It is said that generosity is born of gratitude, for we must first see and appreciate what we have before we can truly share it and give it away.

At the end of this month, we will be saying goodbye to the Rev. Linda Lawrence as our Assistant Minister. When I think of all that Rev. Linda has brought to UUCP, one of the key words that comes to mind is “Generosity.”

Rev. Linda joined the staff at UUCP five years ago, first as our Membership Coordinator. She served in that role for just over a year. In the spring of 2011, when I took a half-time position with the national Unitarian Universalist Association to help lead the Justice General Assembly in Phoenix, Linda became our Assistant Minister. It was fortuitous to already have a UU minister on staff who could offer pastoral and professional leadership and continuity in that Justice GA year. But in that short time, Rev. Linda expanded our capacity to provide ministry and came to be a minister to us all.

For four years, Linda has ministered to our community, pastorally and spiritually. She has developed an impressive Welcoming Ministry program, reorganized our Pathway to Membership process, and helped to better link new people and new members into engagement and service at UUCP. In addition, Linda expanded and helped grow our Small Group Ministry program, so vital to creating close connections in a larger congregation, by leading groups and recruiting and training additional leaders. Without Rev. Linda, we could never have started Community Nights, and she has nurtured this program as a place of fellowship and

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As we shift into stewardship season and a month of meditating on generosity, I find myself thinking about how gifts given now can have effects far in the future. When I heat up food in my microwave oven, it rarely occurs to me to thank its inventor, Percy Spencer, or his aunt, who raised Percy after his father died and his mother chose not to raise him herself. Without their generosity and good work, I wouldn’t be heating up my lunch. For that matter, I also rarely stop to thank the workers of Emerson Electric’s subsidiary who assembled my microwave oven, whoever and wherever they are. We are all surrounded by gifts from people who “paid it forward” and gave out of a generous spirit.

In this vein of noticing the long-lasting effects of generosity, I’m excited to tell you about an effect of last year’s mini-capital campaign which is just coming to light now. By the time you read this article, I believe it will be easier to listen to our services! Last year, UUCP members donated more than $164,000 to a mini-capital campaign to improve aspects of our property, and of that, $12,000 was allocated for improving the intelligibility of our sanctuary, which I believe is far more money than we’d ever invested specifically in audio. I invited many audio professionals to our sanctuary and received widely varying recommendations about what we might do. I particularly appreciate Nathan Greene, Dave Cunningham, Igor Glenn, Bill Mee, Lois Fisher and Denise Selvey, who shared their thoughts and audio expertise to help me make sense of the various recommendations, proposals and priorities. After much consideration, I decided to spend half of the allocated money on upgrades to the sanctuary sound system, including speakers that are the right size for our space and can point at (rather than over) the heads of the congregation, a digital mixing board that will allow us to “tune” those speakers to the space, and an amplifier to provide our new speakers with appropriate power. Our sound volunteers will be training on that equipment at the end of March, so by the time you read this article, I hope that you will hear a difference! It may make sense to use the remaining mini-campaign money on sound dampening panels to reduce or diffuse reverberation, but our sanctuary is a beautiful, grand space, and reverberation is part of what creates that sense of grandeur, so I will spend a few months tuning our new sound system and listening to the room before making that decision.

Next year, many people looking for a liberal, spiritual home will visit UUCP. Many of them will struggle with hearing loss, will not see that we have hearing assist devices available, and will appreciate that they can understand the service. Some of them will like what they hear and decide to return, and some of those will end up finding and creating at UUCP the community they needed. None of them will ever thank you for helping them to hear that first sermon clearly, but if you gave money to this mini-capital campaign last year, you were paying that forward. Even if you didn’t contribute to that campaign, I know that each of you has contributed to UUCP in ways that I will never know but that make it a healthier community. So thank you for your generosity!

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A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit.

D. Elton Trueblood
A s I've gotten older, I've grown a deepened appreciation for the cyclical aspect of the human and natural world, the “circle of life” that "moves us all through despair and hope, through faith and love, till we find our place on the path unwinding," as the song goes.

Spring here in the valley is a glorious time: the weather is lovely, the world is abloom, baseball has started. We're literally and metaphorically shaking out the cobwebs and cleaning house, the vacationing visitors are enjoying our hospitality . . . it’s my favorite time of year. And while many of us struggle with pain or grief or life’s challenges, this time of renewal seems to offer hope and optimism that things can be better, that life can be better, that we can be better. And that optimism engenders a positive spirit that can move us towards doing the things that actually make the world better.

This month's worship theme of Generosity is well-timed to coincide with the bright optimism of spring. Generosity is manifest in so many different ways that it can be difficult to wrap our arms around the concept in its entirety. We often think of it as a sharing of our resources with others: the giving of our money or our time or our talents. But at the heart of it, I think, is the generosity of spirit; the kindness, consideration, understanding and love that we bring to our interactions with others. It’s the generosity of spirit that motivates us to share what we have with others and give of ourselves to help our communities thrive, invest in our future generations and work to create a more just world.

Here at UUCP this spring, we have many opportunities to be generous and share our gifts with each other.

Over the past few months we have been engaged in a Board-initiated “Visioning” process, where we have asked that you participate in a dialog and share your best hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the future of this community. Many of you participated in the discussion sessions, and it has been wonderful and gratifying to hear the excitement and optimism for the future of our congregation, and the deep commitment to our mission, values, and principles. We appreciate the generous giving of time and effort that everyone put in to this process, and you'll be hearing more soon about the outcomes of those discussions.

This is also the time when we begin our annual Stewardship Campaign, when we each make a financial commitment to this congregation to ensure that we are able to achieve our Missional priorities and ensure a healthy, vibrant community. I encourage everyone to consider deeply what UUCP means to each of us personally and what it means to the broader community to have a liberal religious presence in Arizona, standing up for what we believe is right and making real our vision. Others who came before us gave generously to build this for us, and it is incumbent on us to be good stewards of our community for the future generations by carrying on that generosity and paying it forward.

Finally, we are nearing the time when we elect a new slate of leaders for our congregation. The generous giving of our time and talents to move us forward and implement our strategic goals is imperative to fully actualizing our Mission. There are many ways in which we can all contribute, and we are all needed. Please be generous with your time. Consider stepping forward to volunteer on a project or work in the office, join a committee, or make a more significant commitment of an elected position on the Board or Nominating Committee. We need each other, and we need each other’s gifts.
This congregation holds such a profound place in my life. I came here looking for a spiritual home where my soul could not only feel comfortable but could be renewed, and found such comfort and renewal in spades. I also found my place in our youth ministry, first as a Sunday school teacher, then as a senior high youth advisor. Youth ministry deepened my UU faith as I became involved in larger denominational activities, such as youth conferences, Camp de Benneville Pines staff and as a youth caucus advisor for District Assembly.

Magic ensues when energetic, idealist, open, and brilliant UU youth come together from different congregations and regions. Indeed, I was transformed by their stories of finding acceptance in our UU community in the midst of a world that attempted to beat down their souls and leave them empty. I lost count of the number of youth who told me, “This community saved my life.”

Their words made me realize that one thing we resoundingly do so well as a denomination is making a space for youth to empower themselves through leadership, story, and worship. These young people now number among them doctors, cognitive linguists, speech therapists, musicians and performing artists. Two are now civil rights attorneys who served as legal observers in Ferguson, Berkeley and New York City during recent civil rights protests. One of those same young people also testified in front of the United Nations, fighting to designate conversion therapy as torture. At least three are now in seminary to become UU ministers. They all credit their involvement with UUism for laying the foundation to pursue a path that advances justice and enhances the lives of humankind. To have been a part of their journey is an incredible honor, and I would never have experienced it without UUCP.

If youth ministry provides me with hope for the future, the presence of this sacred building is where I find comfort in the present. During my tenure as UUCP’s Director of Lifespan Religious Education (2003-2007), my husband of 21 years and I separated and then divorced. Although I initiated the separation after many years of soul searching and discernment, it was still a time of deep grief. A few months before my divorce was final, I shared my sadness with a UU minister, who had also experienced divorce after a long marriage. She provided comfort and perspective, including encouraging me to hold a ceremony on the day the divorce was final in order to honor the many blessing of my marriage and to mark the new life that would emerge for me.

As she spoke, I imagined holding a ceremony attended by my closest friends and sheltered by the mesquite and palo verde trees in our Memorial Garden. My imagination painted a scene of a serene sunset, with the light dappling the ground through the trees, the protective shadows of the Birmingham girls, and the warmth of my dearest friends’ hands. Hence, on April 15, 2010, I held that ceremony just as I imagined it, making the Memorial Garden all the more hallowed ground to my soul.

These snapshots capture only a few ways this congregation has impacted my life and others. My children have grown up here, and they, too, consider it to be their spiritual home. We all know that it is always here to inspire, comfort, and challenge us. I give for all these reasons and more. Without a doubt, in the dark days of my divorce, I was fairly devastated financially, so I requested a waiver. In the past few years, however, I have regained my financial footing, and although I am single with one child in college and another in high school, UUCP is a priority in my budget. There are many worthy causes to which I often contribute a small amount. However, UUCP is such a force of goodness in the world, an absolute beacon of liberal religious faith, and so integral to my life, I give five percent of my adjusted income per year. I have set up an automatic monthly payment through my American Express — a win-win because I get points toward free hotel stays and I never forget to make my pledge payment!

This is a special place. We are its stewards with the charge of making sure that its mission can be realized today, as well as 10, 20, 50 years from now just as Isabel Johnson and other founding members of the UUCP did so long ago. □
Rev. Linda's Retirement Party—Save the Date!

On Sunday, April 26th we'll be celebrating Rev. Linda's ministry and all that she has done for us during her five years as our assistant minister. On that day, we are having only one service to be held at 10:30 am. The party will follow at 11:30 am, beginning in the Johnson Room with light refreshments. Then, after a fun group activity in the sanctuary, we will present Rev. Linda with gifts and richly deserved tributes.

One of the gifts will be a scrapbook. Individuals and groups can create their own pages to share their memories of and appreciation for Linda. Scrapbook pages will be available in Office 2 during Thursday's Community Nights March 19th through April 16th. Charlotte Carl-Mitchell will be collecting the pages and compiling the book. For those who can’t do their own page, they can send their thoughts and tributes to her at ccm@tic.com and she will put them in the book. The deadline for the return of the pages is Thursday, April 16th.

Linda, soon to be having another grandchild, is retiring to spend more time with her family. Let's give her a rousing send-off! □

— GENEROSITY —

Teach this triple truth to all: a generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity. — Buddha

That's what I consider true generosity: You give your all, and yet you always feel as if it costs you nothing. — Simone de Beauvoir

When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it? — Eleanor Roosevelt

Every man goes to his death bearing in his hands only that which he has given away. — Persian proverb
Several people have asked me recently whether they qualify to join the Chalice Keepers Society because they are concerned that they may have no assets left by the time they die. (The Chalice Keepers Society is a membership group comprising members and friends of UUCP who have made a commitment to leave a gift to the congregation in their will or estate plan.) And the answer is: of course!

None of us knows when our time will come. No matter how clear the skies or how good our eyes, the future can’t be seen. We sometimes imagine we are seeing all the way to the far horizon, but in reality the future is always just around a blind corner. That is a frustrating truth, made bearable only because we all share it equally; we’re all in the same boat. (For those of you starting to grumble about mixed metaphors, remember that even boats sometimes go around corners.)

What we share in the Chalice Keepers Society is a commitment to the future of our beloved community and a present action to leave something behind after we’re gone. All who share the commitment and make a gift in their will or estate plan are welcome, whether the gift is expected to be big or small. Because it is the generosity of spirit and shared love that counts here and now.

Join Diana Ashley and others this summer exploring the book Generosity Path: Finding the Richness in Giving by Mark V. Ewert:

Financial giving can be its own spiritual path. We have a deep potential for meaning-making and life satisfaction when we look to grow from being occasional, haphazard donors to deliberate, ambitious ones—the life-changing transition from donor to philanthropist. With easy-to-read guidance, The Generosity Path sheds new light on our finances—connecting money to our values, beliefs, and loves—promoting skills and strategies in charitable giving. Starting from a very personal place, it helps readers to find clarity in their own experience and then focus on their areas of passion to build a plan of action. Inspiring personal stories help demonstrate the development of financial generosity, the challenges involved, and the deeper benefits we all might expect from being more intentional with our giving. Creative tools for reflection and practice guide readers’ progress. This practical yet wise volume also features information about collective giving in a community setting, family, or giving circle. Ideal for religious and civic organizations, The Generosity Path includes a discussion guide for group use.

Sundays, 9:00–1 May 31–June 28

Cost: $10 for the series

Required Text: Generosity Path: Finding the Richness in Giving by Mark V. Ewert

Register by calling 602-840-8400 ext. 202 or emailing Heidi: heidiparmenter@phoenixuu.org.
Continued from “Generosity...” Rev. Linda, page 1

or something. At the same time, generosity requires letting go of something else we value: our money, our time, our attention, our talents, our sense of security. We get touchy when our sense of ownership of any of these things is threatened.

The ethos of scarcity impacts our lives at nearly every turn. We want to hang onto what we’ve got in case there’s no more to be had. If we are generous, we fear we may end up paying for our generosity in some negative way. We may be “hit up” again or pressured to give more than we are comfortable giving. Perhaps we’ll be sorry we gave anything at all because we might decide we’ll want or need it back for ourselves!

What would it feel like to conquer our fears about giving? What does it feel like to give without judgment or pressure, without a sense of superiority or entitlement, without implying a sense of dependence or debt in the recipient? What if we didn’t care about the tax deduction, having our name in the donor column of the brochure, or the social pressure?

Author Piero Ferrucci says that “the true benefit of generosity, for the giver, is not a material advantage but an inner revolution.” In other words, true generosity helps us to relax in the knowledge that we value people more than things. True generosity increases our flexibility and our ability to take risks. It helps us connect and feel part of the whole rather than feeling isolated and separate.

Generous people are happier than miserly people. Generous people feel better about themselves and have greater peace of mind. They are generally kinder and more content. What’s not to like about generosity?!

We all have something to give, something that’s needed: time, resources, ideas, and more. To give whatever it is we have to give and to give it freely, no strings attached, is... well... freeing! Generosity does not mean giving all one has to give to the point of depletion. Self-awareness and healthy boundaries are important of course. But, according to Ferrucci:

**Generosity is exactly this: to give that which is dearest to us. It is an act that transforms us. After it, we will be poorer, but we will feel richer. Perhaps we will feel less equipped and secure, but we will be freer. We will have made the world we live in a little kinder.**

May we all strive to give freely of our resources, to free ourselves from the fears and the “me-me” stinginess that permeates our culture. May our freely given gifts of time, talent, and treasure generate greater health and happiness for our families, our congregation and our world.

I am most grateful for the generosity I’ve experienced from so many of you over the past five years. May your generous spirit continue! □

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**Make UUCP your Thursday Night Destination**

**COMMUNITY NIGHTS**

6:00 pm Dinner—Suggested Donation: $5/adults, $2/children under 10, $10/family
6:30 pm Classes, Small Groups, and Chalice Kids

Every Thursday night in April—all are welcome!
Welcome New Members

The ministers and Membership Committee were delighted to spend time with the February Pathway to Membership class and welcome 16 people to UUCP membership. Our newest members are: Rene Apack, Judith Breuer, Kathleen Burns, Benny Butt, Bunny Hodas, Karen Kurtz, Celso Mireles, Kelly Rhodes, Jane Roosen, Ileana Salinas, Jennifer Smith, James Spearman, Marlene Tromp, Yolanda Welch, Bonnie White, and Val Wylie. Below are more new member photos with short biographies, continued from the March issue of Horizons. Also look for the photos and names of our new members on the media screen in our foyer and be sure to greet and welcome our newest members.

René Apack recently moved here from Chicago. He has two accomplished daughters, Gina and Bianca Apack. His son Aaron Alexander will be attending college in AZ. Rene became a UU in 2002 at the Deerfield, IL congregation. Professionally, René helps people over the phone and internet with assets and income protection through insurance. His passion is to spread peace around the world by traveling and exploring common ground in all different cultures to help people have better lives.

Kathleen Burns questioned her faith many times over the years but has maintained a belief in reincarnation. She read Siddhartha, the Upanishads, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and other sources that led her to believe that the universe is cosmically connected in some way. All her reading led to more reading, and she now feels drawn more deeply to the tenets of Buddhism and Pantheism. After four years as a UU in Connecticut, she is glad to connect with UUCP.

Benny Butt moved from Arkansas to Phoenix in 1984 to work for the Phoenix Fire Department, where he is currently employed. Benny formerly worked as a firefighter in Arkansas, a cross-country truck driver and chimney sweep. Benny’s hobbies include reading, hiking, camping, and fly fishing. Benny grew up in the Methodist Church and started attending UUCP approximately two years ago. He cherishes the emotional and spiritual support that is shared here with like-minded humanists and progressives.

Karen Kurtz, a Chicago native, has attended UUCP since October 2007. She has a graduate degree in public policy from the Humphrey Institute. After a career in various local government positions, Karen started working for herself in 2001 doing grant management, facilitation, and consulting with various nonprofit and government agencies. In her free time, she loves reading, genealogy, going to Phoenix Mercury games, and anything her four-year-old daughter Ariza wants to do.

Marlene Tromp is Dean of the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at ASU. She is a scholar of Victorian culture and literature and Women and Gender studies, focusing on social justice.

James Spearman is a craftsman and designer with a passion for sustainability. Son Jacob Tromp-Chacko is in 7th grade and loves gaming, Yu-Gi-Oh, and Manga.
Yolanda Welch is a student of classical and opera music. She also enjoys creating educational and inspirational videos. Yolanda is pagan, and she is independently studying Wicca as well. She hopes to meet many interesting people and make lasting friendships at UUCP.  

Gentleness, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion.  
Mahatma Gandhi

Pacific Southwest District Assembly  
April 24-25, Chandler, AZ

District Assembly is an annual event that allows UUs from AZ, CA, and NV to connect over worship, workshops, youth ceremonies, and the District’s annual business meeting. This year the assembly will be held at Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Chandler. You can register for the whole conference (Friday evening and Saturday all day) or you can register for just Friday or Saturday. There is free childcare on Saturday. To download the schedule of events, workshop descriptions and to register online visit www.pswduua.org/pages/district-assembly-2015.php. Online registration ends on April 19th.

General Assembly 2015  
June 24-28, Portland, OR

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend. The theme for GA 2015 is Building a New Way. Most events will be held in the Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Portland, OR 97232. To view the program of events and to register please visit www.uua.org/GA.
April Worship Theme:

Generosity

April 5 & 12 services at 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM

April 5: Easter Service: Life Calls Us On
Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray
Easter in the Christian tradition speaks to us of new life, renewal and the abundance of Spring. It is also a story that reminds us even in our most difficult times, hope is present. How does our own liberal tradition give us markers and stories to remind us of this truth?

April 12: A Grateful Heart is a Generous Heart (Generosity Begins with Gratitude)
Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray
Generosity is born from a place of gratitude, from a place of seeing the blessings of life. Through this we are able to more fully and freely give to others. How do we cultivate gratitude and generosity in our lives?

Share the Plate Sunday: Offering benefits the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

Move to One Sunday Service at 10:30 AM—begins April 19!

April 19: Multigenerational Flower Service and Celebration Sunday!
Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray
Bring a flower to share at this all-ages service celebrating beauty, unity and human dignity. This is a one-of-a-kind traditional Unitarian Universalist service which blends story, music and the beauty of springtime flowers into a celebration of life and community. After service we will have a patio party as we bring to a close our Stewardship Campaign!

Please turn in pledge cards by April 19th! Thank you for your Generosity!

April 26: Living Generously
Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray
Generosity is not just about charity. It is not just about giving money. Generosity is a quality of spirit that allows us to give and share ourselves with others. It is a way of living that helps us move beyond our own preoccupations to giving and sharing more fully who we are with those around us.

Going Away Party for Rev. Linda Lawrence after service on Sunday, April 26th!
Continued from “Gratitude...” Rev. Susan, page 1

community building by organizing, planning, overseeing and, yes, sometimes cooking! And she has strengthened and grown our pastoral ministry by directly providing pastoral care to members and friends but also by expanding and nurturing leadership and participation in our Unicare Ministry. From Friendship Partners, to Memorial services, to regular communication of the needs in our community through the Unicare list, Linda has helped us care for and welcome each other more fully.

Rev. Linda has personally been present to so many people both within and beyond our congregation with a generosity of care. And she has also done this for staff and leaders at UUCP. Behind the scenes, the work of a congregation is fast-paced and surprisingly stressful. There is always more to be done, always a limited amount of time and resources, and while our work is on the one hand relational and spiritual, the mechanics of making it all happen (making the trains run on time, so to speak) is incredibly detail oriented. Something that many people may not know is how gifted and generous Rev. Linda was in ministering to the staff. From being willing to listen with an open heart, to planning for special treats on birthdays and gifts to celebrate our achievements or prayers to renew us during especially busy times, Linda brought a beautiful generosity of caring to the staff team. I say this as both a witness and a recipient of Linda’s caring and ministry.

There is no doubt in my mind that having Rev. Linda as a part of the ministry team at UUCP has made us as a congregation more grateful and more generous in our ministry.

I hope you all will join me in taking time especially this month to thank Rev. Linda for her ministry to and with us and plan to attend her going-away party on Sunday, April 26th! □

For it is in giving that we receive.
St. Francis of Assisi

Unicare News

In remembrance:
• Elaine Gillen, sister of Bob Kaiser, passed away on February 10th.
• Scott Haworth passed away on March 1st.

Serious Illness/hospitalization:
• Daughter of Sylvia Sharma is recuperating after emergency surgery.

Milestone celebrations:
• Karin Quinn completed her master’s degree!

For more information on significant events in the life of UUCP members/friends, sign up to be on our Unicare email list at unicare@phoenixuu.org.

Maureen Jeffries,
Unicare Coordinator