



# Horizons Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix

October 2015



## We Who Believe in Freedom

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray

Throughout October, we will explore the question, “What does it mean to be a people of freedom?” Freedom is a core value in Unitarian Universalism. In our principles and covenant, we speak of the free and responsible search for truth and meaning and our commitment to the right of conscience for every person – the right to articulate the truth of one’s heart. This is so important to us because our theological roots are born in men and women and movements of people who didn’t just accept tradition and doctrine as handed down, but found truth emerging through a combination of history, tradition and the discoveries and needs of the present day.

In our congregations, we welcome a great diversity of belief and non-belief. And yet, this

commitment to seek truth in freedom is not just about making room for a variety of beliefs; it is also about being open to the idea that revelation is never-ending. New understandings, new ways of seeing things, new articulations of truth and meaning are possible when we keep our minds, our hearts and our spirits open. Allowing this openness and flexibility in thinking, even welcoming change to our beliefs requires freedom. This commitment to religious freedom has long been a part of our tradition. This makes freedom an especially interesting theme to explore, as there is also a larger conversation happening around our country today about religious freedom. A few weeks ago, I attended a Scottsdale City Council meeting where opponents to a non-discrimination ordinance to protect the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and

*Continued page 9*



## Come Sunday

Benjie Messer

Music Director

Some of you know that I’m a huge fan of Duke Ellington. In October, pianist Jack Wisniewski will be performing Ellington’s “Come Sunday” at UUCP, so I would like to indulge in a little history about that piece and its connection to our monthly worship theme of freedom.

Perhaps our nation’s greatest composer, Ellington was also passionate about African-American history, and as early as 1930, he planned to write a large concert piece on the topic. Thirteen years later, Duke premiered his 44-minute symphony “Black, Brown and Beige,” the longest and most ambitious work of his career, which he described as “a tone parallel to the history of the Negro in America.” Biographer John Edward Hasse writes of the piece, “The title... suggests a historical progression not of skin colors but, metaphorically,

of the increasing integration of people of African descent and their culture into American society... Ellington tells a story that is troubling, powerful, and hopeful.”

The first movement, “Black,” describes slaves’ lives on a plantation. The second movement, “Brown,” looks at black military service in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and the third, “Beige,” depicts African-American life in Harlem in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ellington had originally intended five movements, and referred to the first two as “Africa” and “Slaveship,” but those were never written. The piece was premiered during World War II, and Duke may have felt that they could seem unpatriotic.

“Come Sunday” itself is an instrumental melody from the first movement, “Black,” a quiet spiritual moment between work songs. In a narrative sketch of the music, Ellington wrote,

*Continued page 8*



## Eye on the Horizon Glen Lockwood

President, UUCP Board of Trustees

In this new program year, our worship themes will be based on Covenant—on *how* we promise to be in community with each other. The monthly themes (such as Love, Freedom, and Service) stem from our congregation's covenant. Over the course of the year, in Sunday services and in small groups, we will explore how we want to be together.

Last program year, the Board began the process of creating a new Vision – that is, *who* we want to be as a congregation in the future. The Board recruited a Vision Task Force of six congregation members (including one youth member) and our minister. The task force spent several months listening to members, engaging in deep conversation, and working together to discern a shared sense of our vision for the future. At the beginning of June the following statement best captured what they heard:

*We aspire to be an inclusive community of spiritual seekers.*

*We gather together in joy and hope, seeking to live and act with generosity, compassion and courage.*

*May we grow as a vital religious voice for love and justice.*

Sam Kirkland, our Vision Task Force convener, presented this prototype at the congregational meeting in June. We still have some discernment and discussions ahead of us. Does this vision statement truly capture who we aspire to be? Is it bold and audacious? As the newly elected Board of Trustees has begun planning our year, it is clear that our most important work involves creating a shared sense of UUCP's Vision and then using that vision to launch us into our future.

At its best, our Vision will have the power to unite us. It will name our dreams. It will help us decide what actions to take in order to create our children's UUCP. Last year, I wrote about Vision in terms of Intention. Now I want us thinking about Vision in terms of Covenant: a shared Intention to which we will hold each other and ourselves accountable. What would we do differently with this statement as a guidepost—no—as a launching pad?

Where and Who do we want to be in 10 years? 25 years? Can we name that? What would it look like to walk into UUCP in 10 years? What will it feel like? What agreements do we need to make with each other in order to create that vision—to live into it?

Ideally, we create a Vision based upon who we are and who we hope to become, and then we set about to achieve that Vision. One of the great (and challenging) things about our Vision is that it changes as we change. And we change with every member: with each member that moves away, with every new member who joins the congregation, with every birth and every death.

That is why our visioning work doesn't end. This work is hard and ever-changing. This is the work of the Board of Trustees—to keep our eyes on the horizon. □



## To Raise World Changers

Katie Resendiz

Acting Director, Children's Ministries

As Unitarian Universalists, we talk about "Freedom" within the context of intellectual pursuit, faith development, and individual decision making. Yet, there is a much more basic concept of freedom that needs to be addressed.

Human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. It is work without consent. In the simplest terms, it is modern day slavery.

At the moment you are reading this, there are more than 27 million people being forced to work against their will (according to the U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons). That number represents more individuals than were enslaved during the entirety of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The issue of Human Trafficking, has been a bit of a cause *de jour* in Metro Phoenix. You may have seen billboards regarding the link between commercial sex and human trafficking, you may have attended meetings on child sex trafficking, you may have heard local mayors call attention to the issue at press conferences. As a community, we are just starting to come to grasp with the reality of this crime. As Unitarian Universalists upholding the ideal of freedom, we need to raise awareness, educate one another, and stand together as a community to say "we refuse to tolerate slavery."

We know all sustainable efforts for change are multigenerational, but how do you talk to children about such a horrific crime?

*Tips (thanks to the She's Worth It Campaign):*

- Keep it simple. Define trafficking within the context of being forced to work. For example "slavery is when one person thinks they own another person and can be their boss at all times. They don't treat them well or respect their words."
- Talk about the extent of the issue. Tell them this happens all over the world, to all types of people. A lot of kids have heard about slavery

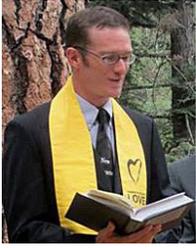
only in terms of Africans being enslaved historically. It's important to let them know that this happens today in every country.

- Don't feel a need to focus solely on sex trafficking or child victimization. If you do, consider the child's age and development. Descriptions like "girls and boys are sometimes held/sold against their will to people who believe they own them and they treat them very badly."
- Use it as an opportunity to talk about injustice and the emotional experience. How does it make your child feel to know slavery exists? What do survivors feel like when they are back in the community? What does it feel like for a "bad person" to value money more than people? What creates these situations?
- Instill hope! Brainstorm solutions. Connect with local service agencies. Remember the Mr. Rogers quote: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

*Resources:*

- How to Talk to Your Children About Human Trafficking: <http://humantraffickingsearch.net/images/teentrafficking/how-to-talk-to-your-children.pdf>
- Sex Trafficking in America: A Guide for Parents and Guardians: [http://www.missingkids.com/en\\_US/documents/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Parents\\_Guardians.pdf](http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/documents/Fact_Sheet_Parents_Guardians.pdf)
- Labor Trafficking in the U.S.: <http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/labor-trafficking-in-the-us>
- *Sex Trafficking Prevention: A Trauma-Informed Approach for Parents and Professionals* (book) by Savannah J. Sanders
- *Nobodies* (book) by John Bowe
- *Disposable People* (book) by Kevin Bales

Talking to children about slavery and the lack of freedom can be daunting, but to raise world changers, we must model bravery. Gather your resources, find your supports, and go for it. □



## Freedoms Worth Fighting For

Emrys Staton

Ministerial Intern

When I was in high school, my parents decided to forego setting a curfew for me. I had the freedom to make my own schedule and deal with the consequences of my decisions. Thinking past high school, which for me seemed like a relatively low stakes time for exploring freedoms, life became more complex and the concept of personal freedom shifted with increased responsibilities.

Now, I think of freedom in a larger social context. I typically think of two categories. One is “freedom to” do things, or agency. Whether it’s the freedom to speak my mind, choose a religion, or to stay out late at night, the freedom to act on my own volition seems to be something that I’ve always assumed to be available to me.

I also think about “freedom from” anything that might hold us down or stifle us. I think of this genre of freedom as rights and liberties, especially in an international setting. As codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all people should have freedom from any form of oppression and persecution. A person should not be coerced or forced into situations they don’t consent to or that would cause them harm.

Governments around the world are tasked with defining and upholding freedoms. However, they also have the legal power to deny and revoke freedoms, like in the United States criminal justice system. This was where I experienced a grownup lesson in freedom. I was convicted in federal court of a crime related to humanitarian work I was doing in 2009. For my sentence, the judge made me choose between 600 hours of prison time, or 300 hours of community service.

This moment demonstrated how freedom is not experienced equally. In my case, even if I chose the prison time, I didn’t see it as a big setback for me. In fact, I was somewhat curious about what prison was like. I saw in it potential to experience and learn something new. When I told a black friend of mine about this decision, his reaction helped open my eyes to a much bigger picture. The fact that I even contemplated the prison time at all

blew his mind—no matter what, jail or prison was to be avoided at all costs.

The criminal justice system has been used to terrorize and devastate communities of people of color since day one in the United States. That’s why it is being targeted so directly by the Black Lives Matter movement, along with many other groups. At the UU General Assembly this summer, our denomination affirmed an Action of Immediate Witness to support the Black Lives Matter movement. Part of that statement calls us to work for prison abolition.

My own sense is that there is a freedom that many people through this country and around the world are fighting for. That is the freedom from living in fear. I hear it from so many people I’ve worked with over the years—undocumented folks, queer folks, sex workers, black folks, political organizers, Muslims, people who look like they are Muslims, poor folks, homeless folks, refugees, asylum seekers, women, young people, and many others... I’ve heard about their daily, ever-present fear that something ranging from unpleasant to deadly could happen to them at any time.

This summer at GA, a UU leader in the movement to build up anti-racism work among white folks, Chris Crass, said something that has really stuck with me. Referencing the Black Lives Matter movement, he said that they don’t need more white folks to be allies. What they need is more white folks to be freedom fighters.

This month, we will be exploring many aspects of what freedom means. What it means in the context of UUCP as a covenanted community, what it means as a larger religious movement, what it means politically, spiritually and morally. In the midst of all that, I will be especially focusing on what it means for me, and definitely not just in the sense of how late I’ll be staying out at night. I’ll be thinking of the freedom that I need to be fighting for, following the leadership of those who’ve been organizing and struggling for generations. And I’ll be recruiting. □

## **OCTOBER COMMUNITY NIGHTS**

Every Thursday, 6:00 PM

*Prepared meals, vegetarian options*

*Suggested donation: \$5/adult, \$2/child under 10, \$10/family  
or bring your own sack supper*

6:30 PM

*Chalice Kids, Adult Faith Development, and Small Groups available:*

**Thoughtful Leadership Forum** with Kim St. Clair begins Oct 8

**Faithiest** with Michael Hipps & Janet McCall Bickley begins Oct 15

**Open (Drop-in) Small Group** with Mike Sheffer, Oct 15

**Young Adult Small Group** with Caitlin Tuffin Gaspar & Sarah Moore , Oct 22

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## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Sunday, October 4, at 10:30, Sanctuary

The Board welcomes all UUCP members to attend a brief congregational meeting to approve the UU Early Education Cooperative (UUEEC) preschool budget for the 2015/2016 program year. UUEEC has developed the budget, and the Board has recommended it for congregational approval. Please join us between services to vote on it.

If you have questions about the UUEEC transition plan, please join us for a Board Chat on Sunday, September 27 after first service, 10:30 in Annex F.





## Freedom Won, Freedom Lost

Julie Smart & Libby Walker

Refugee Assistance Project

It was a perfect day in 2001 for the UUCP hikers, clearly etched in my memory: cornflower blue sky, vistas to write home about, and a comfortable rock outcropping for lunch in the shade. We had a new person with us that day, Aster Yohannes, and the conversation began. We learned that Aster was from Eritrea, a small country in the Horn of Africa and unknown even to the travelers among us, and that the people had sought and won their freedom from Ethiopia in a war lasting 30 years, 1961-91. We were fascinated by Aster and her story. She had been a freedom fighter along with her husband in the most desolate of locations with only rudimentary shelter. All fighters were blood typed because transfusions, when needed, were from one person to another.

We've read so much about getting our freedom, but for the most part we have inherited it, a gift received without much thought concerning the realities of how it was won. We are not asked to make many, if any, sacrifices. Aster had already spent 11 years in the field and then had to travel halfway around the world to further her education. She left a two-year-old, eight-year-old twins and a ten-year-old, not to mention her husband and widowed mother. She shared with us her hope that life back in Eritrea would be better for her family because of this sacrifice and that the newly won freedom would make life better for all Eritreans.

In late September of 2001, Aster told us that her husband Petros Solomon had been arrested in Eritrea for demanding democratic reform. He and 10 other high-ranking Eritrean government officials and all independent journalists were rounded up under cover of 9-11. UUCP launched *Friends of Aster* and helped Aster get asylum in the U.S. and visas for her four young children. Denied permission to leave Eritrea by the dictator, the children became virtual orphans. In December of 2003, against the advice of all who knew her, Aster took a chance and returned to Eritrea where she was arrested before she could see her children. Today Petros and Aster, along with

thousands of Eritreans who fought for freedom, have disappeared into underground cells and shipping containers. They have never been charged or tried and are held incommunicado. Eritrea's 1997 constitution has never been implemented, nor have elections been held since independence was declared in 1993. Military service is mandatory and unending beginning at age 17.

Eritreans' only hope of freedom now lies across their border where they face Eritrean soldiers who have shoot-to-kill orders, human traffickers who harvest the organs of those who cannot pay ransoms, and smugglers who pack them into the holds and onto the decks of open boats to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. Only Syria and Afghanistan produce more refugees than tiny Eritrea.

In 2006, UUCP began helping Eritrean refugees resettled in Phoenix. The *Eritrean Refugee Initiative (ERI)* provided friendship, legal help, a jewelry-making project, furnishings, holiday baskets, English classes and tutoring. Two of Aster's eight siblings escaped and came to Phoenix with help from ERI. While Aster and Petros remain in prison, Aster's mother, siblings and all four children have escaped. Over the years, most of "our" refugees have "graduated" from ERI's English classes, and fewer Eritreans are being resettled in Phoenix.

Soon UUCP will launch RAP, the Refugee Assistance Project, a partnership with the IRC, the International Rescue Committee, Phoenix office. In cooperation with the Beatitudes Retirement Community at 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Glendale, we will provide English classes and other volunteer opportunities for UUCP members through the auspices of the IRC. We will include all refugees with a special focus on Eritreans by means of a Crisis Fund to help with expenses not provided by the IRC. Watch for information on an upcoming orientation meeting where you can learn about becoming an RAP/IRC volunteer and be a part of Freedom Restored. □



## Caring for Our Spiritual Home

Heidi Parmenter

Business Administrator

Our Congregation is blessed with a beautiful campus on nine acres of land. It is our spiritual home and the home to two weekday schools. On Sundays we have between 150 and 300 people coming together to grow in spirit and Monday through Friday we have between 50 to 70 children, teachers, and parents coming together to grow in knowledge and play.

Maintaining the buildings and the grounds requires help from everyone. When it comes to caring for this home, we are a big family working together to ensure that our home is welcoming and safe for everyone.

As the property manager, it is my duty to act as a clearinghouse for building and grounds maintenance issues, maintain all property management records, manage the grounds and maintenance budget, and coordinate repairs and preventative maintenance. My full-time position as Business Administrator and my longevity in the position (10 years this February!) makes some of this responsibility easier for me to handle but, as with most staff positions in the congregation, it is also my responsibility to seek those in our community who can share the ministry with me.

Here are some ways everyone can help care for our campus. Which of these ways will you care for our spiritual home?



- *Report maintenance issues to me in the office.* You can do this by writing down the maintenance issue on the Maintenance Repair List on one of the clipboards located in Office 2 or the Kitchen, or calling me in the office at 602-840-8400 or emailing me at [heidiparmenter@phoenixuu.org](mailto:heidiparmenter@phoenixuu.org). Whichever communication method is easiest for you to get the repair issue reported to me is fine. Every Monday a volunteer will review maintenance issues reported, investigate the issue, and help me prioritize issues within the scope of the annual budget for building and ground maintenance.
- *Join our Campus Caretaker list.* A Campus Caretaker is a person who is willing and able to help with minor repairs and tasks related to campus maintenance. Issues that don't require highly specialized service will be emailed to the Campus Caretakers to see if anyone can volunteer to take care of the issue. If you would like to be included on our Campus Caretakers list please email or call me in the office. All skill levels and experience are welcome—the more Caretakers we have the more care we can provide!
- *Participate in the Campus Work Day on Sunday, February 7, 12:30-2:00 pm.* Details on projects will be announced closer to the date. Is there a special project you are interested in seeing done and willing to help lead? Let me know and I will see if it is something we can include in this work day. □

## Unitarian Universalist Service Committee 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM followed by lunch

Celebrate and learn more about UUSC, the Humanitarian and Social Justice Organization based on UU values, serving both national and international needs.



Sushma Raman, Vice President and Chief Program Officer at UUSC, will be visiting UUCP to premiere a video on UUSC's history of defending the human rights of the most marginalized people around the world. Following the video, Ms. Raman will present on UUSC's current work and future vision. You will be amazed at the wide and varied work being done at home and around the world.

Please join us for the program and if you can stay for lunch and conversation. RSVP to Geoff at 602-840-8400 ext. 201 or visit [www.phoenixuu.org/UUSC](http://www.phoenixuu.org/UUSC).

*Continued from "Come..." page 1*

*Come Sunday, while all the Whites had gone into the church, the slaves congregated under a tree. Huddled together, they passed the word of God around in whispers.... He must enjoy the sweet suffering of this profound internal upheaval of love and joy in silence.*

The lyrics we see in our hymnal first appear on the Ellington band's 1958 recording of excerpts from "Black, Brown and Beige" with gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, and I imagine that Duke wrote them for that recording.

"Black, Brown and Beige" was premiered at a concert at Carnegie Hall in 1943. Most reviewers attacked the piece strongly, calling it "pretentious," "too long," "meaningless," "corny," and "self-conscious," and suggested that Ellington should stick to writing dance music that would fit on one side of a record. His sister Ruth said that after the premiere, Duke "sort of withdrew and was very quiet." Though he continued to write extended works that commented on the African-American

experience, he never performed "Black, Brown and Beige" in full after its three initial premieres. The original scores were never published, and the only complete recording is a scratchy live taping of the Carnegie Hall concert.

So how is "Black, Brown and Beige" about freedom? Well, in one way, it's about the struggle for freedom and full citizenship of African-heritage people, a struggle that we are reminded of as we consider the mass incarceration and police violence that plagues communities of color today. I hope that our freedom songs this month remind us of the enormity of the struggle we face in making our world a place of justice and equity for all.

In another way, this piece is about Ellington's freedom of speech in telling his people's story—a story that clearly wasn't easy for him to tell, or for others to hear. In that way, I hope that this month's songs of freedom inspire us to use our freedom to tell our own stories and to listen to others' stories until we understand each other—even when our stories aren't danceable, and don't fit on one side of a record. □

*Continued from "We Who..." Rev. Susan, page 1*  
transgender people couched their opposition primarily in the language of religious freedom. This is not isolated to Scottsdale. It does raise the question: what does religious freedom really mean and where does a person's rights to believe and teach a particular doctrine begin to impose on another person's inalienable rights and equal protection under the law? What happens when one person's demand for freedom comes at the cost of another person's freedom. We will definitely touch on this conversation this month.

Of course, freedom is not just important in religious belief, it is also a core value to our country. The words liberty and freedom carry tremendous national weight with them; and yet, there are many realities in the United States which are a serious affront to our professed commitment to freedom. In particular, practices of the criminal justice system and the reality of mass incarceration fly in the face of the image of American freedom. Has the language of

freedom become so politicized, so well-worn in political rhetoric that we no longer know what it means? In his book, 1984, George Orwell offers this quintessential example of political double speak, one of the slogans of The Party: "War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength."

Language does matter – but how we use language matters just as much. If we use the language of freedom while allowing the incarceration of people to fund our police force and municipal governments, we corrode the power of the language and spirit of freedom. Freedom is something that we can strive for in our personal lives, our religious lives and our political lives – and it is something worth the struggle. This month, let us deepen our understanding of freedom and our commitment to it. As Bernice Johnson Reagon from Sweet Honey in the Rock writes in *Ella's Song*, "we who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes." □

## *6<sup>th</sup> Annual Service Auction*

*Silent Online Auction: Friday, November 20, 2015 – Sunday, December 6, 2015*

*Live Auction: Sunday, December 6, 2015 at 11 :00 AM in the Sanctuary*

This will be my fourth year running the annual fundraising auction for the congregation and honestly, it never gets boring! Organizing this event is exciting because I get to learn about the interesting hobbies and talents you all possess. To recap, last year the congregation had 254 opportunities to participate in community-hosted events and 59 donations of items and services made by, or offered by, members and friends. If it wasn't for the auction I might never know that we have a professional astrologist, felt artist (remember the world religions dryer balls?!), or genealogist in the house. Every year I meet new people whose names I have seen many times before but never spoke to or met face to face. The auction gives me the opportunity to engage with a variety of people in our community and always reminds me of how fun and talented and generous you all are. Please be sure to join in on the excitement and stay tuned to *Compass* and *Announcements* for information on donating and volunteering for this year's service auction.

– Heidi Parmenter, Business Administrator

## Unicare News

### In remembrance:

- Ellen Bauman, former member of our congregation who moved to Minnesota, passed away in September.
- Marie Lehman, mother of member Jim Allen, mother-in-law to Joanne and grandmother to Celeste, passed away at age 91.
- Earl Ezzell, father of member Gary Ezzell, passed away just shy of age 90.

### Milestone celebrations:

- Jack and Jane Grenard celebrated their 57<sup>th</sup> anniversary in August.

### Other news:

- Come learn more about what Unicare does for our members at the Coffee Hour Showcase after either service on October 18<sup>th</sup> in the Johnson room.

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](mailto:unicare@phoenixuu.org).

Lynne MacVean  
Unicare Coordinator



## Memorial Garden



*friends whose ashes were interred in the Memorial Garden this season in past years are still remembered*

### **April:**

Jesse O. Allen  
Lucy Burrell Allen  
Irv Bezman  
Virginia Ann Bliklen  
Bruce H. Clayton  
Eleanor Dana-Mast  
Edward Ellison Davis  
Glenn Jay Jackel  
Hanna B. Parker  
Robert William Riddle  
Lucy Buckner Wells

### **May:**

Emma LaDuke Ames  
Louise Bauer Bercaw  
Jean Berry  
Ralph P.E. Dickinson  
Ki Hermann  
Donald J. Jackel

Marcy E. Kiefer  
Wilhelmina (Mimi) Muth  
Thaxter Robinson  
Peggy D. Wilkinson  
Kathy Van Kerkwyk

### **June:**

Audrey Hope Engelen  
Shannon Lea Garvin  
Daniel Raymond McNeal  
Jennifer Goyette Raines  
Dr. John Charles Mitchell

### **July:**

Carl Roland Ely  
Mel E. Fair

### **August:**

Roberta Chamberlain  
Howard Ewing Irvine

Lawanda Roach McVey  
Thomas Evan Parker  
Rose Ruttkay

### **September:**

Warren Herbert Amster  
William Blauvelt Bishop  
Phillip Kevin Bliklen  
Betty Halsema Foley  
Julia M. Fritts  
Sarah Patterson Ingersoll  
Betty K. Irvine  
Thomas Stephan Kole  
Erika Michaud  
Mary Ellen Mussman  
Arthur Wilfred Olsen  
William (Bill) Swineford

## October Worship Theme: **Freedom**

*Services bring our community together at 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM*

October 4: *To Seek Knowledge in Freedom*

Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

Each week we affirm a covenant to seek knowledge in freedom. Why is this commitment to knowledge and freedom so foundational for Unitarian Universalists and how are we understanding or misunderstanding religious freedom today?

October 11: *The Power and Poverty of Freedom*

Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

Freedom is a foundational value in the United States. A well-worn word in politics. An ideal we seek to create. But how has our rhetoric of freedom undermined its power for our collective understanding? What do we mean when we talk about freedom and liberty in our country?

October 18: *Moving to the Beat of Freedom*

Service Leader: Emrys Staton, Intern Minister

Music plays such an integral role in the movements for freedom, both by inspiring people in the struggle, and by capturing the conditions of oppression in the poetry of lyrics. From hymns to hip-hop, we can be motivated and educated by the artists who provide powerful messages for us to listen, sing, dance and march to.

October 25: *To Free the Heart*

Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

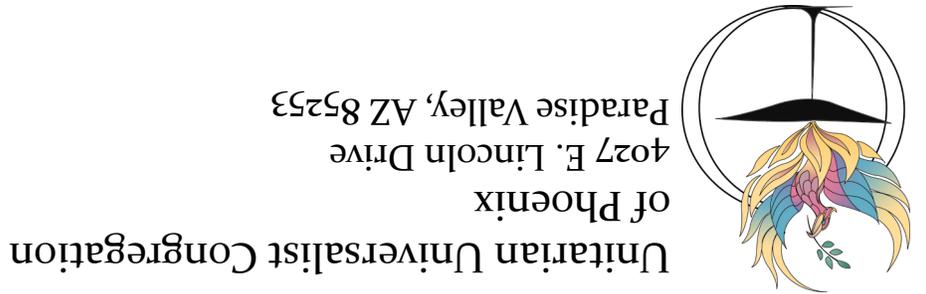
What does freedom mean in our own personal lives? Do we find ourselves stuck, afraid, held back from who we are called to be? How can we learn to free ourselves from some of our internal battles?

Freedom, however, is not the last word. Freedom is only part of the story and half of the truth. Freedom is but the negative aspect of the whole phenomenon whose positive aspect is responsibility. In fact, freedom is in danger of degenerating into mere arbitrariness unless it is lived in terms of responsibility. — Viktor Frankl

If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

— Aboriginal Activists Group

*The moment we choose to love we begin to move against domination, against oppression. The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and others. That action is the testimony of love as the practice of freedom.* — bell hooks



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