

Soul Matters at UUCD

Our congregation has been using monthly themes for worship and programming for many years, and every year we include more ways to experience the theme's message. Last year we added experiences called "Diving Deep" so we could engage with theme topic outside of worship. Diving Deep opportunities included attending panel presentations, discussion groups, and visits to an Islamic faith community. Because of the research done by leaders in Religious Exploration, Worship, Campus Programming, and Committee on Ministry, this year we have joined a nation-wide All-Church monthly theme program called, Soul Matters. Soul Matters has over 125 congregations as members, and because we're all on the same monthly theme, our staff can share resources with congregations of all sizes and locations across the country.

The Soul Matters themes for 2016-2017:

☞ September, Covenant ☞ October, Healing ☞ November, Story ☞ December, Presence ☞ January, Prophecy
☞ February, Identity ☞ March, Risk ☞ April, Transformation ☞ May, Embodiment ☞ June, Zest

As we move into the year, parents and children may not have the same activities on Sunday morning, but they should experience the same theme. Our new Assistant Minister for Congregational Life, Rev. Morgan McLean, and I will create one question each week for the congregation, and especially families, to consider. On First Sunday, when the children and youth take active roles in worship, all ages will have a shared experience based on UU values.

This year we'll start a new program for TIE (Together in Exploration) small group ministry, based on Soul Matters' themes. You can expect that the TIE themes will help new and long-time members create new, strong friendships.

Who makes it work? We all do. If you're on a committee that provides programming for our congregation, consider creating a Diving Deep program related to the theme. Then, give us that information a month ahead so we can let everyone know in our monthly publication, The Theme Journal.

Engage with the themes in worship; experience them beyond the sanctuary; ask the questions we offer; bring Unitarian Universalism into your home.
- Rev. Beth Banks, Senior Minister

Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis

Theme Journal – September, Covenant

As we begin this new ministry together, I'm especially grateful for the opportunity to explore the idea of covenant. In my experience, a covenant is an opportunity to enter a sacred relationship, based on a deep sense of respect and trust.

In the coming months, we will learn many new things about each other, including what's important to us, what traditions we rely on, and what changes we hope to see. We will have conversations and share resources as we learn from each other and imagine together. It is my hope that these conversations are made easier by a foundation of respect and trust.

Many committees develop a covenant as they begin a year working together. I was excited to see the Children's Religious Exploration Committee develop a covenant a few weeks ago. They took time in their planning retreat to talk about how they agree to be together, and what support they need from each other for success. We plan to read our covenant at each meeting. We acknowledged that it is a living document: we may add to it as the year goes on.

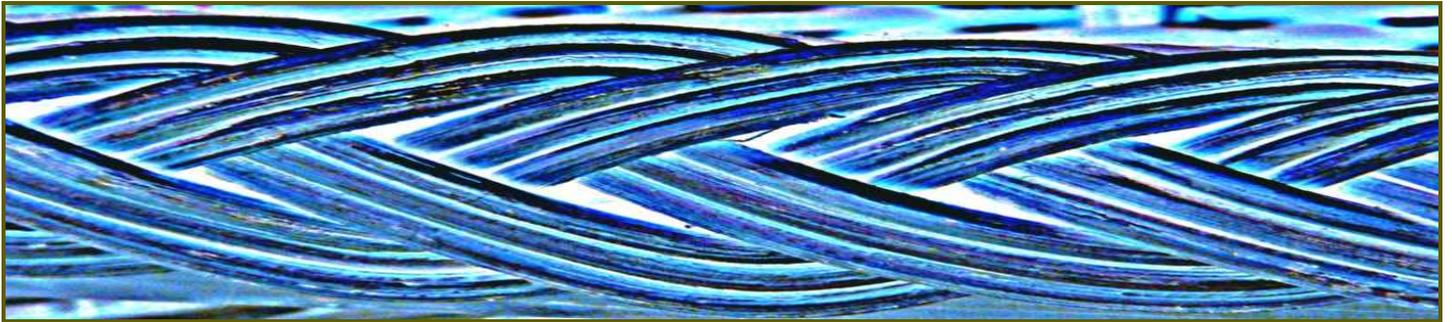
When we come together in church, we come from a wide variety of places. We all have different styles of working, or responding to emails, or communicating concerns. Experiences from our personal and professional lives inform our actions and reactions. As a church community, we have the opportunity to celebrate those differences and grow together.

I look forward to learning together, knowing there will likely be some bumps in the road, and trusting in the foundation of our covenant of respect and trust.
Blessings, Rev. Morgan McLean, Assistant Minister for Congregational Life

Sunday Worship

Hymn of the Month, "We Will Walk Together", by Cliff Hardin

September 4, 10am, *See a Penny, Pick it Up*; John Ashby. This Labor Day we look at the minimum wage.



September 11, Return to TWO SERVICES 9:30 & 11:15am Ingathering Water Communion ☞ Multigenerational Worship

Rev. Beth Banks, Rev. Morgan McLean, Elizabeth Assenza, Intern & Campus Minister

Bring a small sample of water that represents an important experience from your summer. Your water may come from any location across the earth, including the place you live. The distance traveled isn't what creates the magic of this ritual. You'll be asked to share how the water has stirred your soul. Family? Change? Renewed love? Discovery?

We'll introduce Elizabeth Assenza, our 2016-2017 Intern and Campus Minister. Give her your personal welcome at the reception held by the Internship Committee after the 11:15 service: Social Hall, refreshments and conversation.

September 18, 9:30 & 11:15am, *It Matters What We Love*, Rev. Beth Banks. UUs are often asked, "You have theists, humanists, atheists, in one church. People bring their Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Earth-based religion with them. What holds you together as a congregation?" There is a Love that holds us all, and it is the container within which we exist as a congregation. In the words of hymnist, David Haas, "Come and hear, come and see, be all you are, and all you can be." *Special Guest: Alison Luck, of our UU high school group, UNIQUE.*

Special Collection: Yolo Basin Foundation's Discover the Flyway is a hands-on, inquiry-based program that offers school children a meaningful outdoor experience, an appreciation for wetlands, agriculture, and wildlife of the Central Valley, contributes to a lifetime of healthy outdoor activity, and develops a land stewardship ethic. yolobasin.org

September 25, 9:30 & 11:15am, *Covenant*, Elizabeth Assenza, 2016-2017 Intern and Campus Minister. Come to hear Elizabeth and support her journey with us.

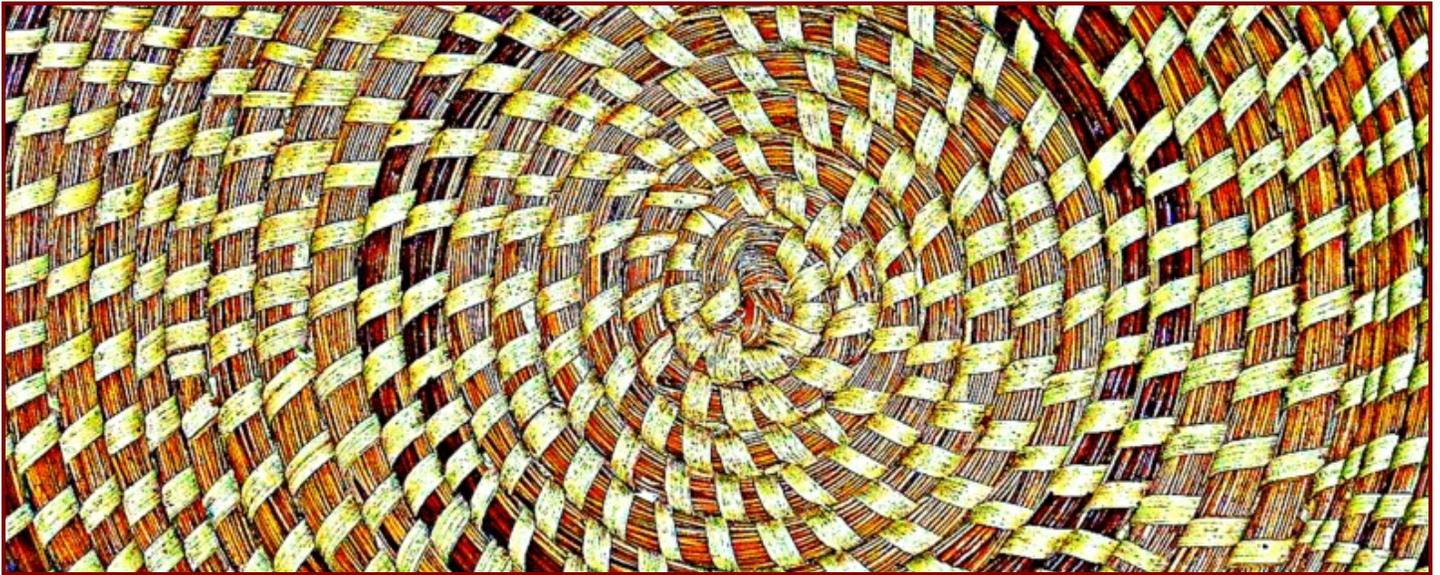
Reflect **The Committee on Ministry** (*Stefan Harvey, Hiram Jackson, Lisa Oakes, Kirk Ridgeway, Susan Steinbach. Many thanks to Karen Urbano and Lucas Frerichs who finished their terms in August.*) invites you to make the theme part of your spiritual practice:

We delve into the mysteries of "covenant." Consider ways in which you covenant with others in the working world, in intimate relationships, in religious or spiritual groups, and in our government. If you were to write a covenant to support our precious globe and its resources, what would it say?

This year our Committee on Ministry will introduce a process to create a new congregational Covenant. They'll begin discussing it at their September meeting. Our congregation will hear more in the upcoming months. We'll be diving deep into covenant!

❖ www.uudavis.org → Events/Publications → 2016-17 ❖

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Resources from Soul Matters: Covenant

Watch

- 🌀 **3 Minute Video** about covenant by UU Youth and Young Adult Ministries: <https://vimeo.com/68767404>
- 🌀 **God on Trial:** Awaiting their inevitable deaths at a concentration camp, a group of Jews make a rabbinical court to decide whether God has gone against the Holy Covenant and if He is guilty for their suffering. http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1173494/?ref_=kw_li_tt
- 🌀 **Up:** An animated movie about the quest to fulfill the dreams and promises of a lifetime. <http://tinyurl.com/hqvnzyv>

Read

- 🌀 **The Covenant with Black America - Ten Years Later** by Tavis Smiley
In 2006, Tavis Smiley teamed up with other leaders in the Black community to create a national plan of action to address the ten most crucial issues facing African Americans. *The Covenant with Black America*, which became a #1 New York Times bestseller, ran the gamut from health care to criminal justice, affordable housing to education, voting rights to racial divides. But a decade later, Black men still fall to police bullets and brutality, Black women still die from preventable diseases, Black children still struggle to get a high quality education, the digital divide and environmental inequality still persist, and American cities from Ferguson to Baltimore burn with frustration. Smiley calls for a renewal of The Covenant, presenting in this new edition the original action plan—with a new foreword and conclusion—alongside fresh data to underscore missed opportunities and the work that remains to be done. <http://tinyurl.com/zsa7fbq> An interview with the author: <http://tinyurl.com/h6dhcrn>
- 🌀 **Not for Ourselves Alone: Theological Essays on Relationship**, edited by Laurel Hallman and Burton D. Carley
These twelve essays from Unitarian Universalist leaders emerge as part of a movement in the faith from focusing on individual identity to relational connectedness. Through personal stories and thoughtful reflections, the contributors describe how we might grow our souls through our connections with one another and with the Holy. <http://www.uabookstore.org/Not-for-Ourselves-Alone-PI7454.aspx>
- 🌀 **Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America** by Eboo Patel
In *Sacred Ground*, author and renowned interfaith leader, Eboo Patel, says this prejudice is not just a problem for Muslims but a challenge to the very idea of America. Patel shows us that Americans from George Washington to Martin Luther King Jr. have been "interfaith leaders," illustrating how the forces of pluralism in America have time and again defeated the forces of prejudice. And now a new generation needs to rise up and confront the anti-Muslim prejudice of our era. To this end, Patel offers a primer in the art and science of interfaith work. <http://www.uabookstore.org/Sacred-Ground-PI7840.aspx>