

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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October 2017

From The Minister's Desk

Our theme this month is “Welcoming to All”. For some of us, autumn is the season of returning to homes and to the routines of school and work after summer vacations. For schools across our country and for us, it is the season of homecoming. I usually think of welcoming others, showing them hospitality. But we need to welcome ourselves, too, which I sometimes forget.



Our individual homes and our church home, if we are lucky enough to have them, are havens, places we look to for safety, for refuge, for rest, away from the world. And there is much I want to get away from. We see and hear news about hurricanes and floods, about the loss of life and homes and ways of life for hundreds of thousands of people across the Caribbean, Texas, Florida, and elsewhere. I read stories that are barely conceivable – majority Buddhists engaging in unspeakable cruelty and murder of innocents, a genocide, against the minority Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. There is never-ending political discord, name-calling, threats, and seeking political advantage. The war of words between the governments of the United States and North Korea threaten actual, nuclear war.

It is all too much. We do need homes where we can recover and renew ourselves. We do need a place to hold it all. And that is asking a lot.

So I come home to our church, where I do find relief and rest and safety, a place, as the Rev. Gordon McKeeman wrote so beautifully, to “attend to our vision of peace and justice; of cleanliness and health; of delight and devotion; of the lovely and the holy; of who we are and what we can do. We summon the power of tradition and the exhilaration of newness, the wisdom of the ages and the knowing of the very young. We summon beauty, eloquence, poetry, and music to be the bearers of our dreams. We would open our eyes, our ears, our minds, our hearts to the amplest dimensions of life. We rejoice in manifold promises and possibilities.” [A Summons, Rev. Gordon McKeeman, <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/5449.shtml>.]

I find myself wanting to put distance between myself and the world. But my hope is that I do so just long enough to reset, recover, and renew. Otherwise, we would distance ourselves permanently from others. Our homes, especially our church home, should not be fortresses in which only we abide, places of oblivion, hermitages. Hospitality lies not in pushing people and their troubles away, but in the opposite – inviting people, including their troubles, into our homes and hearts. It is about lessening the distance between us, not increasing it. I'll see you in church, to be renewed and inspired again to do the hard work of making good bloom in this world.

Yours in our faith,

President's Letter to Congregation

Pat Lindgren, President



Our church year got off to a good start with the In-Gathering breakfast to welcome back our children and their families and to start the R E Program. Please read Lisa Lawrence's column for more information on this year's program for our children. We also have Rev. Terry back. I know we missed him, but he is refreshed and renewed in his studies and ready for a new year.

Rev. Walt Wieder, our minister emeritus will be in the pulpit on Sept 24. I am his lay leader and am looking forward to welcoming him back. Please be aware that your church is housing the "Issues and Action Day" put on by the UUJAZ (UU Justice Arizona, on Saturday, October 14. I hope you have already registered to get the early bird discount, but if not, please register and plan to attend anyway. This looks like a wonderful event, and our own Liz Swan is the president of UUJAZ.

We have two new adult education classes starting in October. Bonnie Saunders will be leading discussion sessions on the book *The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear* by The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II on Monday evenings. Please see the complete information on this class in the September Newsletter. Also detailed in the September newsletter is the study workshop on our 7 UU principles led by Tom Reemtsma.

As your friends and fellow members come back from a cooler summer, remember to welcome them home. During our social hour after church try to sit with different members and guests so you get to know them. When you sit with the same five people every Sunday you miss out on a making new friends and meeting new people.

I hope you have all had a chance to visit our new website. Go to uusurprise.com and take a look at it. We know that the website is one of the primary ways to attract visitors and new members, but it is also a place for current members to find answers to their questions. You can read the newsletters, listen to sermons you may have missed, find out when, where and what events are taking place, and find the names of our employees, board members and committee chairs.

Have a wonderful October everyone. I am going on a Road Scholar trip to Napa and Sonoma for some wine tasting and wine education for a week. I promise not to miss more than one Sunday of church for the fruit of the vine.

Seven Principles Workshop

Tom Reemtsma

All members and friends are invited to participate in the Seven Principles Workshop and Drama. You may attend one or all of the sessions. You can clip pictures of how you see our Principles in action. Contribute your ideas for a scenario that demonstrates a Principle. Attend the presentation on Thanksgiving day. Register for the workshop at our sign-up table and put your clippings and ideas into the boxes under the tables. Sessions start Oct. 3rd.

UUJAZ Action Day October 14th

Ten Arizona UU Congregations will be meeting at our church here in Surprise for Issues and Action Day on October 14th. Excellent presentations in five topic areas will be made by knowledgeable speakers. These areas are Economic Justice, Racial Justice, Water, Immigration and Education. There will be feedback and planning sessions, a catered lunch and an ending reflection. Find registration at UUJAZ.org Click the Issues and Action logo at the top of the home page.

BUUK Circle

Julie Wambach

BUUK Circle: We meet the third Thursday, 2-4pm in the Social Hall. Everyone is welcome whether you've finished the book or never started it.

Please note: This is a change from a book previously listed in the "Newsletter." If you have questions, contact Julie Wambach azwambach@icloud.com.

Oct 19, 2017

"*The Abolition of Man*" by C. S. Lewis. Full text available online https://archive.org/details/TheAbolitionOfMan_229

Published in 1943, this book was chosen by the "National Review" as number 7 of the 100 Best Nonfiction Books of the 20th Century." Perhaps, the most debated of his books, Lewis presents the case for universal moral laws, as opposed to subjective values. Jeff Drake will be our discussion leader.

Setting a New Example

Ken Saunders

I have been thinking for a long while that we must try to set a better example. From now on instead of putting a dollar in the collection basket, make it a ten dollar bill. If you are putting only a dollar in the collection plate you ought to rethink that the coffee after the service is worth that. Hopefully you get much more value out of the entire Sunday service.

We do not want you to give till it hurts, just until it feels really, really good.

UU Endowment Fund

Naming the Endowment Fund of the Church as a beneficiary of your estate or a specific asset, such as an IRA or life insurance plan, provides a simple way to begin your legacy now by providing for our church work in the future. If your circumstances change, you can alter your plans at any time.

For further information call:
Brooks Marshall at 623-362-1195.

UU Movie Night

Linda Vitale

UU Movie Night will feature "Lion" on Thursday October 12th at 7pm. Five year old Saroo, gets lost on a train and separated from his family. He must learn to survive on the streets of India and escape calamities in the process. After ending up in an orphanage, he is adopted by a couple from Tasmania, where he finds love and security. But, as a young adult, the suppressed memories of his childhood propel him on a course to find his lost family. He finally returns to his childhood home more than 20 years later. This moving & extraordinary TRUE story was nominated for six academy awards, including best picture. Run time: 118 minutes. Bring your own refreshments.



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. I hope you will put these dates on your calendar now and come to the discussions with questions and opinions.

Please have information for the Newsletter submitted by Noon on the 15th of each month to the Editor, Charlie Mannino at newsletter@uusurprise.org

Musings from the Loft!

Debby Bullins, Music Director



October is here and that means your UUC Surprise Choir is in full swing, bringing their talents to worship. They want to send out a special invitation to anyone who loves music to join them in the loft. Rehearsals are Sundays, 9 – 10 am. We are a fun loving, welcoming, inclusive group.

Contact me at debbyb@uusurprise.org if you are interested in giving us a try.

On September 8, I had the opportunity to attend Dr. Ysaye Barnwell's "Building a Vocal Community – Singing in the African American Tradition" during her weeklong residency with the ASU School of Music. In this workshop, Dr. Barnwell utilizes oral tradition, African American history, values, cultural and vocal traditions to build communities of song among singers and non-singers alike. She gave no written music and discouraged taking notes and recording. She led us through the layering of gospel melodies, harmonies and the soul of each piece, frosted with a story about the lyrics meaning and intention. She taught every song in this manner. As the ASU presenter said, "Dr. Barnwell sweats music!" Within fifteen to twenty minutes, she had forty to fifty amateur singers filling the room with beautiful harmonies, some tricky blues rhythms and impromptu descants. In the beginning, it wasn't always pretty but there was music... soul...love...and community. She explained how in traditional Africa, music always had a function. Families and neighbors sang together when they raised their babies, cooked, made tools, planted their fields and communicated from one place to another.

Music builds community, yet Barnwell, a Unitarian Universalist, has seen a sharp decline in singing in places where people have most often sung together in this country: political movements and churches. "When I visit different places, I see it. I've talked to Baptists, Episcopalians and Methodists. The congregation is not singing. The choir and soloists have taken over." Barnwell continues to say "nothing on the radio is groups, people singing together anymore. Pop music is all about soloists, digitally perfected, not live harmonies." Barnwell "sees songs as armor when you



need it. I see songs as a blessing. They come to you when you need them".

We are fortunate to have three songs by Dr. Ysaye Barnwell, "Breaths," "We Are," and "Woyaya" in our hymnal, *Singing the Journey*. Our UU Surprise Choir sang her introspective, moving anthem, "Would You Harbor Me," last spring.

On October 1, we will celebrate music with our Hymn Sing at 10:10 a.m. Rise early, bring your child, neighbor, friend or partner and joyfully share your voice as we build community at UUC Surprise.

RE Report

Lisa Lawrence, DRE



On September 10th we welcomed back many UU families at our annual Ingathering breakfast. The children then joined the service, eagerly participated in the story for all ages and were sung off to class. The year's new world religions theme was met with excitement as they viewed sacred places, images and symbols from other faiths from around the world.

This year our children delve into world religions. Our K-4th children will be taking a look at picture books which introduce Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam through story. The 5th and up class will dive a little bit deeper with the UUAs Tapestry of Faith, Building Bridges program. This program is designed to "capture the strong parallel between societal change and religious evolution over human history."

As Unitarian Universalists we understand that many different paths exist to seek meaning. UUA curriculum writer, Katie Tweedy Covey, conveyed the importance of exposing our children to world religions when she said the following: 1. Our children may be informed decision makers in their own spiritual development; 2. They will start to be comfortable with differences and seek out more information about other religions; 3. They will begin to understand more about the circumstances and events around the world involving the world's religions; and 4. They will begin to value differences and enjoy celebrating the variety of expression of world religions.

I'm excited to join the children on their journey to explore some of the world's religions. If you are interested in expanding your own knowledge, as well as that of our youth, please contact me at lisal@uusurprise.org to assist in one of our classrooms.

The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

Reading through the last UU Surprise newsletter, reading the weekly eblasts and the Sunday announcements, it makes my Librarian's heart happy to see the number of our groups involved in reading books. This is terrific! Books are our best source of knowledge and sharing in this knowledge. As your Librarian, I am proud to be a part of this great reading movement at our UU Church!

I have now returned for the season. Please visit the Library Sunday mornings before or after services. Also, you may look forward to the monthly sermon topic reading tables I will feature each month. The Library is available for all your UU reading desires. Be sure to stop in!

New books are on order for the Library shelves. They should be available in the next couple of months. Below is a listing of the books we are looking forward to receiving. If you would like to be first in line to check one out, please see the list on the Library table. Add your name and phone number for your choice(s) and I will call you as soon as the book(s) is available.

Daring Democracy, Igniting Power, Meaning, and Connection for the America We Want, by Lappe

The Third Reconstruction, How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear, by Barber

To Wake, To Rise: Meditations on Justice and Resilience, by Sinkford

A Documentary History of UU to 1899, by McKanan

A Documentary History of UU 1900 to Present, by McKanan

Faith for the Unbeliever, by Kanter

Pagan and Earth Centered Voices in UU, by Hildebrand

They're Bankrupting Us: and 20 Other Myths about Unions, by Fletcher

60 On Up: The Truth About Aging in the 21st Century, by Rubin

The Seasoned Soul: Reflections on Growing Older, by Blanchard

A History of Religion in 5 ½ Objects: Bringing the Spiritual to its Senses, by Plate

Cultivating Empathy: The Worth and Dignity of Every Person—Without Exception, by Walker

Have a great day shared with a terrific UU book!



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www.uusurprise.com

Unitarian
Universalist Church
of Surprise

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME



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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.

Sermon Titles For October 2017

This months theme is Welcoming to All

10/1 - Rev. Terry Sims..... Hospitality to the Stranger

Hospitality was an ancient virtue, a common good that arose out of a common need, especially in harsh environments. It recognized a relationship between the need of someone, often a stranger, and someone else who could meet the stranger's need. Today we will look at what the ancient virtue still has to teach us.

10/8 - Rev. Terry Sims Welcoming Those We Don't Like

Sometimes it is easier to feel hospitable to strangers than to those we know but don't like. What do we do about people we disagree with on fundamental issues? Do we truly want to invite them in for reasons other than to convince them we are right?

10/15 - Rev. Lisa McDaniel-Hutchings Resilience

As Unitarian Universalists we love to recall our leadership in reaching moral victories such as abolition, women's suffrage, equal marriage. However since the election, policy changes affecting race relations, climate change, income inequality, immigration, and more assault us continually. How can we sustain ourselves as we resist divisiveness and hate? How can we stay resilient?

10/22 - Rev. Terry Sims..... Home, Hosts, and Hope

I am convinced that there is a common good to us. And that there are common goods for us. Today we will consider why hospitality is both and how we might become hosts offering both home and hope.

10/29 - TBD