Whenever my life is feeling out of balance, I practice yoga, particularly the tree pose. The practice brings mind, body, and spirit together. An integrated life leads to integrity.

The tree pose looks so easy and graceful, at least when the yoga teacher does it, standing on one leg, bending the opposite knee, resting the foot on the thigh, and touching hands together high above the head. I remember learning the tree pose, urging the appropriate body parts into place, then holding my breath and whispering, “don’t fall . . . don’t fall.” Inevitably, my leg would start to wobble, my arms would start to sway, and I would break the pose to keep from falling.

Over time, I learned. Strength, flexibility, and balance are required, physical abilities that come with practice. Physical abilities alone are not enough. To maintain the pose for an extended period of time requires focus. Staying balanced is made easier by fixing the gaze on a distant spot. Following the thread of breath, a center point is found, an inner fulcrum upon which everything rests and balances.

The religious community is where we practice integrity. It’s a delicate balancing act, made easier when our gaze is fixed on a vision of who we are becoming together. A healthy, vital, and diverse congregation with a mission and a purpose; housed in well-maintained and attractive surroundings; with worship to nurture the spirit and educational programs to stimulate the mind; engaged in the transformative work of justice; committed to inter-faith cooperation and partnership; with deepened bonds among our association of Unitarian Universalist congregations – this is the vision upon which we can fix our gaze.

The center point, the fulcrum upon which it all balances, can be found in the quality of relationship among us. It’s like learning the tree pose. If we hold our breath and worry about what can go wrong, we are certain to lose our balance. The way of integrity is in nourishing each other in wholesome ways. Notice and appreciate the good will and good works that keep our congregation alive. Celebrate successes large and small. Stay focused on the vision. These practices build strength and flexibility, maintaining balance and integrity in our beloved community.

March::

Integrity

Our Shared Path to Ministry  Living with Integrity  Intentional Intergenerational Community
Our church program-year (August-May) is fashioned around nine theological themes. Each theme plays a part in the development of a well-grounded religious and spiritual life. The church’s offerings each month are by no means limited to the themes. However, these topics provide an axis around which many elements of church life gain more meaning and depth. They provide us with a set of common stories and ideas that become elements of an ongoing community conversation. Be warned: seriously engaging these themes could transform your life!

January — Hope
February — Healing
March — Integrity
April — Faith
May — Transformation

Our Shared Path to Ministry: Integrity & God
Lisa McDaniel-Hutchings, Ministry Student
Meadville/Lombard Theological School

Since taking the Religious Humanism class this January, I have felt torn as to whether I am an atheist or a theist. The first thought that usually comes to people when they hear the word God is the concept of a supernatural being. My definition of God is quite different from that. I define God as the Oneness that connects the entire Universe; God is not separate and above the Universe, God is in all of it, making all of the Universe sacred. I don’t believe that my definition of God as a humanistic religious naturalist pantheist is what most people think of as the definition of God. In which case, I am an atheist.

On the other hand, I think it is useful for me to have a definition of God that works for me, so that I have an entry point in interfaith dialogue and I do not give up the traditional language of reverence to those who believe their definitions are the only correct ones. In that case I am a theist, a pantheist who believes that God is in all of Creation, making Creation holy and sacred, worthy of awe and reverence.

So am I an atheist or a theist? Which is the place of integrity? And, what about you? What is your relationship to the word God? Does it hold meaning for you? How do you respond to this word which is so frequently used in our culture?

Left to my own devices, I would probably use the Sacred rather than God as a name for what has ultimate value, but to some extent that is dodging the question. My current understanding leads me to both/and. I am both a theist and an atheist. In the strictest definition of the word God, I am an atheist since I do not believe in a supernatural being. Yet, that diminishes my understanding of God as the processes at work in the world and the connection within the Universe. Having a working definition of God gives me a way to translate the word when I hear it in a cultural context or when I read it in religious contexts. It gives me a way to access the meaning that others find with their own definitions of God. This awareness of my atheist/theist definitions allows me to live authentically with God.

What about you? How do you find integrity with God?
Living with Integrity as a Unitarian Universalist

Lisa McDaniel-Hutchings
Adult Faith Development Director

It’s not what we eat but what we digest that makes us strong; not what we gain but what we save that makes us rich; not what we read but what we remember that makes us learned; and not what we profess but what we practice that gives us integrity.

Francis Bacon

Unitarian Universalism is a creedless faith, and the UU Principles are not a creed, and they are not a statement of our theology. They are actually a covenant among member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and for many of us they are principles that we use to guide our interactions at church and our actions in our daily living. The Principles are often the first place we turn to answer questions about Unitarian Universalism or to explain our personal beliefs.

The Bacon quote above reminds me that living with integrity means walking my talk. If the Unitarian Universalist Principles are indeed high values or guiding principles that I profess to use to make decisions and inspire action in my living, how is that practice visible? The UU principles do not lay out an easy path to follow. We “covenant to affirm and promote” these noble guidelines that on the surface seem obvious and attractive, but upon close examination are much more complex in their implications and more demanding to put into action than they first appear. It can be a challenge to find practical ways in which to integrate each of the Unitarian Universalist Principles into our daily lives.

If you (like me) are a Unitarian Universalist who in part defines your faith through the values expressed by the UU Principles, I challenge you to know the Principles. What do they actually say? What do they mean to you? What concrete actions do you take to express those values? Our individual commitments to care for our planet, to create a peaceful and just world, to promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process, to respect all beings, while they may seem small and insignificant, do indeed add up to the making of a meaningful life. It is one path to living with integrity as a Unitarian Universalist.

The Seven Principles of Our Religious Faith

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.
Clarion Call to Integrity

by Joyce Hardin

Shakespeare in Hamlet, speaks to us through Polonius’ entreaty to his son, Laertes: *This above all: to thine own self be true,/And it must follow, as the night the day,/Thou canst not be false to any [one].* This call to live a life of integrity reflects our first Unitarian Universalist principle. It brings to mind the Golden Rule as well, another clarion call to integrity. In our church community we are encouraged to develop the best in ourselves, with the expectation of encountering the best in others. Quakers like to cite their founder, George Fox, who advised Friends to *walk cheerfully over the earth answering that of God in everyone.* The view of the earth and its creatures through a lens of integrity is a holistic one, integrating the physical, the spiritual, the intellectual, the visionary. Leading a life of integrity leads us on a path toward truth.

A Few Thoughts on Integrity

by Gilbert Moore

What is integrity, and how can we know it and practice it? Actually, integrity is pretty easy to spot. It shines out in some people like a homing beacon. In others, integrity slumbers. In still others, integrity is AWOL -- absent without leave -- though we hope it will return to a better, more honest self.

We admire integrity, we praise it, we wish to be known for it. Easier said than done, of course; integrity is not something you learn in a classroom, or by reading a best-seller, or by following a fashionable guru.

A practical, common-sense tip for practicing integrity came from the famous American comedian and actress, Fanny Brice, star of the famous network radio program of the 40s, *Baby Snooks.*

Fanny Brice advised: *Let the world know you as you are, not as you think you should be, because sooner or later, if you are posing, you will forget the pose, and then where are you?*

And Jim Stovall, the blind and intrepid weightlifter, stockbroker and author. put it this way: *Integrity is doing the right thing, even if nobody is watching.*

Youth to Visit Nicaragua

by Anne Jones

*Integrity: firm adherence to a code, especially of moral or artistic values.*

The high school youth group, the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), is adhering to our religious integrity by acting out our UU principles in the world. For a social action project this year, YRUU is planning a trip to Nicaragua, the second poorest country in Central America, and is politically stable enough to safely visit and do what we can for its impoverished people. Because we have spent all of our lives in America, we know that it is difficult for us to understand the problems that exist in other places in the world. As a group we feel that experiencing this discrepancy hands-on will help us to better understand the lives and attitudes of people who live differently than us. Instead of raising money, we have decided to promote our first, second, and sixth UU principles. Traveling to Nicaragua will be an opportunity to put into actions the principles that bind our faith.

In Nicaragua we will be staying in Cusmapa where we will work with the Fabretto Children’s Foundation at a local orphanage. We will participate in a work exchange program with local youth of our same age, and we will each provide a workshop for the other. We will end our stay with a combined social action project which will benefit the entire community.

The youth group will leave for Nicaragua on May 27th, and return on June 5th. The trip will cost approx. $1,500 per person, including airfare and hotel expenses. We are holding several fundraisers to help us meet the expense, including serving at the Church Auction on March 15th (all money earned in tips will be designated to the trip), and a Sundays Together Lunch on March 30th. Our youth-led service on March 9th will discuss our trip in depth, and provide an opportunity for people to make donations if they wish. Donations may also be made at any time which is convenient; checks should be made out to the church with YRUU designated in the memo line, and will be considered charitable donations. Any assistance offered will be heartily welcomed and gratefully received. If you have any questions or comments, please contact our youth representative, Anne Jones at 908-0996 or via email at ajones@ultrasw.com.
Several times a year Lisa and I give a presentation on Lifespan Faith Development during a Sunday evening Newcomers Orientation for visitors who want to learn more about our religious community. During this presentation we stress that one of the strengths of church life is its intergenerational nature. In a society that so often segregates us by age, religious community offers a valuable opportunity to form connections with those of a different decade than ourselves. Our captive audience always nods in affirmation. The value in forming intentional intergenerational community seems obvious. And here we come to the question of integrity - how do we truly create the intentional intergenerational community that we claim to value?

On Sunday February 3 the Religious Education Council and Adult Faith Development Team hosted a Town Hall meeting on Lifespan Faith Development. During our presentation we highlighted the joys and successes as well as the frustrations and challenges in creating intergenerational community at UUCT. During our Feedback Circles we asked several questions to get a sense of how people feel about intergenerational activities and worship, what kinds of intergenerational activities they would attend, and how and why people who don’t have school aged children can be involved in supporting our RE Program. The answers we received were predictably and wonderfully varied. Yet a consistency emerged within the diversity of our responses, a desire to take on the challenge of creating intentional intergenerational community.

Noted 20th century religious educator Maria Harris describes the curriculum of a church as the entirety of what a church does. That how a church creates community together, does social justice work together, and worships together will tell you a lot more about what that group really believes than any book or class ever will. So what does the curriculum of our church tell us about how we create intentional intergenerational community? Do we give lip service to intergenerational bonds and then avoid the activities that don’t interest us? Or do we take on the challenges of intergenerational community, even the ones that might push us out of our comfort zones, like attending a different form of worship from what we think we like, starting a conversation with a child or youth we don’t know during coffee hour, volunteering to help lead that really awesome intergenerational activity that does interest us, or speaking with honesty and compassion to our friends and leaders about what we think is not working and sharing our ideas for change.

This is what creating intergenerational community with integrity requires of us, that we show by our actions that we include all people of all ages in the life of our church. That we stretch ourselves to make new connections and try new activities, not only because it benefits our own spiritual life, but because it benefits our community
Grow in Evolutionary Integrity

by Rev. Michael Dowd

To live life fully and love the life you live you must be committed to deep, or evolutionary, integrity. If you want to experience real joy, true peace, and lasting fulfillment, there’s really no other way. To grow in evolutionary integrity means getting right with Reality (God/the Universe) by growing in humility, authenticity, responsibility, and service to the Whole.

*Why humility?* Because what’s undeniably so is that the Universe is primary and you are derivative. Said another way, you are not the center of the Universe and your ego does not run the show. We were not thrust into the Universe, we were born out of it. You couldn’t exist without it and the Universe would do just fine without you. And that’s the truth! Humility and its twin sister, trust, are thus essential because only when you’re coming from a place of humility are you in touch with Reality as it actually is.

*Why authenticity?* Because only by being authentic are you aligned with Reality. Honesty, transparency, and authenticity enable the feedback necessary for individuals and groups to evolve in healthy ways. We may sometimes be tempted to lie or present ourselves in false ways because of the promise of a cheap thrill. Deception never, however, provides lasting joy.

*Why responsibility?* Because what’s really real is that there is only one person responsible for the quality of your life, and that person is you.... Only by taking full responsibility for our lives, and the wake we’ve left, can we know heaven of Earth. Righteous indignation may feel good in the moment but blame never yields true happiness.

*Why service to the Whole?* Because it is everything to us: our source and sustenance, our Alpha and Omega, beginning and end. Whatever we may choose to call the Whole, and whatever metaphors or analogies we use to describe it, the undeniable fact is that Ultimate Reality is creator of all things, knows all things, reveals all things, is present everywhere, transcends and includes all things, expresses all forms of power, holds everything together, suffers all things, and transforms all things.

The good news here is that, while it is possible to feel alienated from the Universe (when we are out of integrity, judging events negatively, or casting blame), the fact is that it is impossible to ever be alienated—no matter what. You are part of the Universe. Achieving enlightenment, freedom, salvation, empowerment is as easy (and as challenging) as developing a habit of trusting what’s real and growing in humility, authenticity, responsibility, and service to the Whole—that is, growing in evolutionary integrity.

From the Church Office
by Jean Griffiths, Office Manager

Your help is needed by the church office to make this new publication look like the “journal” it is meant to be. Help is needed in a very specific area … graphics. If you have access to any electronic pictures, art work or other graphics which we could use at some time and the item is in public domain, we would love to receive it. The office can begin to collect these graphics into a file that could be accessed when we are needing something specific for an article which would help to draw attention to the article. Sometimes it is very difficult, with our limited resources, to find just the right piece of art work. We hope to be able to collect these pictures to use anytime. If you are willing to share one or two with us, please email them to uu1@qwestoffice.net and we will keep them in a special file. Thank you for helping us in this way.

Team Integrity
by Mary Wiese
Membership/Community Life Coordinator

There are several reasons that I choose to work here at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson. One of the more important factors of that choice is that with very few exceptions over the years, the people I work for and with and the people that work for me have all been people of integrity.

The Encarta English Dictionary defines integrity as: the “possession of firm principles.” It is also synonymous with honesty. For me it is also linked to responsibility and accountability. These are traits that I consider critical to the success of any job and especially for those of us employed by a UU congregation.

As we all know, people bring their best selves, and sometimes, their worst selves to church. Working here can be an emotional roller coaster. We work with people of all ages; we occasionally contend with intense situations of a confidential manner; we often work odd and sometimes long hours; our business deals with the happiest of times, and the saddest of times. Therefore, it is essential for us to work as a team by supporting one another even when we disagree.

The core staff has a covenant that we developed together a few years ago. We take turns reading that covenant aloud during every staff meeting. Although we do not adhere to it 100 percent of the time, it always serves as a reminder to one another about our responsibility to one another. When we work as a cohesive group, we achieve our best results. The covenant is a testament to our integrity.

The Staff Covenant is posted in the main office. Check it out!
### Upcoming Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 5</td>
<td>Memorial Service for Wm Fogarty at 3:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 6</td>
<td>Town Hall Meeting on Stewardship at 12:15 p.m.</td>
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<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Volunteer Fair in Goddard Hall</td>
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<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>AFD Speaker Series</td>
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<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Homeless Hospitality in Goddard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>Concert: Sheryl Holland and Trio, 7:00 p.m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Sunday Services Feedback Time in Holland at 12:15 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Homeless Hospitality in Goddard</td>
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Sunday Service Times: 8:30 & 10:30 a.m.

### Upcoming in Religious Education

**Sunday March 9** - Be sure to attend the annual **Youth-led Worship Service**. Middle School and Coming of Age youth will attend this worship. Children in preschool thru fifth grade will attend Religious Education programming as usual.

- **Chalice Chapel** (1st thru 5th grade) will focus on what worship means to us.
- **Coming of Age** sojourners meet on the patio at 12:15 for a Conversation on Membership.
- **OWL (7-9)** meets from 1:00 to 4:00 in Servetus.
- **OWL (10-12)** meets from 1:00 to 4:00 in King.

**Wednesday March 12** - Our monthly **Religious Education Council** meeting is held from 6:30 to 8:30 in Emerson room. Contact RE Council Chair, Peggy Smith, for more information.

**Saturday March 15** - Children participate in our annual **Children’s Auction**, which runs concurrently with the congregational service auction. Contact Kathleen Hogue for more information.

**Sunday March 16** - Parents and RE Volunteers are encouraged to fill out the **Worship Survey**. Committee on Ministry members will be available in the RE Courtyard to answer any questions.

- **OWL (7-9)** meets from 1:00 to 4:00 at the Northwest Congregation.
- **OWL (10-12)** meets from 1:00 to 4:00 in King room.

**Sunday March 23** - Children, youth and adults of all ages worship together for a special **Easter Extended Family Worship** featuring our annual flower communion.

Our Director of Religious Education, Rebecca Froom, will take a week’s vacation from Thursday March 13 thru Wednesday March 19.

### Artist of the Month

“Welcome Spring with Act III: Colors and Shapes” an exciting art exhibit by members of ACT (Artist Connection Tucson) with an opening reception on Sunday, March 9. This show will include art by several church members and friends.

### Alliance

Although there will be no meeting in March, we will be looking forward to our annual April 8th outing: a tour of KUAT facilities on campus. Also we need one or two people to once a month collect our leftover magazines and recycle them to waiting rooms or wherever. Could anyone do this for us? Contact Marcia Schenck (326-1102) if you are willing to help.

### Joys & Concerns

Vicki & Ross Behm have been blessed with the arrival of their first grandson on February 17, 2008.

*If you would like your “Joys & Sorrows” share with the congregation, fill out a form on Sunday morning and check off the box “My joy/sorrow may be shared in the church newsletter.”*