

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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40th Anniversary 1975 - 2015

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November 2017

From The Minister's Desk

The recent furor over protests when the national anthem is played at sports events has captured my interest as a person to whom spiritual matters are important. Many people are eager to make a statement they want others to hear and respect. Symbolism is at a fever pitch.

Colin Kaepernick, then quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, brought the issue to national prominence when he first sat, then later took a knee when the national anthem was played. Kaepernick said his purpose was to protest racial inequality and police brutality.

But that purpose has been trampled into near oblivion by hysteria over whether athletes taking a knee during the national anthem is unpatriotic, whether they are failing to show proper respect for our country. As if one cannot both be concerned about our country's shortcomings and still respect and love the country that sometimes falls short.

"NFL players responded in full force . . . after President Trump repeatedly called for swift punishment against those who chose to protest by not standing during the national anthem. Demonstrations spread throughout the league as many players broke out of their routine by joining the protests or engaging in team-wide displays of unity. The Associated Press estimated 204 players elected to either kneel or sit during the anthem [that first Sunday after President Trump's

remarks.] [[https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/2017/09/24/donald-trump-nfl-player-protests-national-anthem-week-3-response/697609001/.](https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/2017/09/24/donald-trump-nfl-player-protests-national-anthem-week-3-response/697609001/)]

"Pittsburgh Steeler left tackle Alejandro Villanueva, a former Army Ranger and graduate of West Point, visibly stood outside the tunnel at Soldier Field with his hand over his heart during The Star-Spangled Banner while his teammates remained under cover inside the stadium. [[https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/2017/09/24/pittsburgh-steelers-national-anthem-mike-tomlin/697847001/.](https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/2017/09/24/pittsburgh-steelers-national-anthem-mike-tomlin/697847001/)]

"Less discussed is the way Kaepernick's protest evolved, as he and others took pains to find a way to bring about change while emphasizing that they were not disrespecting those who served and defended the country. At the beginning of the 2016 preseason, Kaepernick sat on the bench, away from his teammates, during the anthem. But in San Diego, on the eve of their final pre-season game, Kaepernick and 49ers teammate Eric Reid met with former Army Green Beret Nate Boyer, who'd had a brief tryout with an NFL team in 2015. After the meeting, Kaepernick modified his protest from one of sitting on the bench to kneeling near his teammates.

"We were talking to [Boyer] about how can we get the message back on track and not take away from the military, not take away from pride in our country, but keep the focus on what the issues really are," Kaepernick said. "We came up with taking a knee because there are issues that still need to be addressed and there was also a way to show more respect for the men and women that fight for this country." [<http://www.history.com/news/how->



[football-protest-and-politics-have-always-mixed.](#)]

President Trump, at various low points in his presidency, has invited evangelical Christian pastors into the Oval Office. They have prayed together and the pastors have laid their hands on him.

Symbols. What do the people using them intend to say? Are they sincere expressions, or only for show? How do symbols create and communicate meaning? That is what the study of semiotics seeks to determine. I perceive that we often talk past each other with our symbolic gestures, missing each other's intended meanings.

Kneeling is what some people do when they pray. I think of it as a gesture of humility, of reverence, of hope. For our common good, I hope we can start listening to what others mean when they speak through symbolism.

For my part, I see athletes kneeling as a sincere expression of concern for the racial injustice that is part of our past and still part of our present. But I can also see within their gesture respect and gratitude for what others have sacrificed for our ideals of democracy, freedom, and justice. I believe they are praying for our nation to live up to those ideals. I see no conflict among those meanings. I hope that all of those meanings can live together in our hearts and in our church.

Yours in our faith,



President's Letter to Congregation

Pat Lindgren, President

This is the third time I have tried to write this column for our newsletter. You see, I am a news junkie. I don't watch news on television, but I read 4 newspapers and view 6 news websites every day. I think you can probably guess my mood lately. The past four weeks have seen tremendous disasters both natural and man-made. So I decided, after the first two attempts, to go back to something I wrote years ago to help me, and maybe you, deal with today.

What do I believe?

I lived through the civil rights movement of the

60s and I did and do believe that, as Dr. King said, people should be judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin.

I lived through the women's movement of the 70s and I did and do believe that while there are physical differences between men and women, both deserve equal rights to education, employment and control of their own bodies and destinies.

From 1950 through today I lived through the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the war in Grenada, Operation Desert Storm, the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq and countless other American military actions. I did and do believe that war does not solve problems and that most American wars are fought for the benefit of the military-industrial complex.

I lived through the start of the environmental movement in the 1980s and 90s and continuing to today. I did and do believe that we must care for the earth and its resources and preserve it for our future generations.

I lived through the gay rights movement of the 90's and 2000's and still ongoing. I saw DOMA overturned and many states allowing same sex marriage. I did and do believe that sexual orientation is not a choice and marriage is not the same as holy matrimony. If a particular church wants to discriminate against LGBTs they do not have the right to impose their opinions on society.

I missed voting for John F Kennedy because I was only 19 and the voting age then was 21, but I have voted in every election I was eligible for since then. I did and do believe in democracy and in the privilege and responsibility of citizens of a democracy to vote.

I read books, newspapers, magazines of all kinds. I did and do believe in a free press and in the search for truth.

These are the things my life experiences taught me. I am so lucky to have found a faith and a church that preaches exactly what I believe. Our Unitarian Universalist 7 principles are what I believe. All the news to the contrary, I believe there is hope as long as these 7 principles are followed by ever growing numbers of people.

Seven Principles Workshop

Tom Reemtsma

It is not too late to join in the 7 Principles study. We are meeting on Tuesday evenings through November 21st at 6:30 in the choir room. Bring your curiosity and creative urges to join in digging for meaning within the principles. We can use your sense of drama.

UU Movie Night

Linda Vitale

Movie Night will feature: "LA LA LAND" on Wednesday, November 15th from 7 to 9 pm. This critically acclaimed film is reminiscent of earlier Hollywood musicals. It's a romantic comedy/drama film about two L.A. dreamers, waiting and hoping for their big breaks, a jazz pianist and an aspiring actress, drawn together by their common desire to do what they love. They struggle to reconcile their aspirations and relationship in a magical old school romance. As success mounts, they are faced with decisions that can fray the fabric of their love affair. The film explores the joy and pain of pursuing one's dreams. It received 14 Academy Award nominations, of which it won six. Emma Stone from AZ won the Best Actress award. Don't forget to bring some refreshments while watching this wonderful and charming two hour film.



Landscape Update

Jack & Helen Sheehan

We want to thank all of you who answered Virginia Taylor's call to help with the landscaping. Many of you were very diligent, worked hard and it was very much appreciated.

The vicissitudes (how about that word?) of old age forced us to retire and hire maintenance personnel. We were fortunate to acquire the man who we've called on for all the heavy work these past ten years, Lucio Madera. He will oversee and maintain all of the grounds including the twenty trees and keep the irrigation functioning properly.

However, don't be afraid to pick up obvious pieces of trash if you wish. Thanks.



Shared Thanksgiving Dinner

Thursday, November 23, 2017

Bonnie Saunders

Ken and I will host the Shared Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner. We will cook the turkeys, stuffing, and gravy. We encourage members and friends to come and bring guests to this church community event. Bring your choice from the following kinds of potluck dishes: appetizers, vegetable dishes, other side dishes, breads, cranberry sauces, salads, desserts, or your special favorite dish.

The Social Hour will begin at 2:00 p.m. The Dinner will begin at 3:00 p.m. Sign up in the Social Hall and tell us what kind of potluck dish you will bring.

Since October 3rd, several members have been immersing themselves in the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism. At the dinner, they will have on display seven framed montages depicting the principles. After the meal, they will show us what they have created in the way of a physical portrayal of how they use these principles in their daily lives.

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

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



November brings lots of musical opportunities to UUC Surprise. We will have our Hymn Sing on Sunday, November 5 at 10:10 a.m. when we will raise our voices, fearlessly singing some of our favorite hymns. Come early for the best seat!

The choir will be busy this month beginning rehearsals for our Lessons and Carols worship service scheduled for December 17. We invite interested singers to join us! Contact Debby Bullins at debbyb@uusurprise.org for rehearsal times. We also invite the congregation to bring your friends and family for this very special service when Kent Trostel, pianist, will return to set the mood with pre-worship music beginning at 10:00 am.

On November 12, our dear friend, Walter Hartman returns for Special Music beginning at 10:00 am. Plan on arriving early to choose your favorite seat for a concert you won't want to miss. A native of Indiana, Walter received three degrees in music from Indiana University, where he was awarded the Performer's Certificate for outstanding performance. He later studied one year at the Royal College of Music in London, in addition to studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and the Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen. His career was spent teaching in universities in Colorado and North Dakota. He was a member of a touring group called The Audubon Ensemble. He has served on the artistic advisory committee of Chamber Music West and has performed frequently in the West Valley.



We are so fortunate to have these wonderful musicians share their talents. Please take the time to thank them for their gift.

"This will be our response to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, and more devotedly than ever before". Leonard Bernstein

Social Activities

Danean Mitchell



Beginning on the 5th of November, or the First Sunday of the month. We will begin a new activity. *The First Sunday Potlucks*. Each month on the first Sunday we will have a potluck after service. There will be a theme. I am thinking a breakfast type theme like hash brown/potato casseroles, Your favorite egg dish, sweet rolls/muffins, fruit or ???. If you are not in a position to bring something, but would like to participate... a donation would be appropriate. We will have a sign-up sheet for you to let us know what you will be bringing. We will set up the feast at the end of service and will begin eating about 11:50, to be considerate as we would like for everyone to have had a chance to greet the minister of the day. Coffee/tea will be available as usual. Grab a cup, have a seat, chat a moment or two and in no time the potluck will be ready. Tables will be set with silverware and plates. There will be numbers on the table which will be called at random. We will have a drawing for something special (a secret for now). If you have questions you may call me at any time for the answers (if I have them). *Mark Your Calender November 5*. First Sunday in November.

Family-Friendly

BINGO

Friday, November 3rd 7:00-10:00 PM

Win prizes and have fun!

Game cards are \$3 each.

Please sign-up on the social hall activity table by 10/27. All are welcome.

This event is sponsored by the Children's RE Committee

The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

The fall book season is in full swing in your UU Library. New ordered books have arrived and are being processed, a quantity of donated books are under consideration, books are checked out in busy numbers and maintenance chores are under way to keep your library in top organized form for your ease of use. All of this activity leads to the book reviews and discussion topics for this month:

“The World’s Religions,” by Houston Smith, number 291 SMI. Bill Moyers said: “This is the one book on world religions I can’t do without. I return to it often, and always with reward.” It is considered a masterpiece, the classic on comparative religion, a terrific read. Unfortunately, it is also an example of an excited reader with a pencil. Recently, I discovered underlines, notes and even an exclamation mark in the text! Marking library books is not acceptable. I am carefully working to remove the markings. Marked books destroy the immersive experience for the next reader. Please, please do not mark your UU books. They belong to us all.

“And Then There Was One, a tactical survival workbook following the loss of a spouse, partner or loved one and guidelines for end-of-life preparedness,” by Charlotte Fox, number 155.9 FOX. This book is an excellent reference for times of loss. It has understandable instructions in workbook form. Normally a library would shelve such a book in the reference section, for use in house, not for check out. However, I want readers to more fully make use of this volume, in the privacy of home. If you wish to use its features, do not complete the actual pages. Please use your own recording pad/paper instead.

“An Inconvenient Truth,” by Former Vice-President Al Gore, number 363.73 GOR. He “brings together leading-edge research from top scientists around the world; photographs, charts, and other illustrations... to document...global warming,” a review. This excellent book is an example of the type of donated book your library gladly accepts. We thank the generous donors who think of the UU Library for their gently used books. Donated books give

us the chance to add variety to the collection we could otherwise not afford. Please note, all books are checked over for appropriate, current topics and physical condition. The library reserves the right to be decider of accepted books. Thanks for understanding!

Have a blessed day shared with a great UU Library read!

BUUK Circle

Julie Wambach

The BUUK Circle meets on the third Thursday 2pm – 4pm in the Social Hall. Here are selections for the next two months. Join us, whether you’ve finished or even started the book. For more information, contact Julie Wambach at azwambach@icloud.com.

Nov 16, 2017

“The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump: 27 Psychiatrist and Mental Health Experts Assess a President” by Bandy X. Lee (Author), Robert Jay Lifton (Contributor), and 28 more.

More than two dozen psychiatrists and psychologists offer their consensus view that Trump’s mental state presents a clear and present danger to our nation and individual well-being.

Dec. 21, 2017

“Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World” by Linda Hirschman.

The author tells the fascinating story of the intertwined lives of Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

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 til it hurts, just until it feels really, really good.

RE Report

Lisa Lawrence, DRE



The children's "Picture Book World Religions" class just finished a 4 lesson unit on Hinduism. Katie Tweedie Covey's program uses picture books to tell about Hindu holidays as well as share some great tales from the Hindu religion. With more than 300

million gods and goddesses there are more than a few to choose from.

The first tale shared was the story of "Rama and Sita" by David Weisner from the Ramayana. When Ravana, the evil ogre, stole the beloved Princess Sita, Prince Rama enlisted the help of Hanuman, the Monkey King, and his three million monkey army to get her back.

In a modern day tale called, "Ganesha's Sweet

Tooth" by Sanjay Patel, the kids learned about how Ganesha broke his tusk to help him write the epic, Mahabharata. Ganesha is the elephant headed Hindu god known as the "Remover of Obstacles." "The Mahabharata," written by Vyasa, is the longest epic poem known. It is a poem that tells the tale of the Great War between the Pandavas and the Kauravas - cousins who claimed to be the rightful rulers of a kingdom.

Two stories were shared about Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights. This holiday marks the beginning of a new year and symbolizes the renewal of life. In both "Lighting a Lamp: A Diwali Story" by Johnny Zucker and "Lights for Gita" by Rachna Gilmore, Diwali traditions were explained: feasting; spending time with family; shopping; coloring rangolis, card parties and making and lighting small oil lamps called diyas.

From here we move on to a unit on Islam and then a break in December to rehearse for this year's holiday play, "La Befana: A Fireside Tale."



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Visit our new web site at
www.uusurprise.com

Unitarian
Universalist Church
of Surprise

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME



Transportation Resources:

Valley Metro Transportation Service - 602-266-8723

Previously listed as Dial-A-Ride and now run by Discount Cab. They will provide transportation within the Surprise area for \$1.00 per person each way. For medical appointments in Sun City, Sun City West and Peoria the charge is \$1.25, per person each way. They will only take you to medical appointments outside of Surprise.

Benevilla in Surprise - 623-584-4999

This non-profit agency provides free food shopping services for shut ins. You provide a grocery list over the phone, and they will shop for you free of charge. You only pay for the groceries. They also provide transportation for medical appointments, a friendly visitor service who will visit or call, and a handy person who will do minor repairs like change a light bulb; a wonderful service for people in need. *This service is free of charge if you notify them at least 12 days in advance.*

Peoria Dial-A-Ride - 623-773-7435, \$3.00 ADA \$2.00, needs 1 day advance notice. **Note:** As of January 1, 2017 Dial a Ride is not available unless you are ADA certified. To get ADA certification you have to be declared disabled for at least 6 months. This applies to people living in Surprise.

Northwest Valley Connect - 623-282-9300

NVC helps connect seniors and people with disabilities with available public, private and volunteer transportation resources based on their individual needs. Personalized assistance and support is available by contacting our Call—Click—Connect center at (623) 282-9300. Area transportation resources are also listed on our website at NorthwestValleyConnect.org.

West Valley Connections - 623-282-9300 Call for information regarding services available.

Suggested language for including UU Church of Surprise in your will or estate plan:

I herein give and bequeath \$ _____, or _____ percent of the rest, remainder and residue of my estate, or the proceeds from the sale of real estate by my estate that I own located at _____ to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Surprise located at 17540 N. Avenue of the Arts, Surprise, AZ 85378-2581.
Federal tax ID # _____

*For more information about creating a legacy to the UU Church of Surprise
Please call Brooks Marshall at 623-362-1195*

Including a gift to UU Church of Surprise Arizona in your will or estate plan helps your church in its mission of providing a liberal voice in our Community, State and Country.

- Simplicity** Just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed.
- Versatility** You can structure the bequest to leave a specific item or amount of money, make a gift contingent on a certain event, or leave a percentage of your estate to us.
- Tax Relief** If you are subject to estate tax, your gift allows you to be eligible for an estate tax Charitable deduction for the gift's full value.

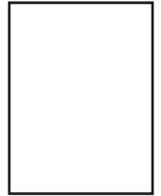


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First Class Mail

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 November 2017

This months theme is Faith

11/5 - Rev. Terry Sims..... Faith As a Verb

For most of my life, I thought of faith as equivalent to belief. But I have a different understanding of faith now. Now I think that faith is more verb than noun, more a way of life than content, more something about which to be “half-sure and whole-hearted” than to be certain.

11/12 - Rev. Terry Sims One Faith Among Others

If I had to choose one unusual feature that distinguishes Unitarian Universalism, it would be that our faith does not claim to be the only path to truth or meaning. While that makes us only one faith among others, it gives us the freedom to embrace other religions, to be wrong, and to evolve.

11/19 - Rev. Terry Sims.....A Faith-Full Life

What does it mean to have faith in God, in the worth of life and our own efforts, in oneself, in others, in goodness? I suspect it cannot be about outcomes.

11/26 – Amy St. Peter A Place at the Table

We all have a myriad of tables at different points in our lives. The holiday table, the kitchen table, the head table. Who do we invite to our table? Who is not invited? How we answer this question determines the company we keep, as well as how we live out our faith..