

Newsletter

November 2022

Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise

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TRANSITIONAL THOUGHTS

by Rev. Samuel Schaal
Transition Minister

LEADING BOLDLY INTO THE FUTURE . . . WITHOUT CHANGING ANYTHING

Scenario One: Last year I was chatting with my 12-year-old grandson and told him that he had an exciting life ahead of him. “You’ll be talking about these days of the pandemic for years to come? You’ll see all the changes that I’ll never live to see!” He looked back at me with a blank face, as if the statement made no sense. I realized from a 12-year-old’s perspective he couldn’t yet grasp what cataclysmic change meant. I intuited that the Covid era would result in generational change. I knew this not from the immediate experience of Covid, but from what I have read of the change in our world over the last century due to the flu epidemic of 1918.

Scenario Two: A cartoon I saw in Facebook shows a ministerial search committee interviewing a ministerial candidate. “We want a leader who will take us boldly into the future, but without changing anything,” says the church leader.

Change is the only constant in life, as evidenced in scenario one. Change is difficult, as evidenced in scenario two. But necessary.

It’s hard to know the long-term effects of something cataclysmic, as in scenario one. Scenario two suggests we must step forward in faith, dealing with the reality of change during a ministerial transition. Granted, the level of change is more radical in one than in two (thank goodness). The bold call of the future requires change. Change is challenging.

This congregation is facing the challenge of ministerial transition, learning to bend to the winds of change and develop a longer-term view, knowing it is laying a foundation for the next generation. We are all, in some way, little Johnny Appleseeds, planting seeds that will flourish in the future. Whether or not we are all present to witness this flourishing, we do so to answer to the mission of our faith to change lives and heal our world.

That’s cataclysmic enough for me. And darned important work. Thanks to all who are helping do it, to move beyond our comfort zones, to do the work that we need to do.

In Our Living Tradition,

SAM

Inside This Issue

Transitional Thoughts	1
President’s Message	2
Membership	2
Circle Suppers	2
Book Report	3
Music Notes	3
Stewardship	3
Dealing with Reality	4
Family Ministry	4
Questers	4
Ministerial Search	5
Categorical Thinking	5
UUCS Thanksgiving	5
Trunk-Or-Treat Pics	5
November Worship	6

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Fall is here; the days are still warm, but the evenings are perfect. It is difficult to stay inside and so easy to be out. I love this time of year in Arizona.

We have a full and interesting year ahead of us. One that requires from us, both time and commitment, and involves members, friends, and staff alike. We are full-steam ahead in the process of searching for our settled minister. We have completed the survey and are now into Focus Groups, and Cottage Meetings. Please take advantage of these opportunities to share your thoughts and feelings on what you would like in a new minister. Our Ministerial Search Committee is listening – let them hear you.

We have begun to attract visitors who are becoming members and who bring experience, interest, and enthusiasm to our community. We are reaching into the wider community to join the Interfaith Council, which will add diversity to our faith community. We are looking for ways to bring our community closer through shared activities like the Ice Cream Social, the Coffee House, and the November BBQ. Lois Bartels and Liz Thomas, with Rev. Sam's guidance, are creating a plan for building covenant groups. And at the same time the Board is building an organization that has structure and flexibility which will serve our congregation as we move forward. We must also maintain that welcoming community spirit and continue to build inclusivity and widen our circle of community.

This remains a stressful time in our lives – with mid-term elections, the stock market, the conflict in Ukraine, the threat of rising prices, and the holidays. For me it is also the idea that we are not going to meet our Pledge goal. I asked you to take a leap of faith with me. Unfortunately, we needed more than faith; we needed a little luck and circumstances were not in our favor. We will be okay, if we can fill the pledges made. My wish for 2023 is to make this “**Our Year of Giving Thanks**” for what we do have.

We are changing and growing as we move forward in this transition process. As we identify what we want in a minister, we are also identifying what we want for us, who we are now and who we may wish to become. The search provides an opportunity for sharing new ideas, seeing ourselves differently, and creating new paths to the future. This is our journey. Let us continue to do it well.

In faith, friendship, and gratitude,

Sherry Robinson



MEMBERSHIP

We are happy to announce that Andrea Schmidlin has signed the membership book! You will learn more about Andrea soon. In the meantime please introduce yourself to her and welcome her to our congregation.

Be sure to attend New Member Sunday November 13 when new members will be welcomed and introduced to the congregation.

We would like to invite you to become a member. If you are considering Membership at UUCS please contact Rev Sam Schaal or any member of the Membership Com-

mittee: Carol Calkins, Judy Reynolds, Ray Mahoney, Lee and Mary Jane Askern or Libby Christianson.

CIRCLE SUPPERS

December 2, 3 & 4



Join us for one of these intimate get togethers! There were three circle suppers in October. A big thank you to the hosts: Carol and Steve Calkins, Sherry Robinson and Steve Shanklin, and Susie Cole. If you would like to participate in one of the December potluck dinners, look for the sign-up sheet in the social hall. Address any questions to Susie Cole 406.600.8857 or Nancy Flann 623.670.4570.

MONTHLY BOOK REPORT

MaryAnne Balzer - UUCS Librarian



The beginning of the holiday season is a good time to remember our Golden Rule concept of Kindness toward one another. From there grows our practice of opening our hearts and minds toward each other. In that vein, we hope you will enjoy the opportunities offered by your church library for books on personal growth and the spiritual expansion of Kindness. Next month I will introduce our four newest Golden Rule books on Kindness.

This month, to make your reading selection easier, I am providing a refresher on how our library works; it should help both our new folks as well as library veterans, as a reminder.

Let's start at the beginning: How are books arranged in the UU library? Our library, like many others, continues to use the Dewey Decimal System to organize books. This system still works well with the latest update in 2011.

Useful to know: The Dewey system uses a three numeral code to describe a book's location based on subject, with an extension past a decimal to specifically mark it for subject. This is followed, below the number, by the first three letters of the author's (or editor's) last name.

In addition to the Dewey number, our library also helps you locate book subjects by having the subject headings posted on the shelves. We also maintain a Subject Catalogue box, in the library, you may browse. This box is located next to the inside door on the book check out/return table.

In the front of each book you will find a pocket with a card in it. To check out a book, take out the card; print your full name and full telephone number on the card. Take as many lines of space as you need. Then place the card in the front of the small blue-flowered box on the table. That's it!

We do not post a certain return date for your books; but in fairness to others please return the book as soon as you are done with it.

People do 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. Any money made goes to the purchase of occasionally needed book processing and office supplies.

I hope you find this information helpful. I am always available to assist you with your reading needs and questions. Phone/Texting is preferred at: 303-589-5729. Email for longer inquiries is always welcome at: balzerfreespirit@gmail.com.

Don't be a library stranger. Enjoy a great day shared with a terrific UU library book!



MUSIC NOTES



Paul Yoder—Music Director

Now that we've started singing hymns again it really feels like a church. Coming to the service, as we all do, from homes that reflect our individuality, dressed in ways that again reflect our uniqueness, we enter the worship space and put aside some of that individuality as we unite to become the worshipping UU Surprise Church, joining with each other in liturgical actions—standing and sitting, reciting our Covenant or a responsive reading with a leader, and finally, even singing with each other, an activity that, except for *Happy Birthday*, most of us rarely do in public.

The songs we sing during the service are an expression of the things that bind us together in the first place, caring for others, a thirst for freedom, willingness to sacrifice and also taking joy in achievements. When we all join our voices in a hymn, the sound that rises up out of this church is the very voice of our community. May it always be firm and never timid!



STEWARDSHIP...Raising Funds

The Stewardship Committee focuses on fundraising to support this congregation and maintain our faith home. You have recently received a statement reminding you to fulfill your pledge. For those who have not pledged, please keep the donations coming as we are short of the goal set for 2022. If you send a donation annually, please consider doing it sooner than later.

(Continued on p4)



We held an **Ice Cream Social** in early September and raised over \$550; this will be **repeated on November 13th**. The **Coffee House** took place on October 29th, and a **BBQ** will be held on **November 19th**. Tickets can be purchased after Sunday Service and online at uusurpriseaz.org/Giving. Please read the weekly Thursday email announcements for details, including type of event, and how to support the event by both volunteering and attending.

DEALING WITH REALITY— ABORTION RIGHTS



ABORTION AND YOUR VOTE

We hope you have seen the headlines, but just in case you may have missed them - Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey have introduced a bill that would ban abortion nationwide, **starting** at 15 weeks of pregnancy. First, we're calling it what it is: **A NATIONAL ABORTION BAN**. If it were to pass, it would override protection for abortions in states where the legislature has stepped up to protect reproductive rights, and it will support states like Arizona that have already passed abortion bans.

This bill will not go anywhere in the current Congress; however, we know that could change soon. The introduction of this bill shows us politicians are not done trying to control our bodies and our futures. They are going to take every ounce of power we allow them. So we're fighting back. Your careful and thoughtful vote in the upcoming election will help us to fight back. Thank you for supporting this fight.

(Adapted from a Planned Parenthood message)



FAMILY MINISTRY

Lisa Lawrence—Director



The focus of this year's children's religious education program is to explore life's many mysteries with an emphasis on love and our UU sources. After spending the past week at Yellowstone National Park, I find myself also contemplating some of life's mysteries, from the simplicities and complexities of the natural world to why fate allowed us to see two grizzlies and a gray wolf but not a moose?

My week exploring allowed me to share my love of nature with my children and taught me facts about wildlife and geologic features that I hadn't previously known. My experience reaffirmed the values and sentiments that I try to weave into my classroom lessons, such as maintaining a sense of mystery and awe no matter your age and being a good steward to our planet.

Trunk or Treat 2022 happened on October 23 and was a huge success...a fun evening for children and adults alike. And it turned out to be a great outreach event, letting people know we are here and that we know how to have fun; as can be attested by all the visitors we had from the community! We had a total of 20 cars decked out in Halloween splendor with all kinds of creepy characters handing out candy. It was wonderful to see so many children having fun! See some Trunk-Or-Treat pictures on p. 5.



November is the perfect time for expressions of thanks. And the Questers Committee has much to be thankful for in 2022. To start off with, we were able to hold our first in-person offerings after starting in Covid when everything needed to be on Zoom. The option for in-person made it possible to offer experiences that would not be successful or possible on Zoom, such as the series on Arizona Native American Tribes and "I Believe....: Create your Own Credo", which leads us to thanksgiving for those in our congregation who have led/facilitated offerings in 2022: Libby Christianson, Rich

Manalis, Susie Cole and Glen Grant, Rick Wambach, Rev. Sam, Maggi Mahan, Yvonne Bentley, Michael Piper, Judy Reynolds, Julie Wambach, Jessica Rose, and Joye Kohl. With the exception of a couple of courses, our leadership was homegrown...a wonderful gift from our diversely talented congregation. A big thank you to everyone who has ever led and/or participated in Questers offerings so far.

In this season of thanksgiving Questers offers you the opportunity to give thanks for your life by participating in a workshop that equips you to write your own story, most likely not for publication, but for yourself and those you love. On Nov. 19 from 10:00-2:00pm you can join Deborah Hansen, who will lead **“Writing Your Story”** in the UUCS Social Hall. Deborah has a tried and true method that works with all levels of writing. Full details are on this link - [Questers Offerings | uucsaz.org](https://uucsaz.org).

Ministerial Search 

**SURVEY RESULTS, CALENDAR, EVENTS,
WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND
MORE...EVERYTHING IS THERE FOR YOU ON
THE UUCS WEBSITE—
uusurpriseaz.org.**

**A PEEK AT
UUCS TRUNK-OR-TREAT 2022**



CATEGORICAL THINKING

We all do it. Why does it matter?
How can we get beyond it?

[Click Here To Find Out.](#)



Thanksgiving dinner is happening again at UUCS this year, and you are invited.

Terri and Glen Grant have once more volunteered to coordinate our Thanksgiving Feast at UUCS. Watch for the details in the Weekly Announcements emails. This is a collaborative effort with volunteers needed for cooking, setting up, and cleaning up. It was a terrific success last year. So if you are interested, save the date and stay tuned.

Thank you Terri and Glen!

Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise NEWSLETTER

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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.

November Worship Theme: *The Path of Change*



See *Weekly Announcements* emails for weekly 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

