

Get ready for Unity Weekend on April 19-21, an inspiring weekend of interfaith community service and reflection for the Unitarian Church and three neighboring congregations.

Volunteers of all ages from the Unitarian Church of Evanston, Beth Emet The Free Synagogue, St. Nicholas Catholic Church and the Second Baptist Church of Evanston will join together to complete hands-on service projects in Evanston and nearby communities.

In 2009, a similar interfaith initiative called “Unity Day” attracted scores of volunteers with more than 30 projects. Among the many accomplishments of the day: volunteers cleaned up the Skokie Lagoons via canoe, visited nursing homes, organized book collections, prepared meals for needy families, and knitted baby blankets. By extending the event over a weekend, volunteers will have even more opportunities to serve the community.

“Unity Weekend presents opportunities to join together with our neighbor congregations to put our values into practice through direct service to our community,” said Rev. Connie Grant, the Minister for Congregational Life from the Unitarian Church of Evanston. “We have the opportunity to participate in short-term projects that have the potential to have long-term impact, both through the results of our work and through the relationships we build with members of our congregations and the larger community. The projects are designed to call upon a range of skills and passions in order to fill a variety of needs within the community. Let’s get together to celebrate the unity that underlies our diversity.”



The weekend kicks off on Friday, April 19 at Beth Emet The Free Synagogue, 1224 Dempster St., with a wine and cheese reception at 6 p.m. followed by Erev Shabbat services. On Saturday, April 20, the Unitarian Church, 1330 Ridge Ave., invites volunteers to attend a Welcoming and Service Send-Off Ceremony at 8:00 a.m., with projects beginning at 10 a.m. After volunteers complete their service projects on Saturday, St. Nicholas, 806 Ridge Ave, offers an opportunity for reflection at 3:30 p.m., followed by Mass at 4:30 p.m., and a light dinner at 5:30 p.m. The second day of service begins at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, April 21 with a Welcoming and Send-Off Ceremony hosted by Beth Emet. Projects begin at 1:30 p.m.

Share your ideas and talent. Volunteer now as a project leader or sign up in March to serve as a volunteer on the weekend of service.

About Project Leaders

Project leaders will serve as the liaisons between the service agencies and the volunteers, making sure volunteers know their responsibilities and ensuring that needed supplies are readily available. For example, project leaders for the Project Linus, which makes blankets for critically ill children, will make available blanket-making supplies and instructions at the service project site. **To volunteer as a project leader or for more information**, contact Eileen Wiviott, ewiviott@hotmail.com.

About Registration

Unity Weekend registration opens in early March. The congregations will distribute a Unity Weekend brochure and publish a Website with details about volunteer opportunities and registration.