From the Minister’s Study:

“The end is where we start from.” T.S. Eliot

As I write, I’ve just returned from a “cluster” gathering of Unitarian Universalist religious professionals serving congregations in Arizona and southern Nevada. Ministers, religious educators, musicians, and church administrators come together to worship and to share common joys and struggles in service of this faith we all love. We meet three times a year at the Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Chandler, Arizona.

Just as this is my seventh year as your minister, this is my seventh year with the cluster group. Since this was a sabbatical year for me, I missed the last cluster meeting. One of the gifts of sabbatical leave is the clarity of vision that happens upon re-entry. Today I saw the cluster group with new eyes.

Our cluster gathering is small enough that we can meet in a circle. This time, the circle is both familiar and different. I see faces of old friends, new acquaintances, and some total strangers, people I’ve not yet met. There’s a tug at my heart when I note the absence of those who’ve moved on to new callings, new careers, and new challenges. The heart-tug becomes painful when some in the circle announce that this will be their last time in the circle.

The sense of living history is palpable, endings and beginnings, comings and goings – all wrapped up together.

And so it is with church life. Always, there are comings and goings, endings and beginnings. We’ll be saying good-bye to our ministerial intern, Christiane Heyde on June 16. The ending of her internship with us marks a new beginning for her. Hopefully, we’ll soon know where she’s headed next.

As more and more people arrived at our cluster gathering, more chairs were added to the circle. The circle became wider as each new person joined in – radical hospitality at its best. We might strive to always draw our circle wide to include people we don’t yet know. We might also strive to remember that our Unitarian Universalist circle is wider than our little corner of the world here on 22nd Street. We are connected to our sibling congregations in Arizona, around the country, and even around the world.

I hope you will be on hand June 16 to say goodbye to Christiane, to wish her well on the next part of her journey, and to express our deep gratitude, appreciation, and love.

See you in church!
Diane

Christiane’s Contemplations

My internship is winding down. I have a heart filled with gratitude, and filled with love for people I had not even met a year ago. And here I am, getting ready to say good bye on June 16th, having finished a full 10 months here. Usually internships are only 9 months, but I wanted to keep my work hours to 35 a week, rather than 40 plus, so I needed to do the extra month. That boundary has served me well. Despite the many demands of this internship, and my private counseling practice, and my landlordng duties, and my family life … I have stayed sane and healthy and happy this year. I continue with my spiritual practices and my enthusiasm for life and ministry. I am grateful for having set those boundaries.

I have learned a lot. Some of you noticed that I had experience in ministry before, and giving sermons was not new to me, but many aspects of congregational life and administrations were eye opening and inspiring. I certainly learned a lot. This congregation has implemented policy governance, which allows the board to focus on visioning and policy making, and not micromanage the tasks it assigns to committees or staff. That is working beautifully, the leadership is empowered, and lines of communication are clear. I am very impressed to have seen policy governance function this smoothly. I had only studied it in my UU Polity class and read about it in text books, and had no idea how it can help a congregation be this healthy and efficient. Again, it is a matter of clear boundaries, that makes this work so well.

After I leave this congregation, I will once again have more boundaries to consider. While I have gotten used to seeing many of you in my role as intern minister, once that role ends, I will not be your minister any more. I will continue to love you, but will have boundaries. It is generally recommended that an intern has distance from a congregation for 3 years after completing an internship. That means that we will not connect socially or in a counseling or ministry way. I will of course acknowledge you when we run into each other in Tucson, and will always have a smile for you! I just will need to back away from further involvement, and honor the need for boundaries. There is one way we will probably see each other: I want to hold my ordination at UUCT, either this November or next spring. I will keep you posted and hope you attend. You have certainly contributed to my ministerial formation, and I would be honored to have you present for this celebration. My membership congregation, Mountain Vista UU, will be doing the ordaining, but I want to celebrate this event in Holland sanctuary, I will certainly enjoy your support and presence at that event. Stay tuned and I will post more details about that as soon as I know them.

With Love and Gratitude and Boundaries,
Christiane Heyde, Intern Minister
Upcoming Services

Sunday, June 2
Rev. Diane Dowgiert
Associating With the Sacred
The Flower Ceremony is a beloved Unitarian Universalist ritual. Designed by Norbert Capek, founder of the Unitarian Church in Prague, the Flower Ceremony is an act of consecration. One definition for consecration is associating with the sacred. Bring a flower to share. We’ll explore our associations with the sacred.
Worship Associate: Gilbert Moore
Music: Desert Chorale, Agnes Paulsen, Michelle Maliniak, and special guests, Dr. Carmen Buford-Paige, pianist, and Georgeanne Weaver, composer/conductor.

Worship Associate: Steve Kraynak

Sunday, June 9
Christiane Heyde

Sunday, June 16
Rev. Diane Dowgiert and Christiane Heyde
Called
On this day, we formally say good-bye to our ministerial intern. This occasion gives the opportunity to consider how each of us responds to that which calls us into a personal practice of service and ministry.
Worship Associate: Carolyn Saunders

Sunday, June 23
Speaker: Margot Garcia
Lay-led Service
Worship Associate: Randall Springer

Sunday, June 30
Rev. Diane Dowgiert
From Promise to Commitment
Promises are easy to make, harder to keep. Rev. Diane will return from General Assembly with reflections on how we might turn our promises into commitments.
Worship Associate: Terence Sheridan

Artist of the Month Gallery: June Show
UUCT Members and Friends Photography Show

The opening reception for UUCT Members and Friends Photography show will be on Sunday, June 9th at 11:45 am in Holland Hall. Come support the talented photographers from our own community. Refreshments will be served. The Gallery is also open during church office hours, 9-1 PM Wednesday through Friday, on Tuesday, by appointment only, and Sunday, 11:30-1PM. The show runs through Sunday, September 2nd.

Newsletter Deadline—During June and July, there will only be one publication per month of the Tucsonitarian. The next deadline is June 19th, with a publication date of June 26th.