people interact. For the past couple years I've focused on people recreating in nature and at parks. While no overt story is depicted, hints of narrative develop from how people hold themselves, how they move and the expressions on their faces.

While I feel keen responsibility about how I represent my subjects, that's not enough in itself. A good painting is a lot like a musical composition. It builds dramatic force through contrasts and harmonies. But instead of tones and rhythms, a painting's elements are colors, shapes and space.

I often think a piece of music leads me on a journey — paintings do that too. A painting can be configured so that when you're looking at a particular part, another part struggles for attention. And then, something else tugs at your eyes, then another, and so on. This creates energy in the experience of looking.

In addition, clear presence of color is very important to me. Color should impress itself upon the eyes with the same kind of immediacy as scent which fills the nose.



## Cultivating Alloparenting

**Katrina Nichols, Nursery Coordinator**

My two-year-old has sometimes been found roaming the Eliot wing. Often, a congregant will stop and ask, "Where's your parent?" If we are looking for Eira, each person we pass will say, "She went that way." There are always trusted eyes on our toddler at Unity Church.

Whether or not the other congregants involved in these interactions feel that Eira is safe in these moments, I believe that she is.

I believe she is because I believe the truth we've heard from the pulpit: there are no other people's children.

I know that our species' survival has always depended on the practice of alloparenting — caring for children not genetically "ours." The National Institutes of Health says alloparenting is a "universal human behavior." In the West, the forces of individualization have weakened our practice of alloparenting, making it very hard (emotionally, financially, logistically) for parents to trust anyone with the care of their children — to the detriment of the parent's and child's well-being. But outside the West, babies are cared for by up to eight different adults in a single day. Mixed age groups of children and adults play and work alongside one another. Older children help younger ones. Family members and neighbors step in to care for little ones, as a matter of course. This is robust alloparenting. This is "no other people's children."

I believe that alloparenting is a spiritual practice and that the Beloved Community depends on it. So I work to cultivate alloparenting in our community. Cultivate, not teach, because it is already within us. We are all built for this, just as we are built for community. I practice it alongside our church's youth caregivers in the nursery. And my wife and I have this secret agenda when we let our child wander just far enough — we're giving you a chance to alloparent. We are trusting you. After all, you made a promise to her and to us when she was dedicated.

Before you balk at this ask — there's a reason Eira is comfortable wandering around the Eliot wing. She knows Martha Tilton is waiting with a snack in her office. She knows Philippa Anastos will hold her hand going down the stairs. She knows Lara Cowtan is a great person to sit by and is usually good for a hug. She knows that Francine and Sophie will make some mean pretend mac and cheese with her in the nursery, that Marina, Esme, and Ruth will play with her at the playground. There is no shortage of folks in our community modeling alloparenting.

We know and Eira knows this building is full of people who love her — too many to list. May this be known by all parents and all children, until there really are no other people's children.



## Music Notes

**Ahmed Anzaldúa**

**Director of Music Ministries**

The Music Ministry had an incredibly busy year! In addition to the traditional, yearly events like Tolling of the Bells, Easter, the Children's Musical, and Foote Music Sunday, the Music Ministry also hosted and collaborated with choirs visiting from Germany and South Africa, held the congregation's joy and anxiety at each of the candidating Sundays, collaborated with various local arts organizations (such as OneVoice and the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra), and was an important part in honoring our beloved Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs at her memorial service. Unity is also in the middle of a stretch of memorial services, each with its own special music needs, all the while the Threshold Choir ministers to people at their bedsides.

Some music is spontaneous, created in the moment with little preparation. Some music requires hours of painstaking practice and tedious rehearsal. All music requires people to show up and be vulnerable. I will never cease to be grateful for everyone in the Music Ministry this year who continue to show up time and again with their hearts open. Every time they sing, every time they play, every time they help others sing and play, it is a gift to each other and to our community.

The choirs at Unity Church are now taking a well-deserved break for the summer. They will occasionally come together to prepare something for a service, but there are no weekly rehearsals until September. Please join our "drop-in choir" for Sunday services on June 9, July 14, and August 11. All are welcome to come sing, and all you have to do is show up.

## The Music of Rondo

*Celebrating Rev. Carl Walker and Grant West*

*The Rondo Center of Diverse Expressions Fifth Annual Juneteenth Celebration*

**Wednesday, June 19 | Noon-5:00 p.m.**

Rondo Commemorative Plaza: 820 Rondo Avenue  
Speakers, music, and vendors!

## One Voice Mixed Chorus: The Art of Joy!

**Saturday, June 22 | 7:00 p.m. | Ordway Concert Hall**

**Sunday, June 23 | 3:00 p.m. | Ordway Concert Hall**

Tickets: [onevoicemn.org/performances/art-joy](https://onevoicemn.org/performances/art-joy)

Join One Voice for *The Art of Joy*, a concert celebrating the 35th anniversary of One Voice Mixed Chorus and exploring concepts of community bonds, found and chosen family, and home.



## Cultivating Our Spiritual Gardens

**Rev. Lara Cowtan, Minister of Congregational Care**

I will not die an unlived life.  
I will not live in fear  
of falling or catching fire.  
I choose to inhabit my days,  
to allow my living to open me,  
to make me less afraid,  
more accessible,  
to loosen my heart  
until it becomes a wing,  
a torch, a promise.  
I choose to risk my significance;  
to live so that which came to me as seed  
goes to the next as blossom  
and that which came to me as blossom,  
goes on as fruit.

— Dawna Markova, b. 1942

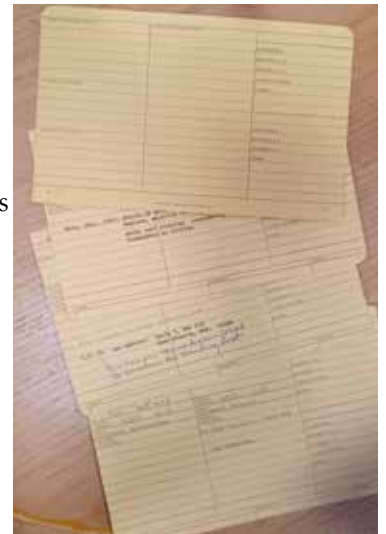
As we move into the summertime, this month has many important milestones to be recognized: June is Pride Month, World Environment Day is on the 5th, there is Father's Day, then Juneteenth and the Stonewall Riot anniversary, World Refugee Day and the significant religious holidays of Shavuot and Pentecost, and a random factoid for those outdoor enthusiasts among us, June 3 is Insect Repellent Awareness Day! A month full of dates to celebrate, commemorate, and consider as we journey through June.

Aside, perhaps, from the latter, there are complexities inherent in each of these days of observance. The Summer Solstice on June 21 marks a tipping point of Earth, from moving towards the light of the Sun to moving away from it and recognizes the need for balance, for holding both the light and the dark. So too the cultural holidays we will mark have different sides. Sometimes joyful remembrances and sometimes painful. Holding too tightly to only one side, or one story or one memory or context, limits our understanding and ability to grow, to learn, to change and develop new relationships in the world and with ourselves. May this month's spiritual practice theme of "cultivating" bring out the inner gardener in us all, to be thoughtful and patient, curious and brave in the nurturing of our spiritual gardens. May we grow in spirit as we are finding balance, deciding what is weed and what is flower, where we add a bit of fertilizer, water and sunlight to bring joy, beauty and nourishment into the world. Let us cultivate our lives so that which came to us as seed goes to the next as blossom, and that which comes as blossom, goes on as fruit. Let us delight in our glorious garden!

*From the Archives Team*

## In the Cards: Membership Information

The Archives Team found two steel file boxes of 5x8" cards from the 1950s through the early 1970s. The cards reveal the information the church collected about its members and friends. We conducted a non-scientific survey of about one hundred cards to learn what information the church thought was important to collect.



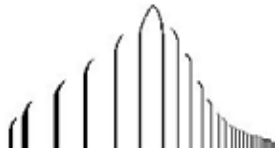
The cards reflect attitudes about gender roles current at the time. They list men's employment, naming their place of work and, occasionally, their supervisors. Married women who worked outside the home were unusual, and the record keepers listed volunteer activities instead of jobs or careers. Those included League of Women Voters, gardening clubs, and involvement with groups at Unity such as the Elizabeth Eliot Club, religious education teachers, Sunday flower arrangers, and coffee servers after church. Interestingly, many people, both male and female, reported membership in the Minnesota Memorial Society.

The cards also reveal the church's desire to know peoples' religious backgrounds. Members came from a wide variety of mainly Protestant denominations. Some of them arrived at Unity as part of "mixed" marriages between people of different religious heritage, or from no religion at all.

Although Unitarianism and Universalism (before the UUA formed) are the most frequent religious backgrounds reported, there were many non-Unitarians who found their way to us. The sample cards show affiliations: Baptist (2), Christian Scientist (2), Congregationalist or UCC (13), Episcopalian (15), Lutheran (16), Methodist (17), Presbyterian (12), Roman Catholic (8), Unitarian or Universalist (20), None (15).

Some cards do not list a previous religious affiliation. Does this mean that those people were unchurched before coming to Unity, were not asked about their background, or refused to say? Who knows? However, the fun part of archives work is encountering items that raise questions and encourage deeper inquiry. We invite you to join us on the Archives Team — you never know what you will find! Contact Pauline Eichten at [pfeichten@yahoo.com](mailto:pfeichten@yahoo.com) or Louise Merriam at [machias1@gmail.com](mailto:machias1@gmail.com).

Unity Archives Team: Pauline Eichten, Patt Kelly, Louise Merriam, Carol Miller, Betsy Moore, Susan Foote (Emerita)



# 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](http://www.unityunitarian.org) | [unity@unityunitarian.org](mailto:unity@unityunitarian.org)

Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation  
Laura Park, Executive Director  
Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, Interim Senior Minister  
Louise Livesay-Al, Chair, Board of Trustees

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
TWIN CITIES MN  
PERMIT NO. 1141

**TIME SENSITIVE  
MATERIAL**

## In The Justice Database

*The Minnesota History Center*

Along with a library housing the state's historical documents, the Historical Society collections and archives (including those of Unity



Church), the museum exhibits allow adults and children to explore the whole history of Minnesota. See "Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow," now through June 9, 2024. [bit.ly/JusticeData](http://bit.ly/JusticeData)

## Chalice Camp

**Week 1: July 8-12 | Week 2: July 15-19**

Chalice Camp at Unity Church is offered Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., for children and youth ages 5-18 (youth in grades 7-12 serve as junior counselors and counselors). Registration and counselor applications: [unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html](http://unityunitarian.org/chalice-camp.html).

## Antisemitism Curriculum from a Framework of Collective Liberation

**Thursday, June 13 | 5:45 p.m. | Parish Hall**

**The webinar is from 6:00-8:00 p.m.**

**Bring a dish to share if you are able.**

Join Unitarian Universalists from around the metro and explore the complexities of antisemitism in a webinar sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East ([uujme.org](http://uujme.org)).

The curriculum for this webinar is devoted to an understanding of antisemitism grounded in a deep commitment to justice and dignity for all people. The presenters are Nina Mehta, an educator and ethnographer, and Donna Nevel, a community psychologist and educator. Nina and Donna are co-directors of PARCEO, a resource and education center that works with a range of institutions seeking to deepen their educational, organizing, research, and cultural work for justice. For more information or to join the webinar individually visit [uujme.org/uujme\\_calendar](http://uujme.org/uujme_calendar).