From the Minister’s Study:

Boston is a bit like Mecca for me, the geographic center that symbolizes my spiritual faith. The Unitarian Universalist Association is headquartered there, along with a number of our historic congregations. In my younger days, I ran races. Never a marathon, but still, I know what it feels like to cross a finish line.

When two bombs exploded at this year’s Boston marathon, killing at least three and seriously wounding more than a hundred people, it hit close to home. My heart went out to the families and loved ones directly impacted and to all who were traumatized. I know what it feels like to have killing, wounding violence happen in my home community.

My heart also went out to all the runners who wanted nothing more than to cross that finish line. I remember the familiar ritual that runners know, the ritual of arriving with the cool, damp dawn to register, to lace up shoes, firm, but not too tight, to stretch and warm sleepy muscles, to wait expectantly for the race to begin. I remember the sound of shoes striking pavement, that moment when there’s a unison to the rhythm of each runner finding their stride, each competing against the most ferocious opponent: their personal best. Mostly I remember the friendly camaraderie, the solidarity of purpose. It felt like church.

Out of every tragedy there arise human stories of heroism, strength, courage, and compassion. The bombing in Boston was no exception. One of the reasons we come to church is to foster these qualities in our selves and the community we create together.

One of the things I did on my sabbatical was to attend the Institute for Excellence in Ministry. I participated in a seminar titled: Ordained Ministry for a New Millennium: Theologies and Practices of Re-Newal. There I was reminded of what I believe to be the core purpose and value of church communities. We exist as a community of resistance against the dominant culture. We resist values that foster violence, values like greed, consumerism, and incivility. We do so by striving for our personal best, to bring the best of who we are to every endeavor.

Building a strong church community is a marathon, not a sprint. It takes commitment and endurance. There will be struggle, hardship, and pain along the way, and sometimes, even tragedy. There will also be joy, friendship, and celebration of the great and beautiful gifts of this precious life.

In solidarity with Boston, let’s keep on running.

Yours,
Diane

Upcoming Services:

**Wednesday, April 24, 7:00 pm**
**Alternative Worship: Prayers for the Earth**
What is your prayer for a hurting earth? Join us for music, ritual, and meditation as we pray for healing our earth’s hurts.
Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Kathleen Hogue, Brian Moon

**Sunday, April 28**
**The Doctrine of Discovery**
**Rev. Diane Dowgiert**
Continuing our exploration of forgiveness this month, we’ll consider the possibility of forgiving wrongs that are centuries old. A papal decree was issued in 1452, known today as the Doctrine of Discovery. It formed the legal justification for displacement of the indigenous people of the Americas from their ancestral homes. The delegates to the UUA General Assembly 2012 voted to adopt a resolution calling for the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. What does this mean? Why should we care?
Worship Associate: Randall Springer
Music: Leeza Beriyeva

**Sunday, May 5**
**Dreams of Peace**
An intergenerational play with special music from the Desert Chorale, Agnes Paulsen, Michelle Maliniak, and solo performances.
*The Annual Meeting will take place after the service. See the reminder inside the newsletter for more info.*

**Sunday, May 12**
**This I Believe**
Join us for our special Coming of Age service where the youth lead us in worship.
Intern Contemplations

I am impressed by the many social action groups and interests represented by our congregation. I have been to Phoenix for the UU Day at the Legislature, I have attended immigration demonstrations and press conferences, and I will represent UUCT for a day at a “clergy build” for Habitat for Humanity this month. I am noticing something, though. There are some areas we tend to avoid as a congregation, and I think we are missing out big time!

While we are a welcoming congregation, openly inviting and welcoming people of all gender identification and sexual orientation, we tend to shy away from any other action related to sexuality issues. Earlier this month, I went to an Interfaith meeting at Wingspan, the Tucson GLBT center. We have not been involved with them and have not connected our congregation to their services, even though they have wonderful programs, like film festivals, youth groups, and senior pride events. At the Gay Pride Parade last fall, I was the only one from UUCT carrying our banner, and only a handful of our congregation attended the event and helped staff our table. We do not have an Interweave chapter at our church, the name for LGBTQ groups at UU churches. We did have a great class on reproductive justice, again attended by just a handful of people, - even though UUs voted at the last GA that this will be a study topic for the next four years. I love our OWL classes for children and teens, which my own children attended this spring, but we don’t provide OWL courses for adults, or classes on Sexuality issues for seniors. We did not have a UUCT group at the last AIDS Walk, and we are not involved in the ministry of TIHAN, the Tucson Interfaith HIV and AIDS Network.

Let me tell you about TIHAN, since we are listed as one of their Member Congregations. They serve people with HIV and AIDS in a variety of ways. My oldest daughter, who died of AIDS in the year 2000 at age 22, benefitted from this ministry. TIHAN has been active in community education, counseling, care partners, referrals, - and they put on a wonderful monthly event, the Poz Café. Here, people who are HIV Positive, can gather with their TIHAN care partners, and have a wonderful lunch together, followed by a lively Bingo game. They leave with great prizes, and – if needed – a bag of toiletry supplies they cannot purchase with food stamps. Every month, two to three different congregations take a turn to 1) take a special offering, like our share the plate Sundays, to buy food, 2) gather toiletry donations from members, and 3) send a group of about 4-8 volunteers to help prepare and serve the meal at the Poz Café event. The lunch is held at St. Francis in the Foothills Methodist Church each month. It is preceded by an educational time for volunteers, and a time to cook, set up tables and prepare donation bags. Then, food is served and the volunteers get to eat and socialize with all attending. It is a delightful day, for which each congregation signs up just once a year. All we would need to get involved is one or two contact people who get to know the procedure at TIHAN, and then half a dozen more helpers for one day a year. Our sister congregation, Mountain Vista UU, has been participating for years, and the volunteers rave about the rewarding time they have at the Poz Café.

What do you say? Is it time for us to join this amazing social action opportunity? Please let me know if you want to assist in us being one of TIHAN’s sponsoring congregation for the Poz Café, or start an Interweave Chapter at UUCT, or become otherwise involved in branching out in our social action efforts. With much Love and Gratitude for all of you, Christiane Heyde, Ministerial Intern esheyde@msn.com, 393-9960

Annual Meeting Reminder

Please plan to attend your congregational Annual Meeting on May 5, in Holland Sanctuary at 12:15. A quorum is required to conduct the business of the church. In addition to voting on the Nominating Committee’s slate of candidates for leadership positions, the congregation will vote to adopt next year’s budget and a new five-year strategic plan. Both the budget and the strategic plan are available on the UUCT website so that you can take the time to review them thoroughly in preparation for the vote.


Volunteer Recognition Nominations

Here at UUCT we are so fortunate to have dozens of wonderful volunteers! Every year we recognize volunteers who have shared their time and energy again and again. Please submit your nominations in the box located in the church lobby. The deadline is May 7th.

May’s Share the Plate Recipient

Half of all non-pledge income on the third Sunday this month (May 19) will be shared with Sierra Club Borderlands. This group works to raise awareness and petition Congress regarding the dire consequences for vast expanses of pristine wild lands, including wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, and national forests, of the more than 600 miles of border walls and barriers that have been constructed in all four southern border states. The threat of a mandate to build hundreds of miles of additional wall continues to loom in Congress. For more information about Sierra Club Borderlands, visit their website at http://www.sierraclub.org/borderlands/ or follow them on Facebook under Sierra Club Borderlands Campaign or Twitter at SC_Borderlands.
Celebrate The End of School at Sweet Tomatoes!!

Celebrate the end of school & the beginning of summer at Sweet Tomatoes, Thursday, May 23rd from 5-8 PM. Purchase dinner & a beverage & UUCT will receive 20% of the total spent. You’ll need a flyer, available at church or on the website, to present to the cashier, so UUCT will get credit. Invite friends & family to join you, & UUCT will earn more!

Call for Artwork from UUCT Members and Friends for the May Gallery Show:

UUCT ‘Members and Friends’ Artists may submit work in any two-dimensional media (Except Photography) to be exhibited in the All Member and Friends Show from Sunday, May 13th through Sunday, June 3rd in Holland Hall. Bring artwork to church Sanctuary on May 8th at 9:30. For any additional information, email Margot Garcia at mgarcia@vcu.edu.

Friends In Deed

Friends In Deed (FID) is a committee at UUCT dedicated to providing support to congregants who’ve had a loss, illness or injury. FID members visit congregants in the hospital, send cards, give rides to doctor appts and church, and lend medical items (walkers, cane, toilet seat extension). If you would like to join Friends In Deed, please contact Reach Barrows, 881-1252.

The deadline for the Unitarian is the first and third Wednesday of each month with publication on the second and fourth Wednesday. The next deadline is May 8th at 8 am and the publication date is May 15th.

Lifespan Faith Development
Kathleen Hogue, Lifespan Faith Development Director
khogue@uuctucson.org

In my last article I invited you to consider the word “free” and how it relates to the work of the church. Hopefully you learned that a free and responsible search for truth and meaning is not-and should not be free. Now I invite you to consider Newton's laws of motion:

- An object at rest will stay at rest, and an object in motion will stay in motion at constant velocity, unless acted upon by an unbalanced force.
- Force equals mass times acceleration.
- For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Let’s think of our church as the “object.” Now, obviously our church is not “at rest.” It has direction and purpose: “The church exists for a transcendent and holy purpose, which is to grow souls and transform lives within its walls and beyond.” But where does that direction come from? I believe it comes from its congregation. They are the force that is applied to the object. They do this by giving volunteer hours, money, leadership and vision. Velocity specifies not only how fast an object is moving, it also specifies in what direction. I think of our strategic plan as velocity: “A Strategic Plan is forward thinking; an operational guide for the present; a monitoring tool to keep us on track; and a retrospective assessment tool.”

In our strategic plan that will be voted on during the Annual meeting on May 5th we have set forth some ambitious goals. We may not meet every single one of the goals but that is not the intent of the strategic plan. “Having a plan enables us to move forward purposefully and intentionally and measure successes. The plan sets forth a VISION of what we want our church to become.”

Acceleration is produced when a force acts on a mass (object). The greater the mass, the greater the amount of force needed (to accelerate the object). Put simply: We are a growing and vibrant congregation. It takes a great deal of energy to push us in the direction that we want to go.

Finally let’s consider that last part- For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Why do we give to the church? We give (that’s the action) because when we do it helps us feel energized, our lives feel enriched and our spirits renewed (that’s the reaction). This is because in doing so we are fulfilling the transcendent and holy purpose of our church- to grow souls and transform lives within its walls and beyond.

Donate...pledge...volunteer… come to the meeting…dream!

Don’t miss our Extended Family Worship on May 5th: DREAMS OF PEACE.