

Call

This Is How We Are Called
by Kimberley Beyer-Nelson

*In the hours before the birds
stream airborne
with chiming voice,
a silent breath rests in the pines,
and upholds the surface of the lake
as if it were a fragile bubble
in the very hand of God.
And I think,
this is how we are called.
To cup our hands and hold
this peace,*

*even when the sirens begin,
even when sorrow cries out, old and
gnarled,
even when words grow fangs and rend.
Cupped hands
gently open,
supporting peace
like the golden hollow of a singing bowl,
like the towering rim of mountains
cradling
this slumbering and mist-draped valley.*

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Beginning September 6, 2015

9:30 a.m. – First Service

10:45 a.m. – Fellowship

11:15 a.m. – Second Service

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The idea that you are called to some special work and some special end might be the mark of pride or of humility. It might be prideful if you see your call as elite, special, something that only you can accomplish, and something that sets you apart. It might be humble if you see your call as something leveled on us all by a moral ground or a divine source, that you hear not because you are unique but because you could not help but listen. And perhaps the idea of call draws from both what is prideful and what is humble in us—from our sense of individuality or uniqueness

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Resurrection



Rev. Anya
Sammler-Michael

and from our sense of ourselves as part and parcel of something so much larger.

Some assume that the word *call* belongs only in seminary and only to ministers. I disagree. Any of us who have found ourselves fully enmeshed, heart and mind, in some work we are accomplishing (whether it is nurturing, healing, teaching, washing, or just about anything) know the feel of vocation—of doing what we are called to do. Call is worth reflection. This month's theme is call. Perhaps it will help you celebrate or listen for your own vocation.

In Faith,
Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Passages



Paul Roche
Board President

September is a time of passages. Children see their new teachers. Parents send their kids to kindergarten or college, and are just as excited/scared in each case! In sports, football is heating up while baseball is winding down.

At UUCS, we kick off a new church year in earnest.

Technically our year starts in July, but September feels like the real kickoff. That may be because Unitarian churches traditionally closed for the summer! But as this church year begins in full swing, we feel a new energy, a different vibe. Going to two services has allowed us to expand our message to lots more people who will benefit from coming through our doors.

Your Board is in the second year of learning what it means to be a “program church” versus a “pastoral church.” Essentially, that means we are reaching a level of membership at which not everyone knows everybody else. Responding to that challenge is the program church effort. This effort, led so capably by Board member Mark Lorenz, includes many more programs and services, less reliance on centralized decision making, and specific plans to free the minister from routine day-to-day church operations so she may work on important mission-related activities like worship, leadership development, and the spiritual development of our members and friends.

One thing that came out of the two-services discussion was the need for all of us to be able to connect to all members at various times. To that end, please watch for announcements about all-church activities, which will be held at least once per month, to keep our community together no matter which service a person attends.

Also, if it has not already happened, Rev Anya is in the early stages of planning every-Wednesday-night all-church spiritual/emotional/physical activities including sound-healing with Woven Green, meditation sessions, perhaps some Yoga, chanting, etc. This is a wonderful mid-week respite and a great way to stay connected to all.

Finally, this year we need to talk about stewardship: financial and volunteered time. Although we have very generous donors of time, talent, and treasure, we often struggle to do the things we want because of lack of funds or volunteers. For that reason it is very heartwarming to see the outpouring of support for the Community Table of Loudoun event. If you've been around a while, you are probably volunteering

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RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Sharing the Monthly Theme with Children: Call



Linda Weaver,
Director of
Religious Exploration

Play and exploration of their surroundings help children learn about themselves, the world, and how to be in relationship with others. This is their most important calling. By playing and exploring, they discover the places, activities, and questions that call to them and they learn about who they are as individuals and how they fit in the world. As they grow, they often find questions and issues that concern them and that are important to them. Having opportunities to address these questions and issues with success helps children build optimism, hope, and self-reliance, which will contribute to their sense of self, their personal relationships, and their ability to interact with the world.

We, the adults in their lives, can help by providing rich opportunities for children to explore many different aspects of the world. We can also provide encouragement when they are uncertain, guidance when they have questions, and emotional support and a place of safety when they need it.

We offer all of this within the Religious Education program and within the congregation at UUCS. However, children spend much more time with their families. Take some time this month to explore the monthly theme together. Share the story and the discussion questions and try out a few of the family activities.

Family Activities

Set aside time with each child to do what he or she most likes to do. This is the best way to learn what is important to your children and to understand how they see the world. It is also the best way to let your children know that they are important to you.

Be proactive when you notice an opportunity to help people or the world. Take a bag with you when you go to the park and pick up litter. Hold the door for someone who is carrying a heavy load. Be positive and patient when interacting with other people. Invite your family to help you look for other opportunities to make the world a better place.

Is there a concern that family members often talk about? Is there an issue that is important to your entire family? Find out what other people are doing to address it and discuss what you can do. Together choose a small step and act on it. Talk about what the experience was like, emphasizing the successes. Then talk about what you might like to do next. Linda Weaver and Rev. Anya can help you find resources and they would be delighted to hear about your experience.

Children's Religious Education topics and a list of programs and events for children and families is on the calendar at the UUCS website, www.uusterling.org.

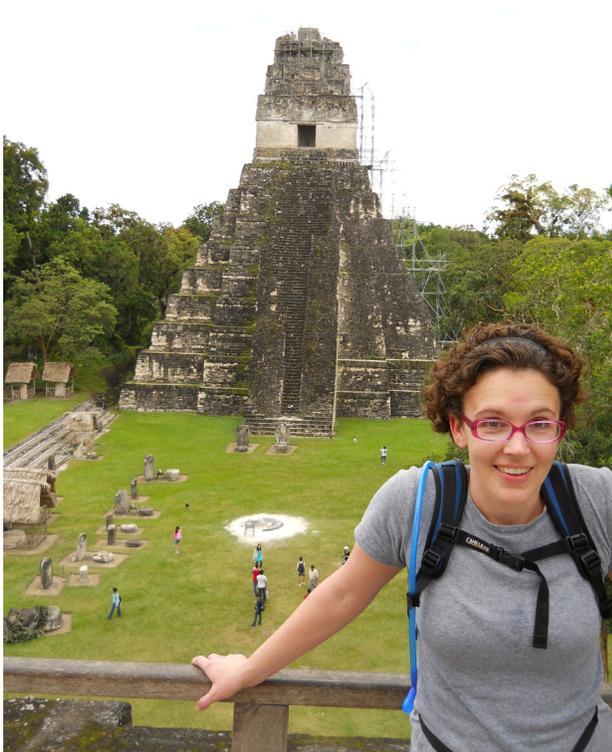
in some way. If you are new, don't be shy—we have lots of needs and lots of fulfilling ways for you to help out. See Rev. Anya or any Board member if you want to become more involved.

In faith and moving forward,
Paul Roche

Want to share something in the October newsletter?

- ✓ Reflections or articles related to the October liturgical theme, *change*
- ✓ Announcements (including those related to events that will take place in October and the first two weeks in November)
- ✓ Group or committee updates (what you accomplished, what's planned coming up, etc.)
- ✓ Recent photos taken at UUCS or during UUCS events

Please send anything you'd like to include to newsletter@uusterling.org by September 15.



New member Sonya Lorenz in Tikal, Guatemala

SEPTEMBER JUSTICE ALLOCATION

In September, half of our offering will support the annual Jazz Poetry Slam, an outreach event organized by our congregation's Journey Toward Wholeness team. The slam is a creative space where all are encouraged to share their own truth and listen to the truth of others. The Journey Toward Wholeness team is dedicated to countering institutional racism and helping UUCS build the world we dream about.

Summer Offering Summary

In May, we gave \$381.20 to 4Paws Rescue Team.

Our special collection at the Gay Men's Chorus concert on May 30 raised \$1,354.97 FOR POFEV (People of Faith for Equality in Virginia).

In June, we gave \$384.12 to Loudoun Interfaith BRIDGES.

In July, we gave \$353.75 to Help Portraits.

Our special collection on July 12 raised \$538.29 for AME Church.

In August, we gave \$472.68 to Community Table of Loudoun.

UUCS NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

We are so pleased to have so many new members at UUCS! As a way to get to know some of the recent (and not so recent) members we plan to feature a short, "get to know you" piece each month.

Introducing...Sonia Lorenz

I joined UUCS on: Hmmm... May 3 or 10.

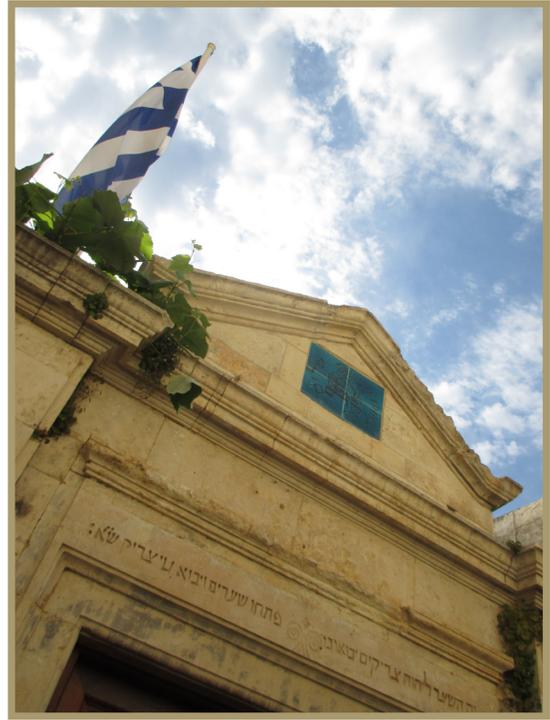
I joined because: In May, I had been attending UUCS for one year and I have sincerely enjoyed getting involved and getting to know the people of UUCS. It feels like home and this is the kind of church experience I want my child to grow up with.

Something you might not know about me is: I am generally lighthearted, bright, happy... and I can tell you everything you never wanted to know about death, dying, and body disposition—including eco-friendly methods for body disposition!

You can find me at UUCS: Sneaking in late and arranging the First Sunday Lunch for the Young and Not-So-Young Adults group.



Jack Rios, flanked by his parents Jason and Laura Rios and his godparents, is honored on August 9th at UUCS at his naming ceremony.



From Rev. Anya's sabbatical, the Synagogue in Hania, Crete, that stood through the German Occupation of World War II.

A MONTH OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

September: Call

Members of our congregation are invited to engage the practice of *lectio divina*. *Lectio divina* is Latin for divine reading, spiritual reading, or holy reading, and represents a traditional practice of scriptural reading intended to promote communion with that which is ultimately meaningful. It is a way of praying or meditating with sacred words that calls one to study, ponder, listen and, finally, rejoice within the soul. Unitarian Universalists embrace a wide-reaching definition of scripture, finding words of profound meaning in the works of the world religions, scientists, poets, and the experiences of our own lives.

Find the time in your day to read each piece every day. Read, pause, read again, pause, and then reflect. You may choose to write each quote in a journal and add notes from your reflections. You may choose to read each piece to your family at the dinner table. You may choose to read in the morning or before sleep. You may choose to use the piece to gather your spirit for prayer or meditation.

September 3–9

My call for a spiritual revolution is not a call for a religious revolution. Nor is it a reference to a way of life that is somehow otherworldly, still less to something magical or mysterious. Rather it is a call for a radical reorientation away from our habitual preoccupation with self. It is a call to turn toward the wider community of beings with

whom we are connected, and for conduct which recognizes others' interests alongside our own.

—Dalai Lama

September 10–16

God did not direct His call to Isaiah—Isaiah overheard God saying, “Who will go for Us?” The call of God is not just for a select few but for everyone. Whether I hear God's call or not depends on the condition of my ears, and exactly what I hear depends upon my spiritual attitude.

—Oswald Chambers

September 17–23

If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.

—Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

September 24–30

No matter how deep a study you make, what you really have to rely on is your own intuition and when it comes down to it, you really don't know what's going to happen until you do it.

—Konosuke Matsushita

SACRED STORY FOR ALL AGES

Moses and the Burning Bush

From the *Bible*, Exodus 3:1–15,
New International Version (NIV)

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, “Here I am.”...

The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey.... So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

And God said, “I will be with you.”

Questions for Discussion

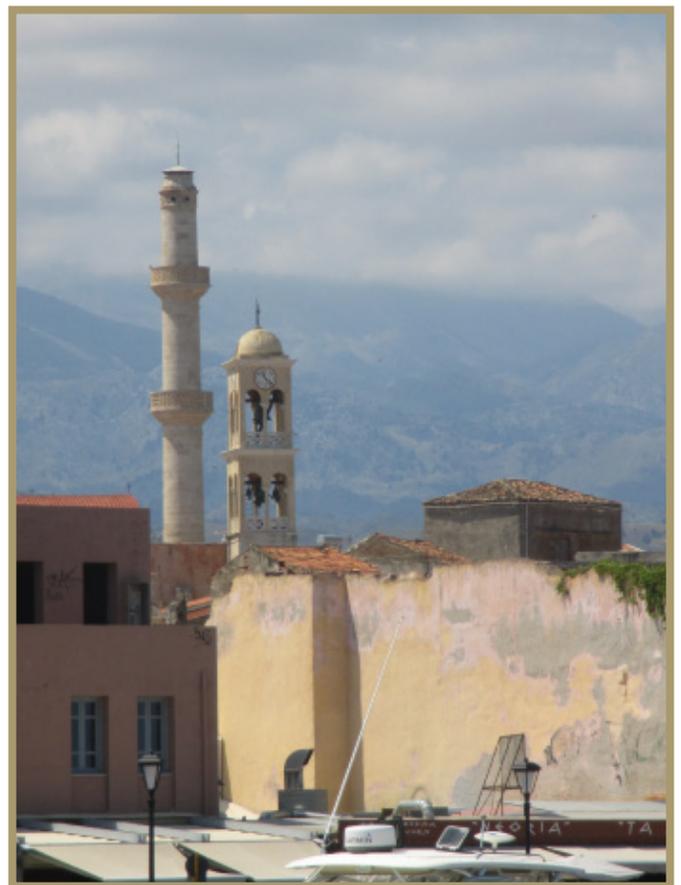
How do you think Moses felt about being called to bring the Israelites out of Egypt?

How might people know they are called to do something if they don't see a burning bush or hear the voice of God?

What have you felt called to do? How were you called and what did you do?



The NAACP Rally at the Leesburg Courthouse. UUCS stood in support of the erecting of a new statue to honor both the Virginian soldiers that fought for the Union during the Civil War and the lives of the slaves who were sold on the courthouse lawn.



From Rev. Anya's sabbatical, the Minaret and the Bell Tower rise above the now— Eastern Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in Hania, Crete.

CALENDAR

Stay Up to Date With UUCS Events

S E P T E M B E R	
Friday, 9/4	<p>6:00 pm - 9:00 pm — Potluck and Game Night</p> <p>Come one, come all! Kick off the new church year and gather with friends old and new. Bring a favorite dish to share and a game to play. All ages are encouraged to attend. <i>Sign up</i> for the potluck or to help with setup or cleanup. There is a signup sheet on the events table or online at www.signupgenius.com/go/10c044ca5a72ea7f58-september</p>
Sunday, 9/6	<p>10:30 am — Worship service: “You Are Chosen”</p> <p>Rev. Anya will lead our annual Ingathering Service featuring a Water Communion. Bring some water to add to our common vessel—water that will be used throughout the year whenever we are called to remember our community and our connections. Our Intern Minister, John Monroe, will be introduced and our Acoustic Band, led by Kris Adams, will play.</p> <p>12:30 pm— Inquirer’s Class in Rev. Anya’s office</p>
Sunday, 9/13	<p>9:30 am and 11:15 am — Worship services: “My Conviction”</p> <p>Rev. Anya, who strives for understanding and works to honor the inherent worth and dignity in every person, reflects today on the ideologies that she cannot abide. John Kim accompanies the first service and the choir will sing at the second.</p>
Sunday, 9/20	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Worship services: “Universal Hope”</p> <p>Rev. Anya found Universal salvation in the most unexpected of places and it may just be enough to save her soul. John Kim will accompany the first service and Mark Lorenz will share a solo. The choir will sing at the second service</p>
Sunday 9/27	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Worship services: “Finding a Way Together”</p> <p>John Monroe, our new intern minister, will reflect on the shared journey of a student minister and a congregation—and what this relationship can teach us about how we all might learn together, and from each other, in a faith community. John Kim will accompany the first service and the UUCS choir will sing at the second.</p>
O C T O B E R	
Sunday, 10/4	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Worship services</p> <p>12:30 pm — Inquirer’s Class in Rev. Anya’s office</p>
Sunday, 10/11	<p>9:30 am and 11:15 am — Worship services</p>