From the Minister’s Study

At the beginning of this New Year, a classic piece of writing keeps running through my head. I offer these words written by UU minister, Robert Fulghum, for your consideration.

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

1. Share everything.
2. Play fair.
3. Don't hit people.
4. Put things back where you found them.
5. CLEAN UP YOUR OWN MESS.
6. Don't take things that aren't yours.
7. Say you're SORRY when you HURT somebody.
8. Wash your hands before you eat.
10. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
11. Live a balanced life - learn some and drink some and draw some and paint some and sing and dance and play and work everyday some.
12. Take a nap every afternoon.
13. When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
14. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
15. Goldfish and hamster and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup - they all die. So do we.
16. And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned - the biggest word of all - LOOK.”

How much better would our lives be if we all remembered these simple rules?

The New Year presents a chance to begin again, to remember the wisdom we learned when we were young, to forgive ourselves and each other for the times we’ve gone astray, and to rededicate ourselves to living and acting in accordance with our professed values and principles.

January’s theme is Forgiving and Forgiven. Our Universalist heritage teaches that we are pre-forgiven, that our creator holds no grudge, and therefore, we are assured of our ultimate salvation. Forgiveness, then, is a human transaction, something we do for each other and ourselves.

As the New Year begins, may we be willing to offer and receive forgiveness, strengthening the bonds of connection that are the fiber of congregational life.

Yours in faith, Rev. Diane

Congregational Forum
Sunday, January 10, 2016
12:30 – 2:30 p.m.
Facing the Challenges of Church in the 21st Century

The 21st century has brought dramatic cultural changes that impact how people engage with faith communities. Across denominations, churches are facing challenges unlike any other time. Our congregation is not immune from the changes or the challenges.

In order to meet the challenges before they become crises, we need to call the congregation together to consider ways to move our ministry forward in today’s world. Joining us will be The Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kwong from the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Congregational Life Staff.

Three areas of congregational life need urgent attention: right relationship, lay-leadership, and funding.

How do we stay in right relationship during times of stress, conflict, and change?

How do we nurture and equip lay leaders with the skills and motivation to guide the congregation in fulfillment of its mission and vision?

How do we fund the congregation’s ministries given today’s economic realities?

You will want to be part of these important conversations.
Upcoming Services

Sunday, January 17*
Rev. Diane Dowgiert and Kathleen Hogue
What can we do about racism?
We can use the methods of our religious heritage: confession, repentance, asking for forgiveness, and seeking reconciliation. We’ll gather as an entire intergenerational community for a time of Extended Family Worship to remember Martin Luther King, and to rededicate ourselves to continuing the work of racial justice.
Worship Associate: Randall Springer
Music: Leeza Beriyeva

*This Sunday is Share the Plate. Half of all non-pledge income will be shared with Interfaith Community Services.

Sunday, January 24
Rev. Diane Dowgiert
Wage Reconciliation
There is a double meaning to this title. The more obvious meaning is about how we reconcile our wages in a time of rampant wage inequality. The other, subtler meaning is about waging not war, but reconciliation. To wage reconciliation would be to aggressively pursue forgiveness. Is it possible the two meanings are more closely related than they seem?
Worship Associate: Gary Luce
Music: Desert Chorale and Leeza Beriyeva

Sunday, January 31
Rev. Ron Phares
Pulpit Exchange
The ministers of our Baja 4 congregations here in Southern Arizona are participating in a pulpit exchange this Sunday. Rev. Ron Phares from Mountain Vista UU in northwest Tucson will be filling the pulpit at UUCT. Rev. Diane will be filling the pulpit at Sky Island UU in Sierra Vista.

January Share the Plate
On January 17th our Share the Plate recipient is Interfaith Community Services (ICS)! As you may know, UUCT partners with ICS throughout the year to help Tucson families in need. Last month UUCT participated in the Gifts of Love program in which we sponsored 2 low income families for the holidays. If you’re interested in volunteering for ICS or if you’d like more info about their programs, contact UUCT’s ICS liaison, Ashley Davis (office@uuctucson.org or 748-1551) or visit icstucson.org. Thank you for helping support this wonderful local non-profit!

Our Annual Auction is Saturday, January 30th!
Purchase your tickets in Goddard Hall after Sunday services. Remember to buy your ticket by Jan. 24th to get it for only $10 (will be $15 at the door). Childcare will be available (please request it when you purchase your tickets).
We are still in need of donations! Please consider donating an item, a dinner, or a service. Sign up in Goddard Hall.

Lost and Found – Our Lost and Found box is overflowing! Please claim your items by January 18th. Anything left over will be donated. Thank you!

Children’s Book Drive – In January we’ll be collecting new and gently used children’s books for Interfaith Community Services. Please bring your donations to the church foyer, where there will be a book box.

Thank You!

Members and friends of UUCT purchased 24 poinsettias, many of them in honor or in memory of someone special, to decorate our sanctuary for the holidays. Thank you to Susan Call, Carolyn Saunders, and Ashley Davis for coordinating the Poinsettia sales. Thank you Judy Dare for watering the plants. A portion of the sales benefited Our Family Services.

Gifts of Love

A Big Thank You to everyone who contributed to the Gifts of Love holiday program. Our Gifts of Love project was a marvelous success! Our congregation was generous beyond words and has made Christmas magical for eight children and two single parent moms who are our neighbors in Tucson. Over 40 of our congregation members, friends and staff contributed gifts, money or gift cards this year! Thank you, thank you!!

A special thank you also goes to the UUCT Elves who organized the project, trained the new Elves, contacted the two families, made the mittens, kept track of the donations, sorted and bagged the gifts and delivered the gifts. The cast of Elves were Carolyn Valdes, Gretchen Field, Sandy Ongley, Bo Ongley, Mary Catherine Habeck-Leighou, Betsy McMillan and Ashley Davis.