

# Newsletter

July-August 2021

## Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise



Minister Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Walt F. Wieder

President: Sherry Robinson

Newsletter Co-Editors: Gus & Juliet Gustavson

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

Distribution: Kathryn Pabich

### Introducing Rev. Sam Schaal, Our Transition Minister:



We are pleased to announce that Rev. Sam Schaal will join UUCS as our Transition Minister beginning August 1, 2021. Most recently Rev. Sam has been serving as the Transition Minister at First Unitarian Church of Orlando. He has extensive experience as a Transition Minister, having served in that capacity at numerous congregations since 2000.

He received his Master of Divinity, cum laude from the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, in 1997 and received his full fellowship in 2002. He became an accredited Transition Minister in 2019. He has a special affinity for Stewardship, although he prefers to call it "Generosity" to imply a joyful practice rather than a burden. His theology is rooted in "the theist/Judeo-Christian/Buddhist/Taoist spiritual traditions, balanced with a search for scientific truth and its relation to the spirit and soul from the humanist tradition."

He has 2 grown sons and five grandchildren who live in Texas. He says that transitional ministry is "perhaps waking up the soul of the congregation." We are excited to covenant with Rev. Sam to work hard to make the most of this transition time to prepare us for our next settled minister.



### Message from our President

Summer Greetings - Our summer weather has arrived with a vengeance and along with the heat came the colors. Love the Cactus when it is in bloom.



We have had a busy month culminating in **our return to our UU home "in -person"** for Terry's Retirement Celebration, his last sermon (not last supper) and now for Sunday Services. When we made our decision to return in person, we did so based on trusting our members to respect the guidelines established, and our trust was rewarded. The Guidelines were observed without complaint. As a result, we are continuing to open within CDC Guidelines. For those of you fully vaccinated, you need not wear a mask, but we do ask that you re-

spect those who choose to continue wearing one. We will also be having our normal Coffee/Social Hour following the Service and remind you to keep the number at the tables at 4-5 and not 7 or 8. It is nice to be back, but let us not throw caution to the wind.

The Planning Committee did an outstanding job on **Terry's party**, and I want to express my sincere thanks to everyone involved for the work they did to make this party the success it was. I would like to name you all but in doing so, I would use up my limited space and would probably forget someone. **SO, if you were involved in planning or implementing this event – consider yourself sincerely thanked by the Board, by Rev. Sims, and the members of the congregation.**

#### Inside this issue:

Transition Minister	1
President's Message	1
Social Justice	2
Stewardship	3
Book Report	3
Children's Program	4
Questers	4
Tidbits	4
Sermon Titles	6

I would be remiss if I did not also thank those who attended and helped us send Rev Terry on his way in proper fashion. Everyone did their part to let Terry know how much we will miss him but how excited we are for him to move onto his next life chapter. We are known as a "congregation that knows how to love their minister," and I think we have shown that to be true. ***If you were unable to attend, we did live-stream the program part of the party and it is available on our Facebook page.***

Next, we have completed the major steps for finding and choosing an Interim Minister to help us as we move forward in seeking and finding a new Settled Minister. Our new Minister is Rev. Sam Schaal and he just completed a transitional ministry in Orlando, Florida. Rev Sam prefers that he be thought of as Transition and not Interim; Interim implying "placeholder," which is not an accurate definition of this position. ***Rev Sam will be joining us in late July and will be our "minister in the pulpit" on Sunday, August 1. Kudos to the Search Committee led by Brooke Gaunt and assisted by Liz Thomas, David King, Maggie Mahan, and Jeff London. Thank you for a job well done.***

***Mark your calendar now to join us August 1 in welcoming Rev, Sam to our Sanctuary and our Congregation. If all goes as planned, the Service will be followed by a light lunch served in our Social Hall to complete the welcome.*** Check out the brief but informative article on Rev Sam featured on the front page of this newsletter.

**Other exciting news includes the installation of a new Church Management System called "Breeze"** which will hopefully make our communication system and data base management easier and user friendly for Kathryn and others who will be using it. Brooke is working with Kathryn currently to move all our files from Mem-info to Breeze in time for the start of the church year. Please be patient – no matter how easy this is to do – there may be a few glitches to work out. More information will be forthcoming as we move to this new system.

And lastly – but certainly not least, we are finishing up our **"Welcome Back Project Fundraiser"**. This was designed to replace our Auction and will provide funds to allow us to paint the exterior of our building and refinish the main doors to the Church, as well as add an automatic door opener to one side for members needing assistance in entering the building. We also ask that you note the Welcome Flags inviting others to join us and the Banner in front of the Church, which might help our neighbors and others understand who we are and what we believe in. We are hoping that perhaps these might even attract new friends and members to our community.

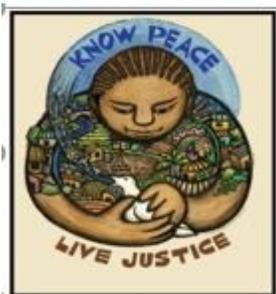
No matter where you are this summer, please stay safe and Sunday mornings click in and join our Live-stream Sunday Services. AND please keep your generous donations coming so that we can continue to build on what has been started. Your contribution to our financial stability is appreciated and valued.

I cannot leave this without commenting on the **Golden Rule Sermon offered by Rebecca Riggs on Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>**. If you did not get a chance to hear it – it is on our You Tube and will be posted on the website soon. Rebecca did an awesome job – enjoyable to listen to and thought provoking when completed. Thanks to Bruce Sorter for his support and to Rebecca for agreeing to deliver this message on how to live the Golden Rule.

Yours in faith, friendship, and gratitude for your continuing commitment to our community,

*Sherry*

## Social Justice Aims & Actions



Let's continue to stay up to date on social actions over the summer break by checking the opinion page in the Arizona Republic newspaper and evening TV news reports. Keep abreast of the awesome reports from the Poor Peoples Campaign at 3RDReconstruction.org and #3rdReconstruction Day of Action. Check into UUJAZ.org and the UUA General Assembly Live. Follow up on the General Assembly at uua.org. HB2035 Parental Rights - sex education instruction has passed in the Arizona Legislature and has Concurrence Recommended in the House. Thank you for your letters of support. Enjoy your summer and livestreamed services at

UUsurpriseaz.org and/or let's talk justice after in-person services.

Tom Reemtsma - Social Justice Committee Facilitator



## Providing Stewardship... Helping To Insure Financial Stability

The Stewardship Committee focuses on developing and implementing fundraising projects that provide financial support for this Congregation and our Faith Home. Two such projects are the Annual Stewardship Campaign and the "Welcome Back" Project.



**The Annual Stewardship Campaign**, as of this writing, has raised over \$176,000 from 91 Members, Friends and Visitors. This amount represents 85% of our goal of \$205, 401. We are so remarkably close and with six plus months still remaining this year we feel confident that we will reach our goal. We urge those of you who have not yet made a donation to this annual appeal, to show up now; any amount you give will be greatly appreciated. At Sunday services you can complete a pledge card or just place your check in the basket. You can also go online to <https://uusurpriseaz.org/get-involved/#donate>.

**The Welcome Back Project**, a new initiative, was created to raise funds in lieu of the fun-filled auctions we were unable to hold for the past two years. Donated monies will be used to repair and paint the exterior of the building, as well as repair and refinish the four front doors. Both of these projects have been long neglected, both are desperately needed. Again, as of this writing, over \$10,000 has been raised of the modest \$12,000 goal. Additional challenge funds have been given to match new donations one-to-one. We expect that by early Fall the funds will have been fully raised and the work on the building will be completed.

If you haven't yet done so, go online to **UU Surprise - Welcome Back**, select Welcome Back from the drop-down menu, then select Donate with PayPal or Donate with Debit or Credit card. You can also give at Sunday

services or by sending a check to UUCS (mark envelope or check memo "Welcome Back"). Let's give and make our Faith Home shine!

**Bob, Claudia, Janet, MaryAnne, Sherry, Steve & Suzi**  
Your Stewardship Team



## MONTHLY BOOK REPORT

Our 2021 summer is in full swing with church upgrades beginning for our highly anticipated full reopening this fall, along with the introduction of our new transition minister. So there is much excitement in the air at UU Surprise!

Included in our excitement is the library's participation in the **Golden Rule** project funded by our own Dr. Bruce Sorter. We have reorganized the library space and set aside a special area of new books encompassing the **Golden Rule** principles. We hope to grow this area with great books to deepen our understanding and education of the **Golden Rule**.

UU Principle #1: We affirm and promote: the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

As we heard worship leader Rebecca Riggs speak Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, the **Golden Rule** and our UU Seven Principles go hand in hand. I encourage everyone, as a follow-on to the kick off of this terrific project, read one of our recommended books. When the library re-opens in fall, they will be available for check out. Until then community library and commercial downloads are always available. Below are our first three reviews:

"Gideon's Promise", subtitled 'A public defender movement to transform criminal justice', by Jonathan Rapping, number 345.7RAP. 'A blueprint for criminal justice reform...lays the foundation for how model public defense programs should work to end mass incarceration.' 5-Star on Amazon.

"Rectify", subtitled 'The power of restorative justice after wrongful conviction', by Lara Bazelon, number 364BAZ. 'Makes a powerful argument for adopting a model of restorative justice as part of the Innocence Movement, so exonerees, crime victims, and their communities can come together to heal.' 4.5-Star on Amazon.

*“Full Dissidence”*, subtitled ‘Notes from an uneven playing field’, by Howard Bryant, number 306.2BRY. ‘A bold... meditation on injustice in our country that punctures the illusion of a post racial America and reveals it as a place where authoritarianism looms large.’ 5-Star on Amazon.

*May you be filled with loving grace. Namaste.*  
MaryAnne Balzer, UUCS Librarian



## CHILDREN’S PROGRAMS

Lisa Lawrence, DRE



I just got back from a lovely, week-long, family vacation down in Tucson. From Tucson, we took a day trip and finally made it to Patagonia State Park, and although it wasn’t peak migration season, the birding was outstanding. I love to explore and I love nature. It’s just

what I needed to renew my spirit. Now, on to those summer projects!

Currently, I am in the process of building a Family Lending Library. My hope is for this library to offer a curated selection of books to assist parents in raising physically, mentally and spiritually healthy UU children. In addition, there will be children’s books which focus on the many themes of the 7 principles and 6 sources. I am also planning to gather literature from various local community organizations which parents may find helpful. I hope to have a fun and useful selection up and running by the start of our new RE season.

The rest of my summer will be spent organizing classrooms, picking new curriculum, hiring new high school-age, pre-school teachers and creating new RE literature to advertise our programs. I really want to make this year exciting for our returning and prospective junior UU’s!



When the next edition of the newsletter comes out, we will be in September, heading into the fall/winter

schedule for Questers Adult Education offerings, whether our weather feels that way or not. Here is a taste of Questers options that will be on the fall/winter menu.

- ◆ Taking Inventory & Designing Our New Normal with Libby Christianson
- ◆ Financial Security for Women with Kathy Young
- ◆ Ancient Civilizations to 1500 with Bonnie Saunders
- ◆ “I Believe.....”: Creating your Credo with Julie Wambach
- ◆ How I Do What I Do with Photographer Rich Manalis
- ◆ Music Moves Us with Juliet Gustavson
- ◆ Four Talks: Native American Tribes & Religion with Rick Wambach

We look forward to your joining us in diving into the questing life come September and beyond. And remember Questers offerings are open to all. Therefore, feel free to invite a friend or two to join you.

<https://uusurpriseaz.org/questers/offerings>

Your Questers Adult Education Committee – Carol Calkins, Di Evans, Juliet Gustavson, Jeff London, and Julie Wambach



## TIDBITS

### AUGUST WORSHIP NOTICE

Although this is our July/August newsletter issue, which would usually have sermon titles for both months, you will notice on the back page that only July sermon titles are listed. That’s because our Transition Minister Sam Schaal arrives on August 1, when he will be in worship and preaching for the first time; therefore, details for August worship are in process.

Watch for a

SPECIAL

AUGUST WORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

with full details before the end of July.

***NOTE IN-PERSON WORSHIP***

***EXCEPTION!!!***

***JULY 11 —SIDE WITH LOVE***

***ON-LINE ONLY***

***<https://vimeo.com/508606963/a31758e913>***

***SANCTUARY CLOSED***

**Welcome**

**On Sunday August 1 we are putting out the Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise welcome mat for our Transition Minister, Sam Schall.**



**The morning will include Sunday morning worship with Rev. Sam. And plans for a light lunch after worship are in process.**

## Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise NEWSLETTER

17540 N. Avenue of the Arts  
Surprise, AZ 85379

Ph: 623.875.2550

Email: [uucsaz2@gmail.com](mailto:uucsaz2@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.

**Join us for Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m.**

*If you are not receiving church email announcements but would like to, please send your preferred email address and full name to [uucsaz2@gmail.com](mailto:uucsaz2@gmail.com).*

## Sermon Titles For July 2021

### **7/4 – Barbara Face .....Sometimes Revisionist History Makes Sense**

The times are changing and folx [sic] in the majority culture are on task to make room. Here's the rub: it may feel scary, it may feel unfair, you may feel defensive. Some will claim this new history is revisionist and therefore invalid because it may be different from what was taught in school. Our UU faith can help us make room for the revisionist history (new history) we may be confronted with. Join Barbara Face, Valley Unitarian Universalist Worship Associate, for thoughts on revisionist history and how to make room for the messiness of the coming new world.

### **7/11 – Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.....Side with Love**

*What if to "side with love" meant making bold, faith-full choices? What if it were even a little bit scary? This worship service brings together worship leaders and musicians from across the country to offer hopeful, moving, challenging reminders about what we, as Unitarian Universalists, are called to do, and BE, in the world. **This service will be by video only, which you may view at home at <https://vimeo.com/508606963/a31758e913>. NO IN-PERSON WORSHIP THIS DAY.***

### **7/18 – Emrys Staton.....Life in the Age of Algorithms**

Whether you are an avid user of social media or not, the algorithms that run behind the scenes of these influential platforms impact our consumer behavior, our worldview, our politics, our ethics, even our friendships and families. Join Emrys for an exploration of the influence of algorithms in our lives.

### **7/25 – Juliet Gustavson....."I Doubt It!"**

Doubt and faith....Is doubt the dead end for faith or its fertilizer? It all depends on what we do with it on our journeys.