



MINISTER'S SLANT - on Faith

Impossible sliver of light...

*I want to write about faith,
about the way the moon rises
over cold snow, night after night,*

*faithful even as it fades from fullness,
slowly becoming that last curving and impossible
sliver of light before the final darkness.*

*But I have no faith myself
I refuse it even the smallest entry.*

*Let this then, my small poem,
like a new moon, slender and barely open
be the first prayer that opens me to faith. — David Whyte*

In November in our hemisphere the dark increases. The dark opens space for our imaginations to conjure monsters. But, is it memory rather than imagination? Neuroscientists and psychologists now speculate that we can inherit traumas from our ancestors and exhibit psychological symptoms in our own lives, even though we have no direct knowledge of the traumas that cause those symptoms. If this theory proves to be true, then most of us, probably all of us, have received a legacy of woe. Human history is a litany of war, want, theft, and genocide, just to mention the events that occurred in this country. So, we do not have to experience trouble; we are born into it and with it. Drat.

Yet, if we are the beneficiaries of traumas, is it possible that we also inherit faith from our family tree? Resilience? Courage? Is it possible to place daring wagers on a good outcome to present events long before any outcome can be predicted with certainty? Presently, we deal with weather catastrophes, financial melt-downs, and a political catastrophe looming large — traumas all around! Where is that impossible sliver of light? Those of us who are tardy to faith may resort, as the poet did, to the small possible action of the moment — the poem, the pan of biscuits, the day's knitting, the plow repaired, the mail delivered, the floor swept — small things, that encourage the change, the light. As we enter the dark season of the year, can we maintain faith in the light, in its existence somewhere, in its inevitable return.

Blessings,
Armida

Co-Moderator's Report

A lot of goals and maintenance items have been accomplished making this a very productive year so far. We still need help on some of our committees; ask Mark or Ted on which ones need to be addressed. The board will be looking for a new co-moderator to be elected at the Annual meeting in January. If interested let a board member know and if asked to fill the vacancy please give serious thought. Randy, Sally, Mark and Sheila provided entertainment for the Stockton Nursing Home Birthday party in October. The new Touchstones meetings have started, the Stockton group could use more participants. If interested or need more information contact Laura Dufford. There will be a roadside clean-up after church on Sunday Nov. 5th on our stretch of hi-way 78 south of Stockton.

ANNUAL HARVEST POTLUCK and PLEDGE DRIVE KICKOFF

Sunday November 12th is the Harvest Potluck and Pledge Drive for 2018. Pledge cards will be handed out for those that attend and mailed to others that can't attend. Please try to return your pledge by the end of November so the board can start working on a budget for 2018. The board will provide the main dish with Michael Staver doing the cooking. (yum – yum) Please bring a dish to pass and table service, church dinnerware is available if you don't mind washing dishes afterwards.

Building and Grounds Report

The new EPDM synthetic rubber roof has been installed over the Patterson room, the elevator, and the flat exit from the RE area. New larger gutters and higher edging along the north and south side of the room were also installed. New extendable kitchen faucets were purchased by Mark Haman and Ted Davenport and have been installed making filling coffee pots easier. When washing dishes use the larger sink away from the refrigerator so there's less congestion.



Touchstones theme for November - FAITH

Please consider joining us on Sunday, November 12 for the Touchstones Adult Discussion Group, 9:15 a.m. in the RE area. This group is open to anyone, no need to sign-up, just show-up! The material that will be discussed is at: <http://www.uuchurchofstockton.org/touchstones.html>. If

you have a chance please look over the discussion material. We're pretty loose, so we'll be happy to have your thoughts whether you've read the material or not. ~ Laura Dufford

A reminder to the Galena/West end group – next meeting is Wednesday, November 15 at 11:30 at E-Town. ~ Sheila Haman

Armida would like to start a Touchstones group at her home midweek during daylight hours.

Meetings are monthly for approximately 1.5 hours. See the sign-up sheet in the Patterson Room.

Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to read The Touchstones Journal whether you are part of a group or not. The Journal can be found at the online address listed above or go to our church website and look for the dark green band at the top. Click on “more” and then “touchstones”. Hard copies will be available in the Patterson Room.

Share the Wealth, by Rev. Roy Phillips

Unitarian Universalists are proud of themselves for doing nothing to seek converts to their faith. A person's religion is a private inward thing, it is said, and we should in no way seek to influence another person to choose our way in religion. The underlying principle here is respect for the privacy and integrity of the other, and such respect is certainly an admirable quality.

The problem with this stand we take is found in that premise about religion being a private, inward, solitary phenomenon. I submit that this idea is out-of-date. Rather, systems-theory holds – correctly, I believe – that there is no such thing as utter personal isolation. Not even in our inwardness is any one of us an island. Our personal spiritual orientation arises in a social context. The question, then, is: Shall the Unitarian Universalist way in religion be offered as part of others' social context? My answer is an unequivocal “Yes”.

I don't intend to try to talk anybody into being a Unitarian Universalist. But I do want UU-talk going on in our community – a good deal of it, if possible. My reasoning for this is that on any given day there will be a number of people out there verging on a point of view very like the stance we Unitarian Universalists take. Left to themselves on their given day, they may well evaluate their dawning point of view as unacceptably eccentric and unworthy; or, worse perhaps, they may accept the mainline evaluation of their new outlook as sinful and may suppose there is something fundamentally amiss within them since they are coming to look at things this new way. ...

There are those out there who need to know there is a way in religion such as ours, that it has a long and noble tradition and that it is represented in our day by a lively community of faithful adherents.

For this reason, these days I am talking a good deal about our way in religion and I hope you are doing that, too. You never know who out there this very moment is in need of hearing about what we have discovered in religion. I say: Don't keep it for yourself and for a few others alone. Share the wealth!

Being Faithful, by Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

In the midst of a world marked by tragedy and beauty there must be those who bear witness against unnecessary destruction and who, with faith, stand and lead in freedom, with grace and power.

- There must be those who speak honestly and do not avoid seeing what must be seen of sorrow and outrage, or tenderness, and wonder.
- There must be those whose grief troubles the water while their voices sing and speak refreshed worlds.

- There must be those whose exuberance rises with lovely energy that articulates earth's joys.
- There must be those who are restless for respectful and loving companionship among human beings, whose presence invites people to be themselves without fear.
- There must be those who gather with the congregation of remembrance and compassion draw water from old wells, and walk the simple path of love for neighbor.

And, there must be communities of people who seek to do justice love kindness and walk humbly with God, who call on the strength of soul-force to heal, transform, and bless life. There must be religious witness.

Sunday Service at Apple Canyon Lake



Rev. Armida provided the message, "Usta-Think" and "Awake!" at our alternate site service at Apple Canyon Lake Club House on Sunday, October 22. Ted Davenport and Parry Stevens sang a duet with piano accompaniment by Joan Harmet.

News and Notes

Hooray to all who helped bring our Sunday service to Apple Canyon Lake on Oct. 22nd. The room was arranged beautifully; the coffee treats were su-u-u-per, and everything was hauled in and back in a timely manner. We are now looking for a hall/church/library/pub to rent for a service in Freeport. Any ideas? Call Armida or anyone on the Board.

Thank you for your responses to the call for Caring Team work. Please gather for a brief time to set our calendars on Sunday, November 5th, during coffee hour. I'll be at a coffee table. Blessings, Armida

Worship Committee Report

It will be hard to top our very successful service at Apple Canyon Lake, but your Worship Committee has worked to bring you some fantastic reasons to be at church every Sunday in November. See the line-up on the calendar below.

Oh, and by the way...the Worship Committee could use a few more folks who are interested in helping to plan our services. If you're interested, please contact Armida, Mark or Alice.

See you in church!

CALENDAR- November 2017

Wednesday, November 1, 10:00 a.m. Stockton Ministers of all faiths meet at UU Stockton in the Patterson Room.

Friday, November 3, 1:30 p.m., at Faith United Methodist Church, 1440 S. Walnut, in Freeport, Rev. Armida will speak at the Church Women United meeting about "Peace."

Sunday, November 5, 10:30 a.m.. Our guest speaker will be Lynn Feaver from the Audubon Society. "How the Audubon Society Preserves, Conserves, and Connects With Our Environment and How We All Can Help."

Sunday, November 12, 10:30 a.m. *Where Your Treasure Lies*, The Rev's meditation on things of value, of great and infinite worth, how they are got, kept, and given away. 11:30 a.m. — HARVEST POTLUCK, with a main dish by Michael Staver. Y'all bring side dishes and desserts. It's all about US, our Church, and how we proceed for next year. Imagine All of us, gathered in Patterson Room for good food and good talk among good friends! Be here.

Monday, November 13, 6:00 p.m. Board of Trustees meeting in Patterson Room.

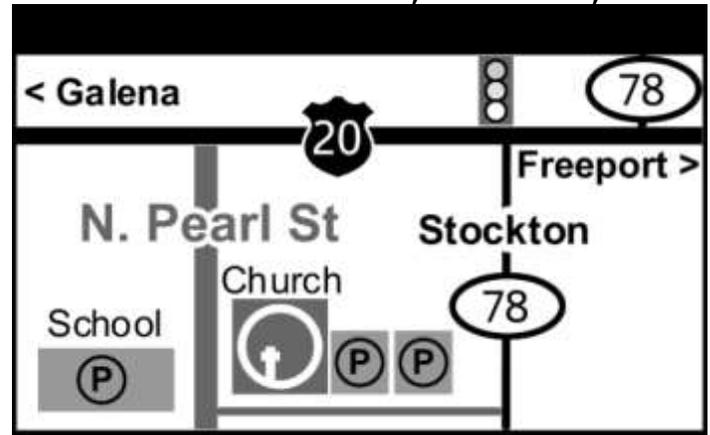
Saturday, November 18, 10:30 a.m. Worship Committee meeting. Place TBA.

Sunday, November 19, 10:30 a.m. Our own Char Thompson will address us on the topic of Hinduism and how it relates to our own UU faith. Note to parents: There will be Religious Education for children.

Sunday, November 26, 10:30 a.m. How Do You DO? — We explore, with Rev. Armida, the various ways our faith translates into action. R. Buckminster Fuller said, "I think I am a verb." What verb are you? I'm still wondering about this definition. Here is an example from Terry Tempest Williams:
This is my living faith, an active faith, a faith of verbs: to question, explore, experiment, experience, walk, run, dance, play, eat, love, learn, dare, taste, touch, smell, listen, speak, write, read, draw, provoke, emote, scream, sin, repent, cry, kneel, pray, bow, rise, stand, look, laugh, cajole, create, confront, confound, walk back, walk forward, circle, hide, and seek.

CHURCH INFORMATION

219 N PEARL STREET, STOCKTON, IL



Wheel chair parking and elevator access is available from the rear parking lot.

Sunday Services at 10:30 AM

Rev. Armida Alexander

UUChurchOfStockton.org

[Facebook.com/UUChurchOfStockton](https://www.facebook.com/UUChurchOfStockton)

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