



# Horizons Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix  
January 2015



## Inspiring Courage

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray

Last April, Worship Associates and Small Group Ministry facilitators gathered to brainstorm the themes we would explore each month this year. To guide our conversation, one question we asked was “What qualities does Unitarian Universalism inspire or challenge us to live in our lives?” Many people mentioned courage. One person said, “UUism gives me courage to try things I previously couldn’t do, it gives me courage to learn new things, and fosters my growth.”

So what do you think? Do you think Unitarian Universalism inspires you to be courageous? My answer is a strong and definitive Yes! Perhaps it grows out of one of my earliest memories of being put on the margins. I was in

elementary school when I shared with my friends that I didn’t believe in God. One of my close friends told me I was going to hell. However, I wasn’t diminished. I told her that didn’t bother me because I didn’t believe in hell either. I know some kids in our congregation have these experiences today. It wasn’t easy, but already at eight years old, I felt strong enough to say what I believed and stick to it, even when it put me on the outside. I see some of those same things in my own son. In Kindergarten, he was the only boy to take ballet, and he was teased, but he stuck with it. He didn’t take ballet the next year, but he saw it through and told stories of being teased and not taking it to heart.

This year our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth have been busy with Coming of Age (COA), a curriculum that invites our young people to wrestle with ethical

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## Do It Anyway

Reverend Linda Lawrence

*Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway.* The title of this 1987 book by Dr. Susan Jeffries caught my attention 25 years ago as I struggled with decisions about career and family. The title continues to speak to me and others today, remaining on the top 50 list of popular self-help books.

Feel the fear and do it anyway. For me, that phrase pretty much sums up courage. And who doesn’t need courage to face life’s challenges? Even without fear-mongering news reports and political propaganda, there are plenty of reasons for fear just in the everyday living of our lives. Dr. Jeffries writes: “Fear seems to be epidemic in our society. We fear beginnings; we fear endings. We fear changing; we fear ‘staying stuck.’ We fear success; we fear failure. We fear living; we fear dying.” Living itself takes

courage.

Paul Tillich, the eminent 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian and existentialist philosopher, wrote one of his best known works in 1952: *The Courage to Be*. I confess that I never had to read it when I was in seminary, but I have read much *about* it. As I understand it, Tillich asserts that humans need courage for three basic reasons: (1) We fear non-being, i.e. we fear death, our ultimate fate, and the reality of our own mortality. (2) We are anxious about our own moral shortcomings, about whether or not we are “good enough” or have “made the most” of our lives, and we sometimes wonder whether we even have the *right* to exist because we are not morally perfect. (3) We are afraid that our lives have no real purpose or meaning.

What constitutes courage in the face of our biological, moral, and existential fears? Tillich said

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## Songs of Protest & Community

Benjie Messer

Music Director

Two weeks ago, a friend in his 60s asked me what had happened to popular music. “You’re a musician,” he said. “Why aren’t we singing peace songs anymore? What’s with these songs on the radio? What happened to Bob Dylan?” The freedom songs of the civil rights movement and the folk revival during the Vietnam war had been a rallying cry for my friend’s generation. The discouragement in his voice showed that his question wasn’t just about the popular music he heard on the radio, but about the social movements he had been a part of.

I reminded him that my life was better because of the work he did, and I suggested that the civil rights, feminist, and anti-war movements of the 1960s should be considered successful, but only as successful as the attack on the Death Star at the end of the first *Star Wars* film—a heroic momentary gain in a much larger struggle, and at a time when the enemy was naively thought to be much less powerful than they truly are. Even after such a great victory, the next film, *The Empire Strikes Back*, opens with the words, “Although the Death Star has been destroyed, Imperial troops have driven the Rebel forces from their hidden base and pursued them across the galaxy.”

I think this is true. As we enter January, the month marked most clearly at UUCP by our annual service dedicated to Martin Luther King, Jr., the three evils of society that MLK warned of—poverty, racism and war—each seem as systemic, embedded, and difficult to challenge as they ever have. Wages for most Americans have only declined in the last 40 years. Drone technology and reduced media

coverage of war make our military engagements overseas continually harder to protest against. And the shockingly public recent deaths of unarmed black men at the hands of police officers are a painful reminder that racism is alive and well in the U.S. In the face of this, we need courage more than ever.

And of course, there is music being made about all of this—but my friend asked a good question. Where is the popular music? What happened to popular music in the last 50 years? Did artists decide that supporting peace and a better world sounded dated and “uncool”? Did the deepening recession push artists to sell out in order to make a living and thus stop them from critiquing the powers that be? Is modern electronic technology simply better at creating textures and soundscapes than at supporting music with a message? Any of those things may have played a part, but my sense is that popular music is less a source of community now simply because our society is simply too isolated to enjoy music in the way it did 50 years ago. We usually listen to music alone—often through headphones—and making YouTube videos in response to other YouTube videos hardly brings the same communal feeling as singing together. I love that we sing together in our worship services—it reminds us that we are not alone, that we care, and that our lives are our own.

And why are the songs we sing in services so rarely taken from today’s “popular music”—let’s say, from the Billboard Top 40 list? I think the reason is explained well in William McNeill’s epic survey of rhythmic movement, “Keeping Together in Time,”

*The terrorists thought that they would change my aims and stop my ambitions,  
but nothing changed in my life, except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died.  
Strength, power and courage was born.*

—Malala Yousafzai, youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Pakistani girl shot in an attempt to keep girls from schools, who has become an advocate for universal education for girls and boys everywhere

published in 1995, though it focuses on dance rather than music. After describing how rhythmic movement has “established warm emotional bonds among [subgroups of people] of any and every sort,” McNeill writes,

[S]ince the Renaissance, [the sexual] aspect of dancing has tended to displace others in European society, first in courtly circles and later in middle-class urban ballrooms, until in our own time mass culture has made song and dance almost synonymous with sex throughout the world. This constitutes a specialized, historically exceptional meaning... and may even be regarded as a social pathology, insofar as it... inhibits the role of dance in consolidating entire communities.

I think this is related to the growing isolation in U.S. society that Rev. Susan has often spoken about. Over the last 50 years, as our society has become more isolated and fragmented, our popular music and dance has increasingly offered a fantasy of connection through sexuality. At any given time, the majority of the songs on the Billboard Top 40 list have lyrics (and videos) that share an almost pornographic aesthetic. I enjoy popular music (I teach electronic music, after all), and there’s certainly nothing wrong with romantic love, but I think that McNeill is right, and that singing music with sexual themes in a service would highlight our isolation rather than bring us together in community. Occasionally a modern pop song does fit perfectly in a service, but modern pop’s explicit sexuality makes it not as fertile a ground for congregational singing as popular music was in the 1960s.

As we begin 2015, I hope that the songs we sing at UUCP will continue to consolidate our community, and give us the courage that we all need in our struggles. □

## Auction Bonanza!

We had two goals this year for the annual auction: to build community by sharing our talents, services and interests and to raise \$29,000 to support the congregation and preschool’s current ministries and programming.

The results?

This year the congregation had 254 opportunities to participate in community-hosted events and 59 donations of items and services made by, or offered by, members and friends. These events and services gave us the opportunity to get to know each other in fun ways outside of our congregation life.

With 92 participants in our Online Auction and more than 60 households participating in the Live Auction, we have made 89% of our stretch goal of \$29,000. We still have another \$2,180 to raise by selling the remaining seats for community hosted events. This would bring us to 96.8% of our goal. We can do this! Please check out our website [www.phoenixuu.org](http://www.phoenixuu.org) to see what events are still available.

Thank you to everyone who donated, participated and volunteered to make this year’s Auction Bonanza! such an exciting community building fundraiser! □



## Courageous Leadership Nominating Committee

*A great leader's courage to fulfill  
his vision comes from passion,  
not position.* — John Maxwell

Gentle reader, you may be asking yourself, whatever could something as mundane as Nominating Committee have to do with courage? It has much to do with courage: one must be courageous to raise their hand to say, “I will serve as a leader.” Agreeing to leadership speaks to a person’s commitment to fulfilling UUCP’s mission of building a religious community where all are welcomed, to share our journeys, to grow in spirit and to advance justice. Indeed, it is an act of courage, even if for one year, to share one’s passion for our Unitarian Universalist faith by taking on the mantle of leadership.

The Nominating Committee is charged with nominating individuals to the Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Foundation and the Nominating Committee itself. We have been “re-envisioning the Nominating Committee” by holding an open and robust dialogue with various leadership groups, including staff, in order to identify the leadership needs of each body and the qualities desired in potential nominees in order to fulfill those needs.

Some facts about what we are seeking:

- UUCP Board and Nominating Committee terms are two years; the term for Foundation Board members is three years.
- All three bodies are focused on the fulfillment UUCP’s mission, not on the day-to-day operations of the Congregation, which are handled by different staff groups.
- We seek members of all ages, backgrounds and length of membership.
- We seek generous spirits who understand that from giving we also receive.

The members of the Nominating Committee encourage you to raise your hand, even if tentatively, to learn more about how you can share your passion for UUCP through leadership opportunities.

Drop us a line at [nominating@phoenixuu.org](mailto:nominating@phoenixuu.org) with your questions about any open positions or give us your input about what you see as ideal leaders as we move the UUCP forward.

In faith,

Kim St. Clair, Chair; Ellie Anderla; Charlotte Carl-Mitchell; Gary Ezzell; Dale Fisher; Caroli Peterson

## Unicare News

In remembrance:

- Katie Maness, sister of Liz Garcia (DVLC parent) passed away on November 15th
- Jesse Garza, uncle of Fred Garza passed away on November 23rd
- Geoff Keppel, friend of Stephanie Hart, passed away in November
- Ronda Mae Parks Armstrong, sister of Margaret Herrick passed away

Serious illness/hospitalization:

- Ruth Pinkus was hospitalized for a broken hip
- Pat Roth is rehabilitating after suffering a broken pelvis

Milestone celebrations:

- Randy Miller and Barbara Berg were married on December 2nd

For more information on significant events in the life of UUCP members/friends, sign up to be on our Unicare email list at [unicare@phoenixuu.org](mailto:unicare@phoenixuu.org).

Maureen Jeffries,  
Unicare Coordinator



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challenges, interview the Lead Minister, interview adult members of the congregation and do community service both inside and beyond UUCP. At the end of the program, they each write a personal credo, a statement of their beliefs and guiding principles, and then share these from the pulpit in a service before the congregation. This takes courage! But more than this, in the interviews I have with our young people, many of them share stories of courage, of standing up when they see someone being bullied, or the courage to be who they are, even if others disagree.

In so many ways, our faith tradition teaches us to keep our minds open, to keep on learning and

growing and trying new things. And too we teach the importance of knowing who you are, being who you are, being clear about what you value and affirming that in your life. I suppose if we only taught the latter, we'd run the risk of teaching arrogance. The combination of encouraging an openness to always learning, listening, stretching ourselves, with the strength to share who we are and work for the things we believe (even when it is not popular, or puts us at odds with others) seems the right recipe for courage.

This month, as we explore the theme of Courage, I invite you think about how UUCP and Unitarian Universalism inspires courage in your life. □

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that we show courage when we seek our own answers, relative to fate and death, rather than relying on or accepting what others tell us. We display courage when we learn to accept ourselves despite our shortcomings. We are courageous when we seek self-affirmation and meaning via faith in the "power of being" which Tillich called God. Some UUs may prefer to think of the "power of being" in other terms: Love, Connection, Community, Justice – these are just a few examples. The point is that courage comes through faith in something greater than ourselves, something that is not necessary wholly outside of ourselves, but something to which we feel connected and committed. Some thoughts to ponder perhaps.

In religious community, we realize  
that we are in this thing called life  
*together,*  
and together we help each other  
find the courage  
to be the best we can be.

For the record, I am as enamored of Tillich's title as I am of Jeffries'. I have seen many, many instances in which the courage to simply be was obvious, and often impressive. I have experienced and witnessed many examples of feeling the fear and stepping out into the unknown or the uncertain despite that fear. Have you ever lost a job? Lost a loved one? Blown an important relationship? Had a serious illness or cared for a seriously ill friend or family member? Ever been deeply depressed? Contemplated a career change? Gone back to school? Questioned your religious identity? Questioned your sexual orientation or gender identity? Had a problem that seemed so insoluble that you just wanted to give up, to drop out of life altogether, become a hermit...or worse? Have you ever taken a stand for something you believed in with all your heart and soul even though you risked alienating important people in your life by taking that stance? Have you felt the fear and done that thing that you wanted to do or that needed doing anyway?

In ways small and large, life itself calls us to be courageous. In religious community, we realize that we are in this thing called life together, and together we help each other find the courage to be the best we can be. Whether we're facing personal challenges or taking action for justice, we help one another feel the fear and do it anyway. □





## Help Your Children Practice Courageous Kindness

Anne Byrne

Director, Children's Ministries

When I was a freshman in high school, I sat behind a boy named Dale in English. Dale was physically more mature than many boys—he was already shaving, and he was a bit overweight. He was eccentric and a bit odd, and I don't think he had many friends.

One day a group of kids in the class conspired to leave a can of deodorant on Dale's desk to deliver the message that he had bad B.O. This group, friends of mine, was proud and amused with themselves. I was not.

I intervened and told Dale my friends were mean. Dale appreciated my kindness. He invited me over to his house to see his bull fighting memorabilia, which was not really high on my list of interests. With a little bit of trepidation and encouragement from my mom, I went over one Saturday afternoon. Dale was a perfect host. He had quite a collection of pictures, spears, clothing and decorations. Dale's passion for his hobby, along with the careful attention and study he made on the subject was impressive to me then and still now.

My actions required more courage than I knew I possessed at the time. I am sure my mom's encouragement helped. I don't know what my actions did for Dale, but I do know what they did for me. Dale took a picture of me in a matador's cape and hat that I looked back on with pleasure for many years. It represented one of the first times I stepped outside my comfort zone and exhibited courageous kindness.

Our religious education lessons are full of stories of courage: the courage to stand up for beliefs different than others; the courage to speak out for justice; the courage to recognize the inherent dignity of all. These lessons translate into attitudes, actions, and behaviors. I was blown away at the presentation panels for Coming of Age youth, where our youth spoke up confidently about the need and their abilities to stand up to bullies.

That being said, it is not always easy for kids to show courageous kindness with their peers. How can we help them traverse this landscape? Along

with the lessons from our UU faith, there are communication skills that will help. Adele Farber and Elaine Mazlish wrote the seminal *How to Talk to Kids So Kids Will Listen, and Listen So Kids Will Talk*, which provides valuable lessons and insight in helping children process their feelings and experiences. Here are some general tips:

- Listen quietly and with your full attention.
- Acknowledge the child's feelings with a word like "oh," "um," or "I see."
- Give the feeling a name: "That sounds frustrating." or "You sound really upset."
- Give the child their wish in fantasy: "I wish I had 100 cookies to give you."

I also encourage parents to validate the values and character traits they observe, but to do so cautiously so the child's perspective is not overwhelmed. Utilizing these techniques will help children understand and own their own experiences, as well as develop skills and resiliency for courageous kindness.

Here are two versions of fictional conversation between a parent and child, one that uses the Farber and Mazlish techniques, and one that doesn't. Let's start with the one that **does not**:

### Conversation One

Child: *Today at school, my friends were being mean to the new kid. I told them to knock it off, and then they started being mean to me! They wouldn't let me sit with them at lunch. I am done standing up for people.*

Parent: *You can't give up standing up for people! We are UU's and we stand up. Your friends are jerks. You need better friends than them.*

Child: *What do you mean? My friends are great.*

Parent: *You just said they were bullying the new kid. Better to have a good conscience than rotten friends.*

Child: *Never mind, I'm not standing up for anyone ever again!*

In this conversation, the parent was clear about the need to stand up for others, but didn't help the child process his experience. Instead, it prompted discouragement from the child. Let's try again with this conversation:

## Conversation Two

Child: *Today at school, my friends were being mean to the new kid. I told them to knock it off, and then they started being mean to me! They wouldn't let me sit with them at lunch. I am done standing up for people.*

Parent: *You sound upset.*

Child: *It's not fair. I was trying to be nice and now my friends hate me.*

Parent: *So you feel like your friends hate you for being nice.*

Child: *Yes! Jon told me if I liked the new kid so much, he could be my new best friend. We have been friends since kindergarten. How could Jon say that?*

Parent: *Jon hurt your feelings.*

Child: *Yes.*

Parent: *Hurt feelings are no fun. I think you stood up for the new kid because you were worried about his feelings. That shows you have a lot of compassion, which is great. Do you think Jon might have had his feelings hurt?*

Child: *Well..... I did tell him he was being a jerk.*

Parent: *Hmmmm.*

Child: *He was being a jerk and it wasn't right, so I told him.*

Parent: *I agree, being mean isn't right. I wish people were never mean to each other. I know standing up to your friends took courage for you. It sounds like maybe there were hurt feelings all around. Do you think you could muster up the courage to talk to Jon tomorrow and explain how you were feeling and listen to how he was feeling? You could share that you were worried about the new kid's feelings and maybe there was a better way to tell him this than to call him a jerk?*

Child: *I guess.*

Parent: *I am happy that you stood up for someone and I understand it was hard for you. It takes courage and you are brave, just like some of the UU heroes you have learned about at UUCP. Maybe it would help if Jon and the new kid got to know each other better. How about we invite both Jon and the new kid over on Saturday?*

Child: *Good idea!*

Hopefully from this conversation, the child is able process what happened in a way that will identify and separate his feelings while building his skills to continue to show courageous kindness. Courage, like most attributes, does not just appear out of nowhere. It is built on a foundation of conviction and practice that comes from both success and failure. It also requires encouragement, which we offer up weekly in our religious education programs. My mom's encouragement was a powerful motivator for me and your encouragement will be for your own children. Practice courageous kindness today. □





## A Steadying Hand

Richard Plattner

I've been thinking about courage a lot lately. We're in New York for a week, helping some family members dealing with tough times.

The dad survived a horrible cancer, then got an incurable case of shingles and became addicted to pain medications. Their adult son who lives with them has chronic mental health and addiction issues. And then they got the eviction notice.

These folks have been bravely fighting these battles and getting by for years. But the threat of losing their home of 33 years paralyzed them. They knew what they need to do but were too overwhelmed to start. So we came to help start sorting and boxing and helping them communicate with their lawyer. What we've been able to accomplish with them in these few days is only a small fraction of what needs to be done. But this little bit of support broke the logjam; getting started has enabled them to mobilize and they'll be able to do what needs doing after we're gone. Amazing how much difference giving just a little help can make. They had and have plenty of courage, but just not

President, Unitarian Universalist Foundation of Phoenix

quite enough strength to get over this last hurdle. Given a little boost, they're chugging ahead on their own steam.

I wish some (many) of our lawmakers could understand that a helping hand is more likely to enable independence rather than dependence. I wish they understood how hard folks without advantages of money, health, or powerful connections struggle day after day. I wish they understood that life's ordinary annoyances for we advantaged folks can knock the less fortunate right out of orbit into a spiral of destruction. I wish I could think of a better phrase than "social safety net," which sounds like something people just lie down in. They don't need a net for after they fall as much as they need a steadying hand to prevent a stumble from becoming a fall.

It's easy to feel brave in the comfortable safety of privilege and financial security. I wonder if I would have the courage to keep on keeping on powerless and poor? I hope I never have to find out. □

### — COURAGE —

*Courage is the most important of the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage.*

— Maya Angelou

Courage is as contagious as fear.

— Eleanor Roosevelt

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.





## New Members

Please welcome these new members to our beloved community!



***Jack Beeghly***



***Sarah Foerster***

Sarah is a college student, mother, veteran, teacher's aid and community volunteer. Currently in a transfer program to ASU, Sarah plans to eventually earn a doctoral degree from NAU in Occupational Therapy with a specialty in pediatrics. In her spare time, Sarah enjoys honing her public speaking and circus performing art skills and spending time with her daughters Annalyse and Lalana. Sarah and family are excited to be part of the UUCP community.

***Diane and Jack McComb***



***Amanda Rogers***

Amanda is an ASU graduate with a degree in French and a fondness for music. She spends her time reading, writing fiction, and crocheting, as well as singing in the UUCP choir.



***Teri and Donna Talbot***

Donna and Teri are retired from teaching in Phoenix public schools. Donna taught elementary school (39 years) and Teri's niche was middle school science (40 years). They have lived in Phoenix for 18 1/2 years and recently went shopping for a congregation where they felt comfortable and at home. They found that at UUCP and are happy to be new members! Donna and Teri were the first same-sex couple legally married in the sanctuary at UUCP. They are former UUs from the Olympia Brown Congregation in Racine, Wisconsin.

## January Worship Theme: **Courage**

*Services bring our community together at 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM*

### **January 4:** Meditation for the New Year

**Service Leaders:** Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray and Lynne Haessler

This will be a unique service blending music, meditation, singing, and reflection as a way to welcome the New Year on a meditation for peace, hope, courage and strength.

### **January 11:** The Most Courageous Act

**Service Leader:** Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

We associate courage with strength and bravery, boldness and power. But what if I told you that a key to courage is vulnerability. Sometimes the most courageous thing we can do is be brave enough to share our failures, to share our weaknesses, to be vulnerable.

### **January 18:** King Sunday: The Courage We Need Today

**Service Leader:** Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

How far have we come since the victories of the civil rights movements? Some say a long way; others today are naming powerfully the ways that racism and discrimination persist even if the language has changed. On this Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday, what are the conversations and what are the movements we need now?

*Children's Chapel offered at the 9:30 am service. Instead of Together Time, a Children's Chapel service for children 5 and older will be offered at our first service. A multi-age Sunday School class will be offered at 11:15am.*

### **January 25:** Everyday Courage

**Service Leader:** Rev. Linda Lawrence

Sometimes courage seems reserved for leaders and heroes of the past. But courage is something we also see in lives that never become famous, in choices that no one sees. Let's look at the courage that shows up in everyday people's lives.

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**January 25, 2015**

**10:30 AM**

UUCP Sanctuary

Childcare available

—All members are encouraged to attend—

## Memorial Garden



*friends whose ashes were interred in the Memorial Garden  
this season in past years are still remembered*

### **October:**

Roger Davy  
Rodney Earl Engelen  
William Frank Hall  
Evemarie Holl Mosher  
Homer M. Sarasohn  
Walter Blake Williamson, Jr.  
Pauline Manker Gay, Jr.

### **November:**

Alvena Isobel Cranmer  
Rose Elfenbein Egeland  
William Harold Gooding  
Barbara Lusby Hise  
Richard Charles Malmleaf  
Elizabeth Wright McNeal  
Walter R. Pepper  
Shirley R. Sarasohn

### **December:**

Jane L Baker  
Jo Ann Davy  
Agnes Lenore Hetebrueg Ericson  
Mary Louise Grobe  
Steven Knight  
Robert Sclater  
Ann Sclater  
Anita Farese Silverthorn  
Archie Huffman Walker

### **January:**

James Francis Bauman  
John Connair Cummings  
Joanlynn Davis  
Thomas Roberts Foltz, Jr.  
Gertrude Posner Ganseberg  
Hubert Lambeth Gay, Jr.  
Jane Horswell  
Robert Klaus  
Gladys Lillian Klaus  
Gladys Klaus  
James Lynch  
Wendell Charles Manker  
Gordon Woods



*And now let us believe in the new year that is given us—  
new, untouched, full of things that have never been born.  
— Rainer Maria Rilke*

