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Jerry Offermann '16

NOVEMBER 2016

Rev. David Ruffin's Message



Healing the Fracturing Around Our Brokenness

"Tell me about your despair, yours, and I will tell you mine"
– Mary Oliver, *Wild Geese*

The most painful way most of us experience our brokenness is in the compulsion to hide our brokenness. What could be scarier than to share our vulnerability with all those other humans who, unlike us, have it all together? Sharing our struggles makes them more real. We can often end up hiding our brokenness even from ourselves.

This brokenness of masking our brokenness is what Buddhist teachings would describe as a "second dart" phenomenon. "First darts" are part of life. They are the pain we can't avoid...intrinsic to the world's brokenness in which we all participate. We're born with limited control. We're born needy and our needs are not always met. We're born to love, and in loving we inevitably lose.

Second darts, however, are our painful feelings and judgments about our pain and brokenness. It's how a universal truth like imperfection becomes experienced as debilitating anxiety about feeling particularly flawed or worthless. It's how the loss of a relationship turns into the fear of being forever alone or unlovable. It's how an experience of betrayal hardens into resentment and suspicion.

Second darts have a way of sticking, changing pain into suffering - especially the suffering of isolation. Feelings about our pain become walls, hardening the illusion that we're separate. It is an isolation we can feel even from our own true selves as we are kept from fully experiencing our life - our pain, yes, but also our power, our beauty, our creativity, our courage, our compassion, and our connection.

As it can be for each of us individually, so is it all the more when second dart brokenness takes shape in our social patterns. Members of UUVC recently spent a Sunday morning discussing together the dehumanizing

fracturing that racism provokes within us all, affecting our very unconscious perceptions, and permitting patterns of external fracturing to persist. Our unaddressed shame about historic and present pain protecting the "American Way," provokes a shared social denial of the reality of persistent racism and bias, in which we all participate.

Through this second dart denial we are walled off from each other, from our own deeper knowing, and from the chance at participating in the work of rewiring our perceptions, and healing and repairing our country. Members noted that in the political realm, some candidates seem so consumed with the struggle for power, they outright disregard truths we know deep down we all need to address.

We'd like to do better than what we're seeing modeled. Whether in healing the pain of our personal or public lives, the path begins with acknowledgment. Spiritual teachings of all kinds have this truth at their core. And at UUVC, we felt the beginnings of such healing even in giving the usually taboo issue of racism a couple hours of our attention together as a community. We plan to continue that work, reading and discussing Shelley Tochluk's book, *Witnessing Whiteness*. Similarly, many in our community have been feeling the healing power of being able to share personal and sometimes painful truths in small groups that meet monthly at UUVC to listen, connect and reflect more deeply on monthly spiritual themes.

As members and friends of UUVC, we don't have the answers, but we have chosen to seek truth together. We've chosen to seek in community because much of what is true is also hard and we know we need love to go with us on the journey. Admittedly, we sometimes think of ourselves as rather enlightened. But we know we're not fooling anyone. We're just everyday average broken (beautiful) folks. And ALL are welcome to join our stumbling toward the truth in love, and the gift of healing and growth we experience when we do that work together.

President's Column
UUVC President Court Mathey



Oct 9, Rabbi Levy, "Being too religious, Good or bad?" The more we become intoxicated with God the less time we have to be concerned about the people condition. What gives people of faith the attitude that they can kill and maim, the license to be intolerant?

October 16, Rev. Dave, "The Evil Eye". We need to work to unlearn racism. People of color have been targeted for violence; the story is not good for those who were marginalized. Dave has such a natural flow to his messages. Rev. Dave suggested we try the "Implicit Bias Test" on the Internet, which I did.

Callie Williams, from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, on October 19, gave a fine presentation about E. Fay Jones. He was a noted Arkansas architect, a graduate of the architecture program at UA, Fayetteville, and designer of about 30 chapels, including two in Arkansas. Thanks to Kim Townsan for setting up the program.

At the Hunger Banquet on Saturday evening, October 22, Anais Troadec and Peggy McCoy teamed up to host about 100 people (about 15 from UUVC) from various organizations and environments around central Arkansas to learn about how difficult it is for people of second and third world countries to avoid "Food Insecurity." Hunger is caused by climate change, wars and corruption and sometimes power is at the foundation of hunger. Many throughout the world are hungry on a daily basis, and many in the United States. We hope to be able to replicate portions of this presentation sometime in the near future.

Melissa Glenn, October 23, shared what Human Trafficking is and how to respond to it. The main areas are labor trafficking and sexual trafficking. It's amazing that these evils are rampant in Garland County.

On October 23, the "Conversations" about the recent Cluster meeting, Social Justice planning within the cluster, Social Action Committee and Dwight Brown Leadership Experience.

We have been informed by many fine programs, sometimes enriched, and invited to be involved.

Equality and justice, the two great distinguishing characteristics of democracy, follow inevitably from the conception of men, all men, as rational and spiritual beings.

Robert Maynard Hutchins

November Sundays at UUVC

**Sept. Attendance: All Souls webcast, 55
UUVC, 400**

Share the Plate:
November Share the Plate: Village Christmas Baskets
October Village Shoe Fund: \$939.00

November 6, Worship, Rev. Dave Ruffin,
"Is this what democracy looks like?"

November 13, Insight, Dane Nielsen, "Bridges out of
Poverty"

November 20, Worship, Rev. Ruffin, "Thankful
Finding"
Thanksgiving Dinner

November 27 Insight, Rev. Bob Van Hook

Treasurer's Report

Kim Townsan

We're in the home stretch ... as we approach the last months' of the calendar ... and tax year. Many of us now are looking towards year-end tax strategies, which frequently include our charitable donations. Do you have an IRA? Do you have a balance on your UUVC pledge ... either an operating or building fund pledge? Would you like to get the maximum tax benefit from your IRA distribution?



The IRS allows tax-free distributions from an IRA if the distribution is made to a qualified charity (and UUVC qualifies). If you are over 70 ½, and can take a distribution from an IRA, consider having your distribution made directly to UUVC. Several of our UUVC members take advantage of this tax strategy. By instructing your financial institution to issue your IRA distribution made out directly to UUVC, and sent to UUVC, your IRA distribution is not considered taxable income on a federal income tax return. The key is that the check must be made out to UUVC and sent directly to UUVC.

If you decide to take advantage of this tax strategy, please send an email to treasurer@uuvc.org, or put a note in the Treasurer's mail slot so I can be on the lookout. If you prefer to set this up as a direct deposit into the UUVC bank account, please contact me and I will provide you with the banking information for your financial institution.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

“SHINING THE LIGHT” Biography Project

Do you like to write? Do you like to talk to people? Are you looking to participate in a worthwhile project? Pati Trippel is looking for biographers to document the lives of our members. Pati has willingly spearheaded this project for a number of years. She has, with the help of biographers, completed approximately 20 biographies. These biographies of members are displayed in a lovely bound book in the Community Hall. Hopefully you have enjoyed reading some of them.

Pati would like some help in completing this project and is asking for our assistance. She has outlines and prepared questionnaires to guide you along the interview and documentation process.

Please contact Pati Trippel (501) 209-9079 or email her at ptrippel@hotmail.com.

Minister Search Committee

The “Minister Search” link on the UUVVC web site has generated some questions as to why we still have a Minister Search Committee, in view of our having hired Dave Ruffin as our part-time Developmental Minister.  Congregants should know that Reverend Ruffin is on a relatively short term contract and will be leaving us in late June, 2017, at which time we will want to have hired another minister. Generally speaking, ministers who are considering a change begin their search process months in advance of the date most ministers are hired (which is early to mid-year). This explains why your Minister Search Committee is actively pursuing a variety of ways to contact ministers who might be interested in our opportunity and willing to accept a part-time contract. This is definitely a work in progress.

UUVVC Minister Search Committee: Bob McCleskey, Kay Croshaw, Kim Harrison, and Myra Rustin.

Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Social Action Committee-Jackson House

Pam Harrison

The UUVVC Food Drive continues to be a great success. The Social Action Committee has delivered 35 bins of food to the Jackson House Food Pantry. The workers at Jackson House Pantry say they are in desperate need of cereal. Other items requested are: pasta, pasta sauce, peanut butter, canned fruit and small packets of dried milk. If you have already made food donations, a BIG THANK YOU. Please keep these Food Pantry requests in mind—of course, anything you donate is accepted with gratitude.

The UUVVC Blue Jean Project: First of all, a BIG THANK YOU to all who have donated to this project. I don't know who you are, but you know who you are! UUVVC has donated 40 pairs of jeans. Patsy Ware, Manager of the Jackson House Thrift Shop, told me she has given our jeans to needy families with children going back to school.

Men's used work jeans are also in high demand and gratefully accepted.

Generosity by our UUVVC Members/Friends knows no boundaries. Give yourselves a BIG HUG!! UUVVC volunteers for the months of July August and September made and served 381 lunches at Jackson House. Many thanks to the kitchen crew who donated their time, service and love.

UUVVC volunteers also helped out in the Jackson House Thrift Shop. For every dollar spent in the store, helps provide \$3.00 worth of food for the Food Pantry at Jackson House. Once again thank you for your time, service and love!

UUVVC VOLUNTEERS ROCK!!

Building Committee thanks ...

The Building Committee wants to thank its members: Mike Kloack who varnished the bathroom door off Room 8 (that was surprisingly bare), and Mike Kloack and Tom Tirrell who painted our new speed bumps.



Christmas Basket Program

Martha Thomson

For the past several years UUVC has taken part in the Christmas Basket Program. We are given names of families in need from our local area. We buy clothing and a toy for each child in the family. We also purchase food for a Christmas breakfast and dinner. Each year we have added families and children. This year we will support four families with up to two children per family. Earlier this year we gave money to the Shoe Fund that provides a new pair of shoes for each child. November's share the plate will go to The Christmas Basket Program. Please give generously. Anyone who would like to help with this project, please contact Martha Thomson at 915-8551.



UUSC Guest at Your Table

Martha Graham



The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee began its legacy of defying hate in 1939 when Waitstill and Martha Sharp worked to get Jewish children out of Nazi held Czechoslovakia. Today UUSC helps people fleeing Syria, Central America and

Africa with partners on the ground. They also work with partners on economic justice, environmental justice and humanitarian crises situations. Please join UUSC or renew your membership. I will have envelopes at church by mid November or you can go to UUSC.org to become part of this important work.

Ouachita Children's Center Arts and Crafts

Pati Trippel

On September 24th, Cindy Strong, Marilyn Matzek, Linda Ragsdale and Pati & Alan Trippel conducted the OCC Arts and Crafts class at the Seeds of Peace Celebration sponsored by REGARD (Recognizing Everyone's Gifts and Respecting Diversity). Marilyn demonstrated the Sleeping Mat project while Cindy, Linda, Pati and Alan helped children make Peace bracelets and Peace worms. We had to move our booth several times to avoid active FIRE ANTS. Poor Marilyn and Alan were repeatedly stung and had welts to show for it on their ankles for weeks.



Our October 15th class was held in the OCC Annex. Many thanks again to Cindy Strong, Janet Enders, Gerald Wheeler and Alan (& Pati) Trippel for volunteering to work with the children at OCC. The fourteen youth in attendance created paintings reflecting the "Scariest Moment in My Life". These paintings will be used to create books to help our community understand the challenges youth at OCC are facing. In this class, one young boy was grieving over the death of his father, a young girl dealing with profound sadness at the passing of her grandfather, a young man was coping with the trauma of being shot at and others were afraid of the dark because they feared demons or the Devil would get them.

So much of what we do as volunteers is to sit and listen to the children as they share their sorrows, tribulations and passions in life. Please consider helping with the arts and crafts class in the future. Our next class will be Saturday morning, December 10th. If you'd like to join us or be included in the email reminders each month, please let me know: Pati Trippel, at ptrippel@hotmail.com or on my cell at 501-209-9079.

The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference, and undernourishment.

Robert Maynard Hutchins



The Hunger Banquet

The issues of world hunger and food insecurity compete strongly for recognition and effective sources of solution wherever caring people gather and work for the betterment of humanity. Sadly, our own state of Arkansas is a dubious leader whenever these statistics are tallied.

With the goal of education and inspiration, approximately 100 people came together on October 22, 2016 to participate in a dramatic exploration by way of a **Hunger Banquet**. Attendees witnessed first hand, the interaction of a diverse population to simulate the struggles experienced by the many layers of humankind at war with hunger and food insecurity.

It was truly a visceral experience, highly interactive and created to send its participants out into a world that will be better for their awareness and willingness to spread the message they have heard. Participants represented various races, cultural backgrounds, ages, occupations, and beliefs; they were brought together with little expectation of the purpose of their participation beyond an exploration of world hunger and food insecurity.

Dignitaries in attendance included: David Norman, VP of Heifer International, Nancy Conley and Kathryn Thompson, AR Hunger Alliance, Shamim Okollah, AR Food Bank, and Michael Regauld, Kids and Hunger.

Hunger Banquets have been presented around the country for 40 years, by such groups as Oxfam and Catholic Relief Services, and this event provided a similar experience. A group of people dedicated to Social Justice organized and presented this local event, which was held at the Unitarian Universalist Village Church in Hot Springs Village.

Anyone interested in finding out more about Hunger Banquets can contact:-Anais Troadec, email, anais.troadec@gmail.com or Peggy McCoy, email, chocoltmccoy@gmail.com.

Few experiences bring to life the inequalities in our world more powerfully than a Hunger Banquet, which allows organizers and participants alike to experience firsthand how our decisions affect others in the world.





Birthdays

11/2	Marlene Kloak
11/8	Elaine Neal
11/9	Myra S. Rustin
11/10	Christine Lammers
11/12	Barb Robbins
11/20	Steve Rittenmeyer
11/21	Ed Bayer
11/21	Bobbie Brooks
11/21	Dane Nielsen
11/22	Jerry Offerman
11/23	Ben Wright
11/26	Mary Thames Bundy
11/27	Robin Young
11/28	Sharon Allen
11/29	Nell Brewer
11/29	Dottie Foehringer

Anniversaries

11/8	Marion & Michael Sowka
11/11	Barb Austin & Judy Johnson
11/24	Stephanie & Frank Hubbard
11/28	Pat & Bud Hearn

Social Action Committee

Alana Clegg, Chair

December –Bridges to Hope (affiliated with Cooperative Christian Ministries and Clinic).

January-CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates.

February – The Imagination Library.

March-OCC, Ouachita Childrens Center.

April-Safe Haven.

May-Heifer International.

June – to be decided.

The above is subject to change.

The next C4K computers will be delivered to Langston school next week. I have been working with Bernice Lowery a teacher at Langston, who has been our best, most consistent customer. I regularly give her 8 computers, which she distributes over a month or two, then she orders 8 more. That arrangement has been working very well. A new client has been Erica Cross, at the Hot Springs School District. We anticipate an order from her in the not too distant future.

We have several people that have worked in the C4K program. Marion Sowka has been helping regularly, Kat Wheeler has been helping, Warren Searls has helped in the past. Jerry Fay was a regular in the past. The Fays have moved back to the area, and he will be helping out again after a few trips they have planned.

We anticipate receiving surplus monitors, desktops and laptop computers from Fountain Lake in the near future.

Heifer International is a humanitarian 501(c)(3) organization that SAC supports. The HSV Heifer Club is holding its Living Gift Market fundraising event on November 12 from 10 am to 2 pm. Alana Clegg, this year's organizer, is requesting volunteers to help where needed. There is a sign up sheet in the Community Room on Sunday, or call Alana - 501-626-1930.



SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Cindy Nance & Bari Searls



All who attended enjoyed the Pulaski Technical College Culinary Arts Lunch on Wednesday, October 12th.

Our Annual UUVC Thanksgiving Dinner will be Sunday, November 20th after the service. The Social Committee will provide: Wine, Iced Tea, Coffee, Turkey, Dressing, Gravy, Cranberry Sauce and Mashed Potatoes. A meal donation basket (Cash or Check made out to UUVC) will be available and all contributions are appreciated.

The sign-up sheet will have limited sign-up for traditional sides along with the number attending. **Please sign-up so we will have a place set for you!**

Up coming events:

UUVC Christmas Eve Soup Dinner after the evening service.

The 2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off will be in January or February.

We are exploring an excursion to the Coleman Mine Tour in the spring.

The 2nd Annual Mother's Day Brunch organized by the men of UUVC.

Fourth Friday Film Fest

Cloe Bayer

As announced previously, the Fourth Friday Film Fest goes on hiatus for the months of November and December, due to our movie night falling during the holidays. We have a number of good films on our wish list for next year: *Florence Foster Jenkins* with Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant, *Sully* with Tom Hanks, *Magnificent Seven*, a remake of the original of some years ago, and *Deep Water Horizon*, with Kurt Russell. We say "wish list" because these films need to be released to DVD before we can order them, and we hope this two-month hiatus will make them available. Please join us again on January 26th, 2017, the film chosen will be announced in the January newsletter.



Resolve Your Conflicts

Steve Rittenmeyer

The Conflict Resolution Committee stands ready confidentially to assist members and friends in resolving disputes and misunderstandings with other congregants that affect their lives in church. For more information about the conflict resolution process, please contact:

Steve Rittenmeyer, 915-0575,
SD-Rittenmeyer@wiu.edu

or

Cloe Bayer, 922-3810,
cloebayer29@sbcglobal.net

Conflict Resolution Committee Know Your Mediator: Steve Rittenmeyer

As most members and friends are aware, the Conflict Resolution Committee employs mediation processes to resolve disagreements affecting congregants' lives in church. As a service committee, members are taking turns writing short biographies relating their relevant training and experience. This month's entry is the third. The others have been Janet Enders and Daryl Wedwick.



Steve Rittenmeyer is *professor emeritus* of Educational Leadership at Western Illinois University, where he served in two departments over a 28 year career. In addition, for more than 20 years he also maintained a private law practice concentrating in education, employment, labor/management and constitutional law matters. His teaching and scholarly focus was in these same areas.

For more than a dozen years, while associated with the state wide law firm of Robbins, Schwartz, Nicholas, Lifton and Taylor, he served as general counsel to public school districts and labor counsel to various county governments in western and central Illinois, In conjunction with that association, Steve completed a comprehensive skill building program on the principles of mediation sponsored by the American Arbitration Association.

His work involved participation in more than twenty-five mediations with public employee unions, as well as litigation and arbitration before state and federal courts and state administrative agencies such as the Illinois State Labor Relations Board and the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board.

Poetry Corner

Acceptance

I can see you've been hurt.
Someone wounded you to the core.
When you believe in your inner beauty,
It doesn't matter anymore.

They're dealing with their demons
Things that you'll never know
Just love them with all their problems
Keep your inner light aglow.

Open your heart completely
You're the keeper of your soul
Follow, friend, your personal dream
Happiness is in your control.

L. lafrate 2013

*In the strict sense of the term, a true democracy
has never existed, and never will exist.*

Jean Jacques Rousseau



**Try the UUVc Website:
www.uuvc.org**

Interest Groups (IGs)

Ronnie Zuege, IG Coordinator



Enjoy the company of people with a similar interest by participating in one of the Interest Groups (IG). Stop by the IG table on Sunday mornings to check out the folders that provide information about each group. It's great to participate in more than one.

Also, if you have a special interest that is not currently represented, contact me (501-922-3878 or email: vzuege@gmail.com) to inquire about starting a new group.

Game Night



Come to play board/card games on the 2nd Saturday of each month (November 12) Game night will be held @ **5:00 PM**. We will eat first and play games afterwards. Bring a dish to share. It's always a surprise! (Marjorie Lakey, 204-2673)

Fourth Friday Film Fest

Friday Film Fest is on hiatus until after the holidays. Look for information on January's film in the newsletter. (Cloe Bayer)



Grief Support Group

The Grief Support Group has been meeting since November 2009, providing comfort and support to those who wish to attend. Grief Support meets the second Monday of each month, at 10:00am. (Cynthia Saalfeld, 915-8577)



Social Justice Book Group

Please contact me if you would like to join the group for the discussion. (Meg Koziar, kozimeg@sbcglobal.net)



DINNERS FOR EIGHT (OR 7, OR 6)



Our next "dinners" series will be starting in a few weeks. Sunday, Sept. 4th will be the cutoff date to sign up. Newer members, and friends are especially encouraged to join us in this Social UU occasion as a way of getting to meet fellow UU'ers in a more relaxed setting in one another's homes.

Food and friendship is the goal of this activity. So sign up and be there, y'hear!

Meditation Group



This is a new group. We recognize it is sometimes easier to meditate in a group than by oneself, so we are creating a sangha. We are all learning, and welcome anyone who would like to meditate with us.

We meet Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 and Wednesday mornings 8:30-9:30 in the Church library. You are invited to join either or both times. (Quay O'Hara, 501-984-2030)

Table Tennis



The group will meet this month. (Jay Williams, 922-1849, jayw66@gmail.com)

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UUVC**