

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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September 2018

From The Minister's Desk

My sister Ronda, her family, and I just visited the reconstructed village of New Salem, Illinois, where Abraham Lincoln spent six years as a young man, arriving when he was 22, with no clear plan for his life. Then we went to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in



Springfield, Illinois, the state capital where Lincoln practiced law, served in the Illinois House of Representatives, and where he lived when he was elected President of the United States. Last summer, we had visited the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. – that huge figure of the seated

Lincoln, the somber right side of his face reflecting all the burdens he carried, the left showing a slight smile revealing his humor and occasional joys.

Throughout our visit this year, I found myself trying to find the center of Abraham Lincoln – what made him the man and the President universally admired and celebrated from a distance more than 150 years after his assassination. That universal respect came immediately after his death, but certainly not before, when political cartoons of the day depicted him as a bumbling incompetent, an ill-educated and ill-mannered buffoon, as Satan.

Abraham Lincoln taught himself to read and then read prodigiously, studying English grammar, mathematics, how to become a land surveyor, and then a lawyer. He grew up poor and never came close to being wealthy. Lincoln was tall and strong and physically imposing, but he was not handsome. He was widely reported to be melancholy and probably suffered from what today would be

diagnosed as depression. He was unsuccessful in his pursuits throughout much of his life, failing as a shopkeeper, in his first political campaign to represent New Salem in the Illinois House and later in his campaign to represent Illinois in the U.S. Senate instead of Stephen Douglas. He loved at least one, and possibly two, women who rejected Lincoln's proposals of marriage before Mary Todd accepted him and became his wife. He loved and indulged his sons Willie and Eddie and Tad, and then was pierced with grief when each of them died in childhood. His wife, Mary, who craved but never found acceptance in Washington society, suffered herself from depression, her own paralyzing grief at the death of their children, and insanity after Abraham's death.

Lincoln became President when many African-Americans were legally owned by white people and the issue of slavery and the economic system it relied on would split the country in a Civil War. Several states in the deep South seceded after Lincoln was elected but before he was inaugurated in March, 1861. The war consumed Lincoln's presidency and claimed 1.3 million lives. In important ways, we are still fighting the Civil War, its forces, and its aftermath of racism and division today. Throughout much of the Civil War, it was the South, not the North, that seemed likely to prevail. Just before the war ended and the Union was preserved, Lincoln was sure the North would lose. When he drafted and signed the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln was reviled on all sides – by those who claimed it did not go far enough, those who thought it unwise and ill-timed, and those who saw it as an abuse of presidential power, unconstitutional, and evil.

Abraham Lincoln did not become our beloved President because he was born to power, nor because of unearned privilege beyond the fact that he was a white, straight man, nor because he led a charmed and happy life, nor because he was always certain of the best course for his own life or that of the country. But his story and his part in history move me and others because he showed us what it is to struggle and to keep struggling through pain and defeat and uncertainty and still cling to decency, to personal integrity, to principle, to humility, to genuine compassion for others, to our humanity. Behind our tendency to mythologize and deify Abraham Lincoln, the essence of who he was and why he commands our admiration came to me in his words engraved around the base of a statue honoring him at New Salem: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right." I'll see you in church.

Yours in our faith,



President's Letter to Congregation

Pat Lindgren, President

SEPTEMBER! For most of my life this has been my favorite month. Crisp mornings, the Minnesota State Fair (the best in the country), the start of a new school year. My favorite September was 1959. I was starting the 10th grade in a new school, West High in Minneapolis. This was not a new experience for me, I started in a new school in first, second, fourth, fifth, seventh and eighth grades as well (the blessings of a military family). Starting something new is exciting, frightening and challenging all at the same time. This time it turned out to be my favorite school.

It is September again and the start of a new church year. No crisp mornings yet (not for a least six weeks), no greatest state fair, but it is the start of a new school year for our RE classes. Many of our friends and members will not be back for a month or two, but those of us who stuck it out all summer will prepare to welcome them back. Our first board meeting for the year will be on September 9th. Check out Lisa's column for information on the new RE year. Check out Debby's column for news about the

choir starting up again. In fact, check out the whole newsletter for information about the next church year and thank Charlie Mannino for the wonderful job he does in creating our newsletters.

When I started in this church in 2008, I was just a church customer. I attended Sunday services and made a pledge, but not more. I soon became a church owner by participating in the church life and taking on responsibilities for parts of running the church. If you are still a church customer, I would like to encourage you to get to know the possibilities of ownership. I know that, unlike me, many of you have full time jobs or families or children or all three and that you cannot give a lot of hours every week, but you can give something. There are a lot of committees that need help. Social Activities needs help in the kitchen on Sundays. Religious Education needs teachers and teacher assistants. We need ushers. Stewardship needs help with the annual pledge drive. Housing and Property needs help with maintenance. This is an equal opportunity congregation, we welcome men in the kitchen and women in maintenance. Your church directory has a list of the various committees and the names and number of the person chairing the committee. We also have sign up sheets in the Social Hall on the long table for the various jobs that need to be done. Please look at these and decide where you can help.

I will see you at church, Pat.



Email Address Changes

Key email address changes have recently been made. It is very important that you add the following information to your church directory.

The new UU office email is
uucsaz2@gmail.com

Debby Bullins, Music Director,
uucsmusic@gmail.com

Lisa Lawrence, RE Director,
uucslisal@gmail.com

Charlie Mannino, Newsletter Editor,
uucsnewsletter@gmail.com

also add Cathy Mannino, Webmaster
www.uusurprizeaz.org

News From Building and Property

Lois I. Bartels

Building and Property is a committee that doesn't have meetings. We just do things!

I was initiated into this position when toilets in the women's room were overflowing. I soon learned that if I plunged enough or jiggled the handles just right, the toilets might behave. When that didn't work, Ken Saunders or Jim Gaunt worked their magic, and all was well.

Sometimes, there are more serious problems. One of the current issues is with homeless people who find their way to our property. Kathryn, our administrator, has had to call the police when they've been sleeping on the outdoor benches and we've cleared away the debris that they've left behind. It's scary for Kathryn or volunteers who work alone at the church and it's painful to have to be the bad guys who don't allow homeless to linger on church property.

A new development is that we now have a locked recycle bin. It stops dumpster diggers who don't close the lid thereby allowing rain water to accumulate in the summer. It also prevents neighbors from putting non-recyclable items in the bin, thus preventing pick-up. It is my understanding that church members used to bring their newspapers and cardboard to be recycled by a vendor who paid us for the materials. That hasn't been the case for several years. We pay to have both the trash and recyclables hauled away. The bin will be open on Sunday morning so you can still bring items to be recycled. On other days you will have to use the key (which is kept on a kitchen cabinet shelf next to the first aid kit) to get into the dumpster.

Do you know that there is an emergency exit close to the library that leads outside? When we have a fire inspection, it's likely to get cited because, while it has shelves for storage, items on the floor sometimes block the doors. Wah! La! I showed the space to Don Helms, and he built and mounted a rack for landscaping tools that keeps them organized and out of the way. Check it out!

You may have noticed that the fountain in the memorial garden isn't working this summer. It has been cleaned and is ready to go but we've decided to keep it on vacation until the weather cools. The plants in front of it have been removed and I'm looking to hear from anyone with inspiration for

decorating that space with something that doesn't get too big and doesn't need water. Rocks?

As chair of the Building and Property Committee, I'm a matchmaker who tries to find members with skills to match our ever-present needs. I call a professional for something big like the air-conditioning going out. Most other things are done by volunteers. In addition to the members mentioned above who are always ready to help, I've also called on Beverly Friend, Patricia Balfour, Michael Piper, Frank Thomas and Charlie Mannino for assistance. Sometimes people just see what needs to be done and do it without ever telling me. I love it!

If you would like to be on this committee that doesn't have meetings, you will find my contact information in the directory. I'd love to have you on my go-to list.

"Cakes for the Queen of Heaven"

A UU Adult Education Course, Fall 2018

In October, Bonnie Saunders will facilitate a four-week adult education course called "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven," a woman-honoring journey into ancient earth-based spiritualities in Europe and the Middle East. Participants will explore questions, such as how did/does the gender of the deity in a society affect the status of women in that society?

Sign-up in the Social Hall for this course, in September if possible. People who cannot attend all of the sessions are welcome to come when they can. If you have questions or if you can't get to church to sign up yourself, contact Bonnie and she'll take care of it.

Schedule: the following eight Monday afternoons at 1:00 p.m.

- 10/1: Prehistoric Goddesses of the Paleolithic and the Neolithic
- 10/8: Goddesses in Ancient Civilizations: Sumeria, Minoa, Pre-Classical Greece
- 10/15: From Goddess to God in Babylonia, Egypt, and Classical Greece
- 10/22: Goddess Traditions in Judaism and Christianity

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

uucsnewsletter@gmail.com

RE Report

Lisa Lawrence, DRE

Hello friends and families!



It will be so good to have everyone back from travels, have our classrooms filled and our halls bustling. The first day of classes is on Sunday, September 9th following our Sunday School Ingathering/Welcome Back Breakfast. The Ingathering is the time for parents to schedule classroom participation dates, register their children, meet the teachers, hear about this year's curriculum and find out about scheduled service projects, special events and other volunteer opportunities. So please come! The breakfast is scheduled at 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the social hall. Please R.S.V.P to uucslisal@gmail.com A sign-up list will be sent to those who R.S.V.P to indicate what they will bring to share at the breakfast.

Our curriculum this year will be examining our shared Unitarian Universalist faith with several "Tapestry of Faith" programs. All classes will be examining similar questions such as: What does it mean to be UU?; What are the 7 Principles and how does one live them out in the "real" world?; How can Unitarian Universalists worship together and support each other when each person's spiritual journey and background may be different?; What are shared UU values? Upon completion of the Tapestry of Faith programs, all students K & up will participate in a disability awareness program designed to encourage empathy and acceptance.

In addition to our regularly scheduled Sunday school classes, O.W.L workshops will be run this year for ages K-1st and 5th - 6th. Our Whole Lives is a series of sexuality education curricula for participants to make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, Our Whole Lives not only provides facts about anatomy and human development, but also helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and

understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality.

Families, don't forget to R.S.V.P for the breakfast at uucslisal@gmail.com . I'm looking forward to seeing everyone and hopefully making new connections.

Circle Suppers

Mark your calendar for circle suppers on Saturday, November 10. These are pot luck suppers at the homes of members. We welcome newcomers and long-time members. It is a great way for you to get to know others in our community on a more personal basis.

To participate, look for the sign-up sheet in the social hall or contact Nancy Flann at nancyflann@hotmail.com 623-583-4636 or Susie Cole at scole100@msn.com 406-600-8857.

B&B Church Fundraiser

Susie Cole

On a recent trip to New Orleans, Sally Thomas and I stayed at the home of a couple from a local UU church that offers B&B services as a church fundraiser. Interested church members volunteer to host UU guests for short-term stays at their homes, providing lodging and breakfast. We paid by check made out to their congregation. We very much enjoyed the company of the couple and even attended their UU church on the Sunday we were there. They said they have met some very nice, interesting UUs from all over by participating. In the process, it has provided funds to their church.

Our Board recently agreed to research the possibility of developing a similar program for our UU church. At this point, I would like to find out if there are enough people in our congregation who would be interested and willing to participate by hosting guests in their homes. Once I know whether there is enough interest to proceed, we'll work out the details. Remember, the host only provides bed and breakfast for short-term stays. The guest provides all other needs - transportation, other meals, entertainment and money to our church.

Contact me if you would consider being a host at scole100@msn.com.

The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

It's our UU Church Library time of the year to order latest books to entice your reading interests. Below is the list of books and a brief look at each. Be sure to watch the e-blasts for availability. All the books will be reviewed here in the coming months. So, stay tuned and happy reading!

“Braving the Wilderness,” by Brene Brown. This #1 NY Times Best Seller discusses cultivating true belonging and the courage to stand alone.

“Emergent Strategy,” by Adrienne Maree Brown. The book covers the topic of shaping change in changing worlds.

“How Lovely the Ruins,” is a terrific edited book by Annie Chagnot. It is filled with inspirational poems and words for difficult times.

“White Fragility,” by Robin Diangelo is another NY Times Best Seller. It is a groundbreaking discussion on racism and social justice.

“Love Like Thunder,” by Jesse Reynolds. This is a brand new published collection of profound poetry and meditation for today's lives.

“Start Where You Are,” by Meera Lee Patel. The author presents an interactive journal for self-exploration. A great new addition to our Library.

“Revisiting the Empowerment Controversy,” by Mark Morrison-Reed, it is a chronicle of a recent difficult period (some say ongoing) in UU. A must read for all UUs in understanding how we come to be where we are today.

“The Heritage,” by Howard Bryant. A most relative and important book for today: Black athletes, America and patriotism. A latest social justice great.

“In Later Years,” by Bruce Marshall. This is another fresh release and discusses the topic of meaning and spirituality in aging.

“The Trials of Nina McCall,” by Scott Stern. An unbelievable buried history of the U.S. Government's 'American Plan', the imprisonment of so-called promiscuous women in the 1910s – 1950s and beyond.

“Awakening Loving Kindness,” by Pema Chodron is a latest beautiful book of inspirations and encouragements for cultivating kindness.

Continue to stay cool, and enjoy a great UU read from our Library shelves!



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.

BUUK Circle

Sally Thomas

BUUK Circle meets the second Tuesday evening 6:30-8:30pm in the Choir Room. Since only two people came to the July meeting, we have decided to cancel the August meeting and move the Madeline Albright book to September 11. Hopefully more people can attend in September. And we'll cancel the book that was selected for September: "*The President Is Missing*" by Bill Clinton and James Patterson. This book is more fiction than most of our choices for the summer have been. The new set of selections and dates are listed below.

September 11: "*Fascism: A Warning*" by Madeleine Albright. A personal and urgent examination of Fascism in the twentieth century and how its legacy shapes today's world, written by one of America's most admired public servants, the first woman to serve as U.S. secretary of state. A fascist, observes Madeleine Albright, "is someone who claims to speak for a whole nation or group, is utterly unconcerned with the rights of others, and is willing to use violence and whatever other means are necessary to achieve the goals he or she might have." *Fascism: A Warning* is a book for our times that is relevant to all times. Written by someone who has not only studied history but helped to shape it, this call to arms teaches us the lessons we must understand and the questions we must answer if we are to save ourselves from repeating the tragic errors of the past.

October 9: "*We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy*" by Ta-Nehisi. Coates Includes essays Coates first published in the Atlantic, as well as eight new ones. He covers the Obama presidency, as well as exploring the backlash that led to the election of Trump, who he calls "America's First White President."

November 13: "*Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth*" by Marc Peyser and Tom Dwyer. The first cousins - one a daughter of a US President and the other a First Lady - grew up together and later each influenced American politics with quite different political views. A double biography.

For more information, contact me at sallythom@aol.com

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 as well as a bucket list trip to the UK & Ireland. Spectacular!

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

I want to thank our musicians, Cathy Mannino, Maggi Mahan, Ruth Swank, Julian Rush, and Kent Trostel for sharing their talents and providing beautiful music each week for worship. 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? I have the perfect outlet for your musical side. Join the UUC Surprise Choir! It's fun, it's free and it's a really good time. Our choir season begins with our monthly rehearsal on September 13 from 1:30 – 3:30 pm., with the choir singing on September 16 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. The members of this choir have one thing in common, the love of music (and parties!) We welcome everyone to our little band of merry makers.

Give us a try - won't you please join us?

Make music a part of every day,

"The most valuable possession you can own is an open heart. The most powerful weapon you can be is an instrument of peace." Carlos Santana



**Visit our web site for
current information**
www.uusurpriseaz.org

Unitarian Universalist Church of Surprise

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME



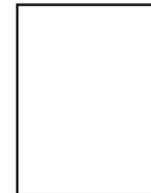
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40th Anniversary 1975 - 2015



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 uucsaz2@gmail.com.*

Sermon Titles For September 2018

The Theme for his month is "Vocation"

9/2 - Rev. Terry Sims..... Vocation as Balance

Both before and after what we may consider our working lives, vocation, our "calling," is present. Vocation has a spiritual dimension that occupations may lack. On this Sunday before Labor Day, I want us to pay attention to the balance vocation can bring to whatever we do, at whatever stage of life we're in.

9/9 - Rev. Terry Sims Vocation as True Self

An occupation is anything that takes up a significant quantity of time. But a vocation is a calling for which one has a feeling of deep affinity, attraction, and/or talent. As Parker Palmer reminds us, our vocation is not something we come to by an act of will. It comes to us when we accept the gift of our true self. And that is a religious quest.

9/16 - Rebecca Riggs We Gather Together... Why?

If you are reading this newsletter, it is at least somewhat likely that you have a basic belief system that aligns with UUism, but attendance...that is a whole different question. Why do some people choose to attend a religious service, and others don't? We gather together...but why? Could you please attend this service as we explore the value of attendance?

9/23 - Rev. Terry Sims..... True Vocation: Improving the World

What did Jesus spend most of his time doing? What was the Buddha's occupation? How did Socrates earn a living in later life, or Lao-Tzu? True vocation may not fit a job description or garner a paycheck. But maybe that's because vocation in one sense is the same for all of us - to find our own way to improve the world.

9/0 - Rev. Clint Reynolds Gratitude and Forgiveness: A Vocation for the Aging

In his poem/hymn, the late Leonard Cohen, balladeer and musical philosopher, sang: "Ring the bell that still can ring, There's a crack in everything, That's how the light gets in!" Let's worship together and contemplate how the Prayers of Gratitude and Forgiveness might be a vocation that allows the light to get in "to the darkness of our world."