

# 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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January 2020

## From The Minister's Desk

The week of December 8, I listened to the mostly rancorous speeches by members during the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees' hearings on impeaching Donald Trump. I wondered for the umpteenth time how people looking at the same facts can form such different conclusions. I



think it has less to do with particular facts than with wildly divergent worldviews. Ken Funk offers this definition of worldview: "A worldview is the set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of Reality that ground and influence all one's perceiving, thinking, knowing, and doing."

The title of Emma Green's November 2, 2019 article for The Atlantic puts the matter starkly: "Americans Hate One Another. Impeachment Isn't Helping." [<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/11/impeachment-democrats-republicans-polarization/601264/>.] Hate is a strong term and emotion, but these days I do feel a lot of hostility toward people who do not see the world and current events as I see them. It is plainly more than simple disagreement; I recognize emotional heat when I feel it. Compassion is my goal. But first I must figure out what to do with my hostility, my anger, maybe my hate.

Green writes: "According to a growing body of political-science research, Americans largely no longer feel a shared sense of national identity. . . . America's great self-sorting [into respective political camps] is partly responsible for the two divergent narratives that have emerged on

impeachment. Democrats can't believe Republicans are willing to give President Donald Trump a pass for basically anything, including asking a foreign leader to investigate the family of one of his political opponents. Republicans, on the other hand, see the latest phase of the impeachment inquiry as a deceitful, partisan ploy from Democrats desperate to get Trump out of office. These are not just two ways of interpreting the same set of facts, with a gentleman's agreement to disagree, they're totally separate understandings of reality based on the assumption of the other side's bad faith."

"According to research from two scholars at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Marc Hetherington and Jonathan Weiler, Americans' assumptions about their political opponents' bad faith is rooted in something deeper than partisan affiliation. People on opposite sides of the political spectrum actually have non-overlapping worldviews, which makes it hard for them to see anything legitimate in their political opponents' views. . . . Americans with a more conservative, or "fixed," orientation value obedience in their children and strength in their leaders. They often fear the world around them, and prize stability and tradition over experimentation and change. By comparison, Americans with a more liberal, or "fluid," worldview strive to raise independent, curious children and see empathy and tolerance as the most noble qualities a leader can embody. They believe in questioning authority and abhor performative shows of toughness.

Listening to the hearings, I found myself trying to find something to question in Democrats' speeches that I agreed with, something to agree with in Republicans' positions I oppose. I felt physical relief when Rep. Sensenbrenner, a Republican from

Wisconsin, said he admired how House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler had handled the hearings in that Committee. But that feeling of relief died as Rep. Sensenbrenner's remarks continued.

I do not know how our country can come back together. But I am certain the answer does not lie, cannot lie, in more anger, more hostility, more hate in my own heart . . . or anyone else's. The only thing I can think of to do is to keep trying more empathy, more decency, more adjustment in my own worldview to incorporate others'. I'll see you in church, where you can help me in that effort.

Yours in our faith,

## BUUK Circle

Sherry Robinson

The BUUK Circle (UU Book Club) gathers in the Choir Room from 6:30 -8:30 pm on the SECOND Tuesday of each month from September through May. We have selected our books for discussion in January and February. These books are listed below. Please join us - whether you have finished the book or haven't yet started it.

January 14, 2020 - **AMERICANAH**: A novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The story of two Nigerians making their way in the U.S. and the UK, raising universal questions of race and belonging, the overseas experience for the African diaspora and the search for identity and a home.

February 11, 2020 - **An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States**: (Revising American History - Book 3) Roxanne Dunbar Otiz

The UUA has chosen this book as their book for the year. This is the first history of the United States as told from the perspective of the indigenous peoples.

Dunbar-Ortiz skillfully challenges the founding myth of the United States and shows how policy against the indigenous peoples was colonialist and designed to seize territories from the original inhabitants, displacing them or eliminating them. Spanning more than 400 years, this story radically reframes US history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.

For more information on the BUUK Circle, contact Sherry Robinson at [sarrobinson@msn.com](mailto:sarrobinson@msn.com) or 360-908-2951(text)

## Great Decisions 2020: U.S. Foreign Policy Discussion Series

Bonnie Saunders

Again in 2020, Bonnie Saunders will facilitate an adult education course on U.S. Foreign Policy, beginning in February at the church. In January, sign up in the Social Hall -- e-mail Bonnie if you can't get to church to sign up and buy the book. The briefing book, available in January from Bonnie for \$20, provides the basis for our lively and always-civil discussions.

Schedule of discussions -- note that because of other meetings at the church, some of our discussions are on Monday and some are on Tuesday. All will meet at 7:00 p.m. on the following days.

1. Climate Change and the Global Order..... M:2/3
2. India and Pakistan ..... M:2/10
3. Red Sea Security..... M:2/17
4. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking ..... T:2/25
5. U.S. Relations with the Northern Triangle..... M:3/2
6. China's Road into Latin America..... M:3/9
7. The Philippines and the U.S..... M:3/16
8. Artificial Intelligence and Data ..... T:3/24

## January Circle Supper

Circle Suppers will be held the weekend of January 17-18-19, 2020, Friday-Saturday-Sunday. Suppers are a delightful way to meet other UU-Surprise members and friends. While hosts are needed, you do not need to ever host to participate. Sign up in the church social hall or call Susie or Claudia to participate in January. Questions? Contact Susie Cole (406-600-8857) or Claudia Yeager-Smith (817-800-7832).

All are welcome, delicious food, wonderful conversation. Please join us!



## The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

Welcome to the New Year! I hope everyone's holidays were joyful and set your stage for a great 2020! This month we feature our second installment of new books to the UU Library. Come on in and browse and check out your first new read of the year. The new books continue to be featured on the Library cart for easy locating.

**"For Praying Out Loud,"** subtitled 'Inter-faith Prayers for Public Occasions', by L Annie Foerster, number 291.3FOE. "This book is a collection of prayers and advice on writing prayers that welcome everyone and create a holy space for events.

The author presents a helpful volume for people participating in worship and for those who want to be able to write meaningful public prayers of their own. The first sections focus on addressing the holy, creating sacred space, along with suggestions on how to craft prayers. The final section provides nearly 80 prayers for use," from inSpirit review.

**"Road Map for Revolutionaries,"** subtitled 'Resistance, Activism and Advocacy for All', by Elisa Page, number 322.42PAG. "Are you ready to take action and make your voice heard, but don't know how to go about it? This hands-on, hit-the-ground-running guide delivers lessons on practical tactics for navigating and protecting one's personal democracy in a gridlocked, heavily surveilled, and politically volatile country. If you want to start making a difference but don't know what to do next, this book provides the resources needed to help you feel safer, more empowered, invested in, and intrinsic to the American experiment," inSpirit review.

**"Did I say that Out Loud?"** Subtitled 'Musings from a Questioning Soul', by Meg Barnhouse, number 248.4BAR. This is a book of wit, wisdom and hope from a widely popular writer. "It is another wonderful collection of nearly 40 essays filled with humor, sharp wit, optimism and wisdom. Combining personal experience with the professional insights of a minister and therapist, the author beckons us to let go of regrets and worries about the future and, instead, surrender to life: 'It doesn't look very cool, but sometimes sitting down is the only clear thing to do,'" from inSpirit review.

*Have a great winter evening shared with a new UU Book!*

## Musings from the Loft!

Debby Bullins, Music Director

It is a new year, The New Year, 2020, which can be a time for reflection or a time to embrace a new experience. I choose to embrace a new experience



since I'm not very good at the whole New Year's Resolution thing which involves thinking of all the things in the past that I could have done better.

I would like to offer each of you an opportunity to join a community of music. Singing can bring harmony to your life.

It can be a spiritual practice as deep and uplifting as prayer or meditation. It can heal and soothe. When you let something so intimate, a sound that starts inside you, go out to other people who match and blend their voices with yours, that experience connects you person-to-person.

Experience this connection on Sunday mornings by giving the UUCS choir a try. We rehearse Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. and one Thursday a month. Take the first step by joining us January 2 for our first rehearsal of the New Year at 1:30 p.m. or January 5 for service. Speak to any of the choir members or myself to find out more details. We look forward to singing with you.

## Angel Tree Success

Tom Reemtsma

In December these wonderful, beautifully wrapped gifts were given to Homeless Youth



students for the holidays. More than fifty Angel Tree tags were chosen and fulfilled by members of the UU Surprise congregation. This was a great celebration of the Joy of Christmas. Thanks Angels for the joy felt by all members when seeing your kindness.

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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)**

## Tax Free Donations to UU from IRA. 403(b), or 401(k)

Bob Walling

This is one time it pays to be old (over 70 ½). Want to make a tax free donation to UUC and other 501(c)3 charities? You can through an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) as long as you are older than 70 ½. Your 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 a 403(b), 401(k) or other Tax Sheltered Annuity that you are taking RMDs from? You may be able to roll the gift amount into an IRA and make the Charitable QCD gift. Confused or have questions, call or talk to Bob Walling at 623.573.5942 (Bob is a former Certified Financial Planner™ and makes all of his UUC and other charitable gifts through this strategy.)

## We Are Here To Be Of Assistance!

Lay Pastoral Care Committee

Are you unable to come to church but would like a visit from the minister or a member of the Lay Pastoral Care Committee in your home? Do you know someone else who is in that situation? If so, please let us know by contacting Joan Carlson, [jomc127@gmail.com](mailto:jomc127@gmail.com), Darnell Kirksey, [dkirk38338@aol.com](mailto:dkirk38338@aol.com), Sharon Beard, [sabeardaz@gmail.com](mailto:sabeardaz@gmail.com), or Rev. Terry Sims, [terrysimsuu@gmail.com](mailto:terrysimsuu@gmail.com).

Thank you.

Your Lay Pastoral Care Committee

### UU Endowment Fund

Naming the Endowment Fund of the Church as a beneficiary of your estate or a specific asset, such as an IRA or life insurance plan, provides a simple way to begin your legacy now by providing for our church work in the future. If your circumstances change, you can alter your plans at any time.

For further information call:  
Bob Walling at 602-750-3293.

## RE Report

Lisa Lawrence, DRE

Happy New Years and welcome to the roaring 20's! May it be a decade filled with jazz, flappers Art Deco and the Charleston. Before I share with



you what's scheduled for RE this month, I'd like to first address old business.

Thanks must go out to the entire cast of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" for a job well done. From the Whoville Community Singers to the Jingtangler Quintet and cast, this has been one of the most

enjoyable performances we've had to date!

December saw the soft opening of our UU summer Camp fundraising campaign. Throughout the month of December I have been selling UU themed charms, or as I am currently calling them, chornaments. The charms are handmade and can be used on a key chain, hung in your car, used as a necklace, or even hung on a tree! I am happy to report that with 2 weeks still left to go, I have already netted a total of \$183. Plus, I have received additional donations! I am very pleased with everyone's enthusiasm and support. In February we will officially launch our UU summer camp fundraising campaign.

During January our K-5th class will be finishing up The Lessons of Dr. Seuss curriculum with classic stories like Thidwick the Kind Hearted Moose, Green Eggs and Ham and Did I ever tell you How Lucky You Are. The preschoolers will continue their unit on feelings, the objective of which is to become familiar with, acknowledge and normalize a wide range of emotions. 6th and up will continue to watch and discuss carefully curated TED videos to discover what the 7 principles look like in the real world. In February k-5th will be embarking on a new and original curriculum focusing on mindfulness readings and meditations called "A Pebble in Your Pocket" and 6th and up will switch to The Lessons of Dr. Seuss curriculum.

If you are interested in the goings-on of children's religious education, please feel free to like and follow us at our family FB page: UUC Surprise Family Page.

## How the Grinch Stole Christmas



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

Unitarian  
Universalist Church  
of Surprise

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME



# Support the Outlaw Dirty Money Voter Initiative

Michael C. Piper

Nine years ago, in a 5-4 vote, the United States Supreme Court issued the Citizens United decision. In Citizens United, the Court held that the free speech clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution prohibits the government from restricting independent expenditures for communications.

This landmark decision unleashed a flood of political contributions. Prior to Citizens United, there was \$143 million in campaign spending from outside groups during the 2008 election cycle. By 2016, that spending rose to \$1.4 billion, a nine-fold increase.

Today, wealthy and powerful people pour unlimited amounts of cash into our elections while shielding their identities. They operate in secret, hiding behind legal barriers to keep us from knowing who they are.

I believe Arizonans have the right to make voting decisions based on full information,

including who is spending money to influence our votes. That is why I'm gathering signatures to put an Arizona constitutional amendment on next year's general election ballot.

This non-partisan amendment effort, led by former Attorneys General Terry Goddard and Tom Horne, says Arizonans have a right to know where the money in politics comes from. It would require those who spend more than \$20,000 to influence statewide races (or \$10,000 in local races) to report the original source of their funding.

To learn more, or to back the campaign, please see the [outlawdirty.com](http://outlawdirty.com) website. If you would like to voice your support for putting this proposed amendment on the November 2020 election ballot, I'll have petitions available for your signature in the Social Hall before and after upcoming Sunday services.

Let's make 2020 the year when we secure our right to know who is funding political campaigns. Let's put the Outlaw Dirty Money constitutional amendment on the ballot and pass it in November 2020. With your help, we can do this.

## Transportation Resources:

### **Valley Metro Dial a Ride - 602-716-2100**

To use *Valley Metro Dial a Ride* you must be 65 or over or ADA certified. The ride costs \$4.00 each way to the doctor or grocery store. To check on eligibility for this program call 623-222-1500. Valley Metro also provides a program called *Ride Choice*. People who qualify for this program pay only \$3.00 for a one way trip costing up to \$21.00. You must be 65 or over or ADA qualified. To enroll call Valley Metro at 602-716-2100.

### **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 one 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 six months. This applies to people living in Surprise.

### **Northwest Valley Connections - 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](http://NorthwestValleyConnect.org).

**West Valley Connections - 623-282-9300** Call for information regarding services available.

# Save the Date

Saturday, March 7, 2020

UU of Surprise 2020 Auction and Dinner



**Take Me Out to the Ball Game**  
*A Grand Slam Night with Team UU*

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## WhaleCoast Alaska 2020



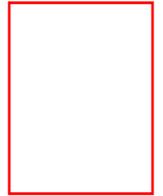
Have you ever dreamed of visiting Alaska? If so, WhaleCoast Alaska 2020 is for you! Four Alaska UU congregations invite you to experience our unique environmental/cultural/spiritual program this summer. See Alaska through the eyes of local UUs, with friendly home stays and unique tour activities. See wildlife, including moose, bears, caribou, whales, bald eagles, sea lions, etc. Visit Denali National Park. Experience Native Alaskan culture. Forget the cruise ships -- our program is truly the best way to visit Alaska! Tours led by Dave Frey, member of the Fairbanks UU congregation and Alaska travel expert. Find out more about this Alaskan trip of a lifetime. For complete info go to: [www.WhaleCoastAK.org](http://www.WhaleCoastAK.org), email [dfrey@whalecoastak.org](mailto:dfrey@whalecoastak.org) or call 907-322-4966. Discount for groups of 8 or more. We would love to share our Alaska with you!

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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 January 2020**

*The Theme for this month is Authority/Leadership*

### **1/5 - Rev. Terry Sims..... On Whose Authority?**

What is “authority”? What and whom do we trust enough to relinquish what we want, believe, or do to follow instead what an “authority” tells us? Unitarian Universalists are generally not quick to acknowledge others’ authority over us. But that does not mean legitimate authority does not exist.

### **1/12 - Rev. Terry Sims..... Leading Indicators**

What qualities and indicators show leadership? Who are we willing to follow and why? Spiritual traditions, and some leaders, show us what the world needs – and what it does not

### **1/19 - Rev. Kellie Walker Hart..... Singing Our Living Tradition**

Come join Kellie Walker Hart as she shares how people can be transformed by the healing power of music and its ability to bring people together through life’s transitions.

### **1/26 - Rev. Terry Sims..... To Lead When Called**

Is Unitarian Universalism called to lead the world? By what authority would we dare to try? And do we have the leadership qualities that will inspire others to follow?