Rev. Bethany Russell-Lowe

The Jewish prophet Micah spoke out against dishonesty in the marketplace and corruption in the government in the 8th century BCE. The prophetic instruction in the midst of his own societal chaos rings in my ears today:

*What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

In a recent sermon I said, “This is not a call to the center, but to the heart of things. The center does not include those on the margins. The heart feeds the whole body.”

This is a tug I’ve been feeling the past few years, as our country has become more divided and it has become more difficult to imagine a ‘whole’ here. I am not feeling called to the center, but to the heart. To efforts which center lives over policies. People over profit.

At the heart of things I imagine us working to assure that all have access to food, water, shelter, and medical care. At the heart of things, basic necessities are not things to be negotiated. These are things people need in order to live. If we value human life this is the most necessary action, at the heart of things.

And once those basic needs are met the heart of things assures education is accessible to and equitable for all...it teaches us that refugees and immigrants are in need of love and care...it demands that we act seriously, quickly, and intentionally to address our climate crisis.

These are not centrist political issues. These are human issues.

Our faith calls us to love beyond belief. At the heart of things, instead of asking “What will you compromise?” we ask, “What do you need?”

Our faith asks us to honor one another across our differences. At the heart of things, instead of asking “Why are you so different?” we ask “What can I learn from you?”

*What do you need? What can I learn from you?*

In these coming days, as you go about your lives I hope you will focus on the heart of things. I hope you will feel tugged to the place where human life and connection is uplifted. To that place where we honor each other’s inherent worth and dignity with care, connection, and community. There is no more worthy task than this.

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**Bring a Flower to Worship on March 8th**

Bring a flower (or a few!) to worship on March 8th for an intergenerational flower communion ritual where we will honor all the volunteers it takes to make our congregation run. Pick a wildflower or buy some from the store! We look forward to seeing you there.

**Click here to Connect with Rev. Bethany!**

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Jamili Omar
Director, LFD

Religious Education

on March 1 and 8

Both of these dates are child- and youth-friendly Inter-generational Services. We welcome people of all ages in Worship!

- **March 1** –ONLY C^3 will meet (for ages 12-19)
- **March 8** –NO RE classes

Feel free to bring quiet, reflective activities such as coloring or knitting to keep hands busy.

Nursery care is available for children 10 years and younger.

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Worship Schedule

March 2020

March 1  Brian Moon
All Music Sunday
Stephen Sondheim program.

March 8  Rev. Bethany, WA Brenda Lundt. Flower Communion (inter-generational) volunteerism and play.

March 15  Rev. Bethany, WA Bob Gordon. "Do I Have to Go to Church with Those People?" Building a healthy congregation.


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Board of Trustees

Stewardship
How does your Board of Trustees handle the tough issues?

Most of the time the Board deals with happy issues (e.g. confirming Lifetime Members) or supporting what the congregation and committees want in order to accomplish their missions. However, over the years I've been president there have been a handful of thorny issues.

On the Board we strive for consensus. We do this by listening carefully to each other's honest opinions and concerns. We also listen to issue leaders in the congregation and to all of you at Town Halls. In most cases, we realize what the right thing needs to be even though we sometimes share feelings of being conflicted about the decision.

There have been very few issues of importance where we did not reach unanimity. In those circumstances our consensus was to keep the status quo. It is important, in the heat of the moment, to remind ourselves that we can come back to an issue later if the status quo is no longer an option.

Almost all the hard issues have been because of a moral dichotomy between our responsibility for our property, safety, and legal duties and our UU values. Guns on campus and locking our doors during service are two from the past.

When you come to the March Town Hall on the 22nd you will be presented with another issue of this type that will be up to YOU to adopt at our Annual Meeting in May. The issue namely, is the potential for responding to a member's destructive behavior. You can see the Proposed Policy by clicking here.

The most recent challenging issue for the Board was on the topic of homeless folks occupying our campus. On the property, safety and legal side are incidents that have occurred and the potential liability to our church. On the values side there is our compassion and respect for people in difficult circumstances. We listened to each other, staff, and other leaders concerned with our campus and social justice. While there are really two distinct issues -- the specific of people on our campus verses the general problems faced by such un-housed people as part of the larger community-- it was difficult to discuss a policy without bringing concerns about both issues into the mix.

After listening, the Board adopted a policy, what was needed for clarity and liability, that addresses both problems. Click here for the Adopted Policy. We remind ourselves again that any policy can be revisited and revised in the future.

We feel it is important to be transparent; especially on the tough issues. The examples mentioned here and the actions taken by your Board, may raise feelings for you. You are welcome to share them at one of our Town Halls or with the Board and minister.

On another topic, are you a procrastinator? I am, and I tend to be driven by deadlines. The pledge campaign has a March 1st deadline. Why? So that the finance folks can start on a budget for the next financial year.

Committee News

We our well on our way to a very successful pledge drive.

Pre-pledges were received from the Finance Committee and the Board. THANK YOU to those of you who have already pledged.

I loved seeing the enthusiasm shown on Kick-off Sunday in support of our community -- Our Common Ground.

If you have questions regarding pledging, please reach out to Margot Garcia or me, or stop by the table in Goddard Hall on Sunday.

The Stewardship drive wraps up on March 15th. Show your support for Our Common Ground. Pledge generously!

Thank you, Deb Collinge

Finance Report

JD Garcia

The Finance Committee met on February 11th. Current status of the Operations Account compared to the budget was reviewed.

We seem to be doing well, despite some unusual expenses earlier this year. Our physical plant expenditures are about 40% over budget, in part reflecting repairs not budgeted, as well as extra water and electricity usage.

Other parts of the budget show similar overages, including our No More Deaths Ministry, which had additional wage expenses beyond the budgeted ones.

The result being that our expenditures to date have been about 25% higher than budgeted, at $504,022, of which $277,410 is the UUCT portion.

The good news is that our income is also higher than budgeted.  Pledges are up 18% (~$28,000), as are donations (50%), so that our income is staying ahead of expenditures thus far, year-to-date.

As of 1/31/2020, we had $43,035.32 in the Checking account, and $37,945.15 in Money Market Funds.

The Committee also collected budget requests from all aspects of our church activities, so we have the information about the budgetary needs of all parts of the UUCT.
fiscal year.

So get your pledge in online by clicking this link: https://uuctucson.org/quick-links/pledge.html.

You might consider adding a little bit extra for the new church year (see the Stewardship Committee news). If you miss the deadline, it is never too late.

And as final plugs -- please plan to come to the March 21st "Moving Forward Together" workshop and the May 3rd Annual Meeting.

Yours,
Frank Valdes, President

Contact Frank at: BOT@uuctucson.org or President@uuctucson.org

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Healthy Congregations Team and Workshop

The Moving Forward Together Workshop
Saturday, March 21st

- Are you interested in investing in the long-term relational health of our congregation?
- Want to learn skills to work more effectively with others and understand those who are different from you?

Yes?! Then Save the Date for the Moving Forward Together Workshop, part of our commitment to becoming a Healthier Congregation, on Saturday, March 21st.

Whether you have been part of our congregation for 40 years and seen us through many conflicts, or whether you are newer to the congregation and don't know us to be a congregation in conflict, you will surely learn something valuable at this workshop.

The goal is to give those who gather, skills to deal with conflict while remaining in relationship with one another. There will be a morning workshop from 9 AM – 12 PM. Then in the afternoon we will have a workshop for the Board, Staff, and other leaders in the congregation.

Please RSVP to Mary Wiese (mwiese@uuctucson.org) if you would like to attend the morning workshop.

Contacting Your Healthy Congregations Team

Are you in conflict with another member of the congregation? Would you like support transforming and/or resolving this conflict? Contact a member of the Healthy Congregations Team by emailing hct@uuctucson.org.

By sending this email, your request will go to all members of the Healthy Congregations Team (Aston Bloom, Carolyn Cooper, Bob Gordon, Bert Meek, Marsha Newcomb) as well as Rev. Bethany. You can also contact any HCT member directly.

More information will be available as the date gets closer. Mark your calendars now!

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NOTICE!

The Newcomers Club

The Newcomers club is canceled for the month of March.

It will resume in April. Please contact Wendy Annis if you have questions.

neverlandpm@yahoo.com

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LGBTQAI+ GROUP

We at UUCT LGBTQAI+ are busy planning several events in the next couple of months!

More details to follow.

The following data is worth the read!

The Data Trail - Harvard Medicine

From a medical perspective, it seems like a no-brainer. "Someone’s sexual orientation and gender identity are a core part of who they are," says Mark Schuster, MD ’88, founding dean and CEO of the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine.

“Clinicians should care for the whole patient and should make an effort to understand each patient in the context of their own life.” But for some LGBTQ patients, disclosing information about such matters to health professionals is considerably less straightforward.

To read the entire article click here.

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Our faith community, is part of the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN) and stands with people living with HIV and strives to...
TBIRDS March 9: Potluck
RSVP's to howard.tolley@gmail.com requested but not required for Monday March 9 city-wide pot luck, 6 pm in Goddard.

Winter members, friends and visitors bring your own plates and utensils as well as a dish to share.

Remaining pot luck— April 13.

For more information go to:
https://groups.google.com/d/forum/tbirds-uuct and subscribe if interested in regular announcements.

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Volunteers Needed!
UU Booth at UA Book Fest
March 14 and 15

To volunteer to be a greeter in the booth, just click on the link below to sign up. You only need to be at the booth for 3 hours, so you can have the rest of the time at the Book Festival for yourself.

Also, a week or so before the Festival, we send you a reminder with tips for booth volunteers as well as the specific booth location.

If you have questions or need help signing up, please feel free to contact Erin Chadwell, Administrator at MVUU at 520 579-7094 or me at 520 664-5323.

Thank you for helping make the UU Booth a success.
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054AAACA2CA8F4 9-tucson2

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SAZCUUPS
EJ Millstone

What Is Waning
We had a really fun Paganism 101 (part 2) class where we played energy ball and conducted a mini-ritual, as well as explored the meaning of cultural appropriation in paganism. We also enjoyed a gorgeous Imbolc ritual led by Ana Ortiz. Participants enjoyed crossing the ritual flames with new intentions for the year.

What Is Waxing
Our Second Sunday class offering this month is Intro to the Celtic Wheel of the Year. The Celtic Wheel of the Year is the religious calendar for our ancestors of the British Isles. Come and learn about the history of these sabbats (holidays) and how they follow the cycles of nature. Join us on March 8th at 12:30pm.

Join us for Ostara Ritual on Thursday, March 19th at 6 pm. Come celebrate the spring equinox SAZCUUPS-style. Bring a snack to share (carpet-friendly, please). This is a child friendly event, but support their flourishing.

To champion this mission, TIHAN is having a benefit to raise funds to support people with HIV locally as well as children in Africa.

The annual Swinging@AIDS events, the golf tournament and concert in collaboration with the Center for Health and Hope, are being combined into one fabulous event this year!

Join us for the Swinging@AIDS Benefit Concert on the outdoor stage on Friday, March 20, 2020, from 7-9pm, featuring the Heather “Li’l Mama” Hardy Band, at Monterey Court, 505 W Miracle Mile.

Tickets are $20. Proceeds jointly benefit the programs and services of TIHAN as well as supporting an emergency fund for orphans in Kenya (sponsored by the Center with whom we partner).

To learn more or purchase tickets go here
https://tihan.org/e-newsletter-february-2018/

NEW: Our monthly meetings are the THIRD Sunday of each month from 12 - 1 p.m. in the Blackwell room. Next meeting, March 15.

All are welcome!
Pronoun stickers available in Holland Sanctuary or at meetings.

For information contact:
Jerry or Bob at LGBTQAI@UUCTUCSON.ORG or by phone: 441-274-4051

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Welcoming and Membership
Team Report

Please welcome long time UU's Penny Stone, Alice Murphy and Rev. Linda Bunyard into our congregation.

New to UU and our congregation, is new member GiGi Dubarton.

The next opportunity to join UUCT is Sunday, March 15, after church in the Minister's Study.

The next Getting to Know UU Orientation and Breakfast will be held on Saturday March 28th from 9:00 to 11:30 am in Holland.

All folks new to the UUCT community are welcome to attend. There will be a light breakfast, time to meet new people and opportunities to learn about UU and UUCT.

Please RSVP to Alma Byrd at alma1byrd777@gmail.com.
Child care will be provided.

Please remember we are all ministers
childcare is available by emailing Jamili at dre.uuct@gmail.com to request it.

Pagan tip of the month

March is a time of birthings, sproutings, beginnings and the balanced equinox between light days and dark days. We are heading into the hot, hot summer here in the desert southwest.

Now is a good time to plant your intentions, along with seedlings in eggshells. Start a new project, create a new habit, dive into a new skill, or grow that savings account (leave a penny and some milk for the fairies on Ostara for an extra boost). What do you like to do in spring?

Have a pagan tip to share? Email sazcuups@uuctucson.com. All traditions welcome!

Have a pagan tip to share? Email sazcuups@uuctucson.com. All traditions welcome!

Southern Arizona CUUPS: A Chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans
Mail: Southern Arizona CUUPS c/o UUCT, 4831 E. 22nd Street, Tucson, AZ 85711
Web: http://uuctucson.org/worship/sazcuups.html | Email: sazcuups@uuctucson.org
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SAZCUUPS/ (FB messages can be sent to m.me/SAZCUUPS)
Chat group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/190164578242015

Grief and Loss Group

Every Sunday
12:15-1:15 p.m.
Reed Room

For those experiencing a difficult time after the loss of a loved one, a pet, a job, or any other significant loss, UUCT holds a Grief and Loss support group.

There you can find recovery in the caring and comfort of other church members (and friends) who are also grieving a loss.

There is POWER in those Flowers!

Do you enjoy the flowers on the chancel on Sunday morning? Volunteer to bring them! Contact Nancy at: cottagegardens2911@gmail.com or call her at 301.802.4683

Sunday Morning Discussion Group

Join us for Conversation Among Friends, 9 a.m. every Sunday in the Servetus Room, UUCT Campus.

Ronna James, facilitator.
All adults welcome.

For more information call Gilbert Moore 520-790-7568 or email gmoore579@aol.com.

Sunday Morning Meditation

Morning Meditation for beginners will be in the meditation garden Sunday mornings. Meditate for as little as 3 minutes to begin. Liz Ravenwood would love to show you her meditative technique that has proven very effective. Others will want to share their techniques as well. For information email: lizravenwood@gmail.com or talk/text 520-661-7153.
UUCT BOOK CLUB

The next UU Book Club will meet Thursday, March 26th at 9:30 in Servetus at church. Please bring your own beverage, snacks will be provided. We’re reading Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Questions? Contact Margo at margonewhouse25@hotmail.com

Come Join the UUCT Happy Hour Group!

When: Fourth Fridays of the month 4-7 pm
Date of Next Gathering: March 27.

Where: On the Border, at north side of Broadway between Swan and Craycroft.

Cheap prices for food and drink. We may try other places eventually. Just show up and ask for the UU's (if questions, email SandyOngley@hotmail.com)

https://www.ontheborder.com/happyhour?loc=broadway-tucson-az

An Invitation from the Nonviolence Legacy Program, in Collaboration with Community Conversations and the SEMA Foundation

Thursday, March 5, 2020 from 6 to 8 PM

We welcome you to bring a traditional culture dish and join us for a night filled with personal stories of pain, healing, hope and peace.

Where: SEMA Foundation, 2843 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85712

We look forward to building community with you, hearing your story and exchanging peace.

Sincerely,
Nonviolence Legacy Co-Coordinators
Vana Dee Lewis & Nai Smith

Editor's note: Many photos included here are from the February Work Day at UUCT.