From the Minister’s Study

Every week a visitor or two tells me that we are a friendly congregation. These kinds of comments always make me proud and all smiley inside. Friendship is a spiritual experience. It takes us beyond the boundaries of self and into the reality of another person’s life. There’s nothing more gratifying for my minister self than to witness the deep and abiding friendships that are formed here. It’s the very essence of what it means to be a member: to belong, to know and be known.

Friendships start with . . . well . . . being friendly. Practicing radical hospitality, welcoming the stranger, can be scary. Talking with someone you’ve never met can feel uncomfortable, even vulnerable. It’s worth the risk. It’s the only way to make new friends.

Everyone who calls this place home is a de facto member of the membership committee. Everyone has a responsibility to welcome people who are searching for a place to hang their spiritual hat, people who are longing for a religious home like ours. Everyone has a responsibility to nurture our existing members. If there’s someone you haven’t seen in a while, pick up the phone and call them. Send them an email. Let them know you care. Let them know you’ve missed them.

Our monthly theme for November is Community. Each one of us plays a part in creating the kind of community we have here. It’s clear that we have a friendly spirit, which each of you has helped to nurture.

At this time of year, daylight begins to wane and the dark nights of winter lengthen over us. The warmth of community is a comfort and a joy. Friends bring light to our lives. The stranger walking through our door for the first time may be just the friend you’ve been waiting for, but you’ll never know unless you take the risk and talk to them.

Yours in faith and friendship,
Diane

Upcoming Services:

Sunday, November 3, 10:30 am
You Don't Fear People Whose Story You Know
On the Day of the Dead, we tell stories of our dearly departed ancestors. Their lives and their stories are woven into the fabric of our community. Their stories help us to remember our deepest commitments and what we care about most.
Rev. Diane Dowgiert
Music: Desert Chorale
Worship Associate: Celeste Rogers

Sunday, November 10, 10:30 am
Mohammed: Community Builder and Prophet
The story of the life of Mohammed is quite inspiring. From a life that began in extreme hardship, he rose as a great leader who built a community of faith that became one of the world’s largest religions. What lessons can we take from his example?
Rev. Diane Dowgiert
Music: Leeza Beriyeva
Worship Associate: Brian Moon

Sunday, November 17, 10:30 am
Food + Community = Communion
A meal shared with others tastes better, somehow, than a meal eaten alone. Eating together is a bonding experience. It connects us to others, strengthening the bonds of community. When we look deeply into the sources of our food, it connects us to the people who produce it and the places it comes from, drawing us into communion with the world.
Rev. Diane Dowgiert
Music: Desert Chorale
Worship Associate: Terence Sheridan

Wednesday, November 20, 7:00 pm
Mid-week Alternative Worship

Sunday, November 24, 10:30 am
Reflections From the Committee on Ministry
Lay-led
Did you know our congregation has a Committee on Ministry? Have you ever wondered who they are and what they do? Today you’ll hear personal reflections from people who’ve served who’ve served on the committee.
Worship Associate: Michelle Maliniak
Music: Agnes Paulsen and Michelle Maliniak
Mata Ortiz Pottery Sale

A sale of pottery from Mata Ortiz will take place on the church patio, after church on Sunday, November 3, from 11:45 to 3 p.m. Again, the church will be sponsoring the sale as part of our Social Outreach and no markup is charged for any of the pottery. Prices start at $5 or $10, and go up from there. Cash is preferred, but checks will be accepted. No credit cards, please. For further information, contact Susan Call at 886-2281 or Julia Mehrer at 762-4035.

UUCT Artist of the Month Gallery presents: Quilts by the UU Quilters

The opening reception for our very ownUU Quilters will be on Sunday, November 13th at 11:45 AM in Holland Sanctuary. The UU Quilters are a dedicated group of women who have been meeting weekly since 1993. Some of their quilts are permanently on display in both Goddard and Holland. This is an extremely popular show and their quilts sell quickly. Come and celebrate with this fabulous group of ladies and enjoy the show. Refreshments will be served. The Gallery is also open during church office hours, 9-1 PM Tuesday through Friday, and Sunday, 11:30-1 PM. The show runs through Sunday, December 1st.

Share the Plate – November 17th

Share the Plate (STP) Sunday is the third Sunday of each month. On that day, UUCT shares half of the non-pledge income with a local non-profit organization. November’s STP recipient is Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse. Emerge! provides domestic abuse crisis intervention and housing, prevention and education, and support and advocacy services to anyone experiencing domestic abuse. Please plan to attend the service and hear a member speak and/or stop by the LFD Table this month for more information. You can also learn more by going to their website: http://www.emergecenter.org/

ORDINATION NEWS:

Christiane Heyde, who served as our intern minister during this last church year, will be ordained on Sunday, November 17, at 5 PM. The service will be held right here at UUCT, and all are welcome to attend. Christiane has already started working as consulting minister in Sierra Vista, at the UU Church ofSoutheastern Arizona. All three UU churches are expected to attend, and both Tucson choirs will sing together in the service. It will be a great celebration, and all of you can know that you contributed greatly to Christiane’s ministerial formation.

If you would like to contribute to the expenses for Christiane’s ordination, please send a check to MVUU, 3601 W. Cromwell, Tucson, AZ 85741, designated to ordination. Thank you!

UUCTucson Thanksgiving!

PLEASE join us on Thanksgiving Day for a fabulous, all-the-trimmings Thanksgiving! The event will take place at Goddard Hall at @ 2 PM, November 28. Family members, kids, friends all welcome - the more the merrier!

Vegan/vegetarian options will be available. There will be entertainment, games, and some fun surprises!

Since this is a largely catered event, fees are as followed: adults - $10; children ages 5-12 - $6; children <4 -- free.

Also, the catered meal does not include everything so we would be very grateful if 10 people would volunteer to fill in the gaps. And here’s the good news! If you sign up for a dish, your admission is only $4!! Call Sally Masteller @ 746-0675 no later than November 10 -- if you would like to help us out with a dish.

Transportation is available; please call Rosemary Axelrod @ 232-2027 by Nov. 22 if you may need a ride.

Please sign up at Goddard at the Thanksgiving poster, and include the number in your party, and a check/cash. You may also mail a check to the church office; please specify number in your party, and that the check is for Thanksgiving. Sign up deadline is November 18. And if you are not able to decide by 11/18, please DO give us a call anyway as we may be able to squeeze you in!!

Call Rosemary @232-2027 or Sally @ 746-0675 if you need more information. We sure hope to see you and your brood there!! It's going to be great!!

SWEET TOMATOES FUN RAISER

Tired of turkey? Need energy for holiday shopping? Sweet Tomatoes & UUCT have the answer: enjoy salads, soups & pastas at Sweet Tomatoes on Monday December 2nd from 5-8:00 PM. You'll get to relax & UUCT will get 20% of the dinner price. You'll need to present a flyer, available on UUCT’s website or at church, & purchase a beverage. Invite family & friends to join you & UUCT will earn more!

Borderlinks Fundraiser at La Cocina

Borderlinks celebrates another wonderful year of raising awareness and inspiring action with an evening of live music and a raffle, 5:30-10:00pm, December 3rd at La Cocina, 201 N Court Ave. La Cocina will donate 10% of the evening’s net profits to BorderLinks. See Rhonda Walker or visit www.borderlinks.org for more info.
Application of the 1st principle in the Life of a Unitarian Universalist (Part Two)

By Kathleen Hogue,
Lifespan Faith Development Director

Professional Life
On a once popular television series ‘Lost’, castaways on a remote island discover they are not alone- that there are people different from their plane wrecked group of 40 on the island. Seeing that they were from somewhere else and strange and different from them, they immediately began calling them “The Others”. While this may be appropriate for this fictitious situation, in real life it is very wrong. As a religious education professional I often encounter people with very differing views and beliefs.

In “What do Unitarian Universalists Believe?” UU Minister David Rankin writes “All people on earth have an equal claim to life, liberty and justice; no idea, ideal or philosophy is superior to a single human life.” - Rankin. It is challenging to address those with different religious and political views, those who believe that homosexuality is chosen and a sin, those who back different candidates in the political scene. It is difficult because these are not just people who are different, but people who we believe are wrong (just as they believe we are). But however misguided and destructive we feel their goals and beliefs are to ours, we must still treat them in a manner that holds to the belief of the inherent worth and dignity of all. When we speak to the ‘Others’- the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Republicans, the Homophobic, the conservative Baptists- We must speak to them and about them with kindness, without insulting words, and with respect.

What about the people who you work with, for and who work for you? In any job there are going to be disagreements, misunderstandings and feelings of unfairness. When we live our beliefs we remember that all work deserves equal respect and dignity- that from janitor to CEO, there needs to be mutual respect. We know that we may come from different backgrounds and beliefs. We know that we may not always agree on the job to be done or how to do it. But when we use good communication practices, those that are respectful, honest, and seek to resolve issues without blame, we honor our first principle.

For those who truly practice the first principle volunteer work is seen as a moral imperative. They feel compelled to do good, to right the wrongs in society, to bring balance to an unequal world. On one hand you could say we volunteer to demonstrate our belief in our principles, and on the other you could say our principles call us to volunteer. There must be an awareness however of how and why we volunteer.

Application of the 1st principle Continued

Do we volunteer because it is expected? Do we volunteer so that we feel powerful or all tingly when we do so? Do we say yes every time someone asks for our help? How do we volunteer? Do we just hand out money? Do we give without asking what is needed?

Stewardship Ministry Update
The Stewardship Ministry Team (SMT) and the Canvass Committee have been meeting to organize the Annual Budget Drive (aka pledge campaign/drive) based on the recommendations of our consultant, Kay Crider. One-on-one contacts are planned with one quarter of the congregation, cottage meetings with another quarter and a letter to the rest of the members and friends. We will rotate every year so eventually everyone will receive a one-on-one contact over the next three years. The SMT will recruit church members to make the contacts, and they will be trained in consultation with Kay Crider.

With the hope of funding more of our goals beyond the constraints of our operating budget, the SMT is establishing an Operating Reserve Fund. We will ask some people, in addition to their annual pledge, to donate to this new fund, the Endowment Fund, or the Internship Fund. We are also moving ahead with a planned giving program.

SMT encourages everyone to attend a Southern Arizona UU workshop presented by Peter Bowden, a consultant on congregational growth strategies and an expert on social media for Unitarian Universalists. The Growth Workshop will be held at UUCT on Saturday, January 4 and Peter Bowden will lead the worship service on January 5, 2014. There is a $35 fee for the workshop. Some scholarships are available. Contact Diane Dowgiert about scholarships. For more information on the workshop:
http://uuplanet.org/2013/10/07/social-media-intensive-tucson-az/

UUCT Book Club
Book Club meets the third Thursday of each month in the Awareness room at 7pm. All are welcome. For questions, or to arrange free childcare, call Lois Atkins 991-5350.

UUCT Book Club Selections:
November - My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor
December - The Boy Kings of Texas by Domingo Martinez
Sharing the Wisdom of Volunteering  
By Carolyn Saunders, PIT Crew

As we approach Election Day, it is a good time to remember, Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in. And if I may paraphrase that quote from Marjorie Moore, Minds Eye Information Service in Belleville, IL, when you volunteer at UUCT you vote every day about the kind of beloved community you want to live in.

In the past four newsletters, I have mentioned three important areas of church life that always need volunteers: the Kitchen Ministry whose devotion to providing tasty food on Sunday makes this a more hospitable place; the Membership Committee who works to grow our membership so that UUCT will continue to exist as a liberal church home for future generations; and the Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) Council that helps all of us pursue a free and responsible search for truth through the religious education and adult faith development classes that are offered here.

Are you called to share your time and talents in one of these areas? Why not? Is it because you don’t feel like you have enough time? "If you try to find time for something that matters, you never will. You must make the time." Unknown

Is it because you feel there is not much you can do to help? Mother Teresa reminds us, “It’s not how much you do, but how much love you put in the doing.” Ellen Goodman put it this way, "I have never been especially impressed by the heroes of people convinced that they are about to change the world. I am more awed by ... those who ...struggle to make one small difference after another.”

But perhaps these three choices just aren’t what you feel like you would enjoy doing. Where do your interests and talents lie? There are many ways to become involved in useful, enjoyable service here at UUCT. I will write about other groups that need your help in the future. But in the meantime, peruse the Ministries of UUCT booklet available in Goddard Hall and on the church web page, or contact me or David Burks at pitcrew@uuctucson.org for more ideas and for a copy of the Interests and Talents survey you can fill out to let us know about your interests.

I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy, I woke and I saw that life is all service. I served and I saw that service is joy. -- Rabindranath Tagore

FIESTA!

The annual UUCT auction will be Saturday night, February 1, 2014. This year, we’ll begin with a delicious Mexican buffet dinner. Good food and lots of fellowship make this a bargain at $10 per person. In addition to a good time, this event is our largest fundraiser of the year, aside from the annual pledge drive. So put it on your calendar now.

Be thinking of what you might donate. Artwork, jewelry, books, household appliances, and other items are welcome. The biggest money-makers, though, are services and entertainment. Services might be several hours of tax preparation, or rides to the airport. Entertainment might be a movie night, theater tickets, or the ever-popular dinners.

A really easy donation is a gift certificate (for example, Target, Fry’s, Frost…,) they always sell, and we’ll even get them for you. We’ll be soliciting donations beginning in December.

Finally, WE NEED YOUR HELP! The auction committee really needs some new people. Consider joining us. We have a minimum of meetings (3 or 4 last year), a lot of fun, and for people who like closure, this is a short-term project with a definite finish date!

For questions, to donate, or to volunteer, contact Bob Gordon, bobgordonrg66@gmail.com, 329-8242, or Jan Dowling, rubytues98@hotmail.com, 940-7930.

Gifts of Love

For the past 2 years UUCT has adopted a family for the holidays through the “Gifts of Love” program at Interfaith Community Services (ICS), and this year we’ll be doing it again! This year instead of one large family, we’ve adopted 2 smaller families, both with single moms. There are many ways for you to get involved. Please consider: purchasing a gift or gift card, donating wrapping supplies, making a special holiday card for each family, or volunteering to deliver the gifts. Please pick up a flyer in the church lobby for specific wish list/clothing size information.

Contact Ashley Davis in the office (748-1551 or office@uuctucson.org) to sign up. Please let Ashley know if you plan to buy a gift, so we can avoid duplication and ensure that each child receives approx. the same number/value of gifts.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline to submit an announcement is the 24th day of the month and the newsletter will be printed and available online the first week of the following month.