

# 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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March 2020

## From The Minister's Desk

I was thinking the other day about Thomas Jefferson's statement in our Declaration of Independence that we all have "unalienable rights" to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness". Jefferson chose an interesting perspective in writing "pursuit of happiness". We don't have an unalienable right to happiness itself because that certainly cannot be guaranteed. And do we have to chase



happiness down as if we are hunting it? When I was a teenager, I found a saying that I liked and that has stayed with me. I decorated a framed canvas with the saying on it and then hung it on the wall of my bedroom. It said, "Happiness is where we find it, but rarely where we seek it."

For me, happiness is tied to meaning in life. Last December I ran across a headline that caught my eye. It read, "This is the age people find the most meaning in their lives, study shows." The article was written by Rachel Grumman Bender for Yahoo Lifestyle. I dived eagerly into reading the article, hoping, as always, to find insights. I commend the entire article to you as well worth your time. The article read, in part:

"A new study, published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, looked at more than 1,000 adults ages 21 to more than 100 years old, who live in San Diego, Calif. They were given what's called the Meaning in Life Questionnaire, which assesses both the presence of meaning and the search for meaning.

The researchers found a U-shaped curve, showing that people at age 60 reported the highest

presence of meaning and lowest in searching for meaning — in other words, they had found their purpose. "The most common pattern is that as our levels of meaning in life are higher, we tend to search for meaning less," Michael F. Steger, PhD, director of the Center for Meaning and Purpose and professor of counseling psychology and applied social and health psychology at Colorado State University, tells Yahoo Lifestyle. Steger, who was not involved with this study, researches meaning and developed the Meaning in Life Questionnaire. . . .

So what exactly does it mean to find meaning in your life? Understandably, Steger says it can be hard to quantify since there are many things that contribute to a meaningful life and they are so personal and specific. But he notes there are common themes that researchers see over and over again — namely, three aspects in people's lives that are going well.

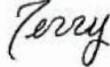
"One, they can make sense of themselves, the world around them, and life as it happens," explains Steger. "We call this coherence. Two, they feel that their lives have inherent value and are worth living, and they feel that they matter somehow. We call this significance. And third, they feel that their lives have one or more deeply valued, personally important aspirations or dreams they intend to pursue over large parts of their lives. We call this purpose." . . .

The tricky part is that searching for meaning can actually backfire for some. In fact, the study found a negative correlation between the search for meaning and mental health. "My simplest advice is the same advice the incredible Viktor Frankl [Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor] gave decades ago," says Steger. "You can't find meaning by looking for it, no matter how intently."

Steger says that the typical person finds meaning in life through “important jobs, relationships, beliefs, traditions, and habits,” adding, “So we don’t need to go looking for it – it’s in the very way we live, ideally.” [Rachel Grumman Bender, “This is the age people find the most meaning in their lives, study shows, 12/12/2019, <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/this-is-the-age-people-find-the-most-meaning-in-their-lives-study-shows-223938607.html>.]

I often say that this congregation and Unitarian Universalism are my quest for meaning and happiness. But I suppose what I really mean is that my faith is not so much where I’m looking for meaning and happiness as where I find them. I’ll see you on Sunday for worship.

Yours in our faith,



## Come One, Come All

*Submitted by Rev. Julian B. Rush*

On Sunday March 8th 2020, The Worship Service will contain a musical production by Rev. Julian B. Rush as a gift to our congregation. Come one, come all to hear about one pilgrim and his lifelong journey to become a worthy person who even Jesus would find satisfactory. Our pilgrim will be accompanied by two story tellers, Maggi Mahan and Ruth Swank, by his pilgrim’s “Guardian Angel” Patricia Balfour and his Nay Sayer, Sharon Beard.

### ***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.

**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)**

## Message from the President

*Sherry Robinson, President*



We are off and running – the new Board met for the first time February 9th with our four new members, Bill Chartrand, Chris Baker, Brooke Gaunt and Margaret Leahy. I welcome their energy, ideas and enthusiasm for the tasks ahead. You will be learning more about each of the Board members as we move forward.

I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the outgoing board members, Pat Lindgren, Bonnie Saunders, Sally Thomas and Julian Rush for their dedication, support and commitment to our congregation. Even though they are no longer on the Board, you can be sure they will remain active and involved in supporting the congregation.

We had a full agenda at the first meeting tying up loose ends and starting new tasks. The Solar System is once again functional and paid for through insurance thanks to Lois Bartels, Ken Saunders and Sally Thomas. There is a new printer in the Office thanks to Charlie Mannino, that does everything but dance and sing. The Board has approved new Co-Chairs of the Membership Committee - Thank you Claudia Yaeger-Smith and Judy Reynolds. (We are still looking for Committee Chairs but more about that later).

The Board had a good discussion on how we would gather congregational input on the question of a “name change” for the church and we believe we have a path forward. This question will be decided by the congregation not the Board, and you will be receiving information about this process via e-mail.

On March 7th – we have a date at the Ball Park to support the Congregation’s largest fundraiser, the Annual Auction, being expertly planned by Janet Jeffrey and Mary Beth Crest with help from many. If you have not purchased your ticket yet, please do so soon.

Some good things have happened this year; we have also experienced a profound sadness with the passing of five fellow church members. We were blessed to have had them among us and their presence will be missed. Seeing the support and care extended to the families and friends of those who passed reminded me, once again, how special our congregation is.

I look forward to building on the work that has been started, and if you want to play a role - let me know, See you next month.

## RE Report

Lisa Lawrence, DRE

As we March closer to Spring, I'd like to remind everyone about the upcoming Annual Church Picnic/



Cookout. This year's event will be on Sunday, March 22nd, Ramada 4F from 2:30-6:30 p.m. at White Tank Mountain Regional Park. All are welcome to join us for hiking, bird and flower watching, relaxing, eating, Cornhole, Horseshoes and more! Bring a main entree for your family to grill and an additional dish to share. A sign-up sheet for dishes will be placed

on the activities table in the social hall beginning the first week in March. Park entry fee is \$7 per vehicle. Bring your own chairs! Hope to see you there! Please contact [uucslisal@gmail.com](mailto:uucslisal@gmail.com) with any questions.

It's time to get serious about raising funds for our UU Summer Camp Scholarship! Between private donations and selling UU Charms over the holidays we have already raised \$620. The UU Summer Camp Scholarship program is an incentive to increase attendance to our Sunday morning religious education classes. The top attendance holders will receive full or partial scholarships to the UU Camp of their choice. Last year, we had a first place winner and a three-way-tie for second place. We won't know how many kids we can send this year until after we finish raising funds.

This contest has really helped our Sunday morning attendance. There are a few kids who have only missed one or two days this whole season! We are also hoping that the children will benefit from continued spiritual growth and enrichment in a nurturing setting where they have the opportunity to meet and bond with other UU children from the entire Pacific Southwest District.

Hear what two of last year's winners have to say about camp during service on Sunday, March 1st, 2020. We will also be donating the collection plate to the scholarship fund this day, so bring your check books!

If you would like to make a donation towards this scholarship program, either now, on March 1st, or in the future, please contact children's RE director, Lisa Lawrence, or Reverend Terry Sims. Another way RE is planning to raise funds for the scholarship program is via a monthly church-wide Bunco group. Half the proceeds will go to the

scholarship fund and the other half will go to the winners! The first game is coming up on Friday, March 20th. Be sure to sign up!

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.

Here are a few pictures of last year's winners enjoying camp:



### *Ladies and Gents!*

Do you like games? Do you like to socialize? Then why not join our new Bunco group?

RE is starting a monthly church-wide group to provide a sustainable revenue to the Summer Camp Scholarship Fund. Half the proceeds will go to the scholarship fund and the other half will go to the winners.

Games will take place in the Social Hall on the third Friday of each month in March 20, April 17 and May 15. (Summer TBD) Games begin at 6:00 sharp or come at 5:30 for an optional "bring your own dinner." Buy in is \$10 cash per month plus \$3 singles if you'd like to play Left, Right, Center following the game.

Please R.S.V.P. at the activities table in the social hall. Feel free to invite non-church friends, but please sign them up, because Bunco is played in groups of 4 and we will need a monthly count.

## Musings from the Loft!

*Debby Bullins, Music Director*

As you might have noticed, Mark A. Miller is one of my favorite contemporary choral composers. His music speaks to me in ways that touches me



deeply, encourages me to continue to try to be a good person and heals me. One of his pieces, Prayer Chant, is one of my favorites. In this song, his lyrics are powerful. "We resist, we refuse to let hatred in! We rise up, we won't back down! We're in this 'til the end."

I was discussing his music with my son, Jay, and he turned me on to a musician that lives these lyrics in his everyday life. I would like to share this story about a blues, rockabilly and boogie-woogie pianist named Daryl Davis. At age 10, Davis' family moved from overseas to Massachusetts. He was one of the two black students at his school. He was immediately exposed to hate, racism and physical attacks including having bottles thrown at him as a Boy Scout participating in a parade. He had never heard of or experienced racism before. After graduating with a music degree from Howard University, he played in a band where he was the only black member.

One evening while playing with this band, he met a member of the KKK. Davis was then introduced to the Maryland Klan leader, Roger Kelly, on the premise that Daryl wanted to interview Kelly for a book he was writing. At their first meeting, Kelly immediately told Davis he was inferior due to his skin color. But Davis wasn't there to fight with him, he was there to learn where these perceptions came from. Why did this man hate him when he didn't even know him? Davis "learned that ignorance breeds fear. If we don't keep that fear in check, that fear, in turn, will breed hatred because we hate those things that frighten us. If we do not keep that hatred in check, that hatred will breed destruction. We want to destroy those things that frighten us and that we hate."

Davis and Kelly continued to meet and became friends. They had dinner together, attended music events together, attended Klan rallies together. They did not agree on everything but learned to respect

each other enough to sit together and listen. "If you have an adversary, you don't have to respect what they're saying, but respect their right to say it. And have that conversation. We spend too much time talking about each other, at each other, past each other, and not enough time talking with each other. That is respect." Over time, Kelly began to rethink his ideals and renounced his previous ideology, giving Davis his Klan robe and hood as a symbol of his transformation.

Over the past 30 years, Daryl Davis has convinced over 200 Ku Klux Klan members to give up their robes and hoods.

"We resist, we refuse to let hatred in! We rise up, we won't back down! We're in this 'til the end!"

Story links:

<https://www.pbs.org/video/daryl-davis-his-anti-racism-activism-klk-members-yhrpiw/>

<https://www.npr.org/2017/08/20/544861933/how-one-man-convinced-200-ku-klux-klan-members-to-give-up-their-robes>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/03/the-audacity-of-talking-about-race-with-the-ku-klux-klan/388733/>



## 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!



## BUUK Circle

Julie Wambach

The BUUK Circle meets the SECOND Tuesday of every month from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Choir Room. We cancelled the February discussion because 6 of our regular attendees had a commitment for auction preparation. We decided to cover the February book in March and move all other listed books up through May. Please attend, whether you have finished the book, or not even started. For more information, contact Julie Wambach at [azwambach@icloud.com](mailto:azwambach@icloud.com).

So, you have another opportunity to discuss this UUA chosen book of the year, the first history of the United States from the perspective of indigenous peoples.

March 10: 6:30-8:30 in the Choir Room -  
**An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States:**  
(Revisioning American History - Book 3) Roxanne Dunbar Otiz

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 re-frames US history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.

## 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.

U.S. Relations with the Northern Triangle..... M:3/2  
China's Road into Latin America ..... M:3/9  
The Philippines and the U.S. .... M:3/16  
Artificial Intelligence and Data ..... T:3/24

## The Monthly Book Report

MaryAnne Balzer

First this month, I want to thank the congregation for your participation in our UU Surprise Library reading programs. Our new books are receiving high circulation. Our reading suggestions that support the Sunday service monthly topic are also receiving high check-out numbers. Congratulations UU Surprise for your continued Library patronage and interest in deepening your UU faith! Keep up the good reading! Now let's review three more new Library offerings.

**"After the Good News,"** author Nancy McDonald Ladd, number 230.91LAD. The author is a UU Minister. The book describes how our faith is at a crossroads. "Liberal pulpits ring with grand sermons about the arc that bends toward justice and about progress 'onward and upward forever.' Meanwhile, the people in the pews struggle to attend to the suffering of their souls and the tragic aspects of life." The author issues a call for change. "She uses stories, with humor and humanity, to call for greater authenticity and truth-telling." Quoting the review. 4.5 Amazon stars.

**"Detained and Deported,"** subtitled 'Stories of Immigrant Families Under Fire', author Margaret Regan, number 325.73REG. This is journalist Regan's follow-up to her award winning "The Death of Josseline: Immigrations Stories from the Arizona Borderlands". This new book "tells the poignant stories of undocumented immigrants who are suddenly torn from their families and sent to detention centers or deported, after living in the US for decades," from the review. Publishers Weekly says "For those who have been searching for an authentic look at people caught between borders, this is it." 5 Amazon stars.

**"The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide,"** this is the latest edition of the complete guide to UU. It has been extensively revised and edited by our current national UU President Susan Frederick-Gray, number 289.133FRE. We have purchased two copies of this very popularly checked-out volume. "The most complete introduction to UU available, covering ministry, worship, religious education, social justice, community and history," says InSpirit Books. It may be a brief 136 pages, but it is a powerhouse book we should all give a new reading. 5 Amazon stars.

*Have a great day shared with a new UU book!*

# Passover Seder

## Saturday April 11 at 5 PM

Suzi Walling

Join us at a Passover Seder to be held in our UUC social hall. We will enjoy an evening of traditional Seder food and an abbreviated Seder service, co-led by Rich Manalis and Susan Lee Walling. Whether the Seder is a part of your family tradition or a new experience, we hope you will join us for a delightful evening of food, wine, song and a chance to socialize while taking part in this special spiritual event that celebrates freedom!

Because of limited space ... congregation members and those who attend services on a regular basis will have first "dibbs" on signing up at a cost of \$20 per person. Sign up begins February 16. Payment by check is preferable, but cash is also welcome. Your reservation will not be confirmed until payment is received. Children of members and regular attendees, 14 years old or younger, may attend free of cost. (Note: There will be planned activities for the children related to Passover.)

Please sign up each child, who will be attending with you, at the time you sign up. To confirm your reservation, you must sign-up AND PAY no later than March 22 (unless we fill up earlier, in which case we will maintain a waiting list).

If you have signed and paid, on March 29 you may sign-up no more than two guests per household, on a first come-first served basis. Cost for guests is \$30 per guest and must be paid by check at the time of sign up.

*Please note, we will not be able to make refunds. In the case of an emergency, a refund will be made by UUC, if requested.*

In order to have our Seder we must have a committee to plan and coordinate this event. So please join the committee by signing up in the social hall as soon as possible.

This year the committee will again be doing most of the cooking. However, we do need volunteers to set-up the social hall, set the tables, set up the buffet, serve, clean-up and break down the room. Please sign-up to volunteer for one of these assignments (if you are physically able to do so) when you make your reservation on the sign-up sheet. The Passover Menu will be posted at the table adjacent to the sign-up sheet once it is set.

In past years, the Seder has sometimes been fully subscribed and gotten rave reviews – so we suggest you sign-up and pay early. Your payment is your confirmation of a place at the table.

For more information and to sign-up and pay, visit the Passover Seder table in the social hall after services on or after February 16 or contact Suzi Walling, 602.750.3293 or Rich Manalis, 260.240.9961.



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**Unitarian  
Universalist Church  
of Surprise**

A Progressive, Inclusive Faith Community

WELCOME



## Get to Know the Board

*This article is the first one of a series providing information about our 2020 board members.*

### Brooke Gaunt, Vice President

I grew up in West Des Moines, Iowa. I earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Tulane University and a law degree from Drake University. I moved to Arizona in 2001 shortly after law school graduation. I had the great honor of serving as a judicial law clerk to Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Zlaket. I started my legal career in private practice handling family law matters such as divorce and custody disputes. Since 2005, I have been a Deputy Legal Defender in juvenile court for the Maricopa County Legal Defender's Office representing indigent parents accused of abusing and neglecting their children. I hold a legal specialty in child welfare law and am very passionate about this area of the law. I handle a caseload of close to 120 cases and am in court nearly every day. I have conducted many trials. I do a lot of committee work including being the Chair of the Planning committee for the Maricopa County Family Reunification Day Celebration. This event honors biological families who have overcome their struggles to be reunited with their children who had been in foster care.



I am also passionate about diversity in our judiciary and am extremely active with Arizona Women Lawyers Association (AWLA), a state-wide organization with nearly 800 members. I have been a member of the AWLA Board of Directors since 2009 and was President of the Board last year. As part of AWLA, I am also chair of the judicial appointments committee which makes endorsements and provides mock interviews for state appellate judicial candidates.

Close to home, here in Surprise, I have been a Commissioner on the City of Surprise Judicial Selection Advisory Commission since 2014. This Commission assists the city council in hiring and retaining city court judges in Surprise.

My husband, Jim, and I will celebrate our 15th wedding anniversary later this year. We have two sons, Jason, 11, and Brayden, 7. We welcomed a goldendoodle puppy, Lambeau, to the family in

December 2019. In my free time, I love to read and have been in a book group with a fantastic group of women since 2004. I also regularly attend the UUCS's nonfiction book group. I love football (you all know we are Green Bay Packers Fans, right?), traveling, and games. I am super excited about the UUCS Bunco nights which are starting in March. In February 2010, my family and I started coming to the UUCS and we became members in April 2010. Our son, Jason, was 18 months old and I was looking for a spiritual community and a way to meet other like-minded people. I had checked out the "mega-churches" in Surprise but the more I read about them and thought about their beliefs, I decided that their beliefs didn't really align with mine. Then I found UUCS. Not only did this congregation's beliefs align with mine but we met many wonderful, smart, friendly folks here. Although UUCS has a small number of families with minor children, the families genuinely like each other and enjoy doing things together outside of church activities. Shortly after we joined the church, I co-chaired, and then chaired the Social Activities Committee until my son Brayden was born. My husband is a past Board member and we both have volunteered for many activities within and sponsored by the church. This church and the wonderful people we have met because of it, are very important to me. I am honored to have been chosen for this important leadership position.

## 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.)

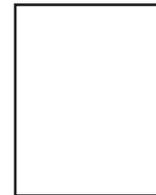
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40th Anniversary 1975 - 2015



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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.*

**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 March 2020

*The Theme for this month is Forgiveness*

- 3/1 - Rev. Terry Sims..... The Promise of Forgiveness**  
A wrong hurts people on both sides of it. Equally, forgiveness blesses those on each side. So forgiveness might be the most promising course ahead – what humanity needs most. That doesn't make it easy.
- 3/8 - Rev. Julian Rush ..... A Musical Production**  
Come one, come all to hear about one pilgrim and his lifelong journey to become a worthy person who even Jesus would find satisfactory.
- 3/15 - Rev. Terry Sims..... Forgiving to Move Forward**  
Sometimes the mistakes we have made and the hurts we have received threaten to consume us and trap us in the past. But if we could forgive ourselves and others, we could let go of the past and move toward a brighter future.
- 3/22- Rev. Terry Sims ..... Forgiveness: Restoring What Is Broken**  
What keeps us from practicing forgiveness, even though we recognize it as a virtue? When we have been wronged or hurt, we often want to see those who have acted against us punished, to see justice done. But restoring relationships by forgiving each other may be a deeper justice.
- 3/29- Janine Gelsinger, UUJAZ Sunday ..... Justice as a Spiritual Practice**  
As Unitarian Universalists, we see our justice work as living out our values into the world. We covenant that “service is our prayer.” What might it look like to create a Spiritual Practice of justice work?