



Horizons Journal

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix

May 2016



To Dwell Together in Peace

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray

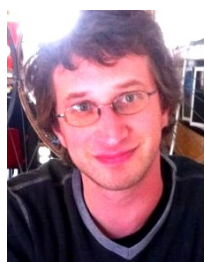
It was in a therapist's office in my mid-twenties that I realized I had a good deal of unresolved anger I was carrying. I was surprised because I thought of myself as a kind, loving, easygoing person. I didn't have conflict in my life, I was happy, so it surprised me that I would have anger dwelling just below the surface of my consciousness.

It may seem strange to begin a reflection on peace by talking about anger. But I am not sure we can really cultivate peace in our lives or our world without dealing more intentionally and forthrightly with anger. It does not serve us well to see peace as only passive tranquility, somehow removed from the realities and challenges we face in our lives. After all, if we define peace as an absence of anger, or an

absence of conflict, we make it impossible—for conflict, frustration, anger—these are a part of the human experience. Peace requires that we understand these more fully and develop healthy ways to respond to anger and to resolve conflict that don't lead to violence and destruction.

Anger is a powerful emotion. It is something every single person experiences. Rarely are we given tools to know how to constructively express and use our anger. Yet just denying that we have anger, or simply trying to quiet it down and push it aside doesn't actually lead us to peace. If you are like me, you may have learned to try not to feel anger, just let it go, let others off the hook, try to smile! Alternatively, there are situations when we are legitimately unable to name our anger, for example, when violations happen in a situation where power

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Tsunangari: Deepening Our Connections

Benjie Messer

Music Director

We have five Sundays in May, and I still can't fit enough peace songs into our services. The world is full of incredible songs of peace in every language, songs that prove the essential goodness and dignity of people on both sides of every conflict. Just this month, our choir will be singing for peace in English, Hebrew, Arabic, Latin and Japanese. It's hard to pick a favorite song to tell you about, because I'm so enthusiastic about each of them. So instead, let me tell you about the one that I'm sure will be the most difficult for our choir—the long one in Japanese.

"Tsunangari" is an emotional piece dedicated to the victims of the earthquake and ensuing nuclear disaster that devastated Japan's Fukushima province in March 2011. Japanese-American compos-

er Kentaro Sato's lyrics are a wonderful response to that disaster, and they apply just as well to war. His English translation of the first verse reads, "How difficult seeing the truth is. How lonely thinking the truth is. How brave speaking the truth is. And how warm is the hand which is held out to people crying in the sad wind behind the lie."

How true this is of war! Most discussions of war focus on whether violence is right and wrong, on when violence can be "justified" or is "necessary." And, of course, many politicians flout their willingness to go war as proof of their ability to make tough decisions. But the truth is that war hurts everyone—victims, witnesses, and perpetrators alike. That truth is harder to look at than arguing about right and wrong, lonelier to think about than justifying our behavior, and takes more bravery to

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speaking than offering to go to war. If the first step to peace is recovering from war, maybe we recover from war by seeing, thinking and speaking our difficult, lonely, brave truths about it.

Who needs to recover from war? Of course, there are people who live in or are refugees from areas that are currently at war: Afghans, Iraqis, Syrians, Kurds, Turks, Somalis, Pakistanis, and many more. Many immigrants to Arizona from the south can be considered refugees from Mexico's drug war, which led to more than 8,000 deaths in 2015 alone. But what about all of the men and women in our families who served in the military? My family recently found a box of letters that my grandfather wrote to my grandmother while serving in World War II, and they make it abundantly clear that he left the U.S. as a smiling, hopeful young adult, and returned a few years later as the often-distant man my mother remembers, reserved and pessimistic, unwilling to speak about what he had seen and done. He was a kind father and a loving husband, but there's no question that the war hurt my grandfather—and perhaps, by extension, in all of the ways that his family was unable to help him recover from what he had experienced, it hurt us as well.

How many of you have similar stories that you rarely tell? How many of us know that there must have been such stories, even if they've now been forgotten or lost? I would guess that almost all of us have ancestors that were involved in violent conflict at some point, either as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses. In this month of meditating on being a people of peace, I would suggest that we make time to tell our families' stories of war, no matter how well or poorly we know them. We can tell them to our small groups at the congregation, or to our friends and families, and we can ask to hear their stories, and we can listen. Speaking our own truth and hearing each others' truths about war can help us each be more ready for peace, and more ready to reach out a warm hand "to people crying in the sad wind behind the lie." "Tsunangari" means "connection," and the last verse translates as, "No matter how far apart we are, please, feel the connection of the sky, and the connection of our hearts." May we deepen our connection as we work for peace this month. □

Annual Congregational Meeting

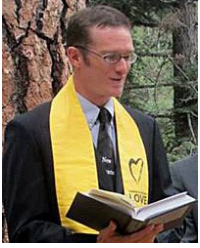
Sunday, June 5, 11:45 AM

All members are invited and encouraged to attend the Congregation Annual Meeting. At the meeting we will adopt a budget for the 2016-2017 year, elect leaders to the Board of Trustees, UU Foundation Board and the Nominating Committee. We will also be voting on the proposed Vision from our Vision Task Force:

To be a Spiritual Community for Our Time
Theologically Diverse
Radically Inclusive
Justice Centered

Help be a part of leading us into our future! Join the Board and Vision Task Force for conversations on Sundays May 15th and 22nd at 11:45 to talk about what this vision means for our future.

The 2016-2017 budget will be emailed along with the 2016 Annual Report to members during the week leading up to the congregational meeting. Rev. Susan and Heidi will hold a budget meeting prior to the Annual Meeting to review next year's budget in more detail. Watch Compass and Sunday Announcements for the date of this budget meeting, to be announced soon.



Reflections on War Memorials

Emrys Staton

Ministerial Intern

I live on the west side of downtown Phoenix, just a few blocks from the state capitol building. I'm prone to take evening walks, just to explore the area and to clear my mind. Many times, I'll walk towards the capitol, and often I stroll through the large park that lies between Jefferson and Washington streets. The first time I explored this park, I was totally overwhelmed—because, as I'm sure many of you know, it is full of war memorials.

There are the two massive artillery guns that are mounted there, salvaged from the USS Arizona that was sunk in Pearl Harbor. Between the guns are racks upon racks with steel plates dangling, each with the name of a U.S. soldier who died in World War II. From there, you can walk around to find installations commemorating every major war, plus specific groups of people involved in those wars: Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Navajo Code Talkers, Confederate Troops, Armenian Martyrs, and several others.

I spend time in this place because I'm intrigued by its significance. What can it teach me about the reality of violence and the desire for peace? If I'm moved to tears, or have rage stirred inside, or sit and stare with indifference... I try to connect those emotions with actions and choices in my own life.

Thich Nhat Hahn, the Vietnamese Buddhist monk who lived through the Vietnam war, has spent his life sharing the teachings of inner peace. He has maintained that the global, political, and social wars around the world can end when we, as individuals, cultivate peace and compassion within ourselves.

Working on inner peace, I have to confront my own war memorials. Inside of me, I have built a rack holding the names of those I have harmed. In my own thoughts, I wander through my past, revisiting mistakes and bad choices, as though they are cast in bronze with descriptive plaques to remind me of exactly what I've done, when, and how many were impacted.

I don't want my own heart to become a place where I build and keep my own war memorials, so I embrace the spiritual practices that bring forgiveness, kindness and peace to myself. It's ongoing and continuous work that I do daily—some days I do better than others. As time passes, I get better at catching myself when I am tempted to construct a new memorial in the form of a regret or a grudge, and the old memorials are beginning to fade.

With that, I hope to be a better agent for peace in the world, so that no further war memorials must be built in downtown Phoenix either. □



USS Arizona WWII Memorial bearing the names of fallen sailors

OWL Teacher Training

Our Whole Lives, our lifespan sexuality education program, gives students facts and skills to navigate the world of sex, love, friendships, safety, and health.

Interested in joining our amazing team of teachers?

May 27-29 at UUCP

For registration information see Katie Resendiz or Emrys Staton.



Building Peace & Justice through Play

Katie Resendiz

Acting Director, Children's Ministries

Thursday evening, Chalice Kids has just finished up their music lesson, complete with drumming parade, and headed out to the playground. Kids are dangling upside down in the climbing structure, steering a pirate ship, and playing a very complex version of tag. Within minutes Ms. Caitlyn must repeat one of her most common admonishments: "We do not play guns here. You may not pretend an object is a gun. You may not pretend any part of your body is a gun. You may not pretend to shoot." Said automatically, from repeated habit, it comes off as a droll general warning to the group, rather than a directed comment on any specific child's behavior. Yet, it has an immediate effect. The children take a quick moment and check themselves, look to one another, a few adjust their play. There are a million responses to refute the "no gun play" rule—all of the nine-year-olds has six or seven on the tip of their tongue at any given moment—but on the playground, with Ms. Caitlyn watching over, the children assent. This scene takes no more than 15 seconds in its entirety, but it embodies the principles we work to instill in the children every day at UUCP.

Through our playground and classroom rules and covenants we ask the children to recognize their role in building a peaceful world. We ask that they reject violent language by confronting unkind words, monitoring their own language, and asking their friends "when you said _____, what did you mean?" We ask the children to suppress violent impulses: instead of pushing someone who has just made you angry, take deep breaths, step back, think

Through our playground and classroom rules and covenants we ask the children to recognize their role in building a peaceful world.

about how the situation can change. We talk about safe and effective ways to call out violence in others and how to refuse the justifications we are given. But, above all of these, when we enforce the "no gun play" rule, we are asking our children to question violent systems.

In 2015, 12-year-old Tamir Rice was shot by police officers who believed the toy gun he was holding was a real fire arm. In 2012, 26 people were shot at Sandy Hook Elementary. According to the Brady Campaign:

- Every day, *48 children and teens* are shot in murders, assaults, suicides and suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, and police intervention.
- Every day, *7 children and teens* die from gun violence:
 - 5 are murdered
 - 2 kill themselves
- Every day, *41 children and teens* are shot and survive:
 - 31 shot in an assault
 - 1 survives a suicide attempt
 - 8 are shot unintentionally.

For the majority of children at UUCP, gun violence is not a part of their everyday lives. The same cannot be said for children the world over. Making a game of weapons becomes a mark of privilege. Most obviously, the perpetuation of gun violence negates the inherent worth and dignity of an individual. A deeper reflection calls us to reject guns out of compassion for the parents of black sons who have to have "the talk"—not about sex or relationships, but about the gun industry and law enforcement habits that threaten their lives. Victimization increases with poverty and racial disparity. Weapons express a desire for imbalanced power. Guns are a direct expression on an unjust system.

Gun control and gun violence are extremely contentious issues in the U.S., but on our playgrounds at UUCP, we ask children to take a quick 15 seconds to find a more compassionate way to play and, in doing so, build justice in our world. □



Swimming to the Other Side

Sarah Montgomery

Vice President, Board of Trustees

As I shared in my stewardship testimony on Easter, my husband Mat and I are expecting a baby this October. When the nominating committee asked me to be Vice President of the Board last year, I let them know about our plans to start a family. I've been led to believe that infants require a fair amount of time, patience, and sleepless nights; so this June I'll be wrapping up my term on the board and letting my well-rested colleagues take the helm.

I have been surprised by how much I've enjoyed my time on the Board of Trustees. We have laughed together, shared meals together, shed tears together, and made some really important decisions. At first I was nervous because I had no idea what I was doing. I struggle with imposter syndrome, a fear that everyone will realize I'm a fraud. Thankfully my fellow board members modeled what it meant to serve on the board, and in time I came to feel at home and more confident in my abilities and contributions to the group.

We all have preconceived notions of what a board is and does. The great thing about this board is that we are all UUs. The board members believe in the UU principles of respect and inclusion, and we strive to live by them. I have been amazed by my fellow board members as we have had important conversations and made difficult decisions. We are all connected to the congregation in different ways. I have been impressed in my colleagues' ability to put aside our personal stakes and keep the future of our congregation and its mission central in our decisions. I hope that in my term on the board I have supported the congregation and helped ensure that it's thriving for my daughter and her daughters.

I'm embarking on the journey of parenthood with many of the same emotions I felt when I joined the board. I'm afraid and excited about what may come. I'm worried that I don't know what to do, so I'm reading all the books and articles I can find (Ravenclaw forever!) and looking to my peers for guidance. When I first joined the board, Pat Humphries' "Swimming to the Other Side" kept

coming to my mind. I think it is just as appropriate now:

On this journey through thoughts and feelings
Binding intuition, my head, my heart
I am gathering the tools together
I'm preparing to do my part
All of those who have come before me
Band together and be my guide
Loving lessons that I will follow
We're all swimming to the other side □

— PEACE —

Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without.

— Buddha

*To meet everything and everyone
through stillness instead of mental
noise is the greatest gift you can offer
to the universe.*

— Eckhart Tolle

Keep inviolate an area of light and
peace within you.

— Corazon Aquino

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is not equal and so we have no recourse. For whatever reason, when we don't allow ourselves to name our feelings, to be open and direct about how we feel, we are more likely to misdirect our anger, or have it explode on others.

Part of the covenant of our congregation, the promises we make to each other for how we will live together in community, is the promise to "dwell together in peace." I find this one of the most meaningful lines in our covenant. However, we must be careful *not* to read it as, "we will never disagree," or "we promise to never share directly our upset in order that we might all dwell in peace." The idea that a community—especially one like ours that has chosen a path toward greater theological diversity and radical inclusion—will never have conflict, disagreement or difference is absurd. The beauty of our covenant to "dwell together in peace" is its invitation to find ways to disagree, even to have conflict, without letting it be destructive.

In my mid-twenties, I had to unpack anger that resulted from my efforts to always "keep the peace," sometimes in ways that denied my truth and my experience. Through that process, I learned to be more assertive, mindful of my own experience and creative in dealing with difference and conflict. This actually unlocked more flexibility and joy in my life as well.

Conflict can be creative, it can be educational, it can actually deepen the relationships of trust between people or within community. The key is following a couple of important principles:

1. Name how you feel, directly and humbly, with "I statements" rather than blame.
2. Listen to the perspectives of others with the hope to gain understanding.
3. Recognize and affirm the humanity of others, especially in times of conflict.
4. Recognize the goal is not winning, but understanding and hopefully an improvement in communication and relationship.
5. Take responsibility for yourself and your actions and words.

This may not be an exhaustive list, but it is a good start. It's important to remember that the absence of conflict is not the same as peace. And the presence of conflict, when approached with a desire to learn and understand, can nurture peace. After all, isn't this what we would hope to see in our world? Not the absence of difference, but a reality where difference didn't result in violence, in power struggles, in winners and losers. The promises of our covenant call us to try to practice that here in community, that we might understand how to live it in the larger world. □

One day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal we seek, but that it is a means by which we arrive at that goal... In the final analysis, means and ends must cohere because the end is preexistent in the means, and, ultimately, destructive means cannot bring about constructive ends.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

SUMMER COMMUNITY NIGHTS

6:00 PM ▪ Potluck ▪ Multigenerational (no Chalice Kids) ▪ Special Activities!

Everyone is welcome!

Thursday, May 5 – *Arts & Crafts for All Ages* with Katie Resendiz & Emrys Staton

Thursday, June 2 – *Variety Hour* with Benjie Messer

Thursday, July 7 – *Games Night* with Heidi Parmenter

Thursday, August 4 – *Ice Cream Social* with Religious Education Committee

Thursday, September – *Dance Party* with entire UUCP staff!



Unicare News

Please lift up in your thoughts and prayers those in our community who are mourning or are supporting loved ones through life's transitions. Your love and friendship is a gift.

Milestone Celebrations:

- Semere Kesete, an Eritrean refugee with close ties to UUCP, and his wife Haimi announced the birth of their daughter Kibret. For those of you wishing to contact Semere, Libby Walker offers this email: Semere.kesete@gmail.com.
- Congratulations to our pianist, Mary Price, on the announcement of her engagement to be married.
- Emma Farrell and Adam Schnitz share the joy of Emma's pregnancy. We will miss them as they relocate to Chicago in June.

Other News:

- Our thoughts and hopes for continued healing go out to Jack Grenard, who is recovering from a stroke.
- Linda Vance and Larry Reed ask for continued prayers for their son Brian Vance as he recovers from cancer treatment.
- Diana Ashley has assumed the role of Unicare Friendship Partner Coordinator. She will work with our Friendship Partners to track activities and assist the ministers with pairing Friends and Partners.

For more information, or to get involved, contact Vicki Myers, our UUCP Unicare Coordinator, at unicare@phoenixuuu.org. □



2016-2017 Congregational Leadership Nominations UUCP Nominating Committee

Each year the UUCP Nominating Committee is charged with recommending members to be elected to positions on the UUCP Board of Trustees, the UU Foundation Board, and the Nominating Committee. We are pleased to offer this slate of nominees and recommend their election at the Annual Congregational Meeting on June 5th at 11:45 AM.

UUCP Board of Trustees



Ceyshe' Napa

Ceyshe' became a member of UUCP in 2008 and has served in several roles, including being the Unicare Coordinator and most recently serving on the Assistant Minister Hiring Committee. She has a Bachelor's degree in Nonprofit

Leadership and Management from Arizona State University and is a Certified Nonprofit Professional through the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance and ASU Lodestar Center for Philanthropy & Nonprofit Innovation. Ceyshe' writes: "I have experience working in the nonprofit sector. For the last two years I have been serving with the AmeriCorps Public Ally program as the Community Development & Engagement Program Coordinator for Phoenix College and South Mountain Community College. In this role I feel I have been effective building relationships and have been an asset in building this program from the ground up."



Jim Allen

Jim is completing one term on the Board as Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee. He has agreed to serve another term, much to the benefit of UUCP. Jim brings many skills as a senior faculty member at ASU.

UU Foundation Board



Jan Kaplan

Jan has chaired and served on several annual stewardship campaigns and previously served as Secretary of the UUF Board. She writes: "As a lifelong UU and 20-year member of UUCP, I'm passionate

about the long-term health and continued growth of both our congregation and Association. I value the foresight to establish a fund to assist in sustaining our growth and maintenance needs that are difficult to sustain from annual stewardship campaign contributions. I'd like to work toward increasing the number of folks who make UUF part of their estate planning—as well as thinking of UUF "living gifts" as a great way to celebrate and honor others—particularly during other "passages of life" like school or Coming of Age Program graduation, marriage (or divorce), retirement, etc."



Jan Wise

Jan began attending UUCP in the 1960s and after a hiatus became a member in the 1990s. She has served on the Board of Trustees among other roles. With respect to the Foundation, she writes: "I think it is

important for religious organizations to create opportunities so that their members may leave bequests when they pass away. It is also important that these donations be carefully protected, invested to encourage growth without undue risk, and distributed for good causes. I am interested in being involved in this effort."

Nominating Committee



Jenny Jones Moats

Jenny has been a member of UUCP for five years, and has been active in the Membership Committee (including as Chair) and Welcoming Ministry. She has served as an office

volunteer and been an active participant in the Small Group Ministry program. When asked about what she looks for in a leader, she writes, "An effective leader must be able to listen deeply to others, and find ways to combine many diverse points of view and interests into one, or a few mutually accepted goals. As a multicultural and multigenerational congregation, it is important that many diverse interests are incorporated into our Congregational vision."



Bill Snowden

Bill has been a member of UUCP since 1991. He has sung in the choir since 1992, has served on the Board of Trustees, and is on the Sanctuary team. When asked about what he looks for in a leader, he writes, "A good leader is trustworthy,

enthusiastic, confident, tolerant of differences, responsive to group needs, communicative, and supportive. All are important."



Bonnie White

Bonnie has been attending UUCP since 2011 and became a member in the spring of 2015. She has been active in the Outdoor Group, has proofread the Order of Service and Announcements for over a year, and

has trained as a Small Group Facilitator. She writes about identifying potential leaders: "With so many diverse opinions, ideas and beliefs, it is necessary to find the person who has the ability to recognize the strengths in others, pull those strengths together

into a cohesive package, and tackle the task at hand. That would seem to me to require good skills in listening, organizing, directing, delegating, and managing time. When the someone with all of these talents has been found, we would hope they are interested and excited about taking on that leadership."

Respectfully submitted for your consideration by the Nominating Committee: Gary Ezzell (Chair), Ellie Anderla, Charlotte Carl-Mitchell, Julie Smart, Jim Sorgatz, and Lydia Yanak. □

Pete Seeger Tribute at UUCP

with UU songwriter Jim Scott

Saturday, May 8th, 6:30 PM

\$15, youth get in free, childcare provided





End of Life Planning Workshop

The Unitarian Universalist Foundation of Phoenix invites you to Save the Date! On Saturday, May 14th, 9:00-10:30 AM at UUCP we will be offering a workshop on end-of-life planning.

As we think about planning what we will leave behind when our lives are over, our first thoughts are often wills and trusts and “estate” planning; we tend to focus on our tangible assets and how they will be passed on. We might also spend some time planning ahead, gathering information and leaving instructions for our memorial services and for cremation or burial or donating our bodies to science. Attorney and UUCP member Robert Back will talk about wills and trusts; we will have information about future health care directives and about planning memorial services.

Direct questions and RSVPs to Heidi at heidiparmenter@phoenixuu.org or 602-840-8400.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly 2016

Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect

June 22-26

Columbus, OH

Register at www.uua.org

The faith world is increasingly multifaith. People are crossing borders of religion and spiritual practice to create wholeness in their lives individually and collectively. The labels—Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, theist and non-theist—no longer define who or what we love, or how spirit moves in our lives. General Assembly 2016 in Columbus, Ohio will assemble leaders and communities of many faiths to worship together, learn from one another, and create a new vision of faith that no longer divides us, but connects us to an interdependent future that works for all.

May Worship Theme: **Peace**

Services bring our community together at 10:30 AM

May 1: Auction Sermon: *Let the Mystery Be*

Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

There is much in life that we may never know. Uncertainty can be a source of anxiety, even fear. How do we nurture a sense of peace with what we do not, or cannot, know? The topic for this service was chosen by our "Choose the Sermon" auction winner, Caitlin Gaspar. *Music from Blessed Brass and the Dissidents.*

May 8: *Our Sacred Mothers*

Service Leader: Emrys Staton

We know the stories of many of the prominent world religious leaders, but what about their mothers? We will explore what we know of the sacred mothers of the world. *Music from Congregation Choir.*

May 15: *Finding Inner Peace*

Service Leaders: YRUU: the UUCP High School Youth Group

Do you remember being in high school? It hasn't gotten any easier. Join our Youth and listen to their reflections on the importance of finding inner peace (and what they do to find it) in the midst of the hectic pace and pressures of being youth today. We will also welcome those moving into high school and offer best wishes to those moving out and beyond. Come and see what our future has to share.

Share the Plate Sunday: Offering benefits Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development.

May 22: *Shalom Living: The Soil Which Bears the Fruit of Peace*

Service Leader: Rev. Andy Burnette

Andy Burnette is the Senior Minister at the Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Chandler, AZ. He is preaching at UUCP as part of a pulpit swap among the greater Phoenix area UU Ministers. *Music from Open Strings.*

May 29: *The Stories We Tell of War and Peace*

Service Leader: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

Stories are one of the most powerful mechanisms humanity has for passing on meaning and values. How do the stories we tell of war and of peace shape the meanings and values we hold? Do we need new stories? *Music from Congregation Choir.*



Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of Phoenix
4027 E. Lincoln Drive
Paradise Valley, AZ 85253

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