



# Horizons Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix

July/August 2015



## Finding Balance in Transition

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray

In the contemporary story “The Parable of the Trapeze” by Dannan Parry, the author describes the experience of swinging along on your own trapeze bar, enjoying the breeze, when suddenly you see another bar coming towards you. In the moment, in that place of deep knowing, you understand that the approaching bar has your name on it. You intuit that your path, your growth, your next step is there just ahead of you. The problem, of course, is that to grab that next bar, you have to let go of the current bar you are holding and there is the unavoidable moment when you will for a period be without any bar flying through the space in-between. This space is called “transition.”

During July and August we will be exploring what it means to live a life of Balance. Sometimes,

we try to create balance by controlling everything, feeling like it is the world or circumstances that throw us out of balance. Maybe the universe does have a sense of humor, for just at the moment when we are spending time looking at living with balance, we, as a congregation, will actually be in a period of transition. We have fantastic staff like Anne Byrne and Jill Story (and just a few months ago, Rev. Linda Lawrence) letting go and flying on to that next bar of opportunity and growth in their lives. Over the next couple of months, we will be adding new staff to the congregation, some who will likely be interim staff, here only for a year, as we move through this transition period and think about what next bar is ahead in the life and growth of UUCP.

Transition times are not always easy. Dannan Parry says that we sometimes regard the in-between

*Continued page 4*



## Balancing What We Say & What We Do

Anne Byrne

Director, Children’s Ministries

Our Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles are an excellent way to say what UUs are all about. In this my final article as your Director of Children’s Ministries, I offer my suggestions on how to balance the saying and the doing of our faith:

### **1<sup>st</sup> Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person.**

- Treasure and value the inherent worth of yourself and teach your children to do the same.
- Seek out the common humanity with all, even those from very different circumstances.
- Consider the roots of difficult behaviors and show compassion for both the bullied and the bully.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in**

### **human relations.**

- Recognize that the root of human connection is in our shared needs. Learn to identify your own needs and encourage this in others.
- Teach yourselves and your children how to communicate to get your own needs met and try meet other’s needs with compassion.
- Analyze systems at home, at work, with our government and everywhere with a lens on equity to uncover subtle and systematic unfairness. Work to change it.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.**

- Acknowledge your own beliefs and characteristics as a first step in accepting another’s beliefs.
- Challenge yourself and others to be open-

*Continued page 5*



## Sounds of Silence

Benjie Messer

Music Director

Like most schools, UUCP's year begins and ends with summer. Most of our musical groups take July and August off, and I take a little time off in these months too, to go camping, visit far-away friends, and take a deep breath before plunging into our fall season. I also attend the UU Musicians' Network annual conference each summer, and get to a few of the important-but-not-urgent tasks that have been waiting patiently at the bottom of my to-do list all year. Breaks are necessary parts of a healthy music program, and I hope that like me, you all get to take occasional breaks from the things you are the most committed to. In the same way that we need sleep after a day of being awake, we need chances to step back from our projects in order to re-engage in them, refreshed and purposeful.

In 1952, the experimental composer John Cage wrote a piece of music titled "4'33", which consisted simply of a performer taking the stage and not playing a single note for four minutes and thirty-three seconds. Drawing on Cage's love of Zen Buddhism, the piece epitomized his belief that music could awaken the listener to the beauty of the world around them, in all its sounds and silences. It's easy to make fun of this piece, but Cage didn't intend it as a joke, and I think that the essential experience of it is as fresh now as it was in 1952. Assailed as we are by music, language and noise, it's a refreshing thing to be asked to simply enjoy silence, to let our attention be free to notice the world as it is.

Each Sunday, we take a minute of silence in our service, and I think that this minute is as important as anything else we do together. Like Cage's "4'33", it provides a balance against the purposeful, planned sections of our service, a reminder that the world is complete without our effort. Before writing "4'33", Cage visited an anechoic chamber, a truly silent room, soundproofed from the outside and completely non-reflective from the inside. Expecting to experience complete silence, he instead clearly heard the subtle sounds of his body, the hums of his nervous system and his circulating

blood. He reported, "Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music." As Rev. Susan often mentions when introducing this silent time, there is no true silence. Pausing not only gives us a chance to calm ourselves and let our attention settle, but also reminds us that the world continues around us. For those of us who keep ourselves busy, taking a moment of silence can remind us that there is nothing we truly need to do, that the planet really will keep spinning without our effort.

Perhaps some of you have lots of silence in your lives, and need more music, more activity, more commitment, to find a balance—if so, go for it, by all means! For me, finding balance in the last year has meant finding ways to work less and enjoy more moments of silence, and I'm excited that the summer is finally here. I hope you all enjoy these quiet, hot Phoenix months, and that you continue to find balance in your own lives. □

### — BALANCE —

Be moderate in order to taste the joys of life in abundance. —Epicurus

*Your hand opens and closes, opens and closes. If it were always a fist or always stretched open, you would be paralysed. Your deepest presence is in every small contracting and expanding, the two as beautifully balanced and coordinated as birds' wings.* —Rumi

To light a candle is to cast a shadow. —Ursula K. Le Guin

Life is about balance. The good and the bad. The highs and the lows. The pina and the colada. —Ellen DeGeneres



## Budgeting Our Time

Sarah Montgomery

Vice President, UUCP Board of Trustees

**B**race yourself; I'm going to assert an unpopular opinion. I love budgets. A budget is a powerful tool that enables us to take a finite resource, income, and apportion it to different spending categories based on our priorities. A budget lets me decide what's important—a home, education, travel, UUCP—and make sure I spend my precious resources in accordance with those values. When I choose to spend money on one thing, I have to decide what I'll spend less on to balance the budget. A budget provides me with the peace of mind that I'll reach my long-term goals. I won't sacrifice what's really important to me for short-term convenience.

Recently I've been thinking about how these same budgeting principles apply to our time. Like money, time is a finite resource. There are only so many hours in a day. Some activities are fixed: we have to spend a certain number of hours on work, school, sleep, etc. But others we have some say over. How many minutes am I going to spend watching TV, meditating, worrying about that thing at work, playing games on my cell phone, or talking with my partner today?

What if you budgeted your time like money? That would mean assessing your values and apportioning your time accordingly. If music is important to you, set aside 30 minutes or an hour a day to practice. If you value lifelong learning, pick a subject you want to know more about and budget time each week to read about it or take a class. And if you consider UUCP your spiritual home and want to see it thrive, budget time to greet or usher on Sunday mornings, help out in the office during the week, teach a religious education class, join a small group ministry, or get involved on a committee.

Upsetting the balance can be scary. When faced with a request to add something to my calendar, my initial response is "I don't have the time." But that's not true, is it? It's not that I don't have the time; it's that I've chosen to spend my time on something else. Saying yes to one thing invariably means saying no to another. If I'm going to

dedicate myself to learning French I'll have to spend less time playing *Monsters Ate My Condo*. Doing what we've always done is comfortable, and changing that balance takes courage. At first it's a little scary, but soon you'll find a new, more meaningful balance. And the payoff can be huge. Imagine if you looked back on the last year and saw that you were devoting time to what really matters most to you. You'd be making progress toward your long-term goals and living a life in accordance with your values. Think of the peace of mind and satisfaction that can bring. □

## Unicare News

In remembrance:

- Catherine "Robin" Yanak, mother of Lydia Yanak, passed away on May 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Florence Butler, grandmother of Christine Marshall, passed away on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Barbara Burns, mother of Arlene Kole Salmon, passed away on May 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Marta, friend of Tammy Wheeler-Rhodes, passed away on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Milestone celebrations:

- Celso Mireles & Ileana Salinas were married on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Bill & Linda Kesler celebrated their 28<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in May.

Other news:

- Rev. Linda Lawrence welcomed her first granddaughter, Emerson Mae Veile.
- Amy & Steven Miskell are happy that their friend Jason has returned from working as a nurse in Sierra Leone and Liberia fighting ebola.
- Ireland became the first country to approve Marriage Equality, and did so by a 67% referendum.

*Continued from "Finding..." Rev. Susan, page 1*  
time as a no-place between places, but that in truth the transition time is the most significant. He writes:

"I have come to believe that transition is the only place that real change occurs. I have a sneaking suspicion that the transition zone is the only real thing and the bars are illusions we dream up to avoid the void where the real change, the real growth, occurs for us. Whether or not my hunch is true, it remains that the transition zones in our lives are incredibly rich places. They should be honored, even savored. Yes, with all the pain and fear and feelings of being out of control that can (but not necessarily) accompany transitions, they are still the most alive, most growth-filled, passionate, expansive moments in our lives."

As we contemplate how to cultivate balance in our lives, to create a balance between our heads and our hearts, our work and our family, our doing and our being, it just may be that there is no better place to really practice balance than in times of transition. And in this way, we might discover that a part of finding balance in the midst of transition is to look around during the "in-between" times, honor these times, and remember that sometimes it is when we

feel most lost, when we are most uncertain which way is forward, when we feel confounded, that these are the times when we are growing the most. That transition is the only place where real change occurs.

In the end, transitions times do pass. We do find that new bar. And once we do, we may discover we only got there by letting go of the old and growing through the transition.

As we go through transition in staffing at UUCP, sending Anne and Jill off with our well-wishes for the opportunities ahead for them, perhaps in your own life you are transition—may we all find a kind of inner balance in the midst of change and the unknown. And may this summer and its long, hot days afford you chances to slow down in body and in spirit, to have time to rest, to appreciate moments of rest and love, joy and hope. I am grateful for some time off in July and appreciate all the wonderful members of UUCP who will be sharing with you their own lessons and experiences in finding balance while I am away. I will be back at UUCP in August. May you have a healthy and peaceful summer. □



## Finding Balance at SAWUURA Family Camp

Heidi Parmenter

Business Administrator

In May, I took my seven-year-old son Beau to his 4<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day Family Camp at SAWUURA, and it was by far our best time yet. This was the first year that I was able to trust him to follow the rules, listen to the other adults, and keep himself alive without my constant hovering.

Beau spent 12+ hours a day outside, running, climbing, jumping, exploring, drawing, and without access to a single electronic device (there is no electricity at SAWUURA). He never once said, "I'm bored. What can I do?" or "When are we going home?" Even more amazing, I basically did the same things, well, substitute "mid-day napping," "reading," and "journaling" for the running, climbing and

jumping. My cellphone was rendered virtually useless with no reception or Wi-Fi, and I discovered that chit chatting around the campfire with fellow UU parents and kids was actually more entertaining than Facebook. After a while, the mother's guilt of all the napping, reading, journaling and chit chatting with adults would compel me to ask Beau if he wanted to play with me, and every single time he would shout over his shoulder a very gleeful "No!" as he ran off to play with the pack of other kids.

It was a magical weekend, one I encourage all of you to experience for yourself. One of the cool things about these Family Camps is that people of all ages attend. It is not just for children and their parents. It feels like camping with your extended

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*Continued from "Balancing..." Anne Byrne, page 1*  
hearted and open-minded to unfamiliar or differing beliefs, styles, and systems of operating.

- Understand that it is common for us all to project our own views or perspective on another, and the first step to openness is recognition of this reality, which enables you to set it aside.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.**

- Encourage yourself and those around you to discover your own authenticity and live as fully in this place as possible.
- Recognize truth and meaning take many forms and encourage searching in all its varieties.
- Take responsibility for ways you may inhibit another's search. Be accountable for the consequences of your actions, regardless of your intentions.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.**

- Vote! Vote! Vote! Take full advantage of your ability to make a difference in your community, state, nation and world.
- Encourage your children to form their own opinions about their worlds and to exercise their rights to advocate and influence others, including and especially on family matters.
- Be brave and encourage your children to be

brave. Working for justice requires courage.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.**

- Learn and apply peaceful communication and use it at work, at home and among friends.
- Recognize that all the people of the earth share the same basic needs and deserve the same basic rights.
- Stand with those whose rights are at risk and follow the leadership of those experiencing injustice. Step up and step back.

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.**

- Educate yourselves and your children on how the dots of existence connect by spending time in nature and learning about our planet.
- Feel the power of existence as human being on this earth with all its blessings. Feel awe, experience beauty, and use those brains and opposing thumbs. Create, inspire others and be inspired. Make music.
- Take seriously the very human responsibility of stewardship and work to protect the planet and all its creatures every day.

Thank for the opportunity to serve this congregation and accept my best wishes for a full, joyful and meaningful life to each of you. □

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family, but all of them are UU and that is probably not the case for most of us.

SAWUURA is a beautiful 109-acre wilderness nestled in the heart of the Sierra Ancha Wilderness, located five miles south of Young, AZ, and surrounded by thousands of acres of national forest at an altitude of 5,500 feet. Driving time from either Phoenix or Tucson is approximately four hours. Tent sites and small camper sites are nestled in the trees close to the creek bed. Picnic tables and shade awnings are provided in a central gathering area. There are four primitive cabins and a gravity-fed water system that brings water to sinks and solar showers near the campsites.

The next Family Camp is Labor Day weekend: Friday, September 4 – Monday, September 7, 2015. You can join dozens of other UUs for a relaxing weekend under the stars. Disconnect from your phones, computers, TVs and share meals, hikes, music and laughter with other nature-lovers. Meals are provided with the cost of registration; just bring snacks, drinks, and camping gear. Registration Fees are \$45 per adult (\$35 for SAWUURA members) and \$25 per child. Register by Monday, August 31 via forms available online ([www.sawuura.org](http://www.sawuura.org)), or for more information contact me at [heidiparmenter@phoenixuu.org](mailto:heidiparmenter@phoenixuu.org) or 602-840-8400 ext. 202. □



## Creating a Balanced Life in Your Retirement Years

Peggy Paden

Facilitator, Small Group Ministry

Once the child raising and career days are over, older people likely have more free time, but often, less energy, strength and mobility. So re-balancing the days and the weeks becomes an ongoing process. The key to creating balance in our lives seems to be two-fold: 1) knowing ourselves really well: strengths, weaknesses, preferences, etc.; and 2) having a clear sense of our priorities and values. As in any stage of life, there's no such thing as "perfect balance." The ability to juggle the unexpected and adapt to changing conditions is necessary for everyone. But as older people, as mortality draws closer, it tends to become more important to prioritize that which is most important, and let go of that which is not.

Some of us retire from leadership positions and are happy to pass the torch to younger generations. Many of us learn to schedule fewer things in one day, and leave more time for reading and relaxing. Relaxing! All my life I looked forward to being retired so I could "relax," and when the time came, I found I wasn't sure how to do it! I'm still working on calming down the adrenalin and taking deep breaths. Many seniors do better with an "unscheduled" day, while others of us like to have a daily routine to follow. Most of us, depending on

health, try to find a balance between family, friends, volunteering, traveling, and hobbies. It does seem more important than ever at this age to use time wisely. The question becomes not "What do I want to be when I grow up?" but "What do I want to do in the time that is left?"

Using time wisely often involves changing expectations of ourselves and others, knowing what we can change, and accepting what we can't. I ask myself this question periodically: "What are you willing to let go of, and what are you not?" The answer keeps changing! Many challenges are unavoidable: the loss of beloved family and friends, possible loss of hearing or sight, the possibility of having to give up driving and the independence that represents. I've seen many friends adapt positively and with flexibility to these situations and re-balance their lives in new ways. The balance between being "too busy" and "not busy enough" varies from person to person, but is a juggling act for many seniors. For some, prioritizing actually gets simpler: "Just give something back, pass something on, and take time to enjoy the small things." A favorite reading in our Senior Women's Group is from the late Rev. Forrest Church: "Want what you have... Be who you are... Do what you can." To me, this seems a good summary of a balanced life. □

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## **SUMMER COMMUNITY NIGHTS**

6:00 PM ▪ Potluck ▪ Multigenerational (no Chalice Kids) ▪ Special Activities!

Thursday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> - *BBQ, Ice Cream & Jam (see below)*

Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup> - *Lynne Haeseler Sing-along and CD Release Party*

### *Barbecue, Ice Cream and Jam*

Join us for July's Community Night with something to grill and a potluck side dish. We'll have homemade ice cream for dessert. Bring along an instrument or song sheet and plan to play and sing along in a friendly, laid back acoustic music jam.

For more information, contact Anne Byrne at [annebyrne@phoenixuu.org](mailto:annebyrne@phoenixuu.org).

## July/August Worship Theme: **Balance**

*Services bring our community together at 10:30 AM*

July 5: *Reflections on Balance*

Service Leader: Rev. Kathy Baughman,

The Reverend Kathy Baughman is a Chaplain at the Mayo Clinic and UUCP's Affiliate Community Minister.

July 12: *The Quest for Inner Equilibrium*

Service Leader: Karin Quinn

Albert Einstein said, "Life is like riding a bicycle; in order to stay balanced, we have to keep moving." So often in the face of life's challenges, we exhaust ourselves struggling to maintain an illusion of solidity and control, in a universe where nothing is fixed. The alternative is to embark on a quest for inner equilibrium.

July 19: *Embracing Our Deepest Fear*

Service Leader: Sam Kirkland

In her poem "Our Deepest Fear," Marianne Williamson writes, "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure!" There is a balancing act between what we hide and what we reveal and by embracing our power, we can unleash a force for greatness in the world.

July 26: *Simple Gifts—Turning to Create Balance in Life*

Service Leader: Donna Featherston

The beloved Shaker hymn *Simple Gifts* begins by reminding us that simplicity and freedom are gifts, and ends with the lyric that by "turning, turning, we come round right." The song was written as a "quick dance" and its lyrics contain instructions for both dance and life. We will consider the thought of turning to create balance in our lives. What do we wish to turn from? What do we wish to turn toward?

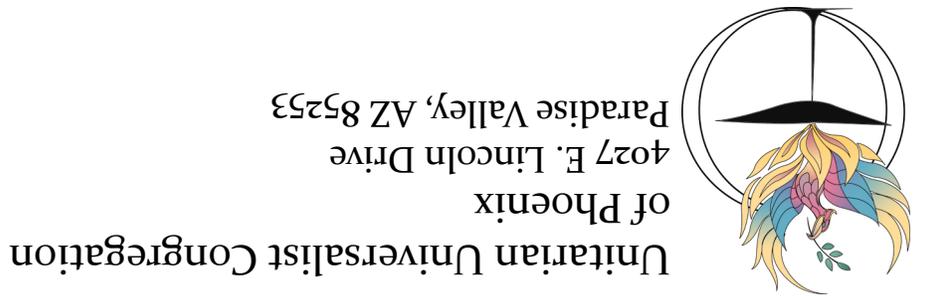
August 2: *Morning Service of Meditation, Music and Mindfulness*

Service Leader: Lynne Haeseler

A program of music and reflections woven together in an uninterrupted flow of meditation. Taking time to be mindful of being here together.

All other August Services will be led by Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray





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