

In this season of gratitude, I am deeply grateful for all the abundance of my life. I am blessed with a loving family, strong and supportive connections with friends and colleagues, creative and engaging work opportunities, good health and reliable health insurance, a beautiful place to live – there is so much abundance in every part of my existence, and I do not take any of it for granted.

Even as living in abundance is a gift and a privilege, my awareness of the abundance in my life calls me move beyond receptive gratitude into doing my part to create a world in which abundance is fairly distributed, and where the resources I enjoy are accessible to all.

As I consider the Vision of this UU Congregation of Phoenix, I think about theological diversity (people of all beliefs can find a place to deepen and grow here), and about being centered in justice (working together to create more wholeness, justice and peace in the world), and perhaps most of all right now, about what it means to be radically inclusive. The word “radical” derives from “root” – so being radically inclusive means going down to the roots, the foundation of who we are, to consider how our way of living, our way of creating religious community, can be truly inclusive.

To that end, we are engaging in work of racial justice, part of a larger movement throughout the UUA, but in our own unique way. I am confident that we will continue to deepen that work, creating an understanding and environment here that is ever more welcoming to all, and learning how to reach out into the community with what we have to offer.

The construction projects that are launching this fall, and the fundraising to make those projects happen, also emerge from that same commitment to radical inclusion. In this process, the front of the building will be redesigned to offer a more inviting visual space as people enter the property. Paved parking, gentle ramps and level surfaces and wide entry doors will ease the way not only for those using wheelchairs and walkers, but for young families with strollers as well. An accessible, shaded patio with generous seating, along with providing a safer place for the children to play, will welcome us to gather in community in ways that nurture all who enter here. And replacing the aging and expensive air conditioning system that was draining our resources, and that was poised to fail at any given moment, probably in the hottest months of the year – yes, we are in Phoenix, after all, and offering a cool space is part of our welcome.

This current round of construction grows from a long history of exploring to use the abundance that has been gifted to this congregation by those who came before, including a large property and a set of buildings that host our activities. This work is an integral part of our vision of radical inclusion, and all are invited to be part of opening the spaces here to make UUCP ever more radically inclusive.

You can make your inclusive financial contribution at www.phoenixuu.org/capitalcampaign, or by using one of the green forms you will find around the building. All gifts are needed and welcome as we open our spaces and make them ever more welcoming and inclusive!