

Annual Report 2017-2018

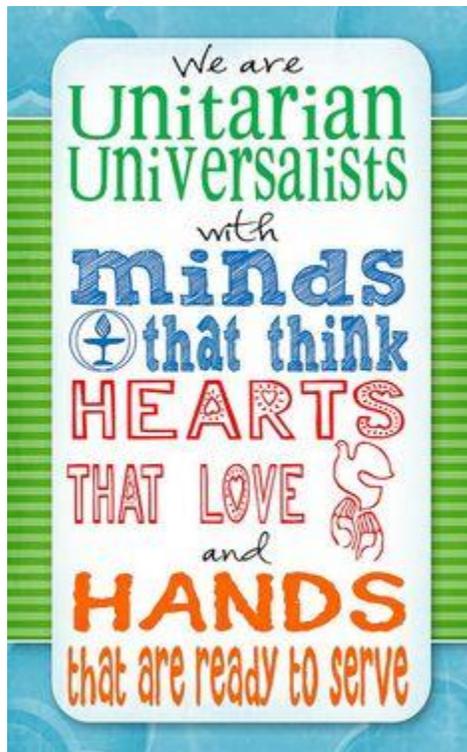


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VUU Annual Meeting Agenda June 3rd, 2018

Call to Order – Establish Quorum (LDC) (67 members)

Invocation – 2 min

Housekeeping – 2 min

- Approval of 2017 meeting minutes
- Approval of meeting agenda and timeline

Elections: Board, Special Funds and LDC (8 min.)

- Any nominations from the floor (2 min.)
- Voting Instructions (2 min.)
- Candidate Introductions (2 min.)
- Collecting Ballots (2 min.)

Minister's Report – 5 min

President's Report – 5 min

Special Funds Report – 5 min

- Presentation, Questions, Discussion & Vote on Special Funds Charter Changes

Budget Approval – 5 min

- Presentation – 2 min
- Questions, Discussions, Vote – 3 min

Growth Presentation – 45 min

- Architect presentation and discussion – 30 - 40 min
- Vote on starting Capital Campaign – 5 min

Election Results – 5 min

Adjourn 1:30

Minutes

Valley Unitarian Universalist Annual Meeting

June 04, 2017

Call to order/Establish a Quorum (LDC)

- 12:00PM Call to Order - Janice Miller
- 117 Voting members present - quorum established.

Invocation - Rev Dr Andy Burnette

- *Serving with Grace* book — the work for the congregation as spiritual practice.

Housekeeping - Minutes and Agenda Approvals

- Motion to approve agenda — Janet so moves, Paul seconds. Motion passes unanimously.
- Motion to approve minutes — Deanne so moves, Mary Ericsson seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Elections: Board, Special Funds, and LDC

- Candidate bios are available.
- Ballots have been distributed and instructed that the ballot will be invalid if you vote for more than allowed. Write-in option is available.
- Office candidates are allowed to make statements.
- Tom Briggs comments that we have more candidates than positions this year, which is good for democracy and diversity of our congregations.
- 9 absentee ballots are given to Janice, President of the Board. Tom certifies all are from qualified members.
- Opportunity for nominations from the floor. There are none.
- Candidates choose to speak:
 - Bob Faber
 - Claudette Wassail
 - Carl
 - Mary Ericsson
 - Maria D
 - DeeAnne M
 - Ken St John
 - David Shea
- Tom Briggs shares that "Make Your Vision A Reality" has been LDC motto.

Minister's Report

- Gratitude
 - Thanks Janice for Board service. Gift and flowers for Janice.
 - Thanks the rest of the Board.
 - Thanks, annual auction Team FUUnd Together
 - Thanks all other volunteers, choir members, etc.
- Acknowledged tumultuous year.
 - He was on sabbatical July - October.
 - In March, he resigned to take position at UUA, then withdrew resignation and promise to serve VUU for 3 more years.
- Accomplishments of Congregation
 - Developed and centered work on new Ends Statements.
 - Revamped stewardship team.
 - Mortgage was recast to free up cash.
 - VUU now member of Valley Interfaith Project — congregations influence legislators to work on our values. Community-based organizing method. Faith-based, broad-based. Synagogues churches and mosques, also schools. Works on a multitude of issues.
 - House meetings will be held to establish VUU's core issues, education and work with legislature.
 - Dues are 1% of VUU annual budget. Goes to fund VIP salaries, organizing work, fair share of being a member. This year, Special Funds approved \$4,000 to cover dues. Next year, will be worked into budget. Won't preclude VUU's other social justice projects. Will help discern what's closest to our hearts and get us connected with other groups at the table (i.e. labor unions, teachers, etc....)
 - Hoping next year to report on completion of 2-3-year plan on our Ends and measures of success on those goals.
 - 2018-19 budget will include a 2nd service and RE expansion for adults.

President's Report

Jim Horton, who headed the search committee, speaks about bringing Andy to VUU. Other members, including Lorraine, Beverly, Ken, Lloyd, and Mary, voted unanimously for Andy to become VUU's settled minister.

Highlights:

- VUU has 353 members & increased diversity.
- Attendance is stable, sanctuary full during cool months.
- Operating budget is balanced this year and next.
- Significant and growing endowment fund.
- Increased our social action and interfaith partnerships.

- Formed the East VUU to encourage growth in Mesa. Currently, dual membership of VUU, fellowship group, social action work, RE opportunity. Meeting in a mobile home park's community area (25-30 people).
- Congregation's vision guides our work (See annual report for interpretations of Vision & Ends that guide our ministries, committees and staff. Planning will revolve around these).
- Will take a 2d service to allow for more expansion.
- Janice Thanks current and prior board members.

Special Funds Report

Chris Sar speaks

- Annual report has totals as of last month (April). Figures through the end of May are now available.
 - Good news — last year, endowment fund was 334,000 dollars, now grown to 382,000. Pleased to approve \$4K grant for Valley Interfaith Project membership.
- Revising policies on how they make grants. Because growth is faster than what they've been allocated for grants available. Bylaws are restrictive by design, so endowment continues to grow. Limits what the funds are available to spend on. Gathering examples from around UUA. Possibly change allocation process. There was a Change in Special Funds charter that requires 2/3 vote by congregation.
- Question: Of \$382K, how much is from original donations vs. appreciation? Answer: \$168K was from the outright, untouchable principal money. The rest is interest and dividends (grant funds). Original committee set up targeted percentages in different types of funds.
- Speaking of endowment, can call 401K or life insurance administrator to give percentage of your 401K in event of your death to VUU.

Budget Presentation & Approval

DeeAnne - 17/18 budget presentation. Summary budget was passed out. Full budgets available and also had been emailed out prior to meeting.

Current year 16-17 projections (through April 30th)

- End June 30
- Slight deficit — staggering variation of month to month donations.
- Please get current with pledges.

Budget 17-18 process

- * Stewardship did pledge campaign.
- * Finance team convened a budget team to prepare budget.
- * Several iterations followed.
- * Finance approved final balanced budget.
- * Budget presentation to congregation and board approved on May 23rd
- * June 4th - annual meeting is chance for congregation to vote.

New this year

- * Far better revenue projections because last year tried something new with operating pledge campaign. Budget had been put together on a lot more assumptions than in the past.
- * Cut expenses to get to end of year without deficit.
- * Have improved tracking through Breeze.
- * Savings from mortgage refinance (approximately \$10K/year).
- * Commitment to adding \$10K annually to cash reserves (\$30K over three years).
- * Raises for staff at 2%.
- * Expense reduction for sabbatical year.
- * Expense reduction in utilities and insurance.
- * Goodwill rummage event raised \$1K.

Pledge Update

- * Calendar basis.
- * This year's pledges are higher than previous year.
- * 11 families are responsible for 1/4 of the budget.
- * 113 families are responsible for 1/4 of budget.
- * Last year, 25 people we assumed had pledge but actually paid nothing.
- * 72 paid more than they pledged.

17-18 contributions

- Compassion in action
- Named contribution
- Cash in plate
- Pledge revenue - 413K is from committed/estimated pledges. 97.6% collection amount predicted.
- New member pledges - 80% collection rate expected.
- \$13,000 change from last year's budget.
- Revenue is lower, despite higher pledges, because last year in spring had to ask for money. VUU raised \$11,000 at that time but can't count on that again.

Jim Horton moves to approve budget, Lloyd seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Questions:

- * Line of credit status? We no longer need the line of credit agreement with Special Funds.
- * Personnel cost re: raises — total business administrator, total maintenance increase from last year, but no RE director's raise is reflected in the summary budget? THIS IS an ERROR. Therefore, total is not correct. Finance Committee will need to revise budget.

Note: Ministerial contracts will be finalized this week. \$400 adjustment to Music Ministers pension salary. Accompanist has 0 increase.

Motion for budget to be approved with less than \$2,000 addition to revenue and payroll expenses, motion is seconded (*Secretary did not hear the names of those who moved/seconded*). Motion passes unanimously.

Election Results – have to wait, still counting.

- Melissa Bush presents some referendums for congregation to sign.
- Rev Andy follows up to this re: boundaries of petitions on site. He says the line for him (legally conservative) never bring a petition to our campus that has anything to do with a candidate or try as a congregation to get a candidate on the ballot.
- Janice reflects on growth since Robert Latham’s visit to congregation. Moving past Pastoral Congregation to Programmatic.

LDC presents results - Tom Briggs

Board

- Maria D
- Mary E
- Carl H
- DeeAnne M

LDC

- David S
- Barbara S
- Ken St John

Special Funds

- Chris S
- Joel Sannes

Adjourn

David Move to adjourn meeting, Lloyd seconds. Passes unanimously.



Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation
ANNUAL REPORT
2017–2018
Board of Trustees
President's Report
ANNUAL REPORT
2017-18

Members and Friends,

This year was very positive for the board. At the beginning of the year, we had a retreat that identified our 3 main goals for the year. I'm happy to say that we've made good progress on all three of them.

First, we wanted to fix a problem with how our board training, minutes, calendar, roles documents were being stored. When we started the year, some of these documents had been saved to the VUU website, some in the office, and some in board member's computers. We have now centralized our documents into an online, easy to use and access, repository called "Trello." We have been using this since the beginning of the year and have already found it very useful to find necessary documentation very quickly.

Next, we wanted to try to better define our measures for each of our ends statements that we developed in the previous year. We updated the policy on our yearly reports to help provide clarity on board expectations as well as help provide useful and necessary information. We do need to do more, however, on this goal and expect to have this as a carryover goal into next year.

Finally, the last goal was to dive into planning VUUs growth. From the visioning work that was done last year, it was clear the congregation wanted to continue to grow and make larger impacts on the community around us. We have spent most of the year working on this goal by researching different ways to grow including moving to a new location, seeding a new congregation, and improving our current campus. We hired an architect to provide us with possibilities of building and remodeling on our current campus. The process included getting inputs from the congregation as to what are the things that would help us meet our growth aspirations. Multiple meetings were held with the staff, board, leadership, and the congregation to gather this information. The architect has taken all this input and put together a mockup of potential improvements to the campus which will be reviewed at the annual meeting. We expect to then decide on moving forward with a capital campaign to explore our next steps including starting a planning and capital campaign committees, holding a "next steps weekend" to start a feasibility study, and more that would extend well into next year and beyond.

One extra item that we added early in the year was to kick off a policy committee. Mary Erickson chairs the committee and they have already brought multiple updates to the board for approval. The updates are much-needed as we continue to fine-tune our policies to ensure they are relevant and meet our needs going forward. We expect that this committee will continue into future years with a goal of updating all or most of our policies every 2 to 3 years.

I want to thank the board members for all their efforts this year and am excited that we will keep the same membership moving into next year. This will help provide continuity as well as momentum moving into next year as our planning for growth really takes off.

Warm regards,
Paul Schneider
President
VUU Board of Trustees

Vision

We are a vibrant, inclusive community, inspired by many spiritualities and theologies, caring for one another through life's challenges, and bending the moral arc of the universe toward justice.

Ends (and Interpretations)

1. We challenge each person to discover, experience, and be transformed by the deep and mysterious.

We pursue spiritual growth as individuals and as a community. Congregants and other members of the communities we serve engage Unitarian Universalist spirituality throughout the week in a variety of ways including worship services, religious education, music, and service.

2. We cultivate our inclusive community through radical hospitality and nurturing.

We share the good news of Unitarian Universalism in our communities and thoughtfully welcome those who come through our doors, tending the path from visitor to member to deep engagement and leadership. We provide pastoral care for one another across the lifespan. We make it known widely that traditionally marginalized populations are welcome among us, and we develop practices which widen and deepen our welcome. We practice radical hospitality in our communities, standing on the side of love in the face of hate and exclusion.

3. We prioritize intergenerational experience through increased investment in the faith formation of the next generation.

Our children and youth pursue spiritual growth. They discover, experience, and are transformed by the deep and mysterious. Prepared for leadership by their experience at VUU, our children and youth counteract hate and live out values of love and inclusion. We joyously create spaces in which multiple generations can worship, learn, and serve together. We realize that this demands resources, financial and other, and we work to develop those resources.

4. We engage in partnerships to counter systems of oppression and create a just, sustainable, and healthy world.

Realizing it is not possible to effect justice alone, we work with partners. Our partners include congregations and other organizations from many faith traditions, and organizations or individuals from traditionally marginalized communities.

5. We are an innovative congregation, growing Unitarian Universalism in covenant with our UUA partners.

We are excited to explore new ways to welcome more and more people into our faith. We foster a culture of experimentation and thoughtful risk-taking. We are committed to being in covenant with other Unitarian Universalist congregations by continuing to pay our fair share to our district and the association, and by working with them to implement programs and strategies which further our faith.



**Senior Minister's Annual Report
Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation
June 2018**



REV. ANDY BEFORE...

Dear VUU Members and Friends,

I am excited to report that the 2017-18 was a very successful congregational year, and that 2018-19 is sure to follow suit. Below are a few of the highlights.

- * We hit a high for Sunday attendance with an average of 264 children, youth, and adults on campus each week. That's more than ever in VUU history. On our highest Sundays (Easter, all-music, etc.) we are now well above 300.

- * We had strong participation in adult faith formation programs including Spirit of Life Reading Circle, Chalice Circles, and Having Difficult Conversations, among several others.

- * We took in 45 new members, up from 31 in 2016-17 and 43 in 2015-16. VUU now has 346 active members. When we include friends of the congregation, folks who attend often and frequently give financially but have not joined, we are about 500 people strong.

- * Our partnership with Valley Interfaith Project, and our own internal work, yielded strong member participation in social justice, including especially the Red for Ed movement and the Outlaw Dirty Money campaign.

- * We planned well, and the stewardship team did a wonderful job with our pledge drive. As a result:

- * Next year's budget includes a half-time Faith Formation Assistant, a much-needed staff person

to help with our flourishing (160 kids registered, plus strong adult participation!) Faith Formation program.

- * We will finally move to two services for October through April, our busiest months, with a 50-minute faith formation time between 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. services.

- * We are moving through the initial stages of determining how our campus will serve our needs and the needs of our community as we move into the future.

If we move ahead with a capital campaign, we will in the next year be making decisions that are vitally important to the history of the congregation. Of course, Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation has a long history of making well-calculated, bold moves to further our mission. As we say in our new member welcoming ceremony, the congregation started with a handful of people meeting in a pizza joint. Fifty-three years later, we are reaching hundreds of people in and outside the congregation. Growing in spirit, in our justice impact, and in numbers is in our DNA!

We take bold steps like campus expansion because our faith calls us to serve present and future VUU members and friends. We know that our call to radical hospitality means we must have adequate space (classrooms, offices, sanctuary, kitchen, and social space) to welcome the next generation of members and friends. This space allows us to do more to prepare ourselves for important work in our community. We do all that we do in the name of love, service, and justice.

It is an honor to serve alongside you as your minister. Thank you for that privilege.

Love,
Rev. Andy

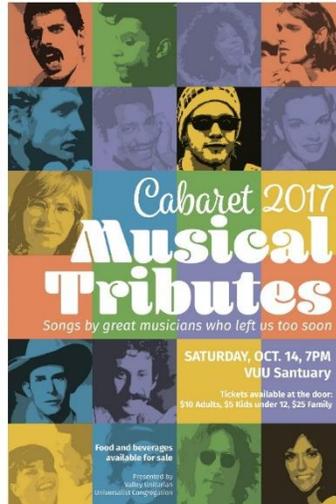


REV. ANDY AFTER!!!



MUSIC MINISTRY & MEMBERSHIP -ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18
Submitted by Rev. Kellie Walker Hart
Music Ministry Highlights:

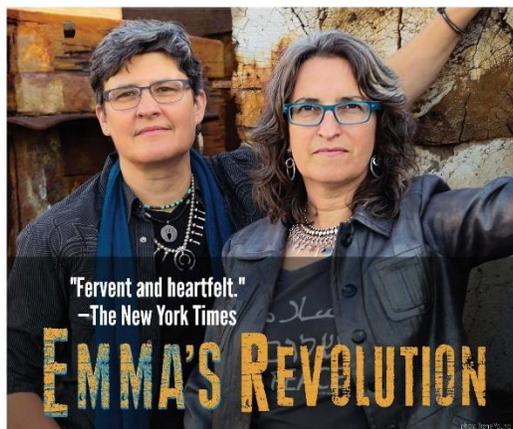
***Annual Fall Cabaret: Musical Tributes**



***Voices Lifted Singers folks took Hospice of the Valley Volunteer Training in October**



***We hosted Tempe Interfaith Fellowship Thanksgiving Service**



***We hosted a workshop & concert by the duo Emma's Revolution**



***Adult Choir performed
"Street Requiem" with
UU Phoenix
& Tempe Interfaith
folks**

Chalice Ringers finished the season with an arrangement of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons



***Adult and Children's Choirs performed Brian Tate's *Connected*
on May 13 – Mother's Day**

July 2017 – June 2018 we welcomed 45 new members!
August 2017 we welcomed 9 new members: Lisa Bonine, Craig Campbell, Janilyn Harding, Lorrie Patrick, Theresa and Dave Juday, Barbara Boehm, Adam Romney and Georgia Hamann

In November 2017 we welcomed 13 new members: Becca Moore, Kate Whiting, Madeline Kasian, Mark and Sue Henderson, Minnie Swetel, MJ Adamovic, Teri McClintock, Tyler Haggerty, Richard and Nancy Anderson, Rosaland Hawkins and John Myers.

In February 2018 we welcomed 11 new members: Meg and Rich Autudillo, Jessica Blonde, Marcia Brown, Chad and Laura Cherington, Doug Nintzel and Teri McGovern-Nintzel, Amy Anderson Perez, Linda Stenholm, Michelle Jean Ziegler

In May 2018 we welcomed 12 new members: Carrie Bennett, Rachel Smith, Raul Blanco, Sue and Rebecca Scales, Annie Peiffer, Judy Conrad, Maria Wildflower, Adam McWethy, Kimberly and Jeffrey Grout, Elizabeth 'Libby' Bean



FAITH FORMATION 2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT

CLASSROOMS

- ❖ Our theme this year, for youth in 2nd – 12th grades was World Religions. Younger children use Unitarian Universalist based curricula that teach to our 7 principles drawing wisdom from our 6 (7 if you add Unitarian Universalist wisdom) sources.
- ❖ As of the middle of May, we have had 1802 children and youth signed into a Sunday morning classes. On average, class attendance was 25% of those in the sanctuary.



A HUGE Thank You to our exceptional lead teachers!! Kinder/1st grade: Nhu-Mai Simon-Kimble, 2nd/3rd grades: Teri McGovern-Nintzel, 4th/5th grades: Sharon Hagen, middle school: Dave Merrill and high school: Rebecca O'Rourke.

- ➦ **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH** - I attended the LREDA Fall Conference in Denver and the Regional Assembly in Portland. My term as President of the local chapter of LREDA ends on June 30th but I will continue as a Good Officer for LREDA professionals. Good Officers offer support during times of professional conflict.

- ➦ **OUR WHOLE LIVES** - In the fall we offered Our Whole Lives (OWL) Human Sexuality for 24



youth in 8th & 9th grades and 12 youth in 10th & 11th grades. In January we had 15 children participate, with their parents, in the kindergarten/1st grade OWL class. OWL classes continue to “bring back” VUU families that have dropped away, as well as introducing friends to our programs; some of whom have continued to attend VUU.

- ➦ **ARE - ADULT FAITH FORMATION PROGRAMS** - We continue to offer a wide variety of lay led adult programs, including several that have continued from last year; Spirit of Life Reading Circle, Dalai Lama and Friends workshops, Great Books, and Not So Great Books. A new program, The Best Diet for Me, will expand its topics and continue to meet next year.

- ➦ **MULTI-AGE SERVICE TRIP TO AGUA PRIETA, SONORA MEXICO** – In March 25 youth and adults crossed the border to assist with building houses in Agua Prieta. Eleven of us were repeat participants, 14 people made the journey with us for the first time. In addition to home building we assisted with building a neighborhood soup kitchen, spent time playing with children at an orphanage, and, as always, made a stop at the border wall.



-Submitted by Marci

Beaudoin, Director of Faith Formation

World Religions Mural

at Valley UU, in education complex

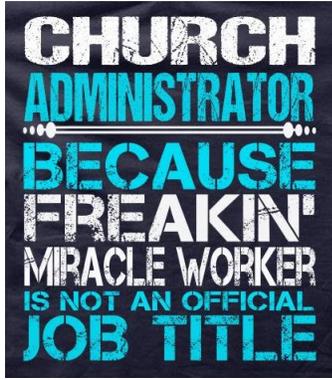


Artist MJ Adamovic designed the mural and assisted the children and youth in filling in the symbols with color.

Mural Legend:

1. **Baha'i** – Baha'i's believe in the essential worth of all religions, the unity and equality of all people, and in one God who has been manifested by several prophets, including the Bahá'u'lláh who was revealed in 1863. The sacred book is the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#).
2. **Islam** – A monotheistic, Abrahamic religion as revealed through the prophet Muhammad. The sacred book is the [Qur'an](#).
3. **Confucianism** - A way of life taught by Confucius, best understood as an all-encompassing humanism that is compatible with other forms of religion. The sacred books are the [Four Books](#) and the [Five Classics](#).
4. **Religious Humanism** - An integration of humanist ethical philosophy with religious rituals and beliefs that center on human needs, interests, and abilities.
5. **Hinduism** – The “oldest religion in the world”, its concept of God is complex and depends upon the tradition and philosophy followed. The sacred texts are classified into [Śruti](#) (“heard”) and [Smṛti](#) (“remembered”).
6. **Sikhism** – One of the youngest of the world’s major religions, a monotheistic religion. Sikhism rejects claims that any particular religious tradition has a monopoly on Absolute Truth. Sikhism is based on the spiritual teachings of its first 10 Gurus. The Tenth Guru named the Sikh scripture, [Guru Granth Sahib](#), as his successor, making the scripture the eternal, religious spiritual guide for Sikhs.
7. **Jainism** – A non-theistic religion that teaches that the way to liberation and bliss is to live a life of harmlessness and renunciation. The aim of Jain life is to achieve liberation of the soul. The sacred books are the [Agamas](#).
8. **Wiccanism** - Beliefs range from polytheism to pantheism, to Goddess monotheism. It is a nature religion that celebrates the changing of the seasons. The [Book of Shadows](#) contains various texts and scriptures that are important.
9. **Judaism** - An ancient monotheistic, Abrahamic religion, it encompasses the religion, philosophy, and culture of the Jewish people. It is considered to be the expression of the covenant that God established with the Children of Israel. The sacred text is the [Torah](#).
10. **Christianity** – An Abrahamic, monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus, who is believed to be the Son of God and the Savior of Humanity. The sacred text is the [Bible](#).
11. **Native American** – Theology may be monotheistic, polytheistic, henotheistic, animistic, or some combination thereof. Traditional beliefs are usually passed down in the form of [oral histories](#). Note: The Kokopelli symbol is often used in Hopi cultures, derived from ancient Anasazi.
12. **Unitarian Universalism** - A liberal religion, without a creed or dogma, with 7 Principles and Purposes as its guide. UUs concepts about deity are diverse. UUs recognize the sacredness of [many texts](#).
13. **Buddhism** – A “non-theistic” religion that encompasses a variety of traditions, beliefs, and spiritual practices, based on teachings of the Buddha. The basic principles are: The Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path and The Five Precepts. The sacred texts are [Sutras](#): the words and teachings of the Buddha.
Note: Zen Buddhists do not emphasize the sacred texts.
14. **Shintoism** – The ethnic religion of Japan that focuses on ritual practices to establish a connection between present-day Japan and its ancient past. The name translates as “the way of the Gods”. The sacred texts refer to a collection of native beliefs and mythology. The sacred texts are the [Kojiki](#) (Records of Ancient Matters) and the [Nihon-gi](#) (Chronicles of Japan), compilations of ancient myths and traditional teachings.

Congregation Administrator 2017-18 Annual Report



This August I will celebrate 3 years as your Administrator. And they said I wouldn't last!

My job here at VUU is to manage the day-to-day operations of the office, streamline processes where possible (incorporating technology and best practices), improve communications and help coordinate volunteer activities. I'm also the staff liaison to both the Facilities Team and the Finance Team. This past year I have also added overseeing/coordinating I-HELP to my duties.

Day-to-Day Office Operations: This year VUU accounting and payroll continues to be out-sourced to JDP Accountants. Brenda Patton and Danielle Weedman are our liaisons and they take care of our accounts. Brenda and Danielle are wonderful resources to us! We continue to have a great relationship with those who rent our space – Adobe Montessori, NefeshSoul, Counselor Jane Baker, Taoist Tai Chi Society and Desert Lotus Zen.

Communications: Along with the website mentioned above, we continue to use a one-page Order of Worship that is available on a link on the front page of the website: just click on *Order of Worship* and there it is. The link is published every week in the Wednesday email blast called VUU Happenings, our weekly email reminder (thanks Sharon Kopina!). Along with the monthly newsletter, VUUPoint (many thanks to long-time, awesome editor Gilda Czerwonka) we now publish a Sunday Bulletin that includes a calendar for the coming week and other important info for both seasoned VUU attendees and newbies! I'm also more involved with our Social Media (Facebook) presence now. Our software system, Breeze has allowed us to keep better track of your giving record, your pledge, your contact info and what skills, interests and experiences you want to share with this community. Breeze even made it possible to create an electronic Directory that is easy to update and email as an attachment to VUU Members and Friends. Thanks to Sue Henderson and her wonderful smile! She is part of the Welcome Team and she has created a nice welcome letter for newbies!



Marci, Joe, Kellie and Sue

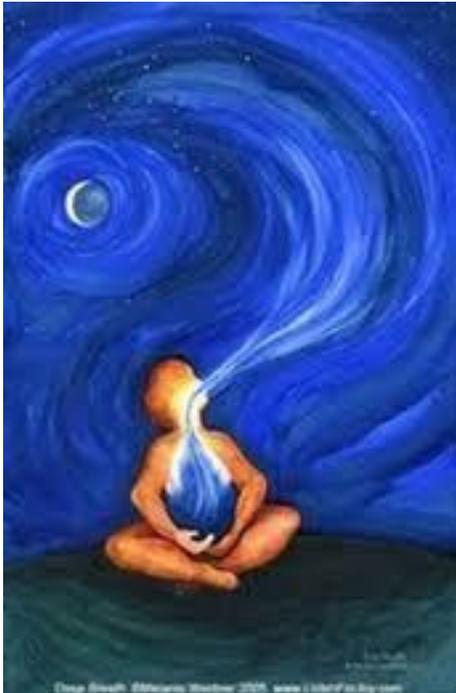
Facilities: Joe Martin continues as our Maintenance Tech and he treats this facility as if it were his home. He cares about our facilities and works very hard. We have a new landscaping company and a new garbage/recycling disposal company this year. The Black Lives Matter Banner, the Welcome Immigrants and Refugees and the Rainbow Flag are all located on the outside east wall of the sanctuary.

I am just as excited as you are as we dream about the future of VUU and how we can continue to be a community leader promoting Love-Service-and Justice!

Submitted by Sue Ringler, Administrator



Social Action Ministry Annual Report 2017-2018



"Difficult Conversations and How to Have Them"

was a 4-part series developed and led by Beverly McCormick, Barb Quijada, Molly McNamara, Dan Schulte, Beverly Workman, Roz Hawkins, and Claudette Wassil.

We used various approaches that addressed the reasons why some conversations were so difficult to have. They included: **O.R.I.D.**: **O** (using objective or neutral questions, **R** (reflection of feelings, both ours and the other person), **I** (interpretation of what was being said, fact or deeply held beliefs) and **D** (decision making); **W.A.I.T.** (Why Am I Talking) instead of listening, and the **Ladder of Inference**, a step by step guide to unveiling long held beliefs that were based on false assumptions.

The lessons to be learned: Listen with empathy; Ask neutral questions; Educate yourself on the topic; Be patient; Control your anger and/or the need to be right and Practice, Practice, Practice!

Our democratic process is at stake.



Our work on behalf of schools began in June 2017

This spring (2017), Arizona legislators passed a bill that allows students - regardless of economic status - to take funds directly from the public/charter education fund and use them at any private school of their choice, without oversight. School budgets are already stretched way too thin to absorb this loss. [Save Our Schools Arizona](#) is a grassroots effort to put this bill on the November 2018 ballot. There will be a table outside of the sanctuary during June and July to gather signatures and for people to pick up and drop off petitions. If you've never done anything like this, you're in good company! The petition you pick up will be accompanied by info on the voucher bill, directions for getting signatures, and suggested talking points. And we will be there 24/7 to help you along the way. *Every signature helps!*

August 2017 - They stood for JUSTICE

Cathy Fitzgerald, Pat Flahart and others did outstanding work in getting the signatures needed to block the extension of the school voucher law, "For now, at least".

Donna and Olivia Bennett and others participated in the peaceful gathering in Phoenix on Sunday, to acknowledge the incident in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Learn, Speak, Take Action

"We must stay awake." says, Rev William Sinkford, a former president of the Unitarian Universalist Organization.



Save Our Schools (SOS) March

When: Saturday, **January 6, 2018** from 10:00 AM to Noon on the AZ Capitol Lawn

WHY: In January the AZ Legislature will convene for another session. As they continue to debate education policy and school funding, let's send a clear message that we, their constituents, will no longer accept business as usual.

Instead we demand: an increase in revenues to expand and stabilize the AZ workforce of qualified teachers; provide essential tools for students in classrooms across the state; repair and maintain school facilities; and STOP the taxpayer-funded voucher expansion.

“Crisis in Public Education with Teachers and Funding” – January 25, 2018

Want to learn more about the current **Crisis in Public Education with Teachers and Funding**? The evening's panel speakers are Dan Hunting from ASU's Morrison Institute (MI) for Public Policy, Dana Naimark of CAA and Jennifer Johnson, former director of Support our Schools and now Grand Canyon University. **VUU will be streaming this presentation at VUU** on Thursday, January 25th. Doors will open at 5:30, presentation will open at 6:00

Findings from the Arizona State University Morrison Institute (MI) for Public Policy show "teacher recruitment, retention and pay at crisis levels in Arizona with more teachers leaving the profession annually than bachelor of education degrees produced by the three universities, compounded by an exodus of instructors for reasons ranging from retirement to poor salaries." Students in the state of Arizona receive **31% less in per-pupil funding than the national average even though AZ has some of the highest rates of childhood poverty in the nation.**

Lawmakers and the Governor have continued the trend of cutting taxes and/or increasing tax credits annually since 1990. This has resulted in more than a 2.2-billion-dollar loss of revenue in the general fund. Bring a neighbor to the forum and get documented and factual information concerning the state of K-12 public education in AZ.



#REDforED Sunday at VUU, April 22 and April 29 Wear Red on Sunday to show our support for our teachers and public school system!





The **#REDforED** Walk-Out on April 26, 2018!

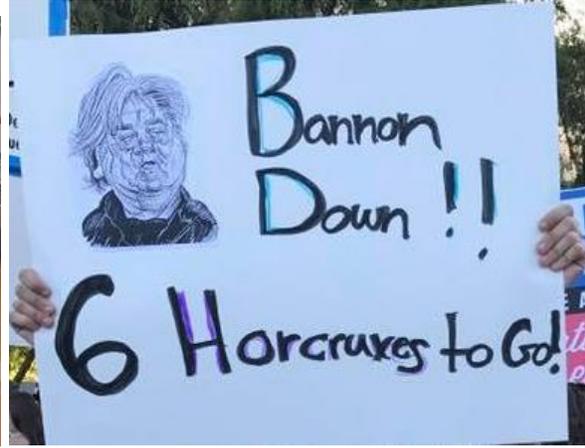
**Stand Up
Spread Love
Stop Hate**

STAND UP TO HATE RALLY

Hi everyone. Rev. Andy here. You may have heard that our friends at Puente Arizona are planning a protest rally against hate to coincide with the president's visit here on Tuesday, Aug. 22. I and many of my faith colleagues will be there, and I have heard from a number of you who are also planning to attend. I will meet anyone who wants to carpool to the protest at 4:45 pm Tuesday in the VUU parking lot. The protest begins near the convention center at 6 pm. Feel free to bring handmade signs. As well, I encourage all of us to commit ourselves to practicing the deeply powerful tactic of nonviolent resistance. If you choose to go, I will see you on Tuesday. If not, keep us in your thoughts and prayers, and keep up all the good you do every day as we stand together on the side of love! With love, Rev. Dr. Andy Burnette, Senior Minister, Valley UU



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No importa de dónde eres,
estamos contentos que seas
nuestro vecino.

No matter where you are
from, we're glad you're
our neighbor.

لا يهم اين ولدتكم، و اكننا
سعداء انكم جيراننا

DACA – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals



DACA – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, should not ever have been an issue. There is no justice, no fairness, in deporting persons who were brought here by their parents when they were children. There is no strategic interest of the United States in deporting these 800,000 young adults.

Congress can fix this problem by granting a path to citizenship for all these persons – and they can do it now. There are Republicans and Democrats willing to support legislation that will protect the so-called “dreamers” from DJT’s deportation notice.

Please call your U.S. Representative and encourage them to support legislation that will allow these “dreamers” to stay in the country. Names, addresses and phone numbers of your Representative can be found in the latest **AZ Legislative Alert**. <http://files.vuu.org/uujaz/2017/alert-090417.pdf>



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HURRICANE AIDE CONCERT featuring the music of the Soulstice Band!

On *Saturday, November 4 at 7:00PM*, the Soulstice Band will play for a family-friendly dance party in the Valley UU Sanctuary (6400 W Del Rio St., Chandler 85226).

This event is to help victims of the recent hurricanes.

There will be a free-will donation at the door, and all proceeds will be donated to the UUA Hurricane Relief Fund.

For those who have not yet heard the Soulstice Band, they play a danceable mix of Classic & Oldie Rock, Blues, and Country. This is a great way to have fun while raising money for a good cause! Please mark the date!

Check out the Soulstice Band here:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheSoulsticeBand/#>



Supporting our brothers and sisters at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas

The recent events in Sutherland Springs, Texas are heart wrenching. As we grieve from afar, we should reflect on our 7 UU Principles. What can we do, as a vibrant UU congregation, to aid our brothers and sisters in Texas? The answer is a meager, but honest one: our congregation should let the members of First Baptist Church know that we are with them in mind and spirit. Although we may not be able to be in Texas to help, we can send reminders their way.

This Sunday November 12th, and next Sunday, November 19th, a table will be set up outside of our sanctuary before and after service to collect letters and notes that we may wish to send to Texas. The package of letters will be mailed to First Baptist Church shortly after the 19th. For more information, contact Brad Colburn:

wbcolburnjr@gmail.com

If you want to donate to the rebuilding of the church or for funeral costs, please go to the First Baptist Church web page: www.ssfb.net/

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**Tempe Interfaith Fellowship's
Annual Thanksgiving Service**

Tuesday, November 21 @ 7PM
Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation
6400 W Del Rio Street, Chandler 85226

Readings, music and prayer are interfaith.
There will be a special opportunity to support Tempe
Interfaith's goal – Hate Has No Home Here –
There will be a pledge to sign and yard signs available for purchase.

A collection will be taken for I-HELP and Women4Women; if you will be writing a check please make the check out to Arizona Faith Network (AFN) with Tempe Interfaith Fellowship (TIF) in the memo line. Thank you!



TEMPE INTERFAITH FELLOWSHIP PLEDGE We, the members of Tempe Interfaith Fellowship, pledge to keep the inherent worth and dignity of every person foremost in our interactions, both with one another and in the wider community. We will seek to know one another across lines of perceived difference, and to work together to solve our community's problems. Where we find hate, we will sow love. Where we perceive difference, we will seek to be curious and not afraid. In so doing we will, over time, build a city in which love and justice and peace are the rule. -- *Witten for Tempe Interfaith Fellowship by Rev. Dr. Andy Burnette*



Jewish, UU, Muslim, Catholic, Native American Women together at the VUU Hosted Tempe Interfaith Fellowship Annual Thanksgiving Service



Women’s March, Sunday, January 21

VUU activists, feminists and friends - The Women's March is back and we are fired up! This year it is on Sunday January 21 and will take place at **1700 W Washington St, Phoenix**. Unfortunately, it conflicts with the VUU morning worship service. Still, some of us are choosing to go to this historic event to be counted, to be heard, to learn and support each other in our fight for social justice.



“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.” Elie Wiesel

Photo by [Vlad Tchompalov](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Love and Coffee, March 17, 2018

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/tempe/2018/03/17/love-trumps-hate-interfaith-community-gathers-support-tempe-mosque/435452002/?from=new-cookie>



March for Our Lives Saturday, March 24



[VIP – Valley Interfaith Project – VUU is an active member of VIP. They have been behind many of our Social Action/Social Justice activities. Get Involved with VIP! Want to know how? Contact Willa Cree \[socialaction@vuu.org\]\(mailto:socialaction@vuu.org\)](#)

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Chalice Circles give you the opportunity to build deeper connections around spirituality. You will meet twice a month with a group of 6-10 people to experience deep listening and quiet reflection on issues of faith and life. You will also complete two service projects during the year with your Circle.

For more information, check out the VUU Website or e-mail chalicecircles@vuu.org.



Chalice Circles Annual Report 2017-18 submitted by Molly McNamara

VUU's small group ministry based on deep listening continued for this year. The goal to have 3 active circles was met. As Chalice Circles have done in the past, the three circles met twice a month and focused on a particular theme with readings and questions designed for deep listening. Dianne Haskell has continued to create a monthly session based on the most recent Touchstone.

Not only do Chalice Circles make a difference in building relationships within the VUU community through deep listening, Circles participate in two service projects during the year. This year's projects were unique, ranging from cleaning, helping a member move, supporting the Emma's Revolution concert and putting together bags to give to people who may need snacks and love. Each circle found great ways to support the congregation and community.

A new way to for sign-ups was introduced this year; instead of having a table after Sunday services, a video was produced by Sean Haas. The video was shown before and during Sunday services, as well as posted on the VUU website. Sign-ups were done online, with posted days/times/and general location shared for people signing up.

Michael and Nancy Woomer, Lenore Braun, and Molly McNamara and Dianne Haskell facilitated the three circles. Two of the circles met in the evening, and one of the circles met in the East Valley during the day. Additionally, the Chalice Circle facilitators met monthly, including Rev. Andy, for their own circle.

New VUU LGBTQ Group Begins – check out LGBTQ Spectrum





The EastVUUs continue to meet in far east Mesa. For more info see the monthly newsletter or the weekly Happenings email blast or check out the Sunday bulletin more info. Contact Margaret Stewart, Janice Miller, or Sharon Kopina Check out the picture, these folks enjoy breaking bread together and working for justice!

Learn more about Lay Pastoral Care Associates (LPCA) submitted by Randy Galbraith

LPCA provides caring emotional and spiritual support via compassionate listening, hosting workshops and making personal visits. During 2017/2018 LPCA teams...

* Were available each Sunday after service to provide a listening ear.



* Facilitated the workshops "Caring for the Care-giver" and "Facing Death with Life."

* Made visits and phone calls to congregation members in need of emotional and spiritual support.

* Three long-time members (Melissa, Mike and Nancy) left the team. We are grateful for their service. We welcomed three new members (Frances, Brad and Randy).

Next year we hope to facilitate the workshop "Owning Our Religious Past."

Our hopes and dreams are reflected in the words of Isaiah chapter 32, wherein LPCA team members wish to be like a shelter from the wind, a refuge from the storm, a stream of water in the desert and like the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. To the extent we can contribute to VUU as spiritual haven in a world all too often beset with troubles we are happy to do so.

I was unable to get a picture last Sunday but will try again for next Sunday if that is not too late.



Our Lay Pastoral Care Associates: Dan, Randy, Frances, Brad, Carl





Finance Committee Annual Report 2017–18 submitted by David Sheh

The primary role of the Finance committee is to:

1. Monitor VUU finances, discuss and analyze pertinent financial matters and to perform a thorough review of the congregation's finances for the prior month and year-to-date.
2. Recommend a budget for the next Fiscal year to the Board of Trustees
3. Update financial policies and recommend to the Board of Trustees.

To achieve these goals we met and reported to the Board monthly. While most Finance deliberations are done out of sight of the congregation, the committee's role is critical to the continuing success of VUU. The accuracy of the congregation's actual results to budget reflect the dedication of the members of the Finance team, the thorough application of sound budgeting principles and practices, and the consistency of our congregation's historical fundraising, spending, and giving habits.

The Finance Committee was chaired in 2017-18 by David Sheh. Committee members included Karl Hurst-Wicker (Financial Analyst), DeeAnne McClenahan (Board Representative), Linda Horton (Recording Secretary), Anne Schneider, Richard Bitner, Garry Klepser, Rev. Sue Ringler, Church Administrator (ex officio), Rev. Dr. Andy Burnette (ex officio). Brenda Patton of JDP Accounting is contract bookkeeper.

Special thanks go to DeeAnne McClenahan for all her dedicated work in maintaining detailed income projections and serving as budget compiler, allowing this committee to have a clear and detailed analysis of accounts receivable and the budget as it evolved through the year.

An Audit subcommittee was created under the auspices of Finance consisting of Karl Hurst-Wicker (Financial Analyst), DeeAnne McClenahan (Board VP), David Sheh (Chairperson), and Sue Ringler with participation by our bookkeeper, Brenda Patton. Records were sampled and processes examined. The subcommittee met in October to discuss results and observations. There were several of these, all of which have been discussed on tracked in subsequent Finance meetings. All items have been closed.



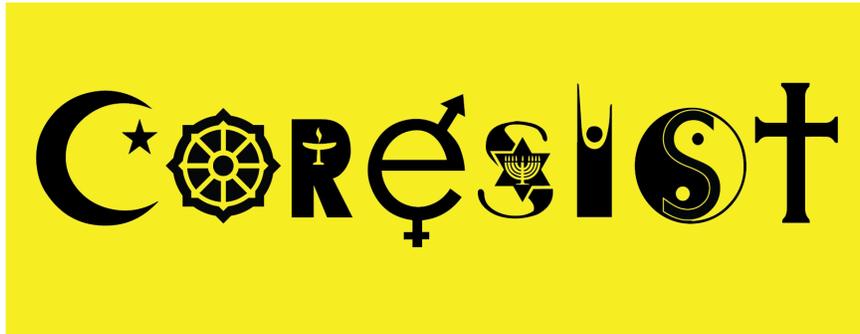
Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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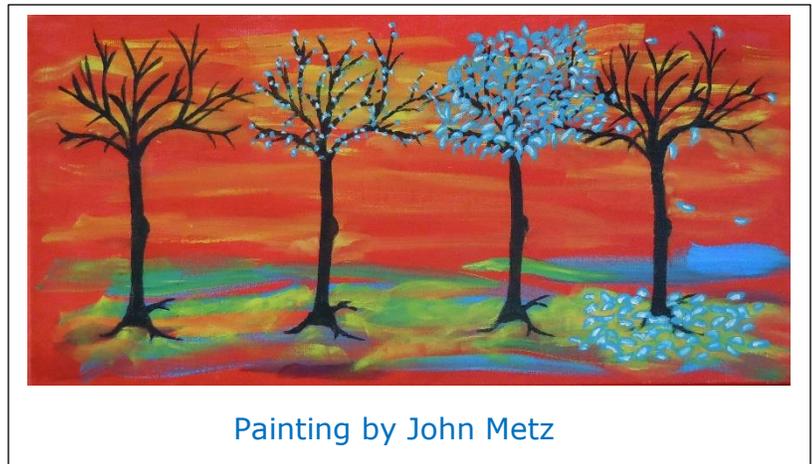
2017–2018

	Jul-Apr 18	Budget	Difference
Income			
Compassion in Action	12,823.19	8,500.00	4,323.19
Contributions Named	14,000.23	20,200.00	-6,199.77
Contributions Unnamed	15,096.18	15,700.00	-603.82
One Time Journey + Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pledges Operating	380,309.44	345,800.00	34,509.44
Rental Income	72,474.40	72,769.00	-294.60
Events	12,140.87	10,500.00	1,640.87
Investments	21.33	0.00	21.33
Miscellaneous	1,439.12	1,685.00	-245.88
Total Income	508,304.76	475,154.00	33,150.76
Expense			
Worship	2,548.81	1,293.00	1,255.81
Board	487.00	1,667.00	-1,180.00
Caring & Concerns	0.00	83.00	-83.00
Chalice Circles	0.00	209.00	-209.00
Event Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hospitality/Coffee	718.41	333.00	385.41
Leadership Council	0.00	166.00	-166.00
Membership	187.00	583.00	-396.00
Newsletter	0.00	167.00	-167.00
Public Relations/Publicity	48.57	583.00	-534.43
Special Funds	-164.85	167.00	-331.85
Stewardship	2,374.45	2,000.00	374.45
Music	2,106.40	1,667.00	439.40
Religious Education	10,424.59	13,210.00	-2,785.41
Social Action	2,485.18	3,026.00	-540.82
Senior Minister	96,025.09	94,449.00	1,576.09
Minister of Music	57,138.13	56,763.50	374.63
Payroll & Payroll Expenses	111,362.87	114,832.00	-3,469.13
Health Insurance	10,708.24	16,697.00	-5,988.76
Administration	19,572.88	20,559.00	-986.12
Property	17,007.16	34,056.00	-17,048.84
Utilities	31,095.18	31,440.00	-344.82
UUA & PSWD Dues	22,668.80	22,599.00	69.80
Liability Insurance	5,252.51	4,167.00	1,085.51
Total Op Expense	392,046.42	420,716.50	-28,670.08
Mortgage P&I	52,065.40	52,075.00	-9.60
Reserve Funding	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00
Total Op Income	508,304.76	475,154.00	33,150.76
Operating Surplus/Deficit	56,192.94	-5,637.50	61,830.44
Operating Account (checking)*	\$67,612		
Savings	\$18,028		
R&D (sweep from ops)	\$176		
Restricted & Designated*	\$39,757		





Photograph by Anne Schneider



Painting by John Metz

What follows are snippets of other activities from 2017 – 2018.
VUU is a dynamic, passionate community.
So glad you have embraced this Beloved Community.
The best is yet to be...



THE AWAKENED

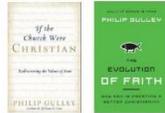


**SOUL -
 A WORKSHOP
 WITH
 PHILIP
 GULLEY**

Philip Gulley is a Quaker pastor, writer, and speaker from Danville, Indiana. Gulley has written 21 books, including the *Harmony* series recounting life in the eccentric Quaker community of Harmony, Indiana and the best-selling *Porch Talk* essay series. Gulley's memoir, *I Love You, Miss Huddleston: And Other Inappropriate Longings of My Indiana Childhood*, was a finalist for the Thurber Prize for American Humor. In addition, Gulley, with co-author James Mulholland, shared their progressive spirituality in the books *If Grace Is True* and *If God Is Love*, followed by Gulley's books *If the Church Were Christian* and *The Evolution of Faith* - available at the workshop.

In his most recently published work of non-fiction, *Living the Quaker Way: Timeless Wisdom For a Better Life Today*, Gulley offers the opportunity to participate in a world where the values of the Quaker way bring equity, peace, healing, and hope. *Living the Quaker Way* invites readers to encounter the defining commitments of the Religious Society of Friends - *simplicity, peace, integrity, community and equality*, and shows how those ideals can be incorporated in personal and public life to bring renewal and eliminate the clutter that is keeping us from deeper spirituality.

Gulley is currently working on his 22nd book entitled *Unlearning God*, in which he describes the process of spiritual growth, especially the re-interpretation of the earliest principles we learned about God.



Find YOUR way to
 GRACE

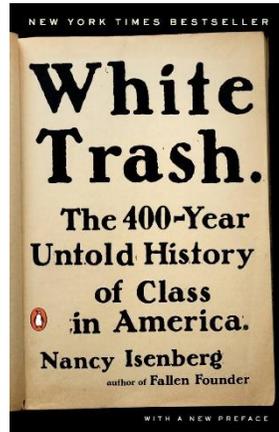
"No one raises provocative questions about Christianity more kindly than Philip Gulley. In an age of shouting, Gulley gently points out the flaws in the church while opening ways to practice Christian spirituality with greater integrity. If the church were as Philip Gulley envisions here, people would be knocking down our doors to experience God's love." ~ Diana Butler Bass, author of *Christianity for the Rest of Us*

"In our ever-changing world, Gulley's book is much needed. An important book for any person of faith." ~ Archbishop Desmond Tutu, author of *MADE FOR GOODNESS*

VALLEY UNITARIAN
 UNIVERSALIST
 CONGREGATION

6400 W Del Rio Street
 Chandler AZ 85226
 480-899-4249
 vuu.org
 Cost: \$5 at the Door

Saturday, October 21
 10:00 a. m. - 11:30 a. m.



**Book
 Discussion on
 "White Trash:
 The 400-Year
 Untold
 History of
 Class
 in America"
 by Nancy
 Isenberg**



YOU MUST BE HERE ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 22!!
**THE BIGGEST POTLUCK YOU WILL EVER
 EXPERIENCE! BRING A DISH TO SHARE!**
THE MOST EXCITING, INSPIRING SERVICE EVER!
**THE BEST INFLATED SLIDE
 (FOR THE KIDS, OF COURSE)**
**INFORMATION ABOUT VUU
 AND HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!**
BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!



INFO? CONTACT SUE AT OFFICE@VUU.ORG



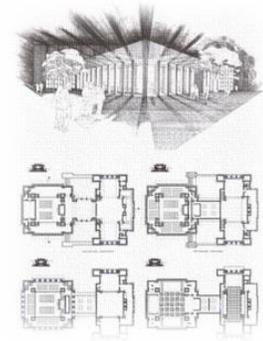
Passover Seder

A FILM EXPLORING THE REAL COST OF PRIVATIZING
 AMERICA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BACKPACK FULL OF CASH

NARRATED BY MATT DAMON

"A BEAUTIFUL FILM—TREMENDOUSLY MOVING! ...EVERYONE
 WHO VALUES DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION NEEDS TO SEE THIS."
 —JONATHAN KOEHL, ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND AUTHOR OF SAVAGE INEQUALITIES



RECREATING THE VUU CAMPUS VISION SESSIONS WITH THE ARCHITECT

Wendell Burnette Architects

Valley UU has engaged Wendell Burnette Architects for a three-month visioning and planning process. WBA will work with the Board, the staff, the property team, and committee leadership congregation-wide. Most importantly, they need to hear from as many members and friends of the congregation as possible.

Please plan to join one of these 2-hour interactive sessions to envision the future of our campus.



Faith Formation Families serving our I-HELP guests a delicious "breakfast for dinner" meal!



Leading up to November one of our most urgent tasks will be to inspire each other to stay motivated to work for those issues that are most dear to us during this upcoming election season.



[Register to Vote:](#)

Most of us are registered to vote. But what happens when you run into someone who isn't? Did you know that you can register to vote online? If you find someone that is not registered send them to <https://vote.gov/register/az/>



<https://www.outlawdirtymoney.com/>

#INVESTinED

www.InvestInEdAZ.com

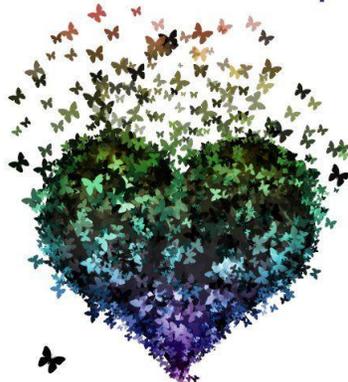




Copyright by Matt Wuerker.



Love Without Exceptions



Unitarian Universalism.

