

# 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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**December 2018**

40th Anniversary 1975 - 2015

## From The Minister's Desk

**O**n November 6, “[v]oters in Colorado[,] Missouri and Michigan overwhelmingly approved ballot measures calling for nonpartisan redistricting. These measures seek to end the practice of gerrymandering or at least limit it.” [“Voters In 3 States Pass Non-Partisan Redistricting Measures”, National Public Radio, Morning Edition, 11/7/2018, [https://www.npr.org/2018/11/07/665112546/voters-pass-non-partisan-redistricting-measures.](https://www.npr.org/2018/11/07/665112546/voters-pass-non-partisan-redistricting-measures)]



Gerrymandering is, of course, the practice of “manipulating the boundaries of (an electoral constituency) so as to favor one party or class.” Steve Inskeep interviewed “Dave Daley, who is a senior fellow at FairVote, which advocates for nonpartisan redistricting. Daley said, “[O]n the eve of a 2020 Census in which this process is likely to become even more sophisticated and more surgical, creating districts that are even more extreme, it is wonderful to see that there is one thing that still unites voters in red states, blue states and purple states, and that is they all hate gerrymandering.” [Ibid.]

When I heard the interview, it occurred to me that, to the extent they care about doing the right thing, parties could only justify creating these wildly irregular voting districts that favor themselves on the ground that they will do such a better job of governing than the other party would. I thought again about the age-old ethical conundrum that is constantly with us in everything we do: “Do ends justify means?” I wrestled with that question in

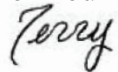
an ethics class and afterward, without ever feeling I had arrived at a satisfactory answer. Some form of division, of line drawing, is required in our way of voting. But on its face, doesn't it feel wrong to manipulate districts so extremely to disadvantage the other side? Wouldn't we all be better served if we focused on a fair, or at least non-partisan process in creating voting districts? Encouragingly, at least three states have recently said we would.

Maybe I should not feel too bad about my confusion on whether ends justify means; many philosophers have also wrestled with that question. And they do not agree on an answer. Agreeing with the statement that “ends justify means” puts one in the consequentialist camp, whereby the consequences of an action determine whether it is right or wrong. A deontological approach emphasizes that ethical behavior depends on following moral rules or duties, not outcomes. For instance, we must not engage in torture because of the pain it inflicts on another human being. But, in the classic example, what if torturing a terrorist might yield information to prevent the loss of innocent lives?

I do not have these answers. All I think I know is that consequentialism seems the more dangerous of those two approaches. Many of the worst horrors we have inflicted on each other have been justified somewhere by someone on the ground that the ends justified doing “what we had to do” to achieve them. In my own ordinary, everyday life, doing something now that feels wrong because it will bring about what I think is a better result later almost never feels right, even in the end. Extreme cases aside, I don't think ends justify means. Frankly, I wish more people would doubt that they know what the

best outcome would be and so would refuse to take intermediate steps that strike many of us as wrong. If we do not focus on the rightness of the intermediate steps to a goal, I think we may lose the ethical battle anyway. That is because of the damage we do in the process to our own characters. That ethical approach is called virtue ethics, or aretology. One of the aspects of Unitarian Universalism I value is that I believe, for the most part, we focus on process, on what seems right to do now. Like not deliberately drawing voting districts just to favor the result we would prefer, tempting as that is. It is not that we UUs do not have goals, preferred outcomes. But we pay attention to the means we use in pursuing our goals. If the means to an end are wrong, we tend to reject them on the basis that they cannot justify the end or the injury to our characters. I'll see you in church.

Yours in our faith,



## President's Letter to Congregation

*Pat Lindgren, President*

*Pat Lindgren was sick with a bad cold and bronchitis.  
This is a rerun of a previous column.*

### Reflections May 29, 2011

Last month (*April 2011*) when it was Walt's (*Wieder*) Sunday to do the service, for the reading he read the parable of the Good Samaritan. That is one



of my favorite stories from the bible. A man is robbed, beaten and left on the side of the road. All the good citizens pass by and ignore him. Then a Samaritan comes to his aid, takes him to safety, pays for his care: all at great expense and inconvenience to himself.

The problem with the story today is that the true meaning is lost in the non-translation of the most important word, the word Samaritan. If you asked any hundred Americans to take a word association test and gave them the word Samaritan, more than ninety of them would come back with the word good. But to the largely Jewish audience listening to Jesus when he told the story, a Samaritan was anything but good. They were sacrilegious and of a mixed race, they were the scum of the earth.

So how do we translate Samaritan to really understand the story? The answer changes with time and place.

- 1939 in Germany, it would be translated as Jew
- 1942 in California, it would translate as Japanese
- 1950 in Washington, DC, it would translate as Communist
- 1957 in Little Rock, Arkansas, it would be translated as Negro
- 1968 in Southeast Asia, it would be Viet Cong
- 1979 in US Embassies, which would translate as Iranian
- 2002 in New York, it would translate as Muslim
- 2010 in Arizona it would translate as illegal Mexican immigrants – as Patty, Marylou and their friends do so well in the Man from Magdalena
- For me personally today, I need to translate Samaritan as the FLDS, the Fundamentalist Mormons, in Colorado City.

The next time you read or hear the story of the Good Samaritan, I want you to look into your heart and find that group of people who maybe by race, by religion, by political affiliation you most disagree with, most dislike, most fear and then substitute that name for the word Samaritan. Let's not continue to let the true meaning of the parable be lost in non-translation.

## 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](mailto:uucsaz2@gmail.com)

Debby Bullins, Music Director,

[uucsmusic@gmail.com](mailto:uucsmusic@gmail.com)

Lisa Lawrence, RE Director,

[uucslisal@gmail.com](mailto:uucslisal@gmail.com)

Charlie Mannino, Newsletter Editor,

[uucsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:uucsnewsletter@gmail.com)

also add Cathy Mannino, Webmaster

[www.uusurpriseaz.org](http://www.uusurpriseaz.org)

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**Please have information for the Newsletter submitted by Noon on the 15th of each month to the Editor, Charlie Mannino at [uucsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:uucsnewsletter@gmail.com)**

## A Season of Love!

Debby Bullins, Music Director



In this season of love, joy and miracles, peace feels ever more elusive. Each day, as we hear of another natural disaster, mass shooting, or racially motivated atrocity, our hearts break a little more, and we question everything we do and believe in. How can we steady our faith and resolve, hold onto hope in the face of adversity and uncertainty? This year, let's embrace each day with kindness, comfort and compassion, letting our seven principles guide us. If we stand together, love will prevail.

This holiday season, our celebration will begin on Sunday, December 9 at 10:00 am, when pianist, Kent Trostel, will provide Special Music. Come early, find a comfy seat and relax as he shares his gifts with you. At 10:30 am., the choir will continue the festivities with their Lessons and Carols service with a gospel feel. Let the music fill you with hope for the future as the choir shares their gift of love to you and our larger community.

## Shared Christmas Dinner December 25, 2018



Berta and George Czeck will organize the Shared Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day, Tuesday, December 25th, beginning with the Social Hour at 2:00 p.m. and the Dinner at 3:00 p.m. They encourage members and friends to come and bring guests to this church community event. Bring your choice from the following kinds of potluck dishes: main dishes, appetizers, vegetable or other side dishes, breads, sauces, salads, desserts, or your special favorite dish.

Sign up in the Social Hall, began on Sunday, November 25th.

## The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

Let's get right to our book reviews this month.

**"White Fragility,"** by Robin DiAngelo, number 305.8DIA. The Amazon full review is a powerful statement about this important book: "In this 'vital, necessary, and beautiful book' (Michael Eric Dyson), antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and 'allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to 'bad people' (Claudia Rankine). Referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. In this in-depth exploration, DiAngelo examines how it develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what we can do to engage more constructively."

**"In Later Years,"** Subtitled: *Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging*, by Bruce Marshall, number 305.2. "Drawing on scores of personal interviews, this straightforward yet introspective volume of real-life accounts provides a felt sense of the challenges and blessings of aging. Unlike many books on the topic, *In Later Years* focuses particularly on older seniors--those in their late seventies, eighties, and nineties. Interviewees thoughtfully share their joys, regrets, accomplishments, and things left unfinished, while also considering the ways they cope with diminishing physical and mental abilities. Weaving these personal reflections and accounts together, Marshall explores questions of meaning and spirituality that ultimately reveal larger themes and hold up the opportunities for discovery, connection, and renewal available to us in advanced age. It also serves as an invaluable resource for family members and caregivers, suggesting ways to understand and help with the issues that attend growing old. Detailed appendices provide tips and a simple curriculum for gathering and facilitating group discussions." From the five-star Amazon review. Your Librarian is resting comfortably at home following a recent medical procedure. I promise more great reviews of our new books next month. *Have a beautiful fall Arizona month with a new UU read!*

## RE Report

Lisa Lawrence, DRE

Be sure to join us in service on Sunday, December 16th for this year's holiday play, "The Spirit of the Christmas Tree". Children's RE, the music department's seasonal "Family Choir", and church members of all ages, will present to us the Christmas Story. This play, by Joyce Poley, encourages us to view a traditional story from a UU perspective and reminds us that there is more than one way to interpret the tale of Jesus' birth.



Children will rehearse for the play on Sunday's during RE class from November 18th- December 12th. There will be a dress rehearsal on December 15th from 12:30-2:30 for all members of the cast followed by a Cookie Exchange Party. The rules for the Cookie Exchange are as follows:

### Cookie Exchange Rules:

1. All cookies/bars/brownies must be homemade!
2. Notify me what you are planning to bake so that there aren't any duplicates.
3. Bring 1 dozen to share and 2 dozen to exchange.
4. Email me your recipes so I can print them to hand out at the party.
5. Bring an extra container to take home the goodies!
6. Bring one non-dessert appetizer to share at the party.
7. Bring any holiday themed crafts and games you may have to entertain the kiddos.

As for the rest of the month, two special themed classes will be held. On December 23rd the class will be "Winter Celebrations" and on the 30th "Out with the Old and in with the New".

I'm also excited to announce that K-2nd Grade O.W.L is coming in January. \*There must be at least 5 participants registered to run the workshop.

"Our Whole Lives" is a series of sexuality education curricula for: grades K-2, grades 5-6, grades 7-9, grades 10-12, young adults (ages 18-35), and adults. For the school age workshops, parents teach at home and concepts are reviewed in class.

"Our Whole Lives" helps participants 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.

We will begin by holding a mandatory Parent Meeting at the church: Monday, January 7th from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Snacks and childcare will be provided. R.S.V.P. to [uucslisal@gmail.com](mailto:uucslisal@gmail.com)

## BUUK Circle

Julie Wambach

BUUK Circle meets SECOND Tuesday evening 6:30-8:30pm in the Choir Room. Please join us whether you've finished the book or haven't yet started it. For more information, contact Julie Wambach [azwambach@icloud.com](mailto:azwambach@icloud.com).

December 11, 2018, 6:30-8:30 pm, Choir Room: **"The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander Newfoundland,"** by Jim DeFede.

"When 38 jetliners bound for the United States were forced to land at Gander International Airport in Canada by the closing of U.S. airspace on September 11, the population of this small town on Newfoundland Island swelled from 10,300 to nearly 17,000. The citizens of Gander met the stranded passengers with an overwhelming display of friendship and goodwill." This nonfiction narrative inspired the Broadway musical "Come from Away."

January 8, 2019, 6:30-8:30, Choir Room: **"White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism"** By Robin DiAngelo.

Anti-racist educator Robin DiAngelo describes the reactions of white people when their views of race are challenged. She also explains how these behaviors shut down cross-racial discussion and how it contributes to racial inequality. This is an opportunity for all of us to gain insight into ourselves as well-meaning people who might find new ways to function.



Visit our web site for current information

[www.uusurpriseaz.org](http://www.uusurpriseaz.org)

# Unitarian Universalist Church of Surprise

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME



## January Circle Supper

It is time to plan for our next round of Circle Suppers. Mark your calendars for the weekend of January 25, 26, and 27. Look for the sign-up sheet in the social hall or contact Nancy Flann at [nancyflann@hotmail.com](mailto:nancyflann@hotmail.com) 623-583-4636 or Susie Cole at [scole100@msn.com](mailto:scole100@msn.com) 406-600-8857. We had a nice mix of long-time and new members and friends at our November dinners. These casual potluck suppers in member's homes are a congenial way of getting to know each other better. Whether you prepare it yourself or get it from the deli or bakery is up to you. Once we have people signed up, we will assign people to days and hosts. We look forward to another round of fun gatherings.



### *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

### **We Are Here To Be Of Assistance!**

*Lay Pastoral Care Committee*

If you, your family or another member of our congregation are experiencing illness, hardship, isolation or are in need of support, please contact Lenore Gaudin (623-933-0186) or the church office (623-875-2550) or speak with any of the committee members on Sunday at church. We wear a second name tag that says *Lay Pastoral Care*.

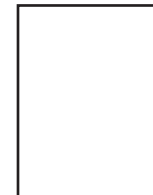
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First Class Mail

## 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 [uucsaz2@gmail.com](mailto:uucsaz2@gmail.com).*

## Sermon Titles For December 2018

*The Theme for his month is "Peace"*

**12/2 – Rev. Terry Sims ..... Hanukkah: A Victory for Peace**

Hanukkah marks the culmination of a miraculous military victory. And so it may seem an odd introduction to our theme this month of peace. But Hanukkah also commemorates a seemingly much smaller miracle of one day's worth of lamp oil lasting for eight days. Maybe in that smaller miracle lies a spiritual victory for peace.

**12/9 – UUCS Choir ..... Holiday Lessons and Carols**

Our choir will help all of us prepare our spirits to receive the familiar Christmas story by telling it in a new way, singing anthems from the gospel tradition.

**12/16 – UUCS Children, Adults, and Choir ..... Spirit of the Christmas Tree**

The children in our religious education program, with some help from choir members and other adults, will present this delightful, touching holiday pageant by Joyce Poley.

**12/23 – Rev. Terry Sims ..... With Peace and Justice for All**

I look at the various winter religious holidays: Hanukkah for Jews; Christmas for Christians; Winter Solstice for pagans; Kwanzaa for African-Americans. Each one reflects the history and culture of a particular group. But what I long for is a message of peace that all people can hear.

**12/30 – Rev. Dr. Cathy Corbin Mannino ..... Do You Hear What I Hear?**

Thich Nhat Hanh says "peace will only become a reality when world leaders come to negotiations with the ability to hear the suffering at the root of all conflicts. Without deep listening and gentle loving speech, it is very difficult to move towards peace."