

WVUU Times

August 2018

West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church



WEST VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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Gavel Talk

Diane D'Agostino, President
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Atending the Unitarian Universalist Association's 57th Annual General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri, on June 20th-24th was a rewarding experience. It allowed me to learn more about the issues facing Unitarian Universalism as well as meet new people from around the country.

A full schedule was presented in the 90 page booklet I received at the registration table, and I quickly saw upon thumbing through it I would need to carefully plan each day's activities. As a voting delegate, I would need to attend the general sessions where reports, bylaws, and other business items on the agenda would be presented.

But there were dozens of additional sessions for me to choose from that included networking with smaller congregations, learning how to cultivate leaders in our

congregations, reimagining the purpose of Sunday services, and being trained for involvement in the Poor People's Campaign. Tough choices had to be made since time was limited, but I came away knowing I had information that could help our congregation as well as feeling I had boosted my own spiritual journey.

If I didn't already know it, I surely learned at the conference that UUs are super active people. The number of groups involved in countless social issues appeared endless. UUs can never complain about having nothing to do. Even with preprinted agendas and General Assembly sessions under way, new injustices were called to the General Assembly's attention in the form of eight Actions of Immediate Witness.

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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.

August Theme: ***This I Believe***

August 5: **Islam**

Sid Shahid

Mr. Sid Shahid, Vice-President of the Islamic Center of Peoria and friend to WVUU Church, will join our congregation to share beliefs of the Islamic religion.

August 12: **Aging Joyfully**

Jo Cleland

Worshippers at WVUU Church know Jo Cleland as the talented musician who shares her talents with us on Sundays. But on this Sunday Jo will step to the podium and give her thoughts on aging joyfully.

August 19: ***to be named***

August 26: **True Confessions of a Spiritual Seeker**

Kellye Perkins

Kellye will share through music and story her search for God and her discovery of spirituality. Highlights will include the 1960's Jim Crow laws and race riots, the 1970's Jesus Movement, counseling for marriage with the 82nd Airborne Military Chaplaincy, and meanderings through various denominations. She will share how she ended up a UU and what it means to her.

Listen to Our Sermons Online!

Whether you're traveling for the summer, couldn't make it to the service, or want to share a particular sermon with someone, podcasts of our sermons are just a click away!

Audios can be found on our website at <http://www.westvalleyuu.org/services/sermons/> (see page 5). They are hosted by Soundcloud. For those of you with the app or an account, you can "like" and subscribe to receive all the latest updates.

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.

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The top three actions would see new efforts focused on them in the coming year. Those passed by the General Assembly were:

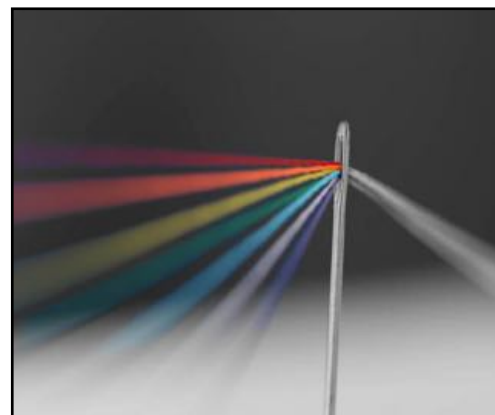
- End family separation and detention of asylum seekers and abolish ICE
- End prisons for profit: dismantle predatory medical care practices in prisons
- Stand in solidarity with the Indigenous Water Protector Movement at Standing Rock & Oceti Sakowin Camp

There were many highlights for me during those few days. The addresses given by Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray were inspiring and helped me to think about my place in society as it pertains to white supremacy. There was a lot of wonderful music at every General Assembly gathering. In addition, it was an honor to be able to see and congratulate Reverend Christiane Heyde for receiving her Final Fellowship at the Service of the Living Tradition.

Two things made this conference a great one for me. The first is having the opportunity to meet people from all over America who have different styles of dress, different accents, and different ways of doing things. Talking with someone about the work demands on a 14 member congregation made me appreciate even more the people in our congregation who work hard to keep our church open every Sunday. Having dinner with someone who has over 950 members in her congregation helped me see that even large congregations have concerns that can't always be taken care of with more money or lots of congregants.

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Common Threads



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

The Golden Rule

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, for this is the law and the prophets.

- Christianity

Hurt not others with that which pains yourself.

- Buddhism

What you do not yourself desire, do not put before others.

- Confucianism

Treat others as thou wouldst be treated thyself.

- Sikhism

Do nothing to thy neighbor, which hereafter thou wouldst not have thy neighbor do to thee.

- Hinduism

Postcard Power

Sharon Moore
leadmoore@gmail.com

So much is happening in our state and nationally that we need to comment on. Please call, text, email, or write your government officials to let them know you're paying attention and that you like or don't like a direction we're headed.

You may think your lone voice will be ignored, but when tens of thousands of lone voices express the same concerns, these poll-minded politicians pay attention. Stand up and be heard. It's the UU thing to do!

Gavel Talk

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No matter where we came from, our different backgrounds did not get in the way of us being able to discuss matters important to each of us.

A second thing I was the feeling that I belonged there. I felt comfortable enough to start learning about issues on a bigger scale. Finding a niche in a small church like WVUU Church was possible for me because I could see where I could help. But going to a national conference? Would I get lost in "The Big Show?" At first, it was a bit overwhelming due to the sheer size of the convention center and all of the committees giving their annual reports, but soon I saw our WVUU Church has a place in the grand scheme of things in the UU world.

Even though we are a smaller congregation, we have a connection to the social interests and activism so unique to Unitarian Universalism. We have people in our congregation actively engaged in local issues right now, and we can continue to make a difference in our own little corner of the world, right on the corner of 59th Avenue and Cholla, or out in the greater community.

My experience at the General Assembly led me to wish that the sense of belonging I experienced at Kansas City extends to all those who walk through our doors at WVUU Church each Sunday. I hope people who attend our services feel comfortable, respected, and valued. Because if they do, then we are on our way to living out our principle of affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

Hospitality

Onna Johnson omercerj@gmail.com

Hospitality for Refugees: We have moved the majority of our supplies to a storage unit near the bus station. Any West Valley volunteers will have ready access to the supplies.

Volunteers are serving a very high number of released detainees, including children, so it made sense to consolidate supplies and give everyone ready access to the supplies near the depot. We will announce when we need to collect specific items.

Thank you to everyone for your generous donations when they have been needed! Please let Onna Johnson (omercerj@gmail.com) know if you would be interested in joining our team of volunteers! It is an exceptionally rewarding experience!

Sunday Service Hospitality: Our new "after service hospitality team" would like to thank Diana Barker and Kimberly Escalante for years of service as Hospitality Chairpersons. Diana and Kimberly were pretty much alone on that committee for several years. They showed up early every Sunday to facilitate hospitality hour, and they often cleaned up alone after everyone had gone. Fortunately, Diana and Kim have been available to help with the transition to a new team! Sincere Thanks! Roz, Phyllis, Morgan, and Onna



Sunday Sermon Podcasts

Pictured below is our WVUUC web page displaying podcasts of our Sunday sermons

The screenshot shows the website for West Valley Unitarian Universalist Church. At the top left is the church's logo, which features a stylized green plant with a flame-like top. The main header area displays the church's name and a background image of the church building. Below the header, there are navigation tabs for 'All', 'Tracks', 'Albums', 'Playlists', and 'Reposts'. The 'Tracks' tab is selected, showing two podcast entries. Each entry includes the church logo, a play button, the title of the sermon, and the name of the speaker. The first track is 'The Way of Not Knowing' by Dr. Kaden Sheffield, and the second is 'The Spiritual Joy of Travel' by Jim Reay. To the right of the tracks, there are statistics for the station: 4 followers, 0 following, and 3 tracks. At the bottom of the page, there are buttons for downloading the app from the App Store and Google Play.

UU Principled Minutes

Sharon Moore leadmoore@gmail.com

Every month I explore our seven Principles through practical, everyday experiences. The more we think about and apply our Principles in our daily lives, the better people we become. And the world is enriched by spreading the goodness of our beliefs.

As Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove explains, “The Principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in Unitarian Universalist religious communities.”

Principle 1: The inherent worth and dignity of every person

Sometimes we forget that Principle 1 applies to ourselves. We each have worth and dignity. Your calling in life is to fully express who you already are. The world will never see another human being like you. There is no one on the face of the planet that has what you have. Your uniqueness, in every respect, is your gift. Life asks one thing of you, to be the full expression of yourself so you can leave your unique imprint on all those you encounter and upon the world. Never underestimate the power of your energy and how it ripples outwards to affect everything and everyone around you – IF you are being your full, authentic self. Honor your intuition and act upon your inspirations.

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

Show unconditional love. This is a total approach towards showing compassion

in every area of life. Don't just hear, but listen without judgment. Be extremely present in a conversation. Give sound advice. Offer your hugs and love freely. Be understanding and above all, love unconditionally.

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

Forgiveness is choosing happiness over hurt. We do not forgive others in order to free them of the situation, burden, guilt or regret. We forgive others to free ourselves and walk into compassion and love by doing so. It is in freeing ourselves that our energy level rises, our consciousness rises, and in doing so those around us benefit too. The words of forgiveness have a positive impact on those we forgive, but ultimately forgiveness is a choice that allows us to happy again. This goes for both forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self.

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

Being open-minded is a key aspect in the process of becoming a more conscious individual. When you haven't accepted the diversity that our planet has to offer, ranging from different cultures, religions, wildlife, and beliefs, you will stay in your same state of consciousness or drop to a lower state. Being open-minded isn't only for beliefs. It involves having an open-mind to try something new such as an exercise routine, spiritual practice, or food.

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Principled Minutes

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

Do you feel empowered or disempowered by the decision making process in our congregation? Is there power sharing, or is it more top-down than side-by-side? How would you change things and why? Speak up. Your responsibility is to let others know how the democratic process is working for us in this church.

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

Celebrate successes in the quest for peace and nonviolence. When you hear about nations coming together for a

common goal, post it on social media, share it as church as a joy, and maybe write an opinion piece for the newsletter.

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

During these hot days, we want our air conditioning units to be as efficient as possible. Two quick tips are (a) keep the outside portion of a central air conditioner clear from dried mud, debris and grass clippings. Check after an intense rain. And (b) plant trees or shrubs to shade air-conditioning units without blocking the airflow. A unit operating in the shade uses less electricity than the same one operating

June 2018 WVUUC Financial Highlights

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

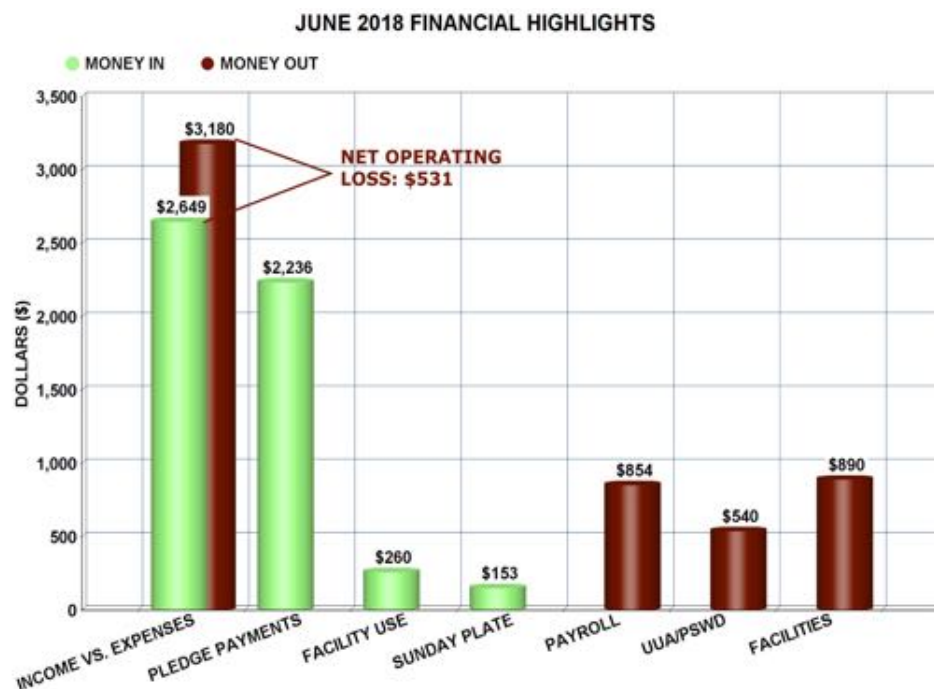
Total Operating Income -
\$2,649

Pledge Payments \$2,236
Facility Use \$260
Sunday Plate \$153

Total Operating Expense -
\$3,180

Personnel and Payroll \$854
UUA/PSWD Fair Share
\$540
Facilities \$890

Net Operating Loss - \$531



Getting to Know Kathy Dugan

Sandra Mahoney

s_1mahoney@cox.net

Kathy Dugan grew up in Brooklyn, NY and is the youngest of three daughters. She was reared a Roman Catholic and stayed with it until she was confirmed at age 13. By then she had enough. Her parents were not religious in the general sense of the word but were Catholic.

She hates the cold and loves the climate here and the look of the desert. It took her several years to convince her husband, Bill, to move here from New York; they finally made the move in 1994. Kathy worked as a project manager in information technology for over 20 years but became disillusioned especially after Y2K. She then studied medical radiology imaging for a short time but did not like the clinical aspect.

She made a career change in 2006 to become an insurance claims adjuster. She now works for Nationwide Insurance covering commercial general liability claims. She finds this fits her well as it uses her analytical and process oriented skills.

Kathy had heard of Unitarian Universalism from her sister who dabbled a bit in it in New York. When their son, Tom, was about five, Bill and Kathy wanted a community for him in which he could learn the principles and values which they think are important. When they came to WVUUC, Kathy Abramowitz took Tom under her wing and the church seemed like a good fit for the family.



She likes WVUUC and is a member because she can be with like-minded people. Although she doesn't consider herself to be a religious person, she is interested in spirituality and the seven UU Principles appeal to her. She likes being with others to whom the principles are important,

especially since we live in a conservative place. WVUUC has been a tremendous learning opportunity for Kathy.

Bill and Kathy served as co-secretaries of WVUUC within six months of joining. She has also been an At Large Member of the Board, on the Ministerial Search committee and the Committee on Ministry when Reverend Paul Langston-Daly was here. She accepted the position of Treasurer on the Board in 2014 and is looking forward to working with Mark Oelerking over the next year.

Kathy describes herself as a "compulsive walker." She walks 25 to 30 miles a week. She loves to read all kinds of books. She has recently acquired two kittens, Spencer and Milo, who have enlivened her life. Her two-legged child, Tom, who is now 19 has recently completed a very successful year at Portland State University.

Grading on a Continuum

Emily Whitmore

emilyawhitmore@gmail.com

One New Year's resolution ago I discovered a book titled, "The Cleaning Ninja: How to Clean Your Home in 8 Minutes Flat and Other Clever Housekeeping Techniques" by Courtenay Hartford.

Some of the techniques worked better than others. For instance, it inspired me to write chores on popsicle sticks and move the finished chores from a full jar to an empty jar over the course of one month, and then switch jars and do them all over again.

That system lasted about four days.

But one technique that did stick with me was this: Make your bed every morning. Just do it. It takes only 20 seconds and makes the biggest impact in transforming a messy room into a clean room.

Six months later, this tip has the Whitmore seal of approval.

It got me thinking. What small things can we do that have the greatest impact in transforming our character?

The one thing I keep coming back to is thoughtfulness. A person who I consider to be thoughtful automatically gets bumped way up to the top of my list of favorite people.

Last Christmas, a lady dressed up as Mrs. Claus told my son the secret to getting onto

Santa's "Nice" list is to help someone every day. Maybe the same principle works for getting onto someone's "thoughtful" list.

Thoughtfulness doesn't need to require lots of money or talent, just a little bit of practice to break out of one's own internal universe. But it's not as easy as it seems.

I often have trouble breaking out of my internal universe in social settings. From experience, I know how much more pleasant it is to talk to someone who remembers details about past conversations you've had with them and takes genuine interest in finding out the latest updates, as opposed to a person who only talks about themselves. But even still, I often catch myself rambling on and on about my own life as my companion's eyes glaze over. But each new conversation offers me the chance to try again.

One of the most thoughtful people I know sends me and my kids handmade birthday cards every year. I, on the other hand, am the *worst* at remembering to wish people a happy birthday. I even have two friends who share a birthday with me, and yet I can't seem to remember to drop them a line, on the one day of all days when I have birthdays on the brain.

Last month my neighbor had a pacemaker put in. I wrote his surgery date on my calendar. I was going to buy him a card and maybe bake him some cookies.

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Grading on a Continuum

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But that day came and went, and I didn't even realize it until a week later. I did give him a card eventually -- right before I was about to go out of town and wondered if he could dog-sit for me.

I know I still have a long way to go in the thoughtfulness department. But I'm going to keep trying. Maybe with enough daily practice, thoughtfulness can become a habit. Maybe soon it will become second nature, like riding a bike.

Or, perhaps more accurately in this case, like making the bed.



I wasn't kidding about those popsicle stick chores in the jars! EW

Circle Supper

Sharon Moore leadmoore@gmail.com

If you're new to a UU church, or even if not new but haven't attended a Circle Supper, you might wish to know what they're about. Circle Suppers, going by various names, were introduced to UU churches in Iowa in the early 1980s. They spread like prairie fire, becoming almost as much a part of UU churches across the country as sharing Joys and Concerns.

A monthly host prepares an entrée and lets those who signed up for the dinner know what side dish to bring to share. It's that simple.



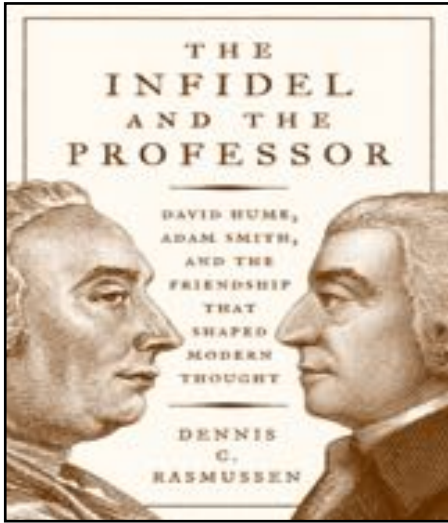
UU members and friends share delicious food and lively conversation in a member's home.

I am team leader for our WVUU Church's Circle Suppers, and I'm asking for help. Would you be willing to host one Circle Supper one time during the 2018-2019 church year? We currently do not have enough team members to host a Circle Supper each month. Please consider being a host. It's really fun and not much work since others bring most of the food.

You tell me how many people you can accommodate in your home. Current Circle Supper sizes range from 6-12 diners. We currently have Second Saturday Circle Suppers scheduled for November through May, but we need more hosts for them to happen.

Media Review

Rasmussen, D. C. (2017). *The infidel and the professor: David Hume, Adam Smith, and the friendship that shaped modern thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.



Reviewed by David Moore

Dennis Rasmussen's *The Infidel and the Professor* describes the friendship between two prominent Scottish Enlightenment philosophers, David Hume and Adam Smith. I found the story of their personal and professional connections to be interesting. The path Adam Smith, the professor, took to produce *The Wealth of Nations* and shape our view of economics was interesting, too. But the journey by David Hume, the "Great Infidel," to become one of our most influential philosophers and shape liberal religion was captivating.

Hume accelerated the Enlightenment's shift from a medieval worldview privileging authority to a liberal perspective favoring freedom. Rather than looking to the nobility, clergy, and divinity for revealed knowledge, Enlightenment philosophers looked to reason, experience, and nature for rational knowledge. Hume's quote, "A wise man proportions his belief to the evidence," seems bland now, but it was a pivotal, radical statement in the mid 1700s. Theorists from Kant to Darwin to Einstein have expressed their intellectual debts to him.

I was fascinated by Hume's groundbreaking formulations of empiricism, naturalism, and skepticism as he applied them to religion. For instance, his essay on miracles is classic. He claimed that amazing events such as the Red Sea parting, Daniel surviving the lions' den, and Jesus being resurrected violated the laws of nature, so we needed especially strong testimony to accept them. Was the reporter an impartial observer? Did the reporter directly observe the event? Did others confirm the event?

Hume never claimed miracles were impossible, but he subverted these foundations of

traditional religion by showing what was needed for them to be credible. Throughout his life he never explicitly denied a higher power, but he showed how the arguments for one were implausible. He concluded that conventional religion arose from ignorance, fear, and a tendency to anthropomorphize.

Hume was impious but not incendiary. Friends and foes regularly remarked on his civility, affability, and sense of humor. He delighted in his potential "to elicit a murmur among the zealots." He was proud that he lived "happily and virtuously, without religion."

Hume's behavior as he met death is telling. Adam Smith recounted Hume on his deathbed, joking that if he met Charon, the boatman who carries souls across the River Styx to Hades, that he would protest, "Good Charon, I have been endeavoring to open the eyes of the people; have a little patience only till I have the pleasure of seeing the churches shut up, and the Clergy sent about their business."

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Media Review

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Contemporaries like James Boswell were curious how this irreligious philosopher would act in the face of death. They were disappointed by Adam Smith's account of Hume's "cheerfulness and equanimity." And they were infuriated by Smith's overall conclusion that Hume approached "as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit."

Notes

- **M**ark Oelerking will serve as an At-Large member of the WVUUC Board of Trustees. Welcome Mark! All Board positions now are filled.
- **P**lease review us on Yelp! Our Yelp page could use some glowing reviews. Please take a moment to let potential members know we're here: <https://www.yelp.com/biz/west-valley-unitarian-universalist-church-glendale>

Children's RE

Mandy Oviatt moonsedai@live.com

Throughout the summer our Children's RE program will be filled with fun activities like crafts, games, and story time. Regular RE classes will resume in September.

If you have questions or suggestions, feel free to contact me, Mandy Oviatt, at moonsedai@live.com or speak with me during our Sunday Hospitality time.



Stewardship

Onna Johnson omercerj@gmail.com
Emily Sulkes emes3@juno.com

We have a total of approximately \$1,100.00 still due in pledge collection from the last fiscal year, which ended July 1, 2018. We have sent out second notices requesting to hear from you if you have a balance. Our treasurer, Kathy Dugan, needs to wrap up the books for FY 2017-18 ASAP. Kathy and the Stewardship team would really appreciate hearing from you if you received a note requesting a response regarding your last year's pledge.

Respectfully, Emilie Sulkes and Onna Johnson, Stewardship Team



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.