

**Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network
Professional Development Day
July 28, 2009**

**For All That Is Our Life - Musician as Pastor
Rev. Jennifer Crow**

Whether we are musicians or ministers, volunteers or administrators, church members, sympathetic friends, or all of the above, when folks come through the doors of our congregations they long for a warm welcome, listening ears, and a kind heart to greet them. More often than not, musicians in our congregations meet people in moments of transition, celebration, and grief - moments that call not only for technical musical skill and versatility but for a pastoral presence as well. This pastoral presence is important not only as we help people prepare for rites of passage, but as we guide our choirs and musicians, and as we interact with everyone in our church communities. Luckily for us, that pastoral presence isn't such a tough thing to offer if only we slow down and pay attention. In our time together this summer, we'll explore the role of musician as pastor in our congregations and we'll learn and laugh together as we draw out and strengthen the inner pastor within each of us.

Reverend Jennifer Crow serves as the Associate Minister at the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, New York, a growing congregation of over 900 members. At First Unitarian, Jen focuses her attention on leading the ministries of Pastoral Care and Adult Spiritual Development. Jen is also the founder of Wellspring – a 10-month adult spiritual development program of Unitarian Universalist spiritual deepening. Prior to attending Meadville Lombard Theological School, Jen served as supervisor and senior staff at an agency in Massachusetts offering support to families and children living with mental illness. Her bachelor's degree in psychology from Smith College, her experience working with children and families, and her deep belief in every individual's ability to grow and heal with support, inform her approach to pastoral care.

Pre-class Reading Assignment

Pick at least two of the following and commit to reading them. The others are recommended – even skimming them is good.

- William Benzon – *Beethoven's Anvil: Music in Mind and Culture*
- Kate Braestrup – *Here If You Need Me: A True Story*
- Parker Palmer – *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*, especially Chapter 4
- Parker Palmer – *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*
- A book of poetry of your choice
- Review the readings and hymns for rites of passage in *Singing the Living Tradition*

Post-Class Assignment

- Write a one-page reflection on both of the readings of your choice addressing the following two topics.
 - Distill the basic message of the reading into one paragraph.
 - So what? What relevance does this reading have to your life – both personally and professionally?
 - This will result in two one-page reflections.
- Compile a set of hymns and/or songs that you might suggest for:
 - A baby dedication
 - Wedding or service of union
 - Memorial service
 - Think outside the box, including not only suggestions from our hymnals but also old favorites, classics, hymns that might resonate from a former religious background, and popular music. Imagine how you might care for a person with an unusual request and how you might musically address the fact that the families and friends in attendance might have more traditionally religious needs.

Both assignments are due 01/31/10