From the Minister’s Study
Growing Stronger Every Day

This August marks the beginning of my tenth year as minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson. I’m somewhat astounded by this fact. The time has passed so quickly. Yet, with each passing year, the love I feel for this congregation grows stronger. I’m eager to be with you again as my time of vacation and study leave draws to a close.

Each new church year holds promise and possibility. This one is no exception. Like in all other years, there will undoubtedly be challenges that call for our faithful response, challenges within our religious community and challenges within our beloved world.

I’m actually quite exited and energized about the coming year. Your board, your staff, and I have all agreed to make the congregation’s stewardship goals as stated in the strategic plan our top priority – and to have fun doing it! Everything else we want to accomplish depends on meeting our stewardship goals. To make it so, we have a theme for the year: Growing Stronger Every Day – a theme that will infuse all we do together during the next twelve months.

I think that mostly, when people hear the word stewardship, they automatically think money, but it’s about so much more than that. Stewardship is caring for what we’ve been given and what we’ve created. Yes, it’s about being faithful stewards of our financial and material resources: operating expenses, endowment funds, buildings, and grounds. Just as important, stewardship is about nurturing and caring for our spiritual resources: a living tradition of freedom, hope, and compassion, a living tradition dedicated to building the beloved community within our walls and beyond.

Mostly, stewardship is about fostering a spirit of gratitude and generosity.

We are stronger together. There is no doubt that together we can accomplish so much more than any one of us alone can do. When the call goes out to help us grow stronger in community, stronger in spirit, and stronger in justice, I hope you will respond from the depth of your desire for all this congregation can be – for all this congregation can offer to the world.

In addition to our theme for the year, we will be sharing monthly themes with our sibling congregations here in southern Arizona, the Baja Four. Every member of our four congregations had the opportunity to give input to the themes that were chosen. These themes enable closer collaboration among our congregations and they engage us all in common conversation and exploration of issues, values, and ideas that matter to us.

The themes for the 2015/16 year are:
September Beloved Community
October What’s Your Song?
November Voices for the Voiceless
December Comfort for the Afflicted
January Forgiven and Forgiving
February Soul Force
March Weaving the Web of Community
April Relating To It All
May Future Earth
June Service is Our Prayer
July Growing in Spirit
August Steps to Justice

I’m looking forward to the ways in which we will grow stronger together this year, stronger in spirit, stronger in community, and stronger in justice.

Gratefully yours,
Rev. Diane
### Upcoming Services

**Sunday, August 9, 2015 10:30 am**

**UU’s and the Spiritual**

**Brian Moon**

Can UUs sing spirituals? *Should* UUs sing spirituals?

Come hear what Brian has to say! (Dr. Brian Moon, Ph.D., is the Music Director at UUCT as well as a professor of Musicology at U of A.)

Worship Associate: Gary Luce

Music: Leeza Beriyeva

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**Sunday, August 16, 2015 10:30 am**

**Rev. Diane Dowgiert**

**Growing Stronger in Spirit: A New Era Dawning**

The General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations was held in Portland, Oregon this year. During my time there, I felt like something had broken open, that something had profoundly shifted, and that something new was emerging, not just in me, but in Unitarian Universalism. It feels to me that we are being called to a new depth of spiritual growth, a time for considering some of our unchallenged assumptions and beliefs, especially around matters of race and our role in bringing about racial justice.

Worship Associate: TBA

Music: Leeza Beriyeva

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**Sunday, August 23, 2015 10:30 am**

**Rev. Diane Dowgiert and Kathleen Hogue**

**Growing Stronger in Community: Gathering the Waters**

Our traditional water communion service is a time to gather as an entire intergenerational community to offer individual blessings to our congregation, blessings that are expressed by the gathering of waters from our summer activities and pouring them into one common vessel. Through story, ritual, and song, we’ll renew the covenants and commitments that hold and sustain us in community.

Worship Associate: Michelle Maliniak

Music: Desert Chorale and Leeza Beriyeva

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**Sunday, August 30, 2015 10:30 am**

**Rev. Diane Dowgiert**

**Growing Stronger in Justice: Our Most Important Task**

Before we can bring justice to the world, we must first bring justice to the inner circles of our daily lives. With so many visible injustices in our world today, how do we find the courage to take on this most important task of embodying justice in our words and our deeds – at home, at work, and in the world?

Worship Associate: Gary Luce

Music: Leeza Beriyeva

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### Have you noticed the new sign outside the office door? BLACK LIVES MATTER

Please come on August 23 after church (@12:30, room to be determined) to make the sign more than a statement at UUCT. Let’s meet to discuss how we as UUs can take action here in Tucson to demonstrate that Black Lives Matter. It could be:

- hold a weekly/monthly vigil with signs along 22nd street
- put up a BIG banner on 22nd street
- learn how to be better allies
- engage in community outreach

You also likely have an idea. Together we can gather to take the first step to action. For More Information, please call Gwen Goodman, 520-954-3599.

### Couples Enrichment Retreat

Spend a weekend away from all the distractions and stresses of everyday life to nurture yourselves and your relationship. Join us for the Couples Enrichment Retreat where couples will take a closer look at common issues such as communication, finances and sexuality. Workshops are designed and led by volunteer couples from the VUU Couples Enrichment Group.

All couples committed to their relationship are welcome -- married and unmarried. Whether you are new in your relationship or have celebrated your golden wedding anniversary, you will have opportunities for growth and will benefit from this event.

The retreat will be held Sept 25-27, 2015, Friday 7pm - Sun 11am. It is offered at $270 per couple and includes two nights lodging at the beautiful Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center in Carefree, AZ. Space is limited to the first 10 couples, so please register early.

For more information, visit [www.vuu.org/couplesretreat](http://www.vuu.org/couplesretreat) or call Byon and Lara at 480-274-7234.

### Safe Sitter Class

This class is a medically accurate, hands-on, class that teaches boys and girls ages 11 and up how to handle emergencies when caring for children. Young children cannot always communicate their needs or protect themselves. The babysitter must be able to handle whatever situation arises. Safe Sitter teaches essential life skills and safety behaviors to prepare its students to be better parents and adults later in life.

This class is available to anyone in the community, so help spread the word. Class will be held in Goddard Hall on **Saturday, August 25**, from **9am to 4:30pm**. A ceremony following the class will begin at 4:15 pm. Parents are encouraged to attend the ceremony. For those interested, please contact Heather Reed at [hreed@uuctucson.org](mailto:hreed@uuctucson.org). A fee of $60.00 covers the program and materials. Please have your child bring a bag lunch.

### 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.