



Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis Theme Journal. March–Balance

Watching the Olympics is a great time to explore balance.

No one watches an ice skater gracefully soar across the rink on one blade and thinks "I could do that, easy!" We understand that those athletes practiced for years to balance on a thin blade, or those skis, or a snowboard. Balance, like all things, takes practice. We might over-work until our bodies protest in illness. We might over-focus on something and neglect relationships. We might over-commit to the point where we feel the only option is to quit everything. This is what it's like to be out of balance. We must stay present to reality while working towards our goals and, ideally, feel fulfilled along the way. Just like the ice skaters, it is not easy. It takes practice. Practice listening to what you really want and need. Practice nurturing relationships. Practice saying "yes" to the right things, and "no" to everything else. You can start this today—look at your calendar and clear one thing off to make time for a friend or some extra time for yourself! On Tuesday, March 27, at 7pm I'll lead a session called "Keeping it Together" where we'll explore the practice we need to do to find balance in our lives. Join us, if you have time!

— Rev. Morgan McLean, Assistant Minister for Congregational Life

Reflect

The Committee on Ministry (Louise Bettner, Hiram Jackson, Liz King, Elli Norris, Lisa Oakes, Jeannette Robertson) invites you to make the theme part of your spiritual practice:

*Pulled in many directions by the demands of our days, we light this chalice to remind us of the still point deep inside.
Made unsteady by the winds of unpredictable paths, we light a chalice to remember the shelter of each other.
Longing for lights that lead us back to our truest selves, we light our chalice to illuminate the faces of friends and sacred companions, recalling once again that we find our way through the willingness to take each other's hand.*
— Soul Matters resource guide

Often we think of balance as a place of rest, or relief from frantic action.
But balance doesn't always mean stillness; think of a bicycle: you can't balance unless you're moving.
In what parts of your life do you find balance in action, and in what parts do you find balance in stillness?

In school, there was a joke passed around that featured a triangle. One corner said "enough sleep," another said "good grades," the third said "social life." In the center it said, "pick two." The idea being that you can't do it all, so often times a student is sacrificing good grades for enough sleep and a social life, or sacrificing enough sleep for good grades and a social life. I remember the diagram being passed around and everyone groaning and agreeing that it was too true. What I did not know, or just didn't think about, is how this trend continues long past the classroom.

According to our Soul Matters curriculum, where our monthly themes come from, psychologists say we need a balance of work, love, and play. As I read this, the image of the triangle with "pick two" in the center popped into my head. Pick work and love, but there won't be much time for play, or pick love and play, but there won't be much time for work. This causes unbalance, we become a two-legged stool. It might work for a while, but eventually it will fall. Finding balance between all that we have to do, all that we want to do, and all that we should do, is not simple. In this month of balance, I would like to challenge everyone to think about your own three-legged stool. Are you on two legs, or perhaps only one? Is there an area that needs more attention? Remember, we need three legs in order to sit comfortably. I will challenge myself also, for I think this is far easier said than done.

— Danielle Lindstrom, Intern & Campus Minister

❖ www.uudavis.org → Events/Publications → 2017-18, March–Balance ❖

Listen

Download or stream edited Sunday services at www.uudavispodcast.org

All tree photos taken in our UUCD forest.



Balance and the Earth

6th Annual Interfaith Climate Conference: **Deepening Our Roots: Growing Resilient Forests** Saturday, March 10, 1-5pm, UUCD. The importance of trees cannot be underestimated. In his writing, John Muir reveals the place of trees and wilderness in the core of his being, "Going to the woods is going home Into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness."

Featured speakers: Dr. Greg McPearson, how to create healthy urban forests; Daniel Barad, who leads a Sierra Club effort to protect the Sierra Nevada forests. Suggested donation of \$10-15 is appreciated. Appropriate for high school students and free for all students. Last hour: activities for children!

Details about this and other upcoming events to support trees in Woodland and Davis:
<https://www.cooldavis.org/2018/02/07/climate-conference/>

Have you ever wondered where our monthly all-church themes

come from? Our church participates in a worship program called, *Soul Matters*, a collaborative of approximately 150 congregations. We are invited to contribute, and then receive thematic readings, movies, articles, poems, recommendations for anthems, hymns, books, YouTube videos, small group ministry questions, and religious education materials. Some of the materials inspire and some don't fit who we are, but what a resource! There's even a Facebook group where worship leaders share ideas, and debrief after worship.



The UU congregation in Grass Valley is also a member of Soul Matters. Their minister, Rev. Kevin Tarsa, and I have been planning one service that will be given at both congregations. Yes, sharing the resources of the congregations we serve is one of the ways the originator of Soul Matters hoped it could be used. The UU Community of the Mountains (Grass Valley) will experience our service, *The Balancing Life*, on March 18. Kevin and I offer the same service at UUCD on March 25. We're having a great time creating the worship and we hope it will inspire. — Rev. Beth Banks, Sr. Minister

Sunday Worship, 9:30 & 11:15am

March 4, 9:30 & 11:15am, *The Prayer Begins*, "You are the Slim Crescent of a Moon," Rev. Beth Banks; Autumn Labbé-Renault, Worship Associate, Sparks Choir. UUs define prayer in many ways. My experience of prayer has changed over time, and will probably change again. I'll share one understanding of prayer and how it can serve us. During this service, we'll be offered some spacious time for inner reflection.

March 11, 9:30 & 11:15am, *How to Balance: Life's Lessons from Trees*, Rev. Beth Banks; Elli Norris, Worship Associate. The campus of the UUCD was once a flat tomato field. When the early members of the congregation purchased the land to become their spiritual home, they transformed the fields into berms & gullies. They planted flowering bushes and a wide variety of trees. Many people who visit our property speak of the grounds and walking among the trees as a healing experience. Their experience may be more than a feeling. Music by Baroque and Beyond & Laura Sandage.

March 18, 9:30 & 11:15am, *Balance*; Balazs Scholar & Rev. Morgan McLean; Tamara Range, Worship Associate.

March 25, 9:30 & 11:15am, *A Balancing Life*. Rev. Beth Banks, and Rev. Kevin Tarsa, minister at UU Community of the Mountains (Grass Valley) will join forces to lead our worship services as a team, merging styles and combining the gifts of many. We draw on music, symbol, and story to explore our shared Soul Matters theme: Balance. The identical service will be offered at the Grass Valley UU on March 18.

Share the Plate: Progress Ranch (summer activities), receives 1/2 of Jan. Sunday offerings.

<http://www.progressranch.org/>

Progress Ranch has two Davis homes for boys, ages 7-12. Most of the boys attend Davis public schools and play on local sports teams. We strive for the following outcomes for our boys: Health and well-being; Confidence and social skills; An optimistic and hopeful outlook; A capacity for meaningful relationships. We work to achieve these outcomes by providing a nurturing home environment, being involved in a supportive community, emphasizing education, offering individual and family therapy. Check UUCD; memo: Offering.