

# Newsletter

November 2021

## Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise

**Transition Minister:** Rev. Samuel Schaal  
**Minister Emeritus:** Rev. Dr. Walt F. Wieder  
**President:** Sherry Robinson



**Newsletter Co-Editors:** Gus & Juliet Gustavson  
julietgus@msn.com  
**Distribution:** Kathryn Pabich



### TRANSITIONAL THOUGHTS

by Rev. Samuel Schaal  
Transition Minister

#### Past, Future and the In-Between

British mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) said reality is made up of processes working in relationship with other processes, not just bits of matters existing independently of one another. He offered a simple description of this approach.

He said there are things in our lives we can't change—*stubborn facts*. These are realities that hem us in. But in the emerging science of his day (think Einstein and others) he saw a fluid and expanding universe. The basic nature of life, he said, was a process of *creative advance*. We are forever surrounded by the stubborn facts and creative advance of life.

We'll explore these themes in worship this month. On Nov. 7 we honor the reality of the most stubborn fact of life, death. We'll memorialize those in the church lost over the last year-plus and consider how immortality dwells within our finitude. On Nov. 14, we witness possibility and growth as we welcome new members and celebrate new ways to worship by beginning on the patio singing with the Choir. Possibility is a theme Nov. 28 in the story of Hanukkah—when our resources are so limited, how can we thrive?

Where is the congregation's *creative advance*? All are invited to walk in the Nov. 6 Phoenix Pride parade as we move out into the community. Regular newcomer classes in the fall and spring offer a focused way of inviting others into community. New printed orders of worship enhance the experience and communicate better. New ritual enriches our worship experience, such as the dedication of infants and children new to our congregation and in the traditional Unitarian Flower Communion in the spring. Through the year we'll seek new understandings of old holy days and seasons. We'll also engage the *stubborn fact* of the congregation's history and how that's enriched and shaped the culture of the church in the History Wall in January.

And so we walk together in that journey of moving from past to future.

In Our Faith,  
*SAM*

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## Message from our President



I believe our Desert Fall has arrived. The temperatures are lower in number during the day, the nights are perfect, and the streets are full of cars bearing license plates from all around us. (The snowbirds are returning.) This is my favorite time here in Arizona. It almost feels normal; except that this year is different. Things are new! Our Church is newly painted and waiting for all to return, Sunday morning coffee now comes from a new coffee brewer, and the dishes will be washed and sanitized using our new dishwasher. The minister in the pulpit is new; we will soon have a new Music Director, a new Congregational Administrator and the RE Director has a new title - Director of Family Ministry.

Yet with all this newness, it still feels like our own special community. We greet each other with joy and are beginning to look forward to the activities in coming months. We may have changed our approach to living our life as it was, but we still care for and are committed to our faith and to each other. We are, as Rev Sam said in his sermon on October 10th, "in Covenant" with one another and with our congregation. This is the affirmation we recite every Sunday.

*"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."*

We are asked as members to honor this covenant, and we saw this happen in our congregation during this difficult time. We saw love given freely and service to the Church being performed on a daily basis. We are headed for additional change as we journey through Transition, and as each change occurs, we must remember that we are still a community based in love and committed to honor our covenant. We will have differences in what we choose to do, and in how we do it, in thoughts, opinions and ideas on how we go forward and to what end. Ultimately, we will learn from one another, and we will grow in spirit and have new skills and opportunities; however, in the end we will still be "our own special community".

May it be so.

*Sherry Robinson*



### A UUCS THANKSGIVING TRADITION CONTINUES?

Because Ken and Bonnie Saunders, with the help of others, hosted a Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner at the church for many years, when they moved to California, there was a question as to whether that tradition would continue.

Yes, it **MIGHT**, if enough people contact Terri Grant to let her know they want to participate in the Thanksgiving Potluck with Glen, her, and other folks from our UUCS community.

**You have the invitation from Terri and Glen,  
but the critical step is letting Terri know if you are a YES . . . ASAP!**

**Contact Information – [terrigrant43@gmail.com](mailto:terrigrant43@gmail.com)/559-760-7853**

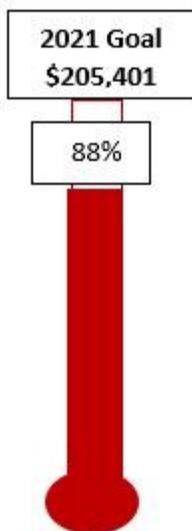
## UUCS Stewardship Update

Dear Beloved Community,

Right now, we are at the time of year when we are getting ready for the holidays. From Labor Day to New Year's Eve and everything in between it is a time for hope through joyous celebration, glorious gratitude and compassionate generosity.

And so it is that at this time of year we are also reminded of the sustenance and support that our beloved spiritual community has given us and that in order for that to continue we must in turn sustain and support it by completing our pledge to the Annual Stewardship Campaign. Or we may well be reminded that we need to make that commitment now, to make a generous, heartfelt donation ensuring that this UU community continues to grow and thrive.

We are so very close to fulfilling our mission to raise \$205,401 ... just \$25,000 of new gifting will bring us from 88% of the goal to 100%. We need to dig a bit deeper and then go to <https://uusurpriseaz.org/get-involved/#donate>. Click on the **Pledge Now link**, complete the Pledge Commitment Form, selecting from one of several payment options (whichever works best for you) and pressing *Submit*. It's not how much you give that matters but that you choose to participate by giving to support this incredible congregation and our Faith Home because...



**UU Values Matter...Pledging Secures our Future.**

With Gratitude, Friendship and Faith,

*Bob, Claudia, Janet, Mary Anne, Sam,  
Sherry, Steve & Suzi*

Your UUCS Stewardship Team

**P.S. - STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES COMING YOUR WAY...**

- ◆ **December 5 – Campaign 2022 kickoff lunch**
- ◆ **February 26 – UU Auction** – with proceeds going to an as yet unspecified project
- ◆ **A Legacy program** – providing for the future of this faith community
- ◆ **A special event - TBD**



UUCS will participate in the **2021 Phoenix Pride Parade on Saturday, Nov. 6**. Please join us! The parade route is about **one mile long, running along 3rd Street between Oak Street and Indian School Road in Central Phoenix**. We'll gather to line up **at 8:30 a.m. for a 10:00 start**. Shared transportation or carpooling will be arranged. To participate, contact **Mary Ellen Baker ([mebakercpa@msn.com](mailto:mebakercpa@msn.com))** or **Sharon Steigmann ([sds49@msn.com](mailto:sds49@msn.com))**.



### SOCIAL JUSTICE— CARING IN OUR CITY

Here we are implementing an idea from the Social Justice workshop. On the morning of October 16 this group helped clean the gardens at the new city Domestic Violence Shelter. **The next Surprise Day of Service will be on December 11.**

*Come out and be a part of UUCS caring in our city.*

The **Homeless Youth Connection Angel Tree** is coming on October 31st. Take an Angel with gift suggestion and be an Angel when you buy a gift for a homeless student.

**Tom Reemtsma—Social Justice Coordinator**  
[reemtsma623@msn.com/623-583-5473](mailto:reemtsma623@msn.com)

### Make a Tax-Free Donation to UUCS with a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

If you are older than 70 1/2, have an IRA (traditional, inactive SEP, inactive SIMPLE, or rollover), you can make a tax-free donation to UUCS and other 501(c)(3) charities. Your QCD donation can replace in whole or part your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) or be in excess of it up to \$100,000 annually.

Don't have an IRA, but have an inactive 403(b), inactive 401(k) or another Tax-Sheltered Annuity that you are taking RMDs from? You may be able to roll the gift amount into an IRA after taking your RMD and make the IRA Charitable QCD gift. Questions? For more information, consult your personal tax advisor. Call Bob Walling, a former Certified Financial Planner™ and member of UUCS Stewardship Committee, at (602) 573-5942.

## MONTHLY BOOK REPORT

MaryAnne Balzer - UUCS Librarian

This November, I give thanks for so much. One of those is having been able to reopen our church library. Blessed be, we have our great collection of books available to everyone once again!

This month, as helpful information to the new folks we have and a reminder to the rest of us, here is an excellent past library column, updated for today. (Book reviews will resume next month.) My thanks to past librarians Marylu Rideout and the memory of Jane Eckenberg for the inspiration to update this timeless piece:

**Don't be a library stranger!** With the beginning of a new church year and with new members in our congregation, it's time for a church library refresher course.

In the library you will find many books on UUism—both historical and religious aspects. Also, there are books on philosophy, social issues, science, poetry, biographies and reference books. We do not carry fiction as a rule. Every book is classified and shelved according to the Dewey Decimal system.

Every book has at least three cards, Title, Author and at least one Subject card. These cards are located in file boxes on the small table next to the hall door. Please use the cards as a way to find books you may like to read.

In the front of each book is a pocket with a card in it. To check out your book, please take out the card and using any space you need print your complete name and complete phone number, as well as the full check out date. Then place the card in the small blue floral box on top of the card file boxes. We do not have a return date policy as such other than in fairness to others please just return the book as soon as possible.

Many people like to donate books to the library. If the subject is suitable and there are no markings in the book, it will be considered. If the books are not appropriate, they will be put on the sale cart. Funds are used to offset small supply needs and an occasional new to us book.

I hope you find this information helpful. And I hope it increases your library use and enjoyment.

*Enjoy our longer Arizona evenings  
with a good UU library book!*



## FAMILY MINISTRY - CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS

Lisa Lawrence  
Dir. of Family Ministry



It's been a long time since our church has had any higher grade level classes, but (and I know this sounds entirely unbelievable) our little ones have grown up. To honor this unbelievable turn of events, I immediately set up a youth group for "youth" to feel appreciated and gather and do "youth" things. The group is co-facilitated by Teraresa Hightower and me, but the group has a collective say in what we do. It's quite fun to see them all working and laughing together.

The first couple of meetings have been spent planning activities, both fun and service oriented, and designing T-shirts for us to wear at events. Their first outing will be marching with the congregation in the Pride Parade on November 6th to show support for the LGBTQ+ community. Then, in December, a bonfire is being planned in celebration of the Winter Solstice/1st Day of Winter. We hope to invite an individual knowledgeable of the Wiccan/Pagan faith to do a short presentation for youth to learn about different spiritual practices and beliefs.



Preschool and elementary classes are being presented on multi-platforms this year. We're teaching classes in-person and over Zoom at the same time. It may not sound hard, but it is a bit challenging, and we're all (teachers and families) still trying to get the hang of it. Our Preschool staff has also received approval at the last board meeting to attend "Babysitter Certification" classes which are offered online by the Red Cross.

Friends, I am looking for a weekday volunteer to help me complete a few projects that I have been unable to get to on my twenty hour-a-week schedule. I am still trying to get my Family Lending Library up and running and would love some assistance cataloging and organizing. I believe it could be finished in a week or two with a few days' assistance. The other project I could use some help with is turning the newly designated nursery into an inviting and accommodating

space. We don't have visitors with babies every week, but when they do show up, I'd love for them to feel welcome. If you've got a little time to spare during the week please shoot me a message at [uucslisal@gmail.com](mailto:uucslisal@gmail.com).

To find out more, please visit the Family FB page at: <https://www.facebook.com/uucsurprisefamily>.



For information and sign-ups go to

[uusurpriseaz.org/Adult Programs/Questers/Offerings](https://uusurpriseaz.org/Adult Programs/Questers/Offerings)

November sneaks up on us bringing with it planning for Thanksgiving with family and/or friends, memories of Thanksgivings past, and those cooler temperatures we who live in the NW Valley often call "the reason we live here."

This November also brings with it two one-session Questers adult education offerings on very different topics: "**Financial Security for Women**" with Kathy Young from 6:30-7:30pm on Nov. 11 and "**How I Do what I Do**" with photographer Rich Manalis from 10:00-11:30am on Nov. 15. In the hour with Kathy Young women will get pointers on how to choose a financial advisor and how to ride the waves in stock market volatility. Your questions will be welcome. In "How I Do What I do" with Rich you will be able to sit back, relax, and enjoy some



visual treats, otherwise known as samples of Rich's minimalist photography, like "Cranberry Juice in the Morning". In addition, you may pick up some tips for

your photography endeavors.

## On the Horizon –

**4 Monthly Talks on Arizona Native American Tribes w/ Rick Wambach you will not want to miss – 1<sup>st</sup> Talk – Dec. 14 – 10:00-Noon**

**About the Presenter** - Immediately out of college Rick taught on the Navajo Reservation. That started a lifelong joy for knowing and learning even more about Native



Americans. He sponsored Indian Clubs with the Phoenix Union High School System, helped set up the River of Time Museum in Fountain Hills, and for 20 years was a docent with the Heard Indian Museum in Phoenix. Rick taught five different courses on Arizona Indians for RISE and Grand Learning to classes of 80-200. He looks forward to sharing his enthusiasm

for tribes in our state.

### **"I Believe...": Create Your Own Credo w/ Julie Wambach—6 Sessions from 10:00-Noon in UUCS Multipurpose Room, starting January 5, 2022**

Unlike many religions, UU's don't just confirm a dogma created by church leaders. No, we help one another decide what we individually believe. "I Believe . . .": Create Your Own Credo is based on a UUA program that assumes we are all theologians; this class offers tools for creating your personal theology so you can confidently explain to others what you believe.

**NOTE: BUUK Circle will NOT meet in November. Book for December 12 meeting – "Susan, Linda, Nina and Koki" by Lisa Napoli.**

Your Questers Adult Education Committee – Carol Calkins, Juliet Gustavson, Jeff London, and Julie Wambach

## **We are here to be of Assistance!**

### **LAY PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE**

 The purpose of the Lay Pastoral Care Committee (LPCC) is to cherish and care for all members of our church community by offering support to people in need and being a resource for referrals. We maintain contact with those unable to come to church due to illness or disability. Requests for help come to the LPCC in a variety of ways, i.e. church office, Membership Committee, concerned family members, and self-requested. The Lay Pastoral Care Committee maintains close contact with the minister regarding people in need.

If you would like help, please call **Sharon Beard** (623-826-3365), **Joan Carlson** (623-537-9449), **Barbara Hughes** (801-589-5644), **Darnell Kirksey** (602-434-5606), **Marilyn Schulze** (623-975-7411), or **Liz Thomas** (602-369-3432).

## Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise NEWSLETTER

17540 N. Avenue of the Arts  
Surprise, AZ 85379

Ph: 623-875-2550

Email: [uucsaz2@gmail.com](mailto:uucsaz2@gmail.com)

### 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.

*If you are not receiving church email announcements but would like to, please send your preferred email address and full name to [uucsaz2@gmail.com](mailto:uucsaz2@gmail.com). You can also request a hard copy of this newsletter by calling the church office at 623-875-2550.*

**Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.**  
***In-Person, Facebook Live, YouTube***  
**November Theme: *Holding History***  
**Rev. Samuel Schaal, Transition Minister**  
**Lisa Lawrence, Director of Family Ministry**

November 7

#### **"Life, Death and Immortality"**

*All Souls / Day of the Dead*

What in one's life is immortal? We will honor the lives of church members who died in the last year-plus.

***Please bring a photo or memento of a loved one you have lost, either recently or long ago, for the memory table in the Sanctuary. The Lay Pastoral Care Committee assists.***

November 14

#### **"Creative Advance"**

*New Member Sunday*

As we welcome new members, we consider the creative advance of our future, both individually and as a congregation.

***Come early to sing! Join us on the patio before worship for celebratory singing with our Choir beginning at 10:15 a.m., then processing into the Sanctuary for worship. We'll sing with masks and sing with gusto!***

November 21

#### **"Perceptions and Transitions"**

*Amy St. Peter, Worship Associate*

We are navigating several transitions with opportunities and challenges. Let's explore what these transitions mean for our personal spirituality, our faith community, and how our perceptions shape them all.

November 28

#### **"Faith and Sufficiency"**

In the sacred story of Hanukkah, the ancient Jews got eight days of light from a lamp with only one day of oil. How might we find sufficiency in a time of insufficiency?