I spent much of the summer on the campaign trail, meeting Unitarian Universalists from all over the country. As I launch this campaign for President of the national Unitarian Universalist Association, I wanted a way to listen to people share what they hope for our liberal religious movement. Taking a cue from the up-cycling theme that Katie Resendiz has led in our summer children’s ministry classes, I found a handy way to up-cycle old maps. Remember the days before google maps, when we had folded up maps of various states, cities and regions in our homes and glove compartments? With these maps, I cut out hundreds of hearts and have invited people to write on them what they love about Unitarian Universalism or what they dream for our future.

At the Southeast UU Summer Institute (SUUSI) in North Carolina, I met a UU who has sometimes found our communities less than welcoming. She shared her dream with me. “I dream that UUs would live by the motto: Walls down, Arms open.” Creating and living in human community isn’t always easy. We can struggle just to make it work in our families, much less try to widen that circle to include our neighbors and cities and congregations. Truth be told, we are not necessarily taught the skills to build and nurture community. So much of our culture is built on the fallacy of “pulling oneself up by the bootstraps”—asking for help is seen as a weakness. In a society that emphasizes individualism, it is no wonder we struggle to live into the beloved community of diversity, inclusion and opportunity that we long for.

The Power & Importance of Community
Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray

Challenging Universalism in UU Community
Emrys Staton

The 118° heat, the haboobs, the sun blasting through my window at 5:00am... I was mentally prepared for all of these aspects of summertime in Phoenix. I also thought I was prepared for the intensity of this summer’s General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio and my usual stint as an adult chaplain at our UU youth camp at DeBenneville Pines.

Both of those weeks away from Arizona offered some reprieve from the kiln that I now call home; however, I was exposed to a different kind of intensity that has got me thinking a lot about the idea of community and inclusion in Unitarian Universalism.

At this point, no one can deny the profound impact of the #BlackLivesMatter campaign, and its broader umbrella: The Movement for Black Lives. The sheer volume of podcasts, blogs, videos, social media content and shared stories coming out of this movement is incredible. We are in a time where huge strides in social thought are being made at a very rapid pace—all made possible by the years of thinking and writing coming from post-colonial and ethnic studies programs, feminist-inspired intersectional analysis, and easy access to online publishing allowing for a huge number of voices to join discussions often dominated by the academic realm.

Religion, theology, mindfulness, faith, and humanism are all being re-shaped by this proliferation of social critique. UUism is being shaken up from outside and from within. It’s exciting. It’s necessary. It’s challenging.

I stated in my August sermon that the

Continued page 12
Radical Inclusion: Fall Identity Groups

Benjie Messer

Music Director

This fall, as we begin living out our new vision of being a radically inclusive community, I’m asking the whole congregation to join me for a series of Thursday night “identity groups” after our community night meals on September 29, October 6 and October 13. I’ve been developing these groups with both our staff and other consultants, and each group will be led by multiple members of our community. All of our adult faith development classes are starting in mid-October this year so that everyone in the congregation can be free to attend, and our small groups and activity groups are encouraged to take part in these identity groups this month rather than meeting separately. Essentially, these are one-time-only listening groups to help us connect with each other around aspects of our identities. I’ll describe them briefly here, and in more detail during my service on Sunday, September 4. If you’re left with more questions than answers, please don’t hesitate to contact me!

Two years ago, our congregation sponsored a workshop on “cultural competence.” Our trainer taught a model of cultural competency developed by Milton Bennett, who defines it as “the process by which people learn to value and respond respectfully to people of all cultures.” This is obviously an important skill for a radically inclusive community, and key to our Unitarian Universalist faith. Bennett’s model describes six sequential stages of cultural competence, and in the workshop, our trainer said that she believed that most Unitarian Universalist congregations are essentially in the stages of “reversal” and “minimization.”

In reversal, where a large minority of UUs are, we acknowledge cultural differences but feel threatened by them, and respond by feeling bad about our own background and adopting another culture as “better.” In a paper about this model, Bennett writes that reversal “may masquerade as cultural sensitivity... however, the positive experience of the other culture is usually an internalization of others’ negative stereotypes.”

In minimization, where the majority of UUs reside, we are aware of cultural differences, but we minimize them and believe that our own worldview is universal. Congregations and people in minimization tend to be insistently “nice” and talk about how “we’re all really the same.” Minimization celebrates tolerance while masking institutional privilege, and generally supports the status quo.

I hope that some of you are nodding your heads in recognition—I certainly did when I heard these descriptions! So how do we “level up” and become the radically inclusive people and congregation we want to be? The Bennett model suggests that to move out of reversal, we should do things our congregation and our faith do beautifully already: group activities like worship, singing together, enjoying coffee together, meeting for meals—anything that allows us to see our common humanity. But to move out of minimization into the higher stages of cultural competence, we have to do something a little different: we have to deepen our understanding and appreciation of our own culture.

Identity groups are chances to build relationships within our community around our backgrounds—relationships that I think will help us be more aware of ourselves and more thoughtful about each other.

On September 29, we’ll meet in groups based on our personal religious heritage—a group of those who have Protestant, Christian or Unitarian Universalist heritage, and separate groups for those with Catholic heritage, Mormon heritage, Jewish heritage, and people with heritage other than those mentioned. Attending these groups doesn’t mean identifying with these backgrounds or believing in their teachings, and many of us will be thinking about traditions that we’re happy to have left, or thinking about how little contact we had with any religious heritage.

On October 6, we’ll meet as men and women, getting to know each other through that
lens, and on October 13, we’ll meet as white people and people of color. Anyone with a blended or mixed history (i.e., multiple foundational religious backgrounds, mixed race, transgender, etc.) is completely welcome in EVERY group that they have ANY connection with, and the choice of which group to attend is fully up to them. In each group, we’ll break into smaller groups and take turns thinking out loud (or silently) in response to open-ended questions about our lives and our histories. We’ll all get equal turns to speak (or not speak), and everything said will be treated as confidential.

As I’ve discussed these groups at the congregation, I’ve found that they make people uncomfortable. I’ve heard a lot of things like this:

- My religious background isn’t important to me. That’s why I became a Unitarian Universalist!
- I don’t like that we’d be separated. I’m here to be connected with people, not separated.
- I don’t belong in that group because I’m only half (Jewish/female/Chicana/etc.)
- I’d be uncomfortable in that group, because I’m a terrible example of a (Catholic/woman/black person/etc.)
- Only one of those groups is important to my identity, so I’ll only go to that one.
- I want to change the world, and I don’t think these groups will do anything.

I’ll speak on Sunday, September 4 about why I think each of us belongs in these groups completely, even you, with your particular history, as mixed or different or awful as it may be. And I’ll share why I think building relationships in this way is an important step in making our community more radically inclusive and more able to take on the societal inequalities that we talk about so often. For now, my brief answer to all of these concerns is, I hear you. Deciding to attend these groups will feel uncomfortable and seem unimportant to many of us. I’m asking you to give them a try anyway.

I had originally planned a few other evenings too—one based on sexuality, another on social class—and there are endless other groupings that would lead to wonderful connections: age, occupations, preoccupations, etc. If these evenings go well and we decide to do them again in the future, those would be exciting groups to try.

**Identity Groups**

**Thursdays, 7:00-9:00PM**

**September 29: Religious heritage**
- Christian/Protestant in Sanctuary
- Raised-UU in Johnson Room
- Catholic heritage in Minister’s Office
- Mormon heritage in Annex C
- Jewish heritage in Room 9
- Other heritages and backgrounds in Annex B

**October 6: Gender**
- Women in Sanctuary
- Men in Annex A and C

**October 13: Race**
- Ending White Racism in Sanctuary
- People of Color in Annex A and B

Anyone of mixed/multiple backgrounds is welcome in any group they feel comfortable attending.
When I was in high school, there was a movement among educators to let students know the classroom was a “safe space.” This was signified by a small circular sticker showing an inverted pink triangle or a nested pair of pink and black triangles. In its first iterations, the stickers let students know that the faculty member was willing to have conversations about queer sexuality. Kids facing identity questions, considering coming out, or dealing with the wonderful world of adolescent hormones, could find a space of peace and compassion.

When thinking about inclusion and community, we tend towards metaphors of wider, more open physical spaces. We talk about drawing the circle wider, opening the doors, removing the barriers. We vision success as a single room filled to the brim with every type of person we can imagine, each checkbox on the demographic sheet diligently checked. These metaphors are problematic. What happens when we haven’t imagined all the intricacies of someone’s identity? What happens when someone comes into the community before the space has been made safe for them? Sometimes our efforts to increase accessibility and inclusion must also include separate space, protected space.

Now, nearly 30 years from its origin, “safe space” has expanded to mean a physical place where marginalized communities can come together to communicate and find respite from the dominant culture. It acknowledges that spaces, both literal physical spaces and metaphorical spaces, are structured by and for the majority. Buildings offer an easy illustration—stairs, chairs, adult size toilets, round door knobs, and narrow passages are perfectly accessible to many people, but for others these features are obstacles and make navigating the room exhausting. The individual can find adaptive solutions, the community can invest in the structure to remove barriers, but in the end, the space is still not, at its root, designed for everyone.

It is created by and for the majority.

And those who are not the majority will need a place to rest.

In Arizona, we are used to housing designated as “Active Adult Living 55+.” Even on college campuses, black student caucuses and women’s study rooms have been around for ages. We see this manifest in the activist community as blacks-only conversations, womyn-only land, POC festival tents. But recently, there has been push back. Protected spaces are being labeled “exclusive.” Demands are being made that these spaces be abolished in the name of fairness and inclusion.

I’ve read a few articles (and woe be to me, some of the comments) about the closure of the women-only study lounge at Michigan State University. I couldn’t help but “think of the children,” specifically the babies. Here at UUCP we have a protected space, that the community has done a very good job of honoring and maintaining. The Nursery provides our youngest community members with a safe space—we acknowledge that our campus was not built to suit the pre-walking set. We designate a room where they can play, eat, cry, cuddle, and sleep. The nursery represents something amazing about our community. It proves that we are capable of welcoming, including, and providing for even the smallest among us. (In this case, smallest both in number and in size.)

As we move forward—in a world where racial divisions, economic disparity, and political derision are increasing, and in a congregation striving for radical inclusion—we should keep the babies in mind. We must remember that we can look to a marginalized group among us and we can say, “Yes, you are important in this community, right now our space, our conversations, our community may not be perfect for you, but we want to invest in you, we want to make this place better for you, and we are willing to do the work to find out what that means. Here, we want you to have a safe space.”
Final **SUMMER COMMUNITY NIGHT**

Thursday, September 1 – *Dance Party* with entire UUCP staff!
6:00 PM • Potluck • Multigenerational (no Chalice Kids)

*Everyone is welcome!*

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**We are here** to awaken from the illusion of our separateness.  Thich Nhat Hanh

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**Pathway to Membership**

**Thursdays, October 6 and 13, 6:45PM**

*after Community Night Dinner*

The Pathway to Membership program is a two-part class that invites you to meet with other people considering membership, hear more from ministers and leaders about what it means to be a member, ask questions, learn about the history of Unitarian Universalism and UUCP, and ends with an invitation to join by signing the membership book and pledging your support. There is no pressure to join. We recognize membership is a commitment and we hope people will take their time before joining.

To register, stop by the Welcome Table in the lobby, or contact Kristina Benner at 602-840-8400 x 204 or KristinaBenner@PhoenixUU.org.
It all comes down to community for me. The opening of our newly adopted vision: *A Spiritual Community for Our Time*. The sense that UUCP had become my (our) UU home after I returned to the congregation in which I was raised. The story from a magazine that I shared about being helped onto a commuter train at rush hour in Bombay. My personal perspective (shared in the July/August *Horizons*) of being religious and not spiritual.

I described in the last *Horizons* that religion to me is all about community. I get energy from the community. I love serving the community. I love being surrounded and supported and lifted up and grounded by our community. I love what we accomplish together. I love how we make a difference for each other. I am inspired by how we make a difference for others. Religion is possible—is powerful—is foundational—for me, because together we encourage and support growth and spiritual awareness in each other. Like in my marriage, I am (we are) better because we are together.

The story of the commuter train in Bombay describes the experience a commuter trying to get to work on time. Already late, and running to an already moving train, many hands reach out of a carriage where there is clearly no room. As they reach out to make contact, they don’t know whether they are helping a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian, a Brahmin, an untouchable—they don’t know if they are helping a fellow citizen or someone from a strange land. They only know that someone is trying to get to the city, and that’s enough. They make room where none exists. They adjust.

For me, the story shared the importance of involvement with and for strangers, from backgrounds that couldn’t be known or assumed in the moment. I encountered this story when we were still fairly new to UUCP and it seemed to me then (and now) that UUCP was that crowded carriage for us and for so many others. Our community.

So what made UUCP our community? It starts with the proverb that “it takes a whole village to raise a child.” This proverb received a fresh treatment in 1996 by then First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, just a couple of years after our family became members. Our children were young—not yet in elementary school. The people we met that first morning helped us connect. They showed us that we were welcome. They (you) demonstrated that morning and for the years that followed, that we had found our village. I could write a book (maybe a large pamphlet) describing the many experiences that cemented the role that UUCP played in the development of our family. SAWUURA, Coming of Age, YRUU, Coming Out, Camp de Benneville Pines, District leadership—and that was just our kids. Terry and I have given and received during and since our children’s Coming of Age.

And that brings me back to our new Vision—and the importance of Community and Involvement. A Spiritual Community for Our Time... The interesting and challenging part of this statement...
Unicare News

Please lift up in your thoughts those in our community who share their transitions, sorrows, celebrations and wishes—that they may find strength in your love and friendship. For more information, or to get involved, contact Vicki Myers, our UUCP Unicare Coordinator, at unicare@phoenixuu.org.

Milestone Celebrations:

- We celebrate with our long-term UUCP custodian, Manuel Gomez, as he is reunited with his wife, daughter and stepson. After 2 ½ years, they have obtained their visas to relocate from Guatemala and join Manuel in the U.S.
- Daniel Mendez shares the wonderful news that he was approved for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). This gives him temporary protection to live and work in the U.S. without fear of deportation for two years. Blessings and joy to Daniel and Tiffany!
- Best Wishes to Tony Banegas as he assumes the role of President and CEO of Children’s First Academy Foundation, a Phoenix K-9 school, where two-thirds of students are homeless.
- Cheers to Dale Fisher who was elected to the Governing Board of Booker T. Washington Head Start.
- Colin and Tonya Brod share their joy that their foster parenting license was approved.
- Happy 31st Wedding Anniversary to Michelle Morgan and Sam Kirkland.
- We keep Benny Butt in our thoughts as he learns more about his half-sister, a secret his mother kept for over 70 years. May this news lead to a joyful path.

In Remembrance:

- Sam Wright passed away late June at age 97. Sam was a UU minister, a founder of SAWUURA and a friend of many at UUCP.
- Accompanied by friends and family in ceremony, Anne Lackey gave her late husband’s ashes to a river in Alaska.
- In June, Vince Waldron said farewell to a very dear friend. “Neighbor, colleague, backpacking companion, mentor, confidant. I admired you, Alex, and loved you like a brother. Go in peace my friend.”

for me is “for our time.” What does that mean? How will it change? What will “for our time” mean in five years? Ten years? Twenty?

I hope that its meaning will change—primarily because “our” will be different tomorrow as compared to today. We covenant to be changed by those who join us and we covenant to be open to our own growth.

Defining what our Vision would look like for our community—if successfully pursued/achieved—will be the primary work in which the Board engages this year. With our community, we will listen and discern. For our community, we will create “pictures” of how we will be seen by each other and the world if our Vision is realized.

Will UUCP be different? Will we view what comprises our community differently? Will that community view UUCP differently? How will we be with each other? With our community? What will we do together? What will we be called to do in and with that community?

I am so grateful for the gift of our new Vision and I am beyond excited for beginning the work of making it real—together. □
Sunday School 2016-2017
Children’s Ministry Committee

A new year of Sunday School gets underway on September 11th! After our annual in-gathering water communion, families are invited to attend Sunday School orientation. You’ll have a chance to hear about our class structure and options, hear a story or two, create a craft as a family, finish up registration, and get your name tag!

As with each year, we’ve made a few shifts to our curriculum to better respond to child and family needs. Please see below for details of each program and links to each program’s unique registration page as well as online payment site for all programs.

Infants
Our Nursery room is located just beyond Office 2 and provides our youngest community members, newborn through year two, a quiet and comfortable nursery to play, eat, and rest. While children are always welcome in the sanctuary, this room also serves as a comfort room for young children and parents who need to step away during worship. Listening devices are available for those who would like to hear the service while cuddling their little one.

Year-round Program
$30 per child
Register at: https://goo.gl/forms/8dBHbSh3nUdmKCPG2

Toddlers
Each Sunday, toddlers have space for play-based learning and early faith development. Staff help children embody the 4th principle “A free and responsible search for truth and meaning,” by creating an atmosphere that is encouraging, safe, and intriguing.

Year Round Program
$30 per child
Register at: https://goo.gl/forms/8dBHbSh3nUdmKCPG2

Pre-K
The Pre-Kindergarten classroom at UUCP provides a protected space for youngsters to being their path of faith development. Structured much like a traditional preschool class, the students enjoy circle time, stories, crafts, and games as they learn about the 7 principles, the monthly themes, and the community.

September–May
$40 for first child, $20 for each additional child
Register at: https://goo.gl/forms/bPssiFLbOeSQ6WTv1

Grades!
Our Kindergarten through 6th graders experience our congregation’s monthly theme through art, music, conversation, cooperation, and play. In contrast to the demands of the school week, Sunday School at UUCP offers faith development through a studio approach. Each Sunday, students are offered a choice of 3 studios. In a given month this may include painting, sports, music, tie-dye, storytelling, and craft, each providing a unique approach to the monthly theme. Every studio is designed to give children the opportunity to demonstrate leadership, express opinions, and experience community.

September–May
$40 for first child, $20 for each additional child
Register at: https://goo.gl/forms/bPssiFLbOeSQ6WTv1

I can see myself in all things and all people around me.

Sanskrit Phrase
**Middle School**

Two middle school opportunities are provided for children in 7th and 8th Grades.

*Coming of Age*

9:30 Service

A comprehensive program that spans the entire school year. This rite of passage marks the transition from childhood to teen years and provides an invaluable opportunity to explore and learn about yourself and your religious beliefs within a supportive community of peers at UUCP. The Coming of Age program at UUCP includes weekly classes, visits to other houses of worship, mentorship by an adult in the congregation, community service, team building activities and overnights, creation of deep friendships and the development of a personal credo of beliefs for presentation to the congregation in the spring.

Year-round Program
Program Fee $300
Register at:
https://goo.gl/forms/m588g6VUtFgK7q5a2

*2nd Principle*

11:15 Service

This new program provides middles schoolers with an opportunity to reflect on their role in building a community of justice, equity, and compassion. Aligned with the monthly themes, each class includes journaling and reflection, biographies of social justice leaders, discussion of UU values in justice work, and opportunities for service.

Year-round Program
$40 for first child, $20 for each additional child
Register at:
https://goo.gl/forms/bPssiFLbOeSQ6WTv1

**YRUU**

The high school group meets on Sundays at 10:30AM in Annex C and is for youth in grades 9-12. Within a new structure, YRUU sessions include socialization, check-in, work on the monthly theme, faith development, and community building. One Sunday a month, students share lunch out. YRUU worship evenings provide a chance to reflect and explore beliefs in a comfortable, teen-centered environment.

Year Round Program
$30 per participant
Register at:
https://goo.gl/forms/CZhooKGvOdFfSaC2

**Chalice Kids**

Chalice kids is offered in conjunction with Thursday night community dinners. Through play, storytelling, and music, students build community and comradery and have an opportunity to socialize in a space designed just for them. Chalice Kids programming does not require registration.

Payment for all classes may be made via our website:
https://secure.accessacs.com/access/oglogin.aspx?
sn=2175&f=87

If Religious Education fees present a challenge to your family, please contact Katie Resendiz at KatieResendiz@phoenixUU.org.

*It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.*

_Frederick Douglass_

*Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them.*

_Lady Bird Johnson_
As many of you are preparing to come back to UUCP after time away from the heat this summer, I am preparing to leave the warmth of Phoenix and this community to finish my education at Northern Arizona University. Although I will not be able to experience the theme of “Community and Inclusion” with you in September directly, this is a theme that has been thoroughly present for my entire life at UUCP, not just during my time in the office.

Earlier this year, I was worried that the spirit of this theme would not be extended to me because of how long has it been since I was an active member of this community. Of course, this fear was completely unwarranted and everyone in the congregation has warmly welcomed me back to UUCP to be your Summer Office Intern. It is difficult for me to feel connected to a community when I am constantly starting new chapters of my life. However, I am so incredibly grateful that the congregation and staff have made space for someone in this community who is in the midst of transition and is interested in ministry.

While I have been here for the primary purpose of helping the office while Geoff is at Camp de Benneville Pines, everyone here has helped me make the time and space to think about my prospective career in ministry. So many people have said things that I have written down to ensure that I incorporate them into my future work. I have gained an even deeper appreciation and admiration for all the work that the staff puts in behind the scenes. There is so much that I never knew and there is still so much that I do not know about the work of a congregation. However, all the experience I have gained from this and encouragement I have received about my work has given me confidence I will need as I begin the next part of my journey by applying to Masters of Divinity programs and finishing my undergraduate education.

“Community and Inclusion” is not just about helping newcomers feel welcomed or ensuring that everyone feels included regardless of their identities. This is a commitment that we continually make to each other no matter how long we have been coming to UUCP. This commitment has been complicated for me since my leaving for college. I miss UUCP terribly when I am away at school and it can be difficult to know how to be a part of the community when I am not able to be physically present. I now realize that the most productive way to deal with the absence of this space in Flagstaff is to incorporate the spirit of “Community and Inclusion” into my life and work even when I am not able to engage with the UUCP community directly.

I cannot fully express my gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity I was given this summer. Everyone has been so kind and supportive of me during my time here that it is overwhelming. I know my journey will continue to include all of the love of UUCP I have even when I am far way.

Asha Arora was your Summer Office Intern this summer to help out while Geoff Anderla was away for work at Camp de Benneville Pines. She grew up in this congregation and is about to begin her senior year at Northern Arizona University to finish her double major in English and Religious Studies.

An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ultimately, America’s answer to the intolerant man is diversity.

Robert Kennedy
Campus & Community News
Heidi Parmenter

Campus Care News
Check out the new Campus Care bulletin board in Office 2. There you will find the Maintenance Repair List where you can write down maintenance repair issues that you notice on the property. I review this list every Monday. Something new that I have added is the Campus Care Projects where we can all write on tickets the projects we would like to see done around campus. For example, deep cleaning, dusting, yardwork, etc. Anyone can pull a ticket off the board and schedule to complete the task at their convenience. We all have a role to play in Campus Care and I hope that all members take the time to check these projects out and pick at least two throughout the year that they will accomplish.

Another place to look for campus care projects is on our website at: http://www.phoenixuu.org/about-us/facilities-and-property-management/

FUNdraising News
FUNdraising for me is about building relationships. Whatever mechanism we use to raise money for our congregation, be it Stewardship, Auction, Art Show, Craft Fair, or Spaghetti Dinner, each and every event is an opportunity for us to come together in fellowship. Events that I plan for the congregation always focus on getting as many people engaged as possible. Friendships and connections form through these fundraising events by volunteering together, attending a member-hosted event together, sitting down face-to-face and sharing each other’s paths to UUCP, and learning about each of our unique and special talents. Read on to see how this year’s FUNdraising events can help you connect to our community.

I’m excited to share that we have a team of wonderful volunteers putting together a UUCP Arts & Crafts Fair for Sunday, November 13 before and after the services. The fair will be held on the patio and the team is gathering vendor applications now. All UU artists and crafters are encouraged to participate. Let’s see your creativity cover our patio! The Fair will take the place of the online auction this year. The minimum donation required is 20% of sales and all money raised goes to support our programs this year. Go to www.phoenixuu.org/fair for more information and to submit your application online.

Our 6th Annual Service Auction will be held Sunday, December 4 in the Sanctuary at 11:00 AM, after the one service. Whereas the Arts & Crafts Fair will showcase our artistic talent, the Service Auction allows our hobbyists, professionals, and amazing hosts let their light shine. Dinners/soirees are the most popular donations at our Annual Auction. Hosts usually designate how many guests can attend their special event and we then auction off the “seats.” Our Live Auction is an exciting and fun affair. To learn more about donating and supporting this event please visit www.phoenixuu.org/auction.

This year we will be having a combined Stewardship and Capital Campaign. The Stewardship Campaign raises money for our annual operating fund and is a one-year commitment. The Capital Campaign will be a multi-year commitment (typically three years) and all money raised will go to specific Capital Campaign projects as selected by the Capital Campaign Committee. The Committee has been working hard to narrow down the projects and you’ll be hearing more about these projects in upcoming Horizons issues. If you are interested in helping to create the combined Stewardship and Capital Campaign materials, plan the Celebration Sunday party, or be a Stewardship Ambassador who meets face to face with folks to learn more about what UUCP means to them, then let me know. I’ll get you in the loop of the exciting things in store.
In June, this congregation adopted a new vision statement: “To be a Spiritual Community for Our Time: Theologically Diverse, Radically Inclusive, Justice Centered.” As we open this new ministry year at UUCP, we are going to dive into these values of community, inclusion and diversity. There will be a variety of opportunities to reflect on what these values mean for us in our lives, in our congregation and in our society through worship, music and small group opportunities.

Being inclusive and being committed to a welcoming, diverse community challenges all of us to ask how can we live in ways that welcome difference. There are many people who choose Unitarian Universalist congregations because they believe we are a congregation of “like-minded people;” however, the call to be radically inclusive means moving beyond those walls and borders to nurture an environment that honors community while also celebrating and sharing differences. This is an opportunity for growth and learning, for being stretched in ways that move us outside our comfort zone. And it offers the opportunity not just to see new perspectives but to understand our own, and the limits of our own, more fully.

I hope you will jump into the exploration of these themes on Sunday and in the small groups we’ll be leading in October, which will invite us to reflect on the way our identities are welcomed or limited in our community. This work is about helping us all live more fully into the vision we have set for ourselves as a community. May we learn and grow and deepen community through our conversations and reflection. □

Continued from “The Power...” Rev. Susan, page 1

**Women’s EQUINOX Ritual**

**Tuesday, September 20**
**6:00PM**
**Johnson Room & Patio**

Members of the *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* class will lead an equinox ritual open to all women. If you are curious or interested in earth-based/pagan spirituality, this is a perfect opportunity. We will gather at 6:00 with ritual to begin promptly at 6:30. If you are new to ritual, please try to arrive at 6:00 for a brief orientation. Please bring a snack to share at the feasting after ritual. You may want to bring a small token to put on the altar. Questions: call Pat at 847-967-1672.
concept of Universalism is being challenged by the ideology of Black Lives Matter. I think that is a good thing. Here’s why...

The most impactful Christian-based theology in this hemisphere was the liberation theology developed by those living in poverty in Latin America. Those living both in the clutches of oppression and in the absence of enough European-trained priests. The entire theology was based on the belief that God, the divine, has an inherent preference for the wellbeing of the poor. It was not a universalist theology (God loves all equally), but a preferential theology, and it shook up the Catholic church to its core. It was such a threat that the corporate and government elites hired killers to torture and assassinate the movement’s leaders—lay and clergy—climaxing with the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero during mass at a church in El Salvador in 1980.

What can this mean for us, today, as UUs? This summer’s General Assembly showed the cracks in Universalist belief as the voices and leadership of black UUs was lifted up throughout the week—in worship, workshops, and in a powerful witness rally. At the closing worship, the last words I heard before I ran off to the airport were from Elandria Williams. A black UU, a member of the UUA Board of Trustees, and an organizer at the Highlander Center, Elandria said in very clear language that she’s done with being treated as an outsider in the faith she chose and grew up in. She told us about her frustration when (white) people thanked her for being at General Assembly, as if she was an outsider. “This is my faith!” she said, “If you can’t be in my faith, then guess what, you might need to find another one.” I urge you to listen to the entire service, which can be found here: http://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2016/worship/closing.

Elandria didn’t dismiss the need to stand together and be unified, but she flipped the order of operations on how to get there. Universalist thought leads us to start with the first principle of UUism, the inherent worth and dignity of all people. We start there, with a common denominator that all of us are included in. This is also the same concept that drives documents like the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Elandria’s point, and the point of liberation theology, is to start by acknowledging those who are being ignored, cast aside, forgotten, and discarded by our current systems of power. She said we have to keep doing the work around ending racism—that comes first—and as we do that preferential work, we will arrive at a place of solidarity and togetherness. So it’s not that Universalism is a bad theology, it’s the priority it receives over preferentialism that makes it a problem.

When I arrived at our youth camp at the end of July, for the first time ever that I know of, we created a space for the youth of color to gather and reflect on their experience at camp as non-white UUs. When I heard the report back of that gathering, my heart broke. I’ve thought of camp as a sanctuary for these teens, a place of respite from the world “down the mountain,” a safe space for them to create a beloved community for seven days.

I heard about the micro-aggressions, the racist comments they have to deal with, the expectations that they carry to both educate but not offend their white peers in the complexities of racism. They came up with a list of three recommendations to make the camp community a better place for them—indeed, for everyone.

This is an example of putting the liberation model into practice. Starting with the needs and experiences of those who are directly exposed to a harmful environment, asking them what changes they want to see, and implementing those to make their experience safer, which will in turn make it better for everyone. That’s the way Universalism will be preserved in our faith. □
September Worship Theme:  
Community & Inclusion

Services on September 4th and 11th at 10:30 AM  
Beginning Sunday, September 18th – two services at 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM

September 4: Including Our Differences  
Service Leader: Benjie Messer  
How can we become more radically inclusive? Sharing and understanding our own personal histories is an important step toward accepting each other. This fall, UUCP invites us all to join a series of “identity/affinity groups” which will allow us to do just that. Benjie will introduce these groups and the opportunity to connect this fall—and, of course, there will be singing!

September 11: Multigenerational Water Communion Service  
Service Leaders: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, Emrys Staton and Katie Resendiz  
This all-ages service celebrates community. It’s also our annual ingathering, a kick-off to the year. Everyone is invited to bring water from a place that holds significance for you, maybe from a vacation spot this summer, your own home, or even tears of joy or grief. Together, we mingle these waters together as a symbol of how are lives are woven together in community.

Two-service schedule begins: 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM

September 18: The Mountain of Tolerance: A Community’s Experience with Dirty Dishes  
Service Leader: Emrys Staton  
Emrys will share some experiences of living in intentional communities, and the lessons learned to build and maintain strong communities.  
Share the Plate Sunday: Offering benefits the Isac Amaya Foundation

September 25: A Deeper Experience of Community  
Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray  
It has been said that what will come next to help lead humanity out of this time of division and climate devastation is not some great individual, but community, and specifically inclusive communities of hope, courage and resilience. We are experiencing the limits of both a society and faith focused on individualism—depression, isolation, loneliness, fear and fragmentation. How can we learn to live, share and practice a richer experience of community, and why is this needed?
We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

The pattern of thinking that divides humanity into us and them is something we can all play a role in dismantling. To do so, we use our two implements: compassion and insight into our interconnectivity with all life. These implements undo the thinking that creates enemies, leading us to community.

Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone

Our differences define us, but our common humanity can redeem us... We just have to open our hearts.

Karen Armstrong