



BEACON

Unity Temple Unitarian Universalist Congregation
February 2012

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CULTIVATING HOPE FOR CHALLENGING TIMES

Rev. Alan Taylor, Senior Minister
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Dear Members and Friends,

This is a time of great uncertainty for our world, our nation, even our congregation. Given what all is happening in the larger world, particularly the state of national politics and the rhetoric of the media, it is so easy to feel isolated and to stumble under the illusion that there isn't anything that can be done. Yet the resources among us are staggering if we but find ways to connect and find ways to live our values in innovative and influential ways.

I write this shortly after two weeks of study leave during which I reflected how best to serve our congregation in the next six months. The overarching theme that I will be focusing on is "Hope." It's a scary time. This past November, the topic for my minister's study group was "Apocalyptic Thinking." After reading *Eearth* by Bill McKibben and learning how far down the road our world now has gone in polluting the world and reflecting on how broken our world as poverty soars and the vast majority of the wealth is ending up in a tiny sliver of the world's population, it is easy to feel we now live in or will soon reach a post-apocalyptic world.

Books that I have pored through and will draw from in coming months--books I highly recommend to anyone who seeks hope in a world that tempts us with despair--include *Healing the Heart of Democracy* by Parker Palmer, *Finding Beauty in a Broken World* by Terry Tempest Williams, *Hunting for Hope* by Scott Russell Sanders, and *Blessed Unrest* by Paul Hawken.

This document is an unformatted, text only version of the BEACON newsletter suitable for download and printing. All of the same content is included as the online version.

A redesigned, interactive BEACON newsletter is now available to read at our all new website, www.unitytemple.org.

If you wish to no longer receive a mailed copy of the Beacon, please email office@unitytemple.org.

We encourage you to read the BEACON online!

Our service on January 22 was the first among several services that shall focus on hope. If you missed it, consider listening to the podcast online. It is my reflection on the role of the prophet in our faith tradition and our need to develop both our individual and collective prophetic voices. In addition, there are plenty of other podcasted messages including those from Emily and Clare that offer inspiration!

I'm inspired to learn that 84 members of our community attended the Martin Luther King Day Faith In Action Assembly hosted by the Communal Renewal Society. I regret I was unable to join you; however, I had all of you in mind as I crafted the January 22 sermon!

Two days in a row, I ran into members wearing a button that says "I Believe in Hope." Clearly, I'm not the only person focusing on hope! During the coming weeks and months, our task is to discern where love is calling us, both individually and as a congregation. Discerning the call of love, particularly when done in community, is a creative process that unleashes resources that shall guide us on our journey.

Warmly,

Alan

IN OUR PULPIT

Rev. Michael Schuler

Sunday, February 12

The Rev. Michael Schuler has served as Parish Minister to First Unitarian Society in Madison, Wisconsin, since 1988. He holds master and Ph.D. degrees in religion and the humanities, and previously served congregations in Iowa and New York. With his wife, Trina, Michael enjoys skiing, hiking, travel, museums and concerts. He practices Ta'i Chi, yoga, and is an avid runner. Michael and Trina have an adult son, Kyle, in a Masters program in Art Education, and a Papillion "therapy" dog, Sasha. Michael is active in a variety of civic and environmental organizations and serves on the steering committee of Dane County United.

UPDATES FROM THE BOARD

Ian Morrison, Board President

president@unitytemple.org

January is a time in our congregation when we focus in earnest on money. The Board is beginning to develop a budget for next year, a process that is informed by your input (through congregational conversations and leadership discussions among other means) and input from the Administrative Team. Over the next two months, the Board will review and publish a budget to be approved by the Congregation at the annual meeting in May.

The most critical element in the Board's deliberations is the outcome of the Annual Fund Drive, because that directly determines how much income the congregation has with which to meet its objectives. By the time you read this, you will have received a solicitation on behalf of the Annual Fund Drive to make a financial commitment for the 2012-2013 congregational year. If you have already made your commitment, I extend a warm thank you from the Board of Trustees. If you have not yet made a commitment, please do so as soon as you can, and please give generously.

While our congregation is classified as "large" by UUA standards, with just over 500 members, we have a relatively small donor base by non-profit standards. This means that our ability to pay our ministers and staff, to keep the lights on, and to keep the rain and snow out depends directly on your individual generosity.

The most direct impact your giving has is on how we pay our staff. Each year, we strive to increase staff compensation to meet the UUA's fair compensation guidelines. Increasing your commitment will help us get there this year.

Conversely, a decrease in giving by a few members or a small drop the number of commitments can mean having to cut staff salaries or even staff positions. A member recently shared with me a newsletter from her former congregation. That congregation's board noted that a mere 5% drop in the number of pledges received was forcing them to reduce one minister's compensation, close the building one day a week, not fill one open position, reduce the number of Sunday collections that could be donated, and to make other cuts. This shows how sensitive congregation finances are to small changes in income.

This congregation is very important to me, as are the valued staff members who do our work every day. I plan to increase my financial commitment this year so that we can ensure our staff is fairly compensated. I hope you will join me.

ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

Jennifer Marling, Chair, 2012 Annual Fund Drive

afd@unitytemple.org

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Leadership Conversations in January. We had several terrific gatherings of congregation leaders and heard so many great ideas and thoughts. We truly appreciate your commitment to attending these sessions and for being so engaged. We are working to gather these notes and will be sharing them with both the Board and committees heads.

Rev. Don Southworth, Executive Director of Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, led a workshop for Program Council and other leaders on Saturday, January 28 on "Creating Congregations and Lives of Abundance." Mr. Southworth also helped us kick-off the Annual Fund Drive with his sermon "A Generous Universe?" on January 29th. His message at both focused on cultivating a life and a congregation of abundance. (If you missed Rev. Southworth's sermon it can be accessed on our website here: [LINK](#)) These were both terrific opportunities for us to learn and build on our efforts to build abundance in our Congregation and to begin the 2012 Annual Fund Drive.

Annual Fund Drive packets were mailed out on January 29th. We ask that you complete your commitment form and return it to the office by March 4. The Annual Fund Drive is our largest and most important fundraising effort each year helping us to raise the vital operating funds that fuel everything from staff salaries and our ever expanding programming to build maintenance and repair. Please be generous so we can continue to grow and thrive as a UU community. If you have any questions about making your commitment members of the Annual Fund Drive Committee are always available. Feel free to contact us at afd@unitytemple.org or call me at 773-889-8040 or David Wilke at 708-848-6225 ext 100.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

ARE YOU NEW? WELCOME!

Introduction to Unitarian Universalism

This two-hour class is offered once a month and is taught by our senior minister, Rev. Alan Taylor. The class answers the question: What is Unitarian Universalism? Our principles, values, beliefs and practices will be addressed. In addition, learn more about the history of our faith tradition, the history of this congregation, and congregational life today, as well as receive a brief tour of the building. For more information or to register, contact Tina Lewis at tlewis@unitytemple.org or 708-848-6225 x102. **Sunday, February 5 from 1 to 3 p.m.** in Unity House. Free.

Pathways to Membership

This two-class session is led by members of the congregation and enables participants to further explore Unitarian Universalism and reflect on their own spiritual and religious beliefs and experiences. Detailed information will be

presented about the five ways in which we touch, change and transform lives through worship and music, faith development, small group ministry, social mission and pastoral care. Participants are invited to formally become a member of the congregation upon completing this class. It is preferred that classes one and two be taken consecutively. For more information or to register, contact Rob Bellmar at rbellmar@gmail.com or 708-763-0260. Session dates: **Sundays, February 12 & 19, from 1 to 4:30 p.m.** in Unity House. Free.

For free childcare at all of these opportunities, contact childcare@unitytemple.org at least one week in advance.

WORSHIP

Tuesday Reflections in the Temple

Join Rev. Alan Taylor on Tuesday evenings in Unity Temple at 6:30 p.m. for 45 minutes of centering. Each week, Rev. Taylor leads a short structured reflection focusing on a different theme. For some, this is a weekly opportunity to wind down a stressful day. For others, it is a time to drop in prior to a committee meeting. For still others, it is the support for a personal journey of spiritual practice.

For free childcare during Tuesday Reflections, contact childcare@unitytemple.org at least one week in advance.

MUSIC AT UNITY TEMPLE

Martha Swisher, Music Director
music@unitytemple.org

Music at Unity Temple services begin on February 5th with the Unity Temple Singers presenting music by Eleanor Daley. One of the choir's favorite works Upon My Heart will be presented.

February 12 will be a special choral presentation as we are joined by the choir and minister from First Unitarian Society of Madison, Wisconsin. This special collaboration that we initiated, brings the Madison folks to Unity Temple on Saturday for a preparatory rehearsal, sharing a meal and hospitality extended to out of towners who need accommodations. Be prepared for a spectacular musical Sunday with FUS's Music Director, Dan Broner conducting. The Unity Temple Choir will travel to Madison On March 31st to sing for services on April 1st.

The Unity Temple Players are back to bring their special brand of worship music to the services on February 19th. They will provide poignant and heartfelt musical messages to complement the overall worship experience.

Our final Sunday of the month presents the return of the Unity Temple Chalice Sings. This 36-member youth ensemble will be working hard to deliver two musical delights; one sung in Xosa from South Africa and the other from Alan Menkin's Pocahontas!

In the Style of Taize will continue this month on February 24th featuring a musical interlude by flutist Jane Wood. Join us for this candlelit musical meditation at 7pm for an hour of meditation, chant, poetry and musical healing.

The Unity Temple Choir has once again been invited to perform in the Evanston Unitarian Universalist Congregation's Annual ChoralFest to take place on Sunday, February 26th at 4pm. We are one of four congregations collected for this annual event. All UTUUC members are encouraged to come and support our choir.

The January Women Inspired by Song Ensemble, led and gathered by Terri Schultz involved over 40 women and teens bringing about beautiful music for our service on January 22nd. Thank you Terri and all the women involved! Working

on this initiative has brought yet another way our community can enrich the ties that make us a close and caring place to learn and grow.

Taizé at Unity Temple

Please join us again for Taizé Service in the Unity Temple Sanctuary, on **Friday, February 24, at 7 p.m.** This service will offer a time for meditation, reflection, and renewal through music, brief words, and silence. Come sing, light a candle, and nurture your spirit during this non-traditional worship experience—and bring a friend. The service will conclude before 8 p.m. For more information, contact Marty Swisher, Music Director, at music@unitytemple.org.

LEARN

A LOT OF WONDERFUL THINGS...

Rev. Emily Gage, Minister of Faith Development
egage@unitytemple.org

There are a lot of wonderful things going on at Unity Temple. You've heard me say that a number of times, I'm sure. And it's always true. If you look through your order of service, or the e-news or the Beacon, there are always new ways to build connections, or expand your mind or heart or spirit, or make a difference in the world or celebrate life.

It is a wonderful list. If you had lots of time, you could be at Unity Temple pretty much every day doing something interesting. It's a wonderful list, but it is just a list. Each event on that list is so much more.

I recently had one of those weeks when I got to go to lots of things on one of those lists. And I was reminded again and again of how much I value the Unity Temple community.

Wednesday night I went to a rehearsal for WISE (Women Inspired by Song Ensemble), the second of three opportunities this congregational year for women to join together and sing together for a worship service. Partly designed for those who like to sing but can't make the ongoing choir commitment, partly designed for people to take a musical risk, I was moved by how many women were there, women I had no idea liked to sing. What a wonderful opportunity. I got to play the guitar, never having accompanied a large group before. What better place than our beloved community for trying something new?

Thursday evening I was at a small stewardship gathering at someone's house, where generous donors (of time and money) sat down and spoke about how they value Unity Temple. Many were long time members, and had a great long-term view of how things are and how they've been. We all spoke of why we give to and believe in Unity Temple UU congregation. What better way to be inspired?

Saturday I was present for the first grade OWL (Our Whole Lives values based sexuality education) parent/child orientation. At one point, the parents and the children gathered in a circle. They read an affirmation together about how each person is special just because of who they are. The children got to introduce their parents, and then their parents talked about why their child or children are special. It was incredibly moving to hear those loving words. And you could see the first graders shining with that love. What better message to be giving to our young people?

Sunday six of our young women (seventh through twelfth grade) joined members of the Ukulele Club of Oak Park for a beautiful rendition of Somewhere Over the Rainbow in the worship service. This is my fourth year at Unity Temple, and I've known each of these youth since I arrived. I've seen each one of them learn and grow and become even more fabulous in that time, and I'm so proud and impressed by each one. What better testament to the challenging and loving arms of this community?

There are a lot of wonderful things going on at Unity Temple. I hope you take advantage of the many things that are listed. And I hope that when you get there, you find so much more.

Helping Hands/Loving Hearts

Unity Temple kids and parents are welcome to join us to make and personally deliver homemade valentines for the residents of [Belmont Village](#). We make valentines beginning at **1:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 11** in Unity House and depart for Belmont Village at 2:30 p.m.

ADULT RELIGIOUS ENRICHMENT

Faith Like a River: Be a Part of Our Living Tradition!

"Because of those who came before, we are," writes the Rev. Barbara Pescan, "in spite of their failings, we believe; because of, and in spite of the horizons of their vision, we, too, dream." This series of three workshops will be an opportunity for you to explore what you believe in the context of our religious history. We'll learn a little bit about where we've come from, what's been passed down to us, and how we make sense of that. This hands-on, short exploration into UU history and how it lives in us will be led by Rev. Scott Aaseng and Rev. Emily Gage on three Thursday nights: **February 16, March 1, and March 15**. Minimum attendance: 10. To sign up, e-mail adultre@unitytemple.org.

End-of-Life Issues Seminar

Back by popular demand! This seminar will prepare you for, or at least to think about, such end-of-life matters as why you need a will and how to get one; the grieving process and what's normal; burial options, including environmentally-friendly ones; what hospice can do for you or loved ones; how to get the memorial service you want

- Oak Park's Dreschler-Brown-Williams Funeral Home's Charlie Williams will be back to discuss choices, costs, pre-planning and other things you didn't even know you had to consider about funerals.
- Estate planning lawyer Angelica Kuehn, a specialist in aging issues, will cover legal aspects of death and dying, including medicare benefits and the difference between trusts and wills.
- UTUUC Minister of Faith Development Emily Gage will help you plan a memorable memorial service -- down to picking out the hymns if you want!
- Rainbow Hospice International chaplain Karen Mooney will walk you through the grieving process, sharing her own story of widowhood and how grief can inform and transform our lives.
- The hospice team from Northwestern Memorial Hospital comprising UT member hospice nurse Carol Kinsey, chaplain and assistant pastor of Resurrection Church of Chicago Gabriel Hardaway, and hospice social worker and psychotherapist Carolyn Placko will tell all about hospice care.
- Time for Q & A.

All these topics and more will be covered on **Saturday, February 25 between 9 AM and 3 PM at Unity House**. On the day of the Seminar, registration begins at 8:30 AM. Program and handouts will be available. Register at adultre@unitytemple.org or call 708-848-6225 x104. Suggested \$15 donation, lunch included. All are welcome. Brought to you by the Adult Religious Enrichment Committee.

Behind the Scenes at OUT IN CHICAGO

Join us on **Saturday, February 25** for a behind the scenes look at the Chicago History Museum's current exhibit on Chicago's LGBT history, OUT IN CHICAGO. We will **meet at Unity Temple at 12:30 p.m. and caravan down to the History Museum**. The exhibit will be free. Recently named one of the best museum shows of 2010 by the Chicago Tribune, OUT

IN CHICAGO is a smart, well researched, eye opening, entertaining and moving exhibit curated by Jill Austin and Jennie Brier. Our tour will be led by UTUUC member Dan Andries who was co-producer and co-writer of WTTW Channel 11's "Out & Proud in Chicago," the station's 2008 documentary on the history of Chicago's LGBT citizens. To RSVP or if you have questions, email Dan at danandries@rocketmail.com.

Sacred Conversations

Come join an ongoing group to have sacred conversations exploring themes about prayer. Come explore this spiritual practice of listening and sharing intentionally, and to find ways of using prayer as a pathway to openness and possibilities. All are welcome to this drop-in gathering. We meet on the first and third Monday of each month in the West Balcony of Unity House from 7 to 8 p.m. This month we will meet **February 6 & 20**. For more information, please contact Scott Talbot Lewis at 708-445-1466.

EX LIBRIS

As we find ourselves in the long-anticipated cold and snow of winter, we invite you again to find interesting reading at Ex Libris. We have some opportunities too. We welcome your suggestions for new books. Perhaps you have read a review or heard about a book which might add to your or someone else's reading life. Please let us know. We want to add to your experience at Unity Temple.

We need volunteers. We welcome people who want to work with sales or other jobs associated with our books.

Our USED BOOK SALE is coming. The date is Sunday, April 15. You will find many affordable books ready for you. We need donations of books, Cds and related items. PLEASE, NO TEXT BOOKS, MAGAZINES, JOURNALS, OLD SCHOOL WORKBOOKS. We enjoy the book sale, and you will too. Unsold books will be donated to the library or to other organizations. We will begin collecting your donations after April 1.

Ex Libris will be closed in February and return next month!

CONNECT

CHALICE CIRCLES

Topic: Prayer

Opening Reading

"My heart and soul reject the idea that there could be a God who answers some people's prayers for life and health and not others because I want to believe that if there is a God, God is good, and this would not match my definition of good... [People have said] that I do not pray or will not pray with others. This is not true. I do it all the time. I just don't do the 'God, please heal so-and-so type' prayer. When I am asked to pray for people, which I do, I do not pray for God to heal them. I pray for them. I pray (which is to say, voice my hope, directed to a possible God) that they find the love or the strength or the compassion they need, in themselves and in their support networks...

"If you hear me give the prayer at a dinner at church, you'll hear something like, 'Spirit of Life, we remember... (insert negative things that are relevant – poverty, hunger, etc.) and we are grateful for... (insert food, company, other noteworthy positive things)... I voice what we are grateful for, or what our needs are. To me, that is prayer. And that is

about as far as prayer can go, in my opinion. It can give voice to things, name things. That's about it.

From "If there is a God ..." by Cynthia Landrum, p. 10, UU World, Winter, 2009. Full article can be found at <http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/151790.shtml>

Discussion Questions

1. How do you react to Cynthia Landrum's attitude towards prayer and praying? Where do you find yourself in agreement with her, where do you differ from her?
2. Cynthia Landrum sees prayer as "voicing her hope, directed towards a possible God" and as voicing "what we are grateful or what our needs are." What do you think of the idea that there can be power or comfort in "naming" (giving voice to) what is negative and positive in our lives?
3. Do you pray? If so, why do you pray? If not, why don't you? How do you define prayer?
4. Prayer sometimes gives people comfort when they are afraid, hopeless, desperate, or heartbroken. Have you found other sources of comfort to help you get through difficult times? Does your Unitarian faith help you get through hard times? What has kept you going during hard times?

Closing Reading

"Our congregations are full of faithful people, people who have survived not just financial setbacks, but also illness, betrayal, the death of loved ones, the failure of plans long crafted, and every other kind of hardship life can muster. Many have come through with their eyes open and their heads high.

"Now is the time for such people to "testify," a time for all of us to testify about our experiences of faith, however large or small they might be. Not to spread false confidence, not to reassure each other that everything will work out the way we want, but to tell our stories of what has kept us going and what keeps us going today even though we can't be sure where this path through the woods will lead."

From "A Religion for Hard Times" by Doug Muder. Full article can be found at <http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/131119.shtml>

COMMUNITY & CONNECTIONS

Unity Temple Co-ed Softball Team

Are you looking to get active this year? Want to try something new or get back into a pastime that you love? This spring, Unity Temple is going to start a co-ed softball team, and if enough people sign up maybe even an additional men's softball team! If you're interested please contact Mike Cantrell at unitysports@live.com. This a great way to get active, have fun, and make some new friends, regardless of whether you're a beginner or seasoned player. If softball is not your thing, but you have an idea for another group athletic activity, e-mail Mike!

Circle Suppers

Members, Friends and Visitors are invited to sign up for a Circle Supper group of eight adults to share a meal on four occasions. A host and start-up date will be assigned for the first meal and then the group will determine future sites, dates and times. Dinners may be held in a home or restaurant. If meeting in a home, the host provides the main dish and the guests fill in the side dishes. If the group agrees, the host may choose to have the group begin in a restaurant (Dutch treat). Please contact Tina Lewis at tlewis@unitytemple.org or 708-848-6225 x102 to sign-up. Also, please indicate if you would like to host the first gathering.

Guest Table at Coffee Hour

Visitors and newcomers are encouraged to stop by the new Guest Table in Unity House during Coffee Hour. Someone will be there to visit with you and assist you with refreshments. Look for the balloons.

New Chalice Circles Beginning

Four new Chalice Circle Facilitators have been trained. The new groups will be beginning in February. Limited space is still available. Please contact Marge Entemann at chalice@unitytemple.org if you are interested in joining a group as soon as possible.

Meet with the Membership Director

If you would like to meet with Tina Lewis, Membership Director, to explore ways to become more involved in various areas of the congregation based on your interests, please contact her for a Sunday appointment at tlewis@unitytemple.org.

Knitting for Peace

Knitters meet on the **second and fourth Saturdays of every month at 2 p.m.** in the Gale House. Output is donated to the University of Chicago Hospital, Project Linus, and others who we personally are told are in need because of illness. Contact: Sarah Muller, sarah.nmn.muller@gmail.com or 708-763-8736.

Women's Retreat, February 17-19

Mark your calendars for this winter's women's retreat, which will focus on "seeking simplicity." Registration forms will be available in December and will continue through January. For more information, contact Jenny Earlandson at jenny.earlandson@gmail.com or 708-524-1215.

Parents Support Group

UT families with special needs children meet on the **third Tuesday of each month at 709 S. Oak Park Ave, Oak Park, at 7:30 p.m.** Contact is Carol DiMatteo, 708-524-2859 or carold27@att.net.

Monday Momentum

The Monday Momentum Group can help with the emotional roller coaster of unemployment. Join us **every Monday at 8:45 a.m.** in the West Balcony at Unity Temple for feedback and support. Open to all. For questions, contact Brooke McMillin, LSW, at 708-383-0608 or just come as you are.

Poet Carlos Cumpian at 3rd Saturday Coffeehouse Feb. 18

Join us at 3rd Saturday Coffeehouse Open Mic night on **February 18** as we feature poet Carlos Cumpian. Cumpian's

family roots start in San Antonio, Texas. He moved to Chicago as a teenager and has been involved with Chicano theater, poetry, and American Indian and Latino community arts since the early 1970s. He has been coordinator of March Abrazo Press since 1982, the Midwest's oldest publisher of Native American, Chicano and Latino poetry. He has taught high school English and has taught about U.S. Latino literature for Columbia College and the University of Illinois. His poetry books are: Coyote Sun, Latino Rainbow, and Armadillo Charm. p.s. Charlie says this guy is a damn good poet. In Unity House. **7:30 sign up, 8 pm Open Mic, 9 pm featured performer.** Open Mic is limited to 5 minutes. Charlie Rossiter host. \$3-\$5 donation. Info at 708-660-9376..

SERVICE

SHOWING UP FOR EACH OTHER

Rev. Scott Aasang, Intern Minister
saaseng@unitytemple.org

One of the moments that stood out for me at last month's Martin Luther King Celebration and Public Action was right at the beginning. The worship band and praise team at Kingdom Baptist started rocking, and within seconds much of the crowd was on its feet, clapping and singing or dancing along. And there were all of us Unitarian Universalists, on our feet clapping and rocking along with everyone else to a contemporary Christian praise song!

What struck me was how we were all showing up for each other in different ways. We were standing (and moving!) in solidarity with brothers and sisters from different religious traditions, supporting them in expressing their faith—and they in turn were there taking a stand for our shared values and principles of justice, equity, and compassion. We were showing up for each other, expressing our mutual support in a very real way: with our bodies, with our physical presence.

And I realized that the same was true of our participation from Unity Temple. Seventy-five of us signed up to go, and closer to 80 of us showed up—but not all the same as those who had signed up. Just as with the social justice training in December, those who showed up on their own more than made up for those who had signed up but couldn't make it. We showed up for each other, again in a very real way. And by showing up for each other, we fulfilled the collective commitment we had made to be there.

Another striking moment was when members of the several dozen congregations in attendance stood and declared to the 8 state legislators in attendance how many people in their congregations they would be reporting back to. No one was claiming to represent anyone's viewpoint other than their own, but we were making it clear that the results of this event would be shared with others in our congregations who share similar values and concerns. (The "report card" is available at the Social Missions table on Sundays.) In terms of accountability, the several hundred of us in attendance were standing in for several thousands of others in our congregations.

Of course, the whole point of our being there was to stand up for those who are marginalized in our society: the homeless, ex-offenders, children. And we showed up, not just for them, but with them: at one point, those who had been in prison and were trying to re-enter society as productive citizens were asked to stand—by one of the event leaders, who was himself an ex-offender. Then those of us who knew someone who was trying to make it after being in prison were asked to stand, and nearly all of us did. We showed up for and with each other, because our lives are inextricably intertwined.

We have ongoing opportunities to show up for each other. Many of us who were involved on MLK Day will be showing up for Faith in Place's upcoming policy training and lobbying day for environmental sustainability (see article elsewhere),

or for our efforts towards justice for immigrants, or for the annual spring CROP walk. You could say we show up at Unity Temple on Sunday mornings, not just for ourselves, but also for each other, in support of each other. After all, isn't showing up, for and with each other, what love is all about?

VALENTINES IN THE SNOW

Rev. Dr. Clare Butterfield, Community Minister
clare@faithinplace.org

I suspect the Valentine's Day traditions have something to do with the time of year and the need for a little color and fun as we wait (and wait) for spring. February at Faith in Place is when we turn our attention to policy matters, and the Illinois General Assembly session. Always a good time, and never moreso than this year. Many of you worked on our fracking bill in 2011 in various ways – postcards, phone calls, letters, emails and visits to your elected officials got the bill through the Senate unanimously but then it stalled in the House. It takes more than a procedural stall-out to discourage Faith in Place, so we're back at it, running our agreed language from last year in both the House and the Senate this year. We'll bring you up to date on that at a special Policy Workshop at Unity Temple on Sunday, February 26 from 2:00-4:00p.m. And I've been talking to Scott Aasang, who's brought me up to date on the desire of many at Unity Temple to get more involved in public advocacy. Have we got a bill for you – and a workshop. At which we'll once again play Public Policy Bingo with M&Ms as the bingo pieces.

Seriously, doing good things for the earth, in community, with games and chocolate? It's like a Valentine's Day party all by itself. So please plan to be there. And mark your calendars now for this year's Springfield Day. Thursday, March 29 the bus(es) will head from Chicago and Oak Park for a one-day trip. We're still working on the details but we expect one bus to depart from near Unity Temple at about 6:30a.m., returning at about 8:00p.m. The cost of the trip, including lunch and dinner, will be \$50 per person. Not to start any friendly competition or anything, but I'm sure there will be people there from Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church. And Good Shepherd Lutheran. So, ahem, Unity Temple.

We joke about these things, but the pressures to strip fossil fuel resources from our state, at great cost to the rivers, the soil and the people, are no laughing matter. The destruction they could do will be real and potentially permanent. We want some restriction on hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, now that leases have started to be signed and permits applied for. And we have another bill in mind as well this year which will expand the ability of citizens to enforce environmental restrictions in case the agencies charged with doing so are not. Find out more by joining us at Unity Temple for the workshop on Sunday, February 26 at 2:00p.m., and plan to be on the bus for Springfield on Thursday, March 29. Ask anyone who's done it and they'll tell you you'll be glad you did. Faith in practice is a beautiful thing. Just like a Valentine.

SOCIAL ACTION

Faith in Place Policy Workshop

Join us **Sunday, February 26, 2012 at Unity Temple 2:00-4:00p.m.** It's policy workshop time again, and another opportunity to use the power of our UU Faith In Action! Join us for these offerings, intended to introduce our legislative strategy for 2012, and get people ready to write letters, make phone calls, hold in-district visits and go to Springfield with us to advocate for the sustainable state we want. This year's efforts will focus on the fracking regulation we got through the Senate but not the House in 2011 (we're very hopeful it will pass this year, with everyone's efforts), and a new bill designed to expand the rights of citizens to look to their own interests when they are impacted adversely by

environmentally destructive activity. Find out the details and play another round of Faith in Place's Public Policy Bingo game, while you meet colleagues from other congregations who are exploring a more active civic presence motivated by the values of their faiths.

Winters Farmer Market a Success

Unity Temple's Social Mission Committee and Faith in Place partnered to host a Winter Farmers Market on Saturday, January 14, 2012. The event was very successful. Customers were pleased with the variety of products offered and vendors with the amount of sales. Coffee, tea, cocoa and reusable bags were available for a free will donation. The \$56.00 which was raised was given to Fraternite Notre Dame who were one of the participating vendors. If you missed us this year. watch for us next year.

Interfaith Prayer Vigil on Fridays

Join the Chicago New Sanctuary Coalition, Sisters of Mercy, Interfaith Committee for Detained Immigrants, Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, Office for Immigrant Affairs & Immigration Education of the Archdiocese of Chicago, and representatives from various faith traditions as we vigil in solidarity with our immigrant sisters and brothers being deported and their families. We'll call for more just and compassionate immigration policies that keep families together. The first Friday of the month is an interfaith vigil and the other Fridays are centered on the Catholic prayer of the Rosary. All are welcome every Friday at 7:15 a.m. at the Broadview Detention Center at 1930 Beach St, Broadview, IL. For more information visit <http://crln.org/Broadview-Detention-Center-Vigil> or contact Shirley Lundin, slundin654@sbcglobal.net or 708-784-0970.

SUPPORT

Be Inspired—Volunteer!

Are you looking for ways to be inspired, connect and live your values? There are many ways to do that at Unity Temple, some small ways and some big ways. Please contact Tina Lewis for more information about engaging and serving our spiritual community. You will be happy that you did. She may be reached at tlewis@unitytemple.org or 708-848-6225 x102.

Need a Ride to the Airport?

Need a ride to the airport? Your \$30 fare benefits Unity Temple (\$20 to UT, \$10 to the driver). Call Duane Dowell, 708-890-1148; John Frye, 708-456-5266 or 708-431-8929; Tom Hall, 708-203-4094; or Lisa Gariota (weekends and O'Hare only), 773-594-1426.

UNITY TEMPLE RESTORATION FOUNDATION

UTCS Presents the Metropolis Quartet

The Unity Temple Concert Series presents the Metropolis Quartet, **Saturday February 25 at 7:30**. Metropolis performs the major oboe quartet repertoire written by composers such as Mozart, JC Bach and Benjamin Britten. They also search for lesser known works by composers of all periods, and take familiar melodies and perform their own arrangements. Experiencing the Metropolis Quartet is an event that will not soon be forgotten. These four musicians bring to the stage musical energy, an obvious love of what they do, and a true affection for each other. These qualities combined make the Metropolis a truly one of a kind quartet. For tickets or information please go to www.utconcerts.com or call 708-445-8955.

CONTACT

BEACON Newsletter Submissions

Submissions for the February Beacon are due at 10 a.m. on February 20. If you are promoting an event or group, please use the publications submission link on the lower left-hand side of the UT homepage, www.unitytemple.org. Events planned to be held at Unity Temple must be confirmed for the online calendar before they can be promoted. Questions? Email newsletter@unitytemple.org.

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Rito Salinas, Sexton

Peter Storms, Accompanist

Tracy Zurawski, Bookkeeper

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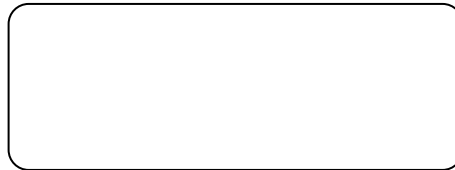
Rev. Dr. Clare Butterfield, Community Minister

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Sunday Services at 9 & 10:45 a.m.

February 5
Tending the Heart of Democracy
Rev. Alan Taylor
Offering: Austin Scholarship Fund

February 12
**Beyond Coping:
Forging a Resilient Spirit**
Rev. Michael Schuler
Offering: Austin Scholarship Fund

February 19
Let Your Light Shine
Worship for All Ages
Revs. Scott Aaseng, Emily Gage and Alan Taylor
Offering: Faith in Place

February 24, 7 p.m.
Service in the Style of Taizé

February 26
Finding Beauty Amidst Brokenness
Rev. Alan Taylor
Offering: Faith in Place