

WVUU Times

July 2018

West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church



WEST VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

5904 W. Cholla St.
Glendale, AZ 85304
(623) 846-6004
wvuu5904@gmail.com
www.westvalleyuu.org

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dmseneca@yahoo.com

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emilyawhitmore@gmail.com

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k.dugan@cox.net

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longroper623@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

David Moore
mooredavid06@gmail.com

Gavel Talk

Diane D'Agostino, President
West Valley UU Church
dmseneca@yahoo.com

I started attending WVUU Church in 2015. At the time, Sunday services were held in the RE Building. On that particular Sunday, Dorothy Ward warmly greeted me, and I watched with interest how Valerie Lynch moderated the service. "Maybe I could learn to do those jobs," I thought to myself. Later that week, I received a nice thank you card for attending the service that left me feeling welcomed.

But more importantly, I was wanting to continue a spiritual journey that had been ignored. I also hoped that along the way I could engage with new people. Would there be a place for me at WVUU Church?

It wasn't long before I found tasks I could take on to help this small church: housekeeper, kitchen volunteer, Sunday driver, greeter, and worship associate. Eventually new paths opened up, offering me challenges where I could not only

learn about the nuts and bolts of the church but how I could better serve the little church that could. Each step taught me something about myself, the people I worked with, or the process needed to get the job done. Spiritually, it was inspiring to see how much was being done by a small group of people to create a special place for all to worship and share in a common philosophy.

For those who have helped me learn about the WVUU congregation, thank you. I pay special attention to those who have stories from the past or who have expertise in a special area. I am especially grateful to those who served on the 2017-18 Board of Trustees with me. Their commitment to our congregation is admirable.

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Sunday Services

Sunday Services begin at 10:30 a.m.
followed by a light lunch and fellowship.
Child care is available for children ages 3 and up.

July Theme: ***This I Believe***

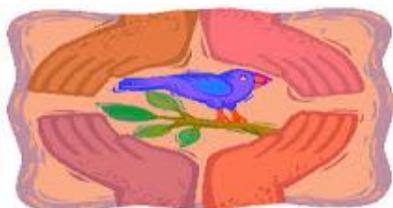
In a format similar to the NPR program, *This I Believe*, Sunday Service speakers will relate through stories and other accounts personal, core beliefs that guide their daily lives. The following are our July speakers:

July 1: **Earle Canfield**
July 8: **Jim Reay**
July 15: **Dr. Kaden Sheffield**
July 22: **Jim Reay**
July 29: **Stacy Fitzwater**

2018-2019 WVUUC Board



The incoming WVUUC Board of Trustees consists of Noel Johnson, Member At-Large; Diane D'Agostino, President; Emily Whitmore, President Elect; Sandra Mahoney, Secretary; Kathy Dugan, Co-Treasurer; and Mark Oelerking, Co-Treasurer (l-r).



Who We Are



West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association. We are a welcoming congregation whose mission is provide a safe place for celebrating diversity, drawing inspiration for living better lives, fostering social and environmental justice, and compassionately supporting each other in our spiritual searches.

We are a theologically diverse community who encourages you to seek your own spiritual path. We provide a caring environment for each adult and child to learn more about yourself and your place in the interdependent web of existence. Sunday services celebrate our community, challenge us intellectually, and engage us spiritually.

Gavel Talk

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Working with the Board helped me discover important facets about the inner workings of this congregation. And a standing ovation for those who have worked with me on the Worship Services Committee! Our Sunday services are part of the central core to what we are at WVUU, and I appreciate their patience as we moved through the steps of creating meaningful services each week.

I look forward to stepping into the role of president at WVUUC. I realize there is still a great deal for me to learn, but I believe my record shows that I am committed to this church.

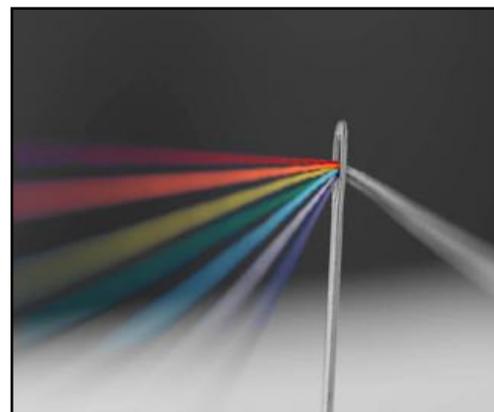
This next year will be challenging but one filled with expectation with our new minister making her sermon debut on September 16. Making our financial resources stretch as far as possible will continue to be a concern. Having the human resources to serve on committees as well as provide services for our church will be an important issue, too.

I encourage you to find out about openings on the various committees at WVUU or perhaps fill the vacancy of Trustee that currently exists on the Board. Being involved at WVUU Church benefits each of us as individuals as well as our entire congregation.

The history of this church has proven its tenacious nature to endure. With a resolve to trust in our principles and in each other, let's begin the 2018-19 year at West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church!



Common Threads



from Moses, J. (2002). *Oneness: Great principles shared by all religions*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Infinite Eternity

Deep within abides another life, not like the life of the senses, escaping sight, unchanging. This endures when all created things have passed away.

- Hinduism

By wisdom, by inner awareness and restraint, one may create for oneself an island no flood can overwhelm.

- Buddhism

Everything that you have shall pass away, but that which is with Allah is Eternal.

- Islam

The world passeth away ... but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

- Christianity

Circle Supper

Sharon Moore
leadmoore@gmail.com

While it is true that official Circle Suppers are on hiatus until November, don't let that stop you. Grab a group of pals, add in a visitor or two, and create your own Circle Suppers during the break. Circle Suppers are designed to foster community and strengthen bonds. You don't need a clipboard sign up for that. Go forth and eat with others from church; let the circle (supper) be unbroken!

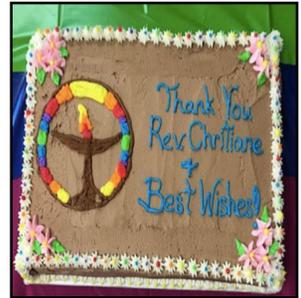


Postcard Power

So much is happening in our state and nation. Set aside one hour a week at home and write or call legislators and other officials to register your views on what is happening in our world. Or get folks together after church and write postcards to them. With so many important issues, we need to keep the pressure on. Resistance fatigue is a real thing. Fight it with action!

Farewell, Rev. Christiane Heyde

Rev. Christiane Heyde and WVUUC said goodbye at the June 17 service. Beginning in 2015, Rev. Christiane came twice-a-month from Tucson and presented a total of 63 Sunday services to WVUUC. She is moving to new opportunities as a chaplain. She will be missed!



Farewell Poem

Reverend Christiane Heyde

Three years ago, and a few days
I mailed the board to find some ways
I might serve West Valley UU
By preaching sermons here to you.

We liked each other from the start
And soon I knew within my heart
That people here were rather smart
And I wanted to play a part.

Now here we are years later
As my love for you grew greater.
And yet, it's time to say good bye,
Let's celebrate instead of cry.

You've grown so much, and I have too,
It seems the last 3 years just flew,
With our new building, and our choir,
Each week we seem to aim yet higher.

For me it's time to get some rest.
To you, I wish the very best.
With Joy and Love and Gratitude,
I am so glad that I pursued

This opportunity we had
To share these sermons, might I ad
That Love has spread among us all.
And still, I'm following my call
To be a chaplain, come this fall.

UU Principled Minutes

Sharon Moore leadmoore@gmail.com

Living our principles is the heart of Unitarian Universalism. Reciting them is only a beginning to living a principled life.

Principle 1: The inherent worth and dignity of every person

To help someone else, you have to take your own needs out of the equation. Put your focus and energy on the other person, be selfless, and limit any distractions or personal goals during the time you commit to the needs of another. That person is your focus. That person deserves your unrestricted attention.

Principle 2: Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations

Empathy is showing that you understand another's feelings or emotions; you identify with the situation and care enough to place yourself in another's shoes. "I understand" is one way to communicate this. But don't pretend to understand a situation beyond your experience. When someone is talking about intensely personal emotional or physical pain, saying "I understand" may not be accepted. Try "I don't truly understand what you're going through, but I'm here to listen or just be with you."

Principle 3: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations

Watch an overtly religious program involving a different faith tradition. It might be a TV preacher or a movie. Note

areas of agreement and areas you don't accept. Think about the truth of the message for followers of that faith. What can you learn from it? We can always learn something if we are open.

Principle 4: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

One way to search for truth is to watch a TV show of oppositional perspective or read an editorial that is counter to your beliefs. Identify at least one thing you learned that will help you understand the other side's story and beliefs rather than merely dismissing them.

Principle 5: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large

Our congregational meetings are an opportunity to be heard through voice and vote. Attend the meetings and speak up for issues important to you. Before the meetings, identify areas you feel strongly about. Craft a resolution for the congregation to act on and present it in New Business.

Principle 6: The goal of world community with peace, justice, and liberty for all

Ask Sunday Services to plan a service that focuses on an aspect you are concerned about so we all are better informed. For example, we think we know what white privilege is, but do we really understand the subtleties that underlie white privilege. Read *The Making of a Racist* by Charles B. Dew.

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Getting to Know Jo Cleland

Sandra Mahoney

s_1mahoney@cox.net

Jo Cleland has always reminded me of a hummingbird, if there were musical hummingbirds that is. She is always smiling, energetic, and has a never-ending supply of music. She is involved in an incredible number of activities, too.

Jo was reared in a German farming community in North Dakota. Her father was a Moravian minister, and her mother had a doctorate in religion and 13 years of training as a pianist.

She learned to play piano at three and a half years of age by attending her sister's lessons, watching, and then practicing at home. When Jo was in fifth grade, her family moved to Philadelphia where Jo received cello lessons from a member of the Philadelphia symphony. She graduated high school with a full scholarship in music education to St. Olaf College.

As St. Olaf students were not allowed cars on campus, the local Moravian church provided volunteer chauffeurs to drive students from campus to church, where Jo was the choir director. Her chauffeur was a

6'3" man named Bob Cleland who had just completed a stint in the Navy; he proposed to her on graduation day and became her husband in 1959.



After a decline in the economy of Minnesota where Jo and Bob were residing, they moved with their two sons to Arizona in 1964 where Bob had family. She and Bob added their daughter to the family. Jo "accidentally" auditioned for the Phoenix Symphony and played both cello and piano with the symphony for 10 years.

Jo volunteered to help students with missing skills at her sons' school. She ended up teaching homebound students in the Washington Elementary School District, and her supervisor suggested she become a full-time teacher, which necessitated going back to college to earn a regular teaching certificate.

Bob was supportive as always, saying, "Go for it, hon." Jo then taught in Chapter I (later Title I) and regular classrooms, grades one through eight. She later earned her master's and doctorate degrees in education at NAU and became the curriculum specialist for reading for Washington District. During this time she was an Adjunct Professor at ASU. Then she began to work full time at ASU, first as Field Placement Director and then as a professor of Reading Education for ten more years.

Since "retiring" in 2001, Jo has written 42 children's books. She is a member of the ASU Emeritus College where she has served as editor of the newsletter. She also chairs a committee to support Harmony Project Phoenix, a program for low income children which builds orchestras, bands, and choirs, and uses music for positive youth development.

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Principled Minutes

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Principle 7: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

One interpretation of Principle 7 is to become a global citizen rather than an isolationist or nationalist. There are pros and cons to this stance. Inform yourself on the issues inherent in global citizenship, then start a conversation at hospitality time after the Sunday service.

Jo Cleland

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Jo gives private cello and piano lessons and plays in five orchestras and three ensembles. She volunteers for Honor Health where she plays cello in the hospital, plays piano for the adult care chapel services, and conducts literacy activities with children in their day care center. She plays for her own church on Sundays and has been coming to play for WVUUC for 25 years.

April 2018 WVUUC Financial Highlights

Kathy Dugan, Co-Treasurer k.dugan@cox.net

MAY 2018 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Total Operating Income -
\$3,927

Pledge Payments \$3,309

Facility Rental \$411

Sunday Plate \$186

Total Operating Expense -
\$6,875

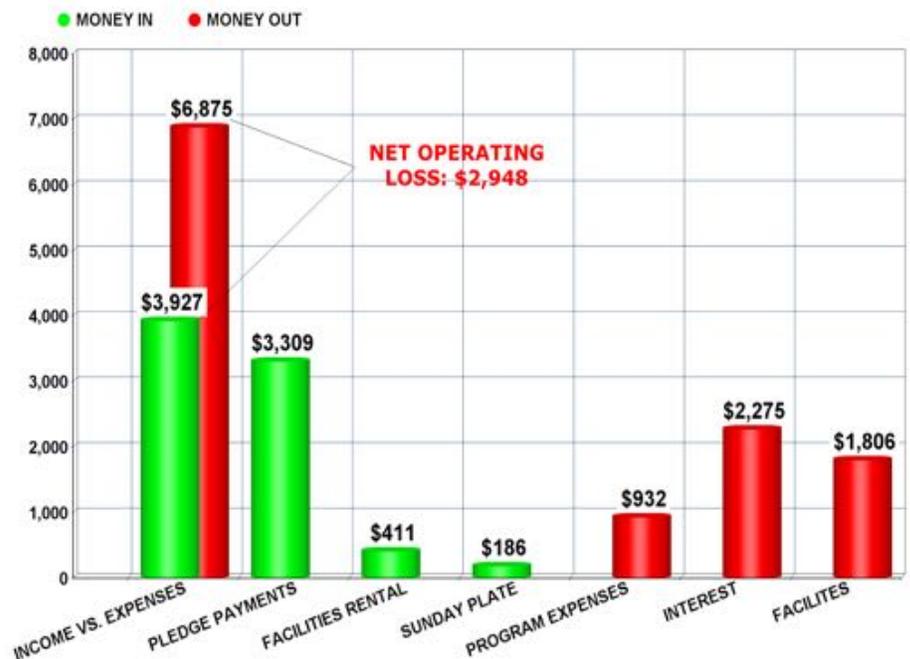
Program Expenses \$932

Interest on Member Building

Loans \$2,275

Facilities \$1,806

Net Operating Loss - \$2,948



Grading on a Continuum

Emily Whitmore

emilyawhitmore@gmail.com

Have you ever tried showing scientific data to a climate change denier only to end up feeling like you're fighting the Black Knight from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*?

You can point out reality to them all day long, but no matter how many limbs you've chopped off, they think they can keep fighting just because they refuse to acknowledge that fact.

That's exactly how I felt when discussing this topic with an immediate family member. And four months ago, I straight-up told him so. Only I wish I hadn't.

I want so badly to "in my defense" my way out of feeling guilty about it. He may have insinuated that I, with my "fair and open-minded journalistic background," wasn't looking at the "other side" of the argument." But even so, I shouldn't have reacted out of anger and frustration. The Golden Rule should still apply.

Plus, I doubt there's a chapter on hurling insults in the book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

I've butted heads with this particular family member on just about every political and theological topic you can imagine. We're polar opposites, ideologically, but equally as stubborn. We're the genetic manifestation of what happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object.

Four months ago I emailed some climate change data to this person. I received a response that I was being lied to by the alarmist left for political gain, along with a link to a YouTube video of John Stossel titled "Death by Socialism." I laughed at the irony but couldn't see the connection. Until now.

Since then I've begun reading the book, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, by Naomi Klein. The book is aptly titled because it's even changing my own perspective.

In it, she deduces, "What the climate needs to avoid collapse is a contraction in Humanity's use of resources; what our economic model demands to avoid collapse is unfettered expansion. Only one of these sets of rules can be changed, and it's not the laws of nature."

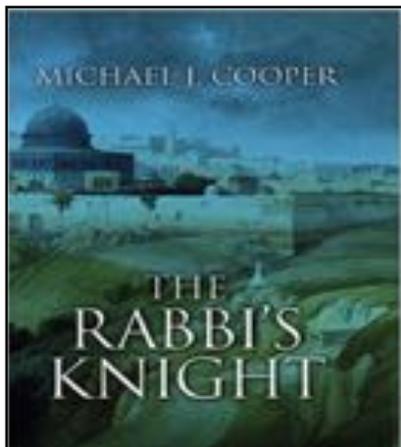
Thanks to Klein, my loved one and I are now speaking the same language. In rereading the past email exchanges I've had with him, I realize I have it in writing that he doesn't deny the planet is warming. He doesn't even deny that humans are causing it "to some extent." His issue lies in how to deal with this information.

I initiated another email exchange, but this time taking a much more respectful approach. I suggested that I think he's just afraid to admit climate change is a threat.

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Media Review

Cooper, M. (2015). *The rabbi's knight*. Waterville, ME: Five Star Publishing.



Reviewed by Sharon Moore

This historical fiction novel takes place at the end of the Crusades in the late thirteenth century. While it mostly stays within the confines of its genre (some action-adventure, a touch of romance), I am calling *The Rabbi's Knight* to your attention because of its religious elements. One reason I love historical fiction is I learn so much while enjoying an engaging story.

The Rabbi's Knight is centered around a cryptic inscription on a scroll that Jonathan St. Clair,

a Templar Knight, possesses. He seeks help from Rabbi Samuel of Baghdad to interpret the scroll through Kabbalah. The knight, who is open to non-Christian perspectives, finds fighting Moslems less important than divining the meaning of the scroll. The inscription can help unlock the secrets of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Complicating the task is that Rabbi Samuel is targeted for assassination by an unscrupulous rabbi who enlists the help of the local emir. Money and promises of power pass hands, of course. Oh, and there is the knight's forbidden love interest.

Kabbalah, developed in medieval times, is a system of Jewish theosophy, mysticism, and thaumaturgy that uses a cipher method for interpreting scripture. While the novel by no means thoroughly explains Kabbalism, it presents some essentials as the rabbi teaches the knight.

The rabbi and the knight have a number of discussions about religious practices. Rabbi Samuel takes apart the rationale for celibacy, for example, by showing Jonathan that a mistranslation led to a misinterpretation which led to this wrongful precept. Chapter and verse are cited for you to check out, too.

In other discussions, we see the rabbi as a learned man who has Muslim, Jewish, and Christian friends alike, a man who lives the New Testament principles better than most Christians. He believes, after all, that Jesus was a Jew, and that his words were spoken not to form a new religion, but to untangle the complicated strictures Jews had placed on themselves. He sees the Kabbalah as a key to understanding God's message to the world.

Continuum

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In doing so he'd have to admit that the capitalist system he's embraced, defended, and made part of his very identity might be flawed. To put it mildly.

So it turns out he's not the Black Knight prancing around King Arthur, not conceding the fight. He's John Cleese in the Black Knight costume, pretending not to admit the truth.

Only the joke isn't funny anymore. And it's time to get serious!



Web Presence



Go to this online calendar for WVUU events:

westvalleyuu.org/events/calendar/



Keep up with WVUU church and member news, post comments, and share articles and photos with friends at these websites:

Facebook Group
facebook.com/groups/wvuuc

Facebook Fan Page
facebook.com/WestValleyUnitarianUniversalistChurch

Pin and browse UU-related visuals at this site:

pinterest.com/pin/242772236133017855/

UU Principles and Sources



Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote seven principles:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; and
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalist principles are drawn from six sources:

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit; and
6. Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.