

# Unitarian Universalist Church Newsletter

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The Newsletter of Unitarian Universalist Church, Surprise, AZ is published monthly except August.

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September 2017

40th Anniversary 1975 - 2015

## From The Minister's Desk

I have just returned from my trip to Washington, D.C. I had never been there before and I was excited about visiting our nation's capital. And yet I was not convinced that I would find much inspiration there in light of our current political climate and our current elected and appointed leaders.

One morning, as we walked out of the condo for a day of sightseeing, I saw a man wearing a white T-shirt with blue and red lettering that read "TRUMP – Make America Great Again". It was hard for me even to say "good morning" to him. "Could we find any agreement as to how to make America great?" I thought to myself. "Do we share any ideas, beliefs, goals?"

Some wise, persistent voices are asking us to try to find commonalities with those with whom we disagree. Van Jones was the Ware Lecturer at the 2008 UU General Assembly. I was there and have never forgotten the impact Jones' lecture about "green jobs" had on me. Jones is now a CNN commentator "touring the country to get people to 'focus on our commonalities as opposed to our differences' at a time when politics has fractured the country."

"Jones' We Rise tour, which . . . continues until Aug. 19, is stopping at venues from Los Angeles to New York as he hosts conversations with local government and community leaders and artists about politics and activism." In an interview Jones gave the Huffington Post, "Jones said he wants to push people progressives in particular to think beyond partisan divides to work on social justice



issues, such as mass incarceration and the drug epidemics." [["Black Voices", 08/01/2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/van-jones-we-rise-tour-us-597a61aae4b02a4eb744696Van-Jones-Is-Touring-America-To-Have-Messy-Conversations-With-Liberals](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/van-jones-we-rise-tour-us-597a61aae4b02a4eb744696Van-Jones-Is-Touring-America-To-Have-Messy-Conversations-With-Liberals)"]

"Part of what's happened is everybody feels a sense of crisis economically geopolitically, but instead of turning to each other, we're turning on each other," Jones said. Since the election, Jones has drawn some criticism from the left for his push to 'bridge divides' with folks on the right, particularly those who voted for Donald Trump. As a proud progressive who worked in the Obama administration and famously dubbed Trump's election a 'whitelash' against changing demographics, Jones caused some brows to furrow when his CNN show, "The Messy Truth," which launched in December, had him visiting Trump supporters to listen to their struggles." [Ibid.]

In the interview, Jones said "It's about trying to get us back to a place where we're talking about solutions and building bridges again. It's scary to me, because I'm going out into what feels like a civil war and trying to point out opportunities for hope and progress without being Pollyanna about it. . . . I think the problem is people are in their own bubbles of outrage, and we're not trying to solve problems anymore." [Ibid.]

To my relief, I was inspired by my visit to our nation's capital. With hundreds of others at the feet of the seated figure of Abraham Lincoln, I believe the vast majority of us would have agreed that "In [that] temple, as in the hearts of the people for whom he saved the Union, the memory of Abraham Lincoln is enshrined forever." Visiting the new

African-American Museum and the Holocaust Memorial with many others whose votes and beliefs and attitudes I did not know, I believe it is likely that almost all of us want to root out every vestige of slavery, oppression, and persecution. Reading the words of Thomas Jefferson and Martin Luther King with the strangers who stood or sat with me beneath those larger-than-life statues, I felt certain that most of us are convinced that all of us should be equal with the same inalienable rights, that it is possible to “hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope,” and that some have shown us the way.

I think often of what G.K Chesterton said about Christianity – “The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried.” Our annual theme for this 2017-2018 church year is “Reimagining the Common Good”. That will be a difficult challenge for me and for many of you, I suspect. But I’m looking forward to trying together to reimagine what would be good for all of us.

We are not religious because being so is easy. What makes commitment to our religious, or really any, principles hard is that it requires us to struggle against, if not our natural impulses, then at least often our first impulses. We don’t get to do just what we want. We are instead committed to doing what we often don’t want, but know to be a better way of being in the world. I’ll see you in church.

*Terry*

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### Coming Soon “Eldertopia”

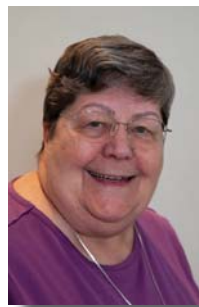
*Danean Mitchell*

What we need is a radical reinterpretation of longevity that makes elders (and their needs) central to our collective pursuit of happiness and well-being. We have no word that describes the value of intergenerational interdependence, of living in a multigenerational society, of protective social structures and rituals. Because such a word would be useful, I coined the term “Eldertopia.” . . . Dr. William H. Thomas, Geriatrician and Eldercare Expert.

I hope to create a new meeting group this coming year for the senior community inspired by Dr. Bill Thomas. Discussions, snacks, field trips, guest speakers, and ??? will be tackled. Whatever is on your mind, we can discuss and share. More information to follow.

## President's Letter to Congregation

*Pat Lindgren, President*



September is upon us, the beginning of a new church year. Terry is in the pulpit, R E gets a big bang start with breakfast, the choir will again fill our ears and hearts with music. We start this church year with more members than last year as we welcome our new members and our returning traveling members. I am looking forward to seeing friends that I have missed during the summer, to working with the children in our R E classes, to hearing Terry’s sermons again, to working on the auction for 2018 and to resuming meetings with the board members on September 10th.

The recent news events has shown the timeliness of the new UUA push to reverse the white supremacy culture in our own organization and in our culture in general. My experiences at the General Assembly in June were profound and eye-opening. For those of you who were not able to hear my talk about it on Sunday, August 6, I hope you will listen to my sharing on the internet. The highlight of the Assembly was the Ware lecture by Bryan Stevenson.

As the UUA website explains “There are four essential things that we must do to create a more just and equal world, Stevenson told UUs: Get proximate to the poor, the excluded, neglected, and abused; change the narratives that underlie racism and other inequalities; stay hopeful about creating justice; and be willing to do uncomfortable things. He has spent much of life in proximity to the poor, neglected, and abused. Visiting a death-row prisoner to inform him that he would not be executed in the upcoming year led Stevenson to find passion in studying law and helped him identify his life’s work.”

Changing the narratives that underline racism is critically important, Stevenson said. Oppressors justify oppression with a narrative of fear and anger, he said, which leads to a culture that tolerates injustice. For example, the narrative that many black and brown children who commit crimes aren’t children at all but rather are “super predators” created the school-to-prison pipeline. He urged UUs to resist fear and anger, examine how we treat poor children, and acknowledge that we live in a post-

genocidal society given that more than 10 million native peoples died of disease or murder in the U.S. Stevenson said that the great evil of American slavery wasn't involuntary servitude, it was the narrative of racial difference that was used to justify slavery, which even the U.S. Supreme Court adopted. The period from the Civil War to WWII was an era of terrorism against black people, he said, and black people in northern cities fled the U.S. South as refugees and exiles from the terror in the South—"something that is very rarely discussed," Stevenson said. Today, people of color are too often presumed dangerous and guilty, no matter their social class, age, or how much money they have, he said.

In South Africa, the history of apartheid is openly discussed, and in Germany, holocaust stones are placed in front of homes Jews were taken from and sent to camps, because Germany is trying to change the narrative. But in the U.S., we avoid discussion of slavery and lynching, said Stevenson, who has a project to put markers at every lynching site in the U.S.

Stevenson urged UUs to make a choice to do uncomfortable things, say uncomfortable things, and be in uncomfortable places, and to stay hopeful about creating racial justice. Hope makes us speak out, so fight against what makes you hopeless, he urged.

"Our hopefulness is the one thing we cannot compromise," he said. "You are either hopeful or you are part of the problem."

I hope that our congregation and our board will spend time and effort this year being hopeful and not part of the problem.

## **Name Tags**

*Janet Kafel*

Magnetic name tags are now available for purchase through Janet Kafel. They are \$5.25 each. To order yours, see Janet on Sundays at the table by the front door of the Social Hall or contact her at [janetkafel@gmail.com](mailto:janetkafel@gmail.com) or 530-340-3230.

When you see a name badge with a green dot, it signifies a new member. Take time to say hello, and welcome them to our congregation.

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**Please have information for the Newsletter submitted by Noon on the 15th of each month to the Editor, Charlie Mannino at [newsletter@uusurprise.org](mailto:newsletter@uusurprise.org)**

## **An Invitation to study in a Seven Principles Workshop: Faith for a Unitarian-Universalist**

*Tom Reemtsma, Facilitator*

On October 3rd, a study workshop will begin featuring our UU 7 Principles. We will dig for roots of the principles by looking into the history of world religions and philosophies. The sessions will meet in the choir room from 6:30 until 8 P.M. on Tuesday evenings through November 21st.

Over the eight weeks of study, discussion and creation of montages, we are intending to unearth the deep, timeless foundations upon which our faith is built. Then on November 23rd we will present our work at the church as part of our Thanksgiving meal event. Join this creative exploration by signing up at the events table.

As a word of introduction, I have a fifty year history in the liberal religious movement with twenty of those years in The Ecumenical Institute. I have lived in Europe and the Far East and travelled in Bahrain, India, Indonesia and Japan. My hope is that this study will be a journey of discovery for each and every one of us.

### ***Have you named our church in your will?***

A simple codicil added to an existing will can provide for continuance of our liberal church ideals.

For info call: Brooks Marshall at 623-362-1195

### **Help! Help! Help!**

*Jack & Helen Sheehan*

Without Virginia Taylor and her recruits, we're finding more remaining trash on our property. So we are requesting your help particularly with the accumulation in the basin where it requires more sure footed people other than ourselves. Perhaps our children would enjoy running up and down and around as they gather the litter.

We try to be at the church early Thursday mornings (around 8:00 a.m.) to check the irrigation and sweep the debris. We would greatly welcome your help at that time or any more convenient time for you.



## Welcome Back!

*Debby Bullins, Music Director*



September is the time to welcome everyone back to our UUC Surprise family. I hope you have had a wonderful summer whether your time was spent close to home or far away. My summer has flown by, spending time with family and friends

while traveling through this beautiful country.

Summer is also a time when I spend hours perusing through choral music looking for the perfect anthem to compliment Rev. Terry's themed worship as well as the holiday season. So many wonderful anthems and composers, so little time!

I want to thank our musicians, Connie Jahrmarkt, Cathy Mannino, Julian Rush, Maggi Mahan, Ruth Swank and Lynne Haeseler for sharing their talents and providing beautiful music throughout the summer. I love that we have so many different accompanists who bring their own interesting twist to service. There is never a dull moment in the Music Department!

Do you love to sing? Do you find yourself singing or humming in the car or in the shower or in the grocery aisle and getting those curious looks from strangers? Have you thought about sharing a joyful musical experience with your child, partner, or friend? I have the perfect outlet for your musical side. Join the UUC Surprise Choir! It's fun, free and a really good time. Our choir season begins with our monthly rehearsal on September 7 from 1:30 – 3:30 pm., with the choir singing on September 10 for service. The choir sings about three Sundays a month and has rehearsals on those Sundays from 9:00 – 10:00 am. We also have a monthly rehearsal on a Thursday from 1:30 – 3:30 pm. Our choir family is inclusive, not exclusive...come share the joy! Give us a try - won't you please join us?

Our monthly "Hymn Sing" is back. Rise a little early and join us on September 10 @ 10:10 a.m., when we fearlessly sing some familiar and not so familiar hymns together, building our welcoming community. The more love and understanding we experience together, the larger our family will be. I hope to see you there.

*Make music a part of every day!*

## More Good News With Free Pizza

*Bonnie F. Saunders, Chair, Adult Education Committee and Member, UU Board of Trustees*

Put the date of Sunday, September 24th immediately after Church, on your calendar now, and remember to be there. At that time on that date, we will serve members and friends with delicious (free) pizza and soda. As soon as people settle down to eat, we will begin our discussion about the many church activities in which many church members and friends have been involved and in which you might want to engage in the future. I will be talking about the adult education courses that I teach. I hope that others who have taught courses will talk about their favorite subjects. I hope that members who have been involved in religious education for children will talk about that program. There are lots of other people who are involved in various other activities of the church - support groups (i.e., the Lay Pastoral Committee, the Men's Group, the Women's Group). Social Activities (such as, Sunday morning coffee, potluck meals), and the Music program (the Choir, concerts by outside people and groups). I plan to ask leaders in those activities (and maybe others) to talk briefly about their work, its importance, and its rewards to participants. We will pass around sign-up sheets for members and friends to sign up to participate in many of these activities.

## We Are Here To Be Of Assistance!

*Lay Pastoral Care Committee*

If you, your family or another member of our congregation are experiencing illness, hardship, isolation or are in need of support, please contact Janet Kafel (530-340-3230), Lenore Gaudin (623-933-0186) the church office (623-875-2550) or speak with any of the committee members on Sunday at church. We wear a second name tag that says LAY PASTORAL CARE.





Visit our new web site at  
[www.uusurprise.com](http://www.uusurprise.com)

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Surprise

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME

### RE Report

*Lisa Lawrence, DRE*

On your mark, get set...classes start September 10th!

We will be starting the morning off with a bang at our annual Welcome Back/Ingathering Breakfast before classes begin. This is the time we use to visit with each other, register families for the upcoming season, schedule classroom participation dates, meet the teachers and learn about the new curriculum.



Classes are being offered this year for preschool, K-4th and 5th and up. Preschoolers will be exploring diverse themes

of family, tolerance, love, feelings, diversity, peace, gratitude, working together and making a difference. Our older children will be studying world religions.

This year will be special because I have many volunteer opportunities for parents and others who are interested. In addition to teaching or assisting in the classroom, the program is in need of members to join the children's RE committee; assist with organizing the children's book collection; and a snack coordinator to laissee with the kitchen.

Families, don't forget to R.S.V.P for the breakfast at [lisal@uusurprise.org](mailto:lisal@uusurprise.org). I'm looking forward to seeing everyone and hopefully making new connections.

### The Fable Of The Dollar Bill

Here is just a little note to explain the "story" told by Lee Ormsbee and Jan Lundstrom. The "fable" was brought to us by the late Phyllis Burnett. She obtained it at a past GA and modified it to suit our needs.

All of us are familiar with the Great Depression, if not in person, in family lore. We also remember the standard plea of that tragic era, "Buddy can you spare a dime?"

Inflation has colored our plea for your "spare" dollars. If you are willing and able, please drop a dollar bill in the collection basket to support the many programs of this church. This plea is above and beyond the amount of your stewardship pledge. As a courtesy to our money counters, please unfold or "uncrunch" your donated dollar.

Thank you for supporting the work of our church!

# The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

Fall will soon be in the air, and your UU Library is getting ready for a new season. Librarian MaryAnne will return mid-September, so look for the Library to be staffed weekly beginning then. New donated books will soon be displayed and ready for check out. New purchased books will also be displayed and available later in fall. Watch the weekly announcement e-blast for the latest Library news!

I hope you enjoyed a good read from the summer suggestions on the topic of prayer from the previous newsletter. Here is a list of some classic reading on Unitarian Universalism. Whether new to our faith, or interested in refresh reading, any of these books are a good basis:

**“The Seven Principles in Word and Worship,”** by Ellen Brandenburg, Editor, number 230.91BRA. “This elegant volume presents fresh perspectives from seven ministers who joined the ministry after the Principles took their current form,” Amazon review.

**“100 Questions that Non-Members Ask About Unitarian-Universalism,”** by John Sais, number 289.133SIA. This is a book of specific, sometimes controversial, questions and answers in very understandable language; a bestselling UU book. **“A Faith for All Seasons,”** by William Murry, number 289.133MUR. “A UUs understanding of the pain and suffering in life. It is a solid reference for those dealing with grieving. It helps provide meaning and purpose. An excellent choice for comforting ideas.

**“Turning Point, Essays on a New Unitarian Universalism,”** by Fredric Muir, number 289.1MUI. In inspiring fresh essays, 20 UU leaders issue a call for change in the denomination; a way forward to an inclusive community. Excerpted from the In Spirit Books review.

**“Freethinking Mystics with Hands,”** by Tom Owen-Towle, number 289.133OWE. Inspiring essays balance UU's rational, mystical and activist sentiments. An excellent introduction for new UUs and a very valuable resource for all committed UUs.

*Have a blessed day shared with a good UU book!*

# Book Discussion

Bonnie F. Saunders, Chair, Adult Education Committee and Member, UU Board of Trustees

UU Church members and friends are invited to read a very interesting and extremely relevant book and attend a series of discussions on that book. The book is *The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear* by The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II. The topic is the “Moral Monday” action by the people of North Carolina against racism and voter suppression over the past several years. If you don't know who the Rev. Barber is, google him and listen (or hear him when he appears on various news programs) -- listening to him is the closest we can come today to the words and charisma of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This book has been recommended by the UUA as the book for all UU members to read during 2017. It is available from the UUA for about \$16 and from Amazon for about \$10.

On three Mondays in October beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Church, I will conduct a series of discussions on this book. On October 9th, I will talk about the historical background: [1] the first Reconstruction (1865-1877) and its eventual destruction and [2] the second Reconstruction (the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s) and the backlash to that movement. On October 16th, we will discuss the main part of the book, which deals with the actions against voter suppression and racism by the Rev. Barber's movement between 2010 and 2016 -- and how he brought together black and white citizens of NC. On October 23rd, we will discuss the section at the end of the book, which outlines how we can take action in our own communities to fight voter suppression, racism, and other political difficulties.

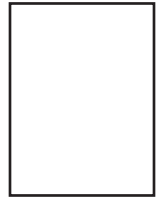
In order for you to get some outside ideas of our possible role in doing this, I urge you to read the book, come to the discussions, and think about what we can do. I will appreciate it if you will sign up in the Social Hall that you plan to read and attend -- but it is not absolutely necessary to do so. This information will be repeated in the September Newsletter but I hope you will put these dates on your calendar now, read the book over the summer, and come to the discussions with questions and opinions.

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First Class Mail

## Affirmation

*Love is the spirit of this church*

*And service is its law.*

*This is our great covenant:*

*To dwell together in peace,*

*To seek the truth in freedom,*

*And to help one another.*

**Join us for Sunday service at 10:30 am**

*If you are not a member but would like to receive church announcements by email,  
please send your email address and full name to [uucsaz@aol.com](mailto:uucsaz@aol.com).*

## Sermon Titles For September 2017

*This months theme is **The Beauty in Justice***

**9/3 - Rev. Terry Sims.....The Knack of Seeing Beauty**

If there is a code for how best to experience the universe, I think it might be beauty. What I need most are ways to “crack” the code.

**9/10 - Rev. Terry Sims .....A Theology of Beauty**

What does theology mean to you? Where do you find beauty? If we understand theology to mean working toward the highest and best, or the divine, I think beauty becomes an important part of theology.

**9/17 - Rev. Terry Sims.....The Beauty of Justice**

We are trying something new this year – an annual theme as well as monthly themes. Our theme for this church year is “Reimagining the Common Good”. This Sunday we will reimagine the beauty of justice that we can all see and share.

**9/24 - Rev. Dr. Walter F. Wieder..... Hard Times**