

Newsletter

MARCH 2022

Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise

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



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TRANSITIONAL THOUGHTS

by Rev. Samuel Schaal
Transition Minister

Being More

As of this writing we've had the first of three History Wall sessions after worship. We recalled the life of this congregation from the first gathering Sept. 7, 1975, when 29 Sun Cities residents who were connected to the Phoenix UU congregation signed the membership book to create a fellowship closer to home. They rented various halls for worship and fellowship. They brought on a half-time minister, the Rev. Dr. Glenn Bomstadt, in 1981. On June 1, 1982, the fellowship was named the UU Church of the Sun Cities. Continued growth necessitated a full-time minister, and they called Dr. Nathaniel Lauriat, who served 1985 to 1995.

Needing a more permanent meeting place, they purchased a former bank building at the corner of 99th and Union Hills, and had their first service there Feb. 4, 1990. Dr. Lauriat announced his retirement in 1995, and they hired Rev. Oren Peterson as Interim Minister for a year while they formed a search committee to find a candidate for ministry. That person was the Rev. Walt Weider who arrived in 1996. Their building now too small, they found land in nearby Surprise and built the current building with their first service Oct. 3, 1999, renaming themselves the UU Church in Surprise. The new location allowed for being more than a church of retirees, as a few young families made their way here. Mindful of their mission to serve a diverse population, the congregation went through the process to become a Welcoming Congregation to LGBT individuals. The rest of the story will be remembered in the last two sessions Feb. 27 and March 13.

The Rev. Megan Foley has said, "When we believe that we are supposed to be more, even when we aren't sure what the road to it will be like, that's how we show that we are a people of faith." The early generation of the congregation found ways to be more. In our time, we are making the history that future generations will remember. We will be more than we are now to follow the call to our future as people of faith.

In Our Living Tradition,

SAM

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Message from our President



For those who either have not been back to UUCS in person or perhaps have not noticed – our name is back in full letters on our monument in front of the church. The name is the same; however, having shiny new letters on the stone to match the new paint on the Church and the welcoming congregation banner nearby is a remarkable sight when approaching our southern entrance, A huge thank you to all who helped make this happen.

I could spend every Newsletter thanking our members/friends for the volunteer work they do to make this congregation function and thrive. It is astonishing the amount of time and energy members and friends put into our activities. Look around when you attend services – you see greeters, membership ambassadors welcoming new members and visitors, ushers, coffee makers, members fixing snacks, sound booth techs working on live streaming, and worship associates preparing for the service. You also can sign up for classes prepared and taught by members, sign up for a Circle Supper, also coordinated by volunteers. And there is even a Library with a librarian to find wonderful resources.

Behind the scenes we have another group of (member) volunteers, those that help to raise funds to support our congregational activities, those who guide, grow, and protect our investments, and those who propose and create policies and procedures to make our work easier. It is difficult to recognize these volunteers as they do most of their work unseen and we do not always see the results - but without them we would be in trouble.

Then we have the invisible volunteers -our maintenance team- who work when we are not here. They are rarely recognized for what they do; however, we do see the results of their work –new LED lights in the sanctuary; the banner structure in front of the church; shelves in the closets; furniture placement in the offices and monitoring the solar panels. This is the team that works with Lois Bartels to keep our building safe, sound and functioning. The team includes Jim Gaunt, Steve Shanklin, Jeff London, Don and Susan Helms, Bob Walling and Frank Thomas.

A good example is Frank Thomas, who is currently replacing an old leaky fountain in the hall outside Sam's office. Frank is our plumbing expert on call and always prepared. He, like the others, does this work because they have the skills, the tools, talent, and they are committed to this congregation. None of these volunteers are seeking approval or reward; – BUT – when you see them, please let them know you appreciate their support of our community.

And if you are a new friend or member and want to get to know this community, find your spot with one of these volunteer groups and jump in. You will make wonderful friendships, learn about your chosen faith home and be supporting your congregation as well.

Yours in faith, friendship, and sincere appreciation,

Sherry Robinson



Stewardship Campaign 2022

Gather the Spirit ... Harvest the Power

As we approach the end of the first quarter for 2022, as of mid-February we have received 65 pledges that total 71.2% of the annual campaign goal (see box). The average pledge has been \$2,471. This is a strong start at 6 weeks into a new year. I am optimistic that we can reach our goal in the next few weeks. Check the thermometer in the Social Hall for the most up-to-date results. Although testimonials have been completed, Sam will continue to remind you to contribute and pledge on Sundays.

We also raise funds in collection plates on Sundays and receive other donations. As of mid-February, contributions received are: \$500 from a non-member; \$499.76 from Sunday Collections; and \$22 in cash from social activities.

Remember, it's up to each of us, who count on UUCS being here for us, to be as generous as you can in support of this liberal Faith Home. All pledges are welcome no matter what you are able to give.

**STEWARDSHIP ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2022
UPDATE**

UUCS Budget	\$299,361
Annual Campaign Goal	\$225,000
Current Results	\$160,667
Percent of Goal	71.2%
Number of Pledgers	65

There are several ways to give: by far the quickest and easiest is online at <https://uusurpriseaz.org/getinvolved/#donate>. One way to donate is a tax-free donation with a qualified charitable distribution (if you are over 70.5 years of age) – see box.

To pledge go <https://uusurpriseaz.org/getinvolved/#donate> and click on the *Pledge Now* link to see the Pledge Form. Complete the form, then follow directions and submit. There are also Pledge Forms at UUCS; just complete the form and deposit in the Pledge Form's box or basket.

Let's keep the flame burning!
Janet Jeffrey
Co-Chair, Stewardship Committee

SOCIAL SERVICE & JUSTICE

Let's celebrate Women's History Month by posting brief bios of women who have left an enduring impression in your life. Women have nudged civilizations onward for 60,000 years. Here is a bio of a woman whose words and deeds are regularly inspiring my actions. Bring bios on Sundays in March.



Rigoberta Menchu was born in 1959, the year I graduated from high school. By the time she reached the age of 33 she was an internationally celebrated woman winning a Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. She followed her parents in

the work of gaining rights for the Indigenous people of Guatemala. Ms. Menchu organized the first indigenous political party, **Winaq**, and ran for president in both 2007 and 2011. She is of Q'iche' Maya descent. Her mix of Mayan and Catholic teachings sustained her in the threatened work of organizing the women of Guatemala. She said, "It is not possible to conceive a democratic Guatemala, free and independent, without the indigenous identity shaping its character into all aspects of national existence."

Tom Reemtsma
Coordinator



**MUSIC NOTES
CHOIR NEWS**

We are singing again!



The choir is thrilled that live music is returning to Sunday Services! Under the leadership of Music Director Paul Yoder we have resumed rehearsals, masked (only unmasked for pic) and socially distanced. Our rehearsal schedules will be staggered to accommodate retired, working, and student members. Love to sing? Interested in joining our fun group? Contact Paul Yoder (azmystrow@yahoo.com) or Maggi Mahan (magathalee@gmail.com).

MONTHLY BOOK REPORT

MaryAnne Balzer - UUCS Librarian

In honor of our Golden Rule program activities, this month, I am featuring further reviews on three of our fine Golden Rule books. Please check-out and enjoy one of these educational and enlightening books.

"The New Golden Rule", subtitled 'Community and Morality in a Democratic Society', by Dr. of Sociology Amitai Etzioni, number 303.3 ETZ GR. "A leading communitarian thinker, the author contends Americans have

overemphasized individual rights in recent years. In his searching treatise, he seeks to restore equilibrium between personal liberty and the common good, urging the diverse strands of America's social fabric to come together, to commit to a core of shared values that will help renew the family, schools and public institutions. Challenging liberals and conservatives alike, Etzioni cuts through a welter of issues, from bicultural education to curbing alcohol abuse, in this timely contribution to the debate over what constitutes a good society." Review.

"Ethics and the Golden Rule", subtitled 'Do Unto Others', by Harry J. Gensler, number 170 GEN GR. "The golden rule is often dismissed by scholars as a vague proverb that quickly leads to absurdities when one attempts to formulate it in clear terms. In this book, Gensler defends the golden rule and addresses all of the major philosophic objections, pointing out several common misunderstandings and misapplications. He first discusses golden-rule reasoning and how to avoid the main pitfalls. He then relates the golden rule to world religions and history, and to areas like moral education, egoism, evolution, society, racism, business, and medicine. The book ends with a discussion of theoretical issues (like whether all morality reduces to the golden rule)" Review.

"The Golden Rule", by Jeffrey Wattles, number 170.4 WAT GR. "The golden rule is presumed to have a single meaning, shared by virtually all the world's religions. It strikes the average person as intuitively true, though most modern philosophers reject it or recast it in more rational form. Wattles surveys the history of the golden rule and its spectrum of meanings in diverse contexts, ranging from Confucius to Plato to modern theological and philosophical responses and objections to the rule, as well as how some early twentieth-century American leaders tried to use the rule. Wattles draws these diverse interpretation into a synthesis." Review.

Challenge your mind and beliefs with one of these great new books!



FAMILY MINISTRY

Lisa Lawrence

Director, Family Ministry

Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn." —

Lewis Grizzard

Although we've already had some fairly nice weather and warm temperatures this past month, come March,

it should be gorgeous. In Arizona, March and April are the best months to plan outdoor activities before the heat returns. So I did. Several!

Our **White Tanks Cookout/Picnic** is back! Join us outdoors on Sunday, March 20th, from 2:30-6:30 p.m. for some fun, food, and friendship; all are welcome. Bring a main entree for your family to grill and an additional dish to share with the group. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the Social Hall towards the end of February. Park entry fee is \$7 per vehicle and Ramada 4F has been reserved for us. Please feel free to bring along any outdoor games (cough, cough, Cornhole) you'd like and your own chairs as Ramada seating is limited. Hope to see you there! Please contact uucslisal@gmail.com with any questions. Event hosted by Family Ministry.

Then, two weeks later, on the morning of April 9 from 8:30-12:00pm we will be holding our first ever **Eco-Olympics!** This all-age event is one of the environmental-themed activities being planned for the month of April. All are welcome to this fun, outdoors, church-wide competition to encourage environmental education and the 7th principle. Activities will be held on the church grounds and teams will be created to compete in gentle, physical and mental challenges for prizes. Come on out to play and test your knowledge. Free breakfast for competitors! More information to come.

In the classrooms, in-person attendance returned on February 20th, so we are once again offering multi-platform attendance options; in-person or Zoom. Our preschool- first grade children are having great fun in their biology-themed, "World of Wonder" class. They've been learning about the web of life, partnerships, trees, balance, habitats, life cycles and decomposition and how they relate to the interdependent web-of existence. For second grade and up children our monthly Soul Matters theme is "Renewing Faith".

Let us look forward to a healthier Spring filled with fun, outdoor-events! Yes, I'm making big plans. Stay tuned!

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



For information and sign-ups go to
[uucsurpriseaz.org/Adult Programs/Questers/Offerings](https://www.uucsurpriseaz.org/Adult-Programs/Questers/Offerings)

Or visit the Questers Table after worship.

(Continued on Page 5)

The Questers Adult Enrichment program has the goal of offering opportunities for growth in three areas:

- ◆ **Inner Quests** – Opportunities for personal spiritual growth
- ◆ **Interpersonal Quests** – Building the Beloved Community
- ◆ **Outer Quests** - Growing in our understanding of local, national, and world issues

Often an offering will span more than one of these areas, although the Committee may have included it thinking that it was specific to one. That was the case with “I Believe...”: Create Your Own Credo, which Julie Wambach led for six weeks in January and February. Those who signed up were eager to explore what they believe at this time in their lives but uncertain what the experience would be like. Julie, who has taught this class in other churches, expertly and seemingly effortlessly with humor took the group on a journey inward and in community through homework, videos, and large and small-group discussions.

They shared their credos on the last day of class and will have the opportunity to share them with the worshipping community on a Sunday in March 20. Clearly this was an inner quest for all, but it was also an interpersonal quest as the participants shared and listened to each other, learning about each other’s lives and faith journeys, and bonding more deeply with this UUCS community. Thanks to Julie for making that opportunity possible.

FIND YOUR NEXT QUEST BY VISITING THE SUNDAY QUESTERS TABLE OR BY CLICKING THE LINK ON PAGE 4.

- March 7, 14 & 22 – Great Decisions – Continuing discussions on U.S. foreign policy issues
- March 8, 10:00-Noon - The final Arizona Native American Tribes Talk w/ Rick Wambach
- March 8, 6:30-8:30pm – BUUK Circle – “Peril” by Bob Woodruff and Robert Costa
- March 31, 10:00-Noon – A Workshop: Editing Your Mobile Device Photos with Snapseed w/ Rich Manalis
- April 7, 14 & 21, 10:00-11:30 – Living Sustainably w/ Libby Christianson

Watch for the Questers Survey coming your way in March. Your input will inform the committee’s future planning.

Your Questers Committee—Carol Calkins, Juliet Gustavson, Joye Kohl, Jeff London & Julie Wambach

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.



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

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Email: uucsz2@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.

You can request a hard copy of this newsletter by calling the church office at 623-875-2550.

March Worship Theme: *Renewing Faith*



See your *Weekly Announcements* email for worship topics.

Join us on Sunday Mornings—10:30 a.m. In-Person and Livestreamed



Rev. Samuel Schaal, Transition Minister

Lisa Lawrence, Director of Family Ministry

Paul Yoder, Music Director